

UTOPIA, POLITICS AND SOCIAL IMAGINATION

Ph.D. THESIS

by

SMRUTIPRIYA PATTNAIK



DISCIPLINE OF PHILOSOPHY
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY INDORE

FEBRUARY 2018

UTOPIA, POLITICS AND SOCIAL IMAGINATION

A THESIS

*submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the award of the degree*

of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

SMRUTIPRIYA PATTNAIK



DISCIPLINE OF PHILOSOPHY

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY INDORE

FEBRUARY 2018



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY INDORE
CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I hereby certify that the work which is being presented in the thesis entitled **UTOPIA, POLITICS AND SOCIAL IMAGINATION** in the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** and submitted in the **DISCIPLINE OF PHILOSOPHY, Indian Institute of Technology Indore**, is an authentic record of my own work carried out during the time period from January 2013 to December 2017 under the supervision of Dr. C. Upendra, Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Technology Indore. The matter presented in this thesis has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree of this or any other institute.

Signature of the student with date
(SMRUTIPRIYA PATTNAIK)

This is to certify that the above statement made by the candidate is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Thesis Supervisor with date
(Dr. C. UPENDRA)

SMRUTIPRIYA PATTNAIK has successfully given her Ph.D. Oral Examination held on

Sign of Chairperson (OEB)	Sign of External Examiner	Sign of Thesis Supervisor
Date:	Date:	Date:

Sign of PSPC Member #1	Sign of PSPC Member #2	Sign of Convener, DPGC
Date:	Date:	Date:

Sign of Head of Discipline
Date:

Most respectfully dedicated to my Parents, whose prayers, efforts
and wishes are an inspiration.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, it is my great pleasure to express my deepest respect and most sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. C. Upendra for his guidance and encouragement throughout my doctoral research. His expert remarks and guidance have been the heart and soul of this thesis work from conception to its fruition. He not only introduced me to the thesis topic but also shared his vision, and was dedicated to developing the research. His presence has had a remarkable influence on me. I appreciate all his of his time and ideas that he contributed to make this thesis work productive and stimulating. Besides my advisor, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my PSPC members: Dr. Bharat Kumar and Dr. Neeraj Mishra for their observations, comments and encouragement which have honed my critique. I am grateful to Dr. Sanjram Premjit K. (Head, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Indore) for facilitating research oriented atmosphere in the school. A very special gratitude to Dr. Amarjeet Nayak for his invaluable support and motivation throughout my PhD tenure. My sincere thanks to the faculty of School of Humanities and Social Sciences for their insightful comments and suggestions. I warmly thank all my colleagues for making these years memorable and enjoyable. I wish to express my gratitude to Prof. Pradeep Mathur, Director, IIT Indore for his continuous support in every aspect. I would like to thank IIT Indore for providing infrastructure, and financial support. I acknowledge the library and its resources provided by the institution. My thesis work is grounded on the research materials made accessible by the library staff. A special thanks to my cheerleaders Ashna and Bijay for being the pillars of support without which I may not have reached this juncture. I have learned a lot from them through our personal and scholarly interactions. They are my home away from home. I also owe a lot to my friends Hareesh, Suchi, Anuradha, Himanshu for all the help they extended

to me personally and professionally. Their unfailing support at various points of my research program will be remembered fondly.

I would like to acknowledge a very special person, my husband, Surajit for being constant source of support and strength. His unfailing love and understanding helped me to keep things going even in the most difficult of times. Last but not the least, I am indebted to my parents who have shown faith in me and have given me the liberty to pursue my passion. Nothing can compare to the selfless love, care and pain that they have gone through to shape my life. I thank my brother, sister-in-law and nephew for their love and affection that they have showered over me. Their moral support and valuable prayers have helped me keep things in perspective. Above all, I owe it all to God for granting me the strength to undertake this research and helping me to reach its completion.

Smrutipriya Pattnaik

February, 2018.

Synopsis

Background and Focus

The erasure of utopia from the socio-political imagination by-now is sacrosanct and more or less consensual. It implies that inequality and injustice are to be socio-politically managed but not fought out-of-the-world, leaving before us liberal *realistic utopia* as the only successful [ideological] paradigm. It has changed the idea of politics and ideology and placed us in the post-ideological age. People who negate socialism/communism entirely seem to claim that such an idea of equality rests on a mistake - which means that there are permissible inequalities; hence, injustices that are seen as *let-it-go*. Negation of all grand narratives resulted in a consensus arrived at of the previous century as the *worst in all historical times*, placing suspicion and even negation of the western metaphysical cannon. Implications of this are two. One, a distortion of the political history of an epoch giving a one-dimensional view of violence. Due to this distorted representation the socialist/communist paradigm lost the emancipatory status. It also meant the loss of messianic time and messianic politics. Politics is reduced to *police* in order to uphold the historically sedimented socio-cultural hierarchies. Second, it indirectly legitimizes the victory-debate of [western] liberal-democratic-capitalism. These two lead to an even greater implication: The loss of a counter-perspective/paradigm deforms the shape of equality, placing the notion of a just society in the narrow conceptions of individual and the collective. It also subverts the subject of politics. The poverty of liberalism is that it aims at a certain kind of egalitarian condition, while, to echo Ranciere, equality is not the goal to be

achieved but to be treated as a regulative principle also already existing.

The conditions of *now* in particular and the *present* at large ignite in us the *urge* for a *radical* transformation, that no more injustice will befall onto the *oppressed* and the *deprived* by any means; most vital being the *political*. The *now-aspect* never fully realizes itself, thus, retaining in the present the indispensability of the futuristic imagination of a *yet-to-arrive*[Benjaminian], *yet-to-come*[Derridean], and in *whatever singularities*[Agamben's *the coming community*] form it may be. The world we live in itself generates the longingness for another [to echo Agamnen's supposition that utopia is the *it topos* of things], alternate world - an *imaginary* place free of exploitation, oppression and dehumanization. The perplexing question here is what should be the focus of justice and equality? A just and fair society calls for a radical transformation, with non-repeatability of *specters of the adominable past*. It is important to note that the unjust conditions of people are not to be seen exclusively. Inequality and injustice in one realm indicate the reality in other realms too. The distinction between the economic and other realms is needless to be maintained. This kind of an understanding takes us back to some of the most crucial fundamental questions of political philosophy. One amongst them is the dynamics of interplay between individuals, groups, collectives and institutions. Foucault's idea of modern power encapsulated in the dictum of *fostering life or disallowing it* is taken into in conceiving *new* community. The sovereign power that holds right over life and death, where the state of exception has become the rule, in the sense that the [social] life has multiple sovereigns taking control of life and death - like the Foucauldian understanding of power's penetrating power over subjects' bodies and forms of life. The condition of *zone of indistinction* is what is the serious issue here. The control automatically breeds within itself the seeds of intolerance and oppression. Neither liberalism nor democracy attempts

to resolve this. Stating this, the study keeps in view, as a background condition, the prevalence of violence and dehumanization that reflects total moral downfall.

Justice and equality are enigmatic because we do not possess a definitive picture of an equal and just society. This keeps alive the utopian futuristic imagination. A determinate idea of social equality is not without problems. The desire to see-the-world-transformed is always looked at in-terms of idiotic binaries - either an ideal society or a practical political society, either capitalist-liberal-democracy or socialist-communism, etc. The world greatly witnessed these idiosyncracies in the twentieth century *via* blue-prints for a better world [**Another world is possible**], bundled with catastrophic experiences of political violence ‘in the name of’, which invented infinitely newer forms of death that brought to everyone’s astonishment the unbearable burden of evil. Revolutions indeed had ignited the movement but failed due to their unwarranted political violence that witnessed evil shocking to our imagination. The thought of possibility of a conflation of radical politics with the principle of hope is also surrendered. The denunciation of political utopias imply *as if* societies that are governed beyond the bounds of utopian imagination are more sane. The apparent failure of communism is reduced utopia to mere *possibilism* - creating a metaphysical difference between politics and utopia.

Liberals had emphatically convinced the world that the by-gone century experienced the moral fall. This is indeed a soothing story. There is also truth in this. Reducing the utopian imagination to an impossible dream, denouncers of utopia had a hidden message that an egalitarian fair or a just society will be achieved on their own terms. The death of political ideologies was declared once-for-all crucifying both the philosophical and the political sides of Marxism. The *triumph*

of capitalism is another soothing story told in the form of *endism*. The truth in it brought no change in the lives of the oppressed. May be people did not hold back their faith in the idea of radical transformation. Liberal-capitalist-democracy is defended by providing a two-fold understanding; as a profound *pragmatic* principle and as one integral to everyday life. It means that the world-after-communism has undone the past, by moving toward a liberal-capitalist future. Yet democracy lacks the messianic role. If liberal-democratic-capitalism is the only way then it is supposed to play the role of the emancipator. It is indeed a monumental task for liberal dmocracy.

The democratic imposture as the society of the masses, cannot act as the messiah because its understanding of politics and community cannot really liberate the oppressed. Many critics have argued on these similar lines. Democratic equality is no better than liberal or socialist equality. Radical equality that Ranciere and others argue for requires radical contingency - not in the sense of *public neutrality*, but accommodating radical differences. What kind of a society it would be if not democratic? No socio-political formation can completely liberate or emancipate people in its present-time and present form, also because [civil] society lacks that in-built mechanism to fight its injustices. It always require the political and politics - as an extra-social perspective. Interestingly, there is an overlapping consensus among all political philosophers and others on the futility of the meta-physical foundations of politics. The current work acknowledges Ranciere's idea of the political and Derrida's democratic radical futures. The deeply contemptible social hierarchies are backed by oppressive politics. For the oppressed, past and present; the tomorrow is yet to come and will come. It is only a hopeful future, hopeful of getting over the fear of social life. Derrida is right, in that promise of politics-to-come is more an ontological one than being empirical, and certainly has

infinite possibilities. It means there is never a accomplished condition of an idea. There is still something-to-emerge by way of self-creation. The open future doesn't give a name to the coming community, making it a *whatever* form. Bloch's hope gets translated this way in Derrida - the deferment to the future and openness of the future. It also means that it can come in an incomplete form. The challenging task is the irreparability of the world - precisely the human social condition. It is important to address inequalities/injustices/dominations/violences associated with several social identities.

Radical equality calls for a new social ontology of community [Nancy's way]. Is it a community in which all members are equal yet hierarchy matters (religion, caste, identity, historicity)? Or is it a society which allows every member to speak their own story, to be heard, their own argument, without any *political* representative process? To answer these questions we may have to address multiple aspects and tie them together. First, if the past century is the worst because it has given rise to metaphysical-political violence, then violence should have lessened in the post-utopian scenario owing to the failure of all utopian pursuits. Second, belief in democracy brought people out of the morally decadent condition. It is complemented by the supposition that the post-political has shaped up better politics. However, there is no change in our perception of 'eternal oppressors' and 'eternally oppressed' through the ages. It requires a re-treatment of the political and the social. Third, imperfectionism in us, speaking the anti-utopian language, makes both revolutionary violence and utopias absurd. There is nothing like a forced-equality. Yet equality is not an *overly* desired condition. It is a genuine expectation if at all we believe in the idea of the social contract, **self-preservation of everyone** that here is a way of achieving fairness in the world. Finally, ideologies have gone bank-rupt as they had gone beserk in their heydays. The ontological

status of new politics is at stake with distancing itself from any serious ideological politics. Liberal-capitalist-democracy [through endism] has out played all its opponents - bringing in a promise of a convenient-existence.

These four aspects are addressed in the thesis. The principal commitment is *specters of utopia* continue to haunt the world, far greater than the specters of the past. Meaning, presently, we are *only* forced to believe that there is madness in utopia. On the contrary, the principle of justice-as-fairness very well reconciles human incapacities of the *will* yet a fair world is warranted. There is an element of suspicion in this. When we talk about economic inequality of the world, it is no independent condition from other injustices. Hence, no hardcore Marxian base-superstructure formula is applied here. Not completely being dismissive about communism, and not blindly shifting the faith to liberal-capitalist-democracy, time-and-again we need to re-interpret and re-invent the idea of equality and fairness, along with processes that hold back these ideals. How are these ideals achieved in the practical world? Inequality and injustice have a cumulative dimension of economic, social and cultural predominantly regulated by the political conditions of the society. The four points mentioned above no way vouch for a just-fair world except it being only a proposition. How did the world fare after the demise of the communist empire? It is pertinent to answer this because ideals that regulate the post-utopian world have totally distorted the idea of equality. Factually, the world hasn't become just, the tradition of the oppressed continue to explain, as Benjamin and Zizek call it, the world of *lost causes*. The question is, 'had the world failed communism or communism failed the world.?'

Chapters

The current study inclines toward the opinion that we are never clear about what a just social condition is finally. The non-deliverance of promises is a failure of how we rolled the utopian dream into our lives. In the introductory chapter, “The Time That Has Gone,” we discussed the relationship between the past, present and future with respect to civil and political society. The concern here would be how utopias interplay with each other, acting as alternatives for a better world. In theory, a better world/ perfect world is always appealing, but in actuality we have several accounts evidencing the fact that utopias turned out to be dystopic in nature. It asserts that that the century is also being overly misrepresented is to be taken very seriously. Badiou’s idea that it is difficult to frame the entire century into a single paradigm is rightly argued. In doing so several aspects get subverted and distorted diverting our attention. In this regard, Tracy Strong’s book *Politics Without Vision* is discussed at large. Twentieth century is marked by several utopian claims that have proved utterly destructive, violent and morally decadent. The phrase ‘without a banister’ implies the radical step forward avoiding the transcendental concerns, and potentially emerges as a ‘new’ foundation of civil and political society. To sustain this alternative approach, we need to re-visit our understanding of human nature – both in terms of thinking and judging, not just of political paradigms but also of attitudes of individuals and groups within the realm of the social. Strong aptly focuses on the necessity of ‘reflective thinking’ and ‘careful judgment’ treating metaphysical doctrines with caution. Post metaphysical thinking calls for such an approach – the broadening of the horizons of ‘thinking’, which involves our comprehension of human nature, and the temperament toward the ‘Other’. Strong takes us on a ride through western

(political) philosophy, persuading us to contemplate 'contemporary times'.

In the second chapter, "Fallen Utopias or the *Lost Causes*," we have critically addressed the paradigm of failure eventually developed into a *fall* narrative. The collapse argument might be a tautology within the western world, but a serious issue for those socialism-inspired societies that are yet to experience a holistic radical transformation. Negri's question that "can one be a communist without Marx?" is significant, but relevant only in the reverse manner. We should ask, "can one be a Marxist without Communism?" An important aspect of Marx that remains ever important is, *the returning of the human oneself*, escaping social alienation as a social being. Return to the human self imparts in us empathy for others. This automatically transforms the nature of production function itself. The return will also symbolically mean that there will not be exploitation. Defense of Marxism is made not just because it believes in the just and egalitarian management of capital, but more because it is the force for a kind of levelling process of the uneven world. Uneven is all senses of the term. The current study commits to the idea that, in the present times, we need to have a more holistic approach to the understanding of individual, society and state. It is not to be forgotten that every individual is requisite of dignity and a place in the world - not to be treated as an excrement. Zizek rightly argues that post-communism is not a condition of *jouissance* but the beginning of even more heinous, sorrowful, religious, ethnic, genocidal violence happening on a wide ranging scales of intensity. It has also resulted in the invention of new complex orders of domination. Here too, Badiou expresses the difficulty and futility of theorizing the failure into a perspective. This chapter also carries the critical analysis of Terry Eagleton's *Why Marx Was Right*. The strength of this philosophy is its emancipatory appeal that takes into account the liberated conditions of everyday life. If revolution

lost its ontological status then the question as to who will be the vanguard of the oppressed bothers us immensely.

In the third chapter, “Realistic Utopias,” we made a critical discussion of three important aspects - *the end syndrome*, Zizek’s book *Living in the End Times* and the idea of a *fair society* as a realistic utopia. The end paradigm makes no sense as whenever an end was conceived a new beginning was hoped for. The end is symbolic of the apocalyptic tone atypical to the western world. Endism has created a hyper reality that terribly punctured the notion of the political. The end of a monstrous doctrine did not put the struggles to an end. One can boldly say that there is no discovery of new definition of equality after socialism. The post-ideological age has also showed how ugly the confrontation between liberty and equality can be. Amid this, Liberalism offers something *via* Rawls’s idea of a just well-ordered society. Rawls had rescued liberalism but his theory too leaves behind profound anomalies. The promise/hope in his theory is the sense of justice as fairness among individuals that clearly distinguishes between what is agreeable and what is not. A just basic structure is only a necessary condition but may not provide us with idea of community that we look for, a radical pluralistic society. Rawls’s relies on easy assumptions about fairness among human beings typical to the liberal social contract tradition. Prominent among them is *fact of pluralism* and overlapping consensus. Positions like well-ordered and well-founded are very problematic. The challenge for fairness comes not only from the rationalistic or normative suppositions but also from various alliances and disassociations. The oppressed conditions cannot be treated as permissible inequalities just by granting them basic liberties. Reiman’s idea of Marxian-Liberalism is appealing yet it does not free us from many doubts. It still leaves open the question of achieving justice. From the Zizek’s book we can infer that it is never a simple task to understand the

nature of a Just Society and what justice refers to. While numerous perspectives seek to understand a ‘pluralist’ ‘diverse’ ‘multicultural society’ on the one hand, characterizing certain normative frameworks, on the other, dogmas of social and political justice seeking multicultural world make it an unrealized fantasy.

In the fourth chapter, “Politics, Utopia, Emancipation,” we dealt with the same question, ‘after all, what is the problem with Utopian imagination?’ It is argued here that the idea of utopia is inexhaustible. The arguments of Kolakowski, White, Bloch and Jameson are dealt here. While Utopian thought survives, it still pushes us to think about what kind of a community we want, *i.e.*, the new community. The new community faces the greater challenge of redefining common good [not in the communitarian sense] that is pitched along with genuinely radical pluralism. Even greater is the challenge of eliminating the principle of totality. Nancy’s idea of *inoperative community* is discussed that provides valuable thoughts on what is to understand *being-in-common* and *being-with-common*. With ever great challenges society is under pressure for the manifestation of diverse worlds. The questioning of the metaphysical absolutism of the western philosophical canon exposes us to the post-foundationalism and the *impolitical*. Politics must find its own finite zone of the existential ground that is revealed through the social ontology of co-existential analysis. As are beings-in-the-world, there exists a difference between how *I* mark others and vice-versa, and what others and me are in the actual sense.

in the fifth chapter, “Democracy and the Political,” it is argued that to reinvent politics through the return of the political is to reinvent the possibility of *disagreement* and *dissensus*. Bringing back the political in its renewed form is establishing its difference not in the sense of its pure ontology but in the sense of differentiating from the social. In this chapter, Ranciere’s aesthetization of the political and

the distribution of the sensible are discussed. Only the new political can rescue politics from being mere police - through its sense of radical equality, the unheard and the unseen are made felt as part that indeed has a part. Equality is an ontological principle, which truly fits the radical framework. If politics allies with the social hierarchical forms the oppressive conditions can never be liberated. Democracy too had failed. While discussing this in his *Hatred of Democracy* Ranciere looks for a form of democracy that could really stage radical equality, most of the time, contrary to our imagination, radical differences. Derrida's *democracy-to-come*, Agamben's *comming community* and Benjamin's *awaited arrival*, all can have a meeting point here.

Conclusion

Some critical reflections have been made. Many talk about justice and equality pointing out the fact of the unjust ways of the world. Yet it remains an unaccomplished goal of the human condition. Emancipation of the oppressed is defeated by the profound impenetrable ways of the social realm. The unemancipated condition leaves them as lost causes. The reason is their struggles are the same, for 'to be part', 'to be heard' and 'to be valued'. It is one thing to identify the practical possibilities of emancipation to regulate the social lives. On the other hand, how individuals, belonging to various identities they form, mark each other in terms of valuations and validations is the perplexing issue here. We have seen how the sense of the political is important as it is the only realm that can promise the desired condition of a fair society. It can only face the recalcitrant socio-cultural forms that can turn perverse, and patronage fear and hatred that begets

moral degeneration. If the political can distance itself from the social, not in the ontological sense, then there is a hope. Public realm is supposed to be such a superior realm driven by the spirit of the political. We have also seen that the adverse is also possible - the totality functional within the socio-cultural realm. We have seen that the integration approach is futile in nature unless also retains the parallel immanent condition of dissensus. Both political realism and normative politics should realize that - when lives continue to remain the generations after generations reflective of no movement in the standards of living and no movement in terms of belonging to the community - utopia, the longing for anything but not the present; dissent, the non-conformity to society and culture; and radical disagreement, the freedom to oppose the *singular* status of common good remain as great potentialities.

Bibliography

- [1] A. Badiou, *The Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007). [English Version]
- [2] B. Bosteels, *The Actuality of Communism* (New York: Verso, 2014).
- [3] G. A. Cohen, *Rescuing Justice and Equality* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008).
- [4] G. Delanty, *Community* (New York: Routledge, 2010).
- [5] I. Devisch, *Jean-Luc Nancy and the Question of Community* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012).
- [6] J. Ranciere, "The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics," in *Reading Ranciere*, eds., Paul Bowman & Richard Stamp, (London: Continuum, 2011).
- [7] J. Ranciere, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, td., by Julie Rose, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).
- [8] J. Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005 edn).
- [9] M. Viroli, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the Well-Ordered Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
- [10] S. Zizek, *Living in the End Times* (London: Verso, 2011).
- [11] T. Eagleton, *Why Marx Was Right* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).
- [12] T. Strong, *Politics Without Vision: Thinking Without Banister in the Twentieth Century* (Yale University Press, 2011).

Publications

- 1. S. Pattnaik, C. Upendra. "Seeking a Better World: From Utopia to Multiculturalism". *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies*. Volume 3, Issue 4, April 2016, PP 46-50 ISSN 2349-4395 (Print) - ISSN 2349-4409 (Online) [Impact Factor: 0.982]

2. S. Pattnaik, C. Upendra. "Political Utopia 'really' matters". *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* Volume 21, Issue 5, Ver. 6 (May. 2016) PP 87-95 e-ISSN: 2279-0837 (print) ISSN: 2279-0845. [Impact Factor: 4.621]
3. S. Pattnaik, C. Upendra. "Critical Reflections on the Fall Narrative of Communism". *SOCRATES* Vol 6, no 2 (June 2018): 34-50 ISSN: 2347-6869. (Impact factor:0.765) (Indexing: SCI, SCOPUS).

Papers Presented

1. 2016, July 5-9 (17th International Conference of the Utopian Studies Society/Europe): Presented a paper titled "Is Utopia really Indispensable?" held at 17th International Conference of the Utopian Studies Society/Europe, Lisbon, Portugal.
2. 2016, March 29-31 (Andhra University): Presented a paper titled "Seeking a Better World: From Utopia to Multiculturalism" held by Council for Research in Value and Philosophy, Andhra University, 2016
3. 2013, July 3- 7 (Jawaharlal Nehru University): Presented a paper titled "Understanding of Untouchability: Gandhi and Ambedkar's Perspective" held at Indian Council of Philosophical Research Academic Centre, New Delhi, 2013
4. 2012, August 19- 21 (UGC): Presented a paper titled "Sri Aurobindo's transformation from Politics to Spirituality" at UGC Sponsored National Seminar held at Orissa, 2012.

Workshops

1. 2013, June 17- July 13 (Goa University): Workshop attended at Forum on Contemporary Theory on Theory/ Praxis course.

2. 2017, March 6- 10 (ICPR, Lucknow): Workshop attended on Plato's Republic conducted at Indian Council of Philosophical Research, Lucknow, UP, India.

Contents

1	The Time that has gone: <i>Century of Violence</i>	2
1.1	Crucifixion of the Century	3
1.2	Politics Without <i>Banister</i>	22
2	Failure of Utopia or <i>the lost causes!!</i>	32
2.1	The Collapse: <i>A Lost Cause!</i>	32
2.2	So, Marx is Right! <i>via</i> Terry Eagleton	52
2.3	Vanguard of the Oppressed	55
3	Realistic Utopia	60
3.1	The Triumph of Capitalism: <i>The End Syndrome</i>	61
3.2	Living in the End Times : Certain Ironies	75
3.3	Humanity and Fairness	92
4	Politics, Utopia, Emancipation	120
4.1	[Re]Drawing the Utopian Spirit	120
4.2	Intersubjectivity, Isn't it a Lie!	134
4.3	The [<i>Im</i>]possibility of Community	138
5	<i>In the name of</i> Democracy	154
5.1	The New Political	154
5.2	The Emancipatory Force of Democracy	190
6	Conclusion	206
	Utopia, Politics and Social Imagination: <i>The Endless Struggle</i>	206
	Bibliography	215

Chapter 1

The Time that has gone: *Century of Violence*

Twentieth century began as a site of sacrifice amid which the new world is born under the signs of *torment* and death. Many great scholars have arrived at the negative, melancholic and prevert representation of the twentieth century. Twentieth Century is a tragic figure in the historical context. Through multiple perspectives, it is of utter puzzlement, whether to treat this phenomenon as reasonable and valid. The morally decadent portrayal of the century implies our admittance of the dehumanized violence the century had witnessed; especially, in the name of utopias. Depsite a deep abhorrence to these utopias one still gets a *contrary* feeling that the century is crucified not just by the massacres but also by its own burial. In this chapter, the emphasis is laid on making sense of the century, acknowledging Badiou's contention of the *non-necessity* and *impossibility* of **framing** a century into a paradigm.

1.1 Crucifixion of the Century

Even when our imaginations are deeply entrenched in setting up the ‘house-of-politics’ in order, of the *now* moment in particular, there is no shying away from coloring of these time zones - past, present and future [the time-to-come]. Abundant literature is available on the fact that the previous century had witnessed unbearable violence. Many critical responses have greatly reflected on the astonishing *possibility of evil*¹ in these ideological paradigms. On the contrary, they never spoke of the possibility of evil quite ancient to these; especially, racism and colonialism. The moment humans learnt or invented the infinite forms of discrimination, the ground was laid for the possibility of evil of such enormity. Besides, there is no second thought but to think of them as monstrous ideologies. As mentioned earlier, the discussion will be focused on the characterization of Socialist-Communist adventures as pervert² or violent. It is not irrelevant Communism impacted the post-Holocaust world, which eventually saw the world torn between two long-standing political ideologies.

As time passes-by, the question that bothers us is not the manner in which violence has become the means for radical transformation. The real questions raised are, ‘was violence due to systematic efforts to erase the imbalances of the world, regardless of this or that society?’ Does it imply a generation’s reluctance to distort the unequal and deplorable conditions of human existence? It is liberalism

¹It is borrowed from Hannah Arendt’s *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*.

²For instance, the perversion is the pursuit of impossible ends, for which, eminent political philosopher John Gray opines as “perversion of tragedy in which terrible crimes are inflicted ...” See his review of Terry Eagleton’s book *Why Marx Was Right* in his “The Return of an Illusion.” Alan Ryan also says that “What is common to all Communist states ... is the perversion of utopia.” See his review of Stephane Courtois *et. al*’s book *The Black Book of Communism* titles, “The Evil Empire” in *New York Times Review*, January 2, 2000.

that has given the thought of the **movement** from the *state-of-nature* to the state of *civil society*. It means that there is always a movement from one condition to another. The mention of implicit and explicit agreements are insufficient in grasping the human condition. To understand this insufficiency one has to make a radical critique of social contract liberalism and its various other forms. The fundamental idea of all traditional social contractualists [Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau] is what liberals call the *inalienable* right to life, labeled as *self-preservation*. It may not suffice to mean that there will be sovereign and legal protectives to ensure *redressal of all deprived and denied* of the right to self-preservation.³ It is treated as implicit in Rawls, for whom, the problem of injustice is resolvable through *just*-[by itself] political institutions. Justice, equality and freedom are virtues that cannot be understood independently. They are inseparable values. Understanding of discrimination demands the *ontological dependence* on each other. The idea is that one need not have a low economic status enjoying social, cultural and political privileges. We are not here questioning the base-superstructure relationship in Marxian terms or Gramscian terms.

To understand justice and equality we need to understand the in relationship in far more complex forms. For instance, an individual or a community is economically backward due to the presence of *undisguised* forms of cultural and social downtrodden - conditions of the *oppressed*. Marxian understanding still being pre-eminent, we, now, no longer confine the well-being of one individual to merely one sphere of life. It requires a profound understanding of not just *inalienable right* but also, what Ranciere refers to as *ontological* nature of equality. That liberalism lacks deep insights in transposing individual rights into the collective rights

³There is no dilemma on what causes the deprived condition - it is determinately the collective life

is a partial story. The simple logic is if a dignified life is inseparable from one it is similarly integral to all. Again, needless to restate all or many radical social movements featured in the past century due to the inability of human societies to deeply lay down into our lives this value of dignity. The question of desert and dignity does not arise here. One can say that liberalism does not come with any promise of ensuring **self-preservation** to all. At least, it has no such practical consequence and lacks consistency.⁴ Liberal-capitalism depicts a rights-based society, with a half-baked virtue that freedom is important, yet not sure about ways to achieve it for all or everyone. To make a preliminary remark, liberalism seems to withhold an *implicit* supposition that everyone's self-preservation is not possible and it's fine for it. It means there are no strong political guarantees to which individuals have surrendered their sovereign status. This kind of a projection makes Liberalism more Hobbesian rather Lockean or Rousseauian - *i.e.*, naturally, individuals are driven by power, passion and glory.

Giorgio Agamben talks about the distinction between bare life⁵ and political life. In between bare life and political life remains the most vital aspect, the socio-cultural life. For instance, Holocaust [though may not be a case for discussing equality] can be stated as that *in-between* [state of **indistinction**] condition of the people having denied the species-dignity to all humans. Likewise, in every society (to mention a few Blacks in America, backward classes in India, Muslims in India etc.) one witnesses such long historical tradition of oppressed people being given *less-than-animal* status.⁶ Access to bare life is also dependent on one's belonging

⁴The inconsistency is clearly explained by Elijah Weber in his article, "Rebels With a Cause: Self-Preservation and Absolute Sovereignty in Hobbes's *Leviathan*," *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 29.3 (July 2012): 227-246.

⁵James Gordon Finlayson, "'Bare Life' and Politics in Agamben's Reading of Aristotle," *Review of Politics* 72 (2010): 97-126. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

⁶This term is borrowed from Slavoj Žižek's *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism? Five Inter-*

to this or that culture or identity. What if the bare life itself is denied? What is the political to which individuals bestowed the sovereign status doing? Both bare life and the in-between life are responsibilities of the political realm. There is a problem here. Traditional Marxism tends to give a low value for the political [MacPherson] and liberalism, predominantly, sounds, as critics claim, *apolitical*. We need not say the same for post-liberalism or new-liberalism where it has its own kind of idea of the political [Rawls and later]. Definitely it does not contain the Mouffean (coming from Schmitt's idea of political) way of understanding the political that greatly impacts the social realm either.

The Twentieth century offers multiple ways of understanding the political. Whether in our analysis of the century violence as metaphysical canon guilty or treating justice as only a political possibility or locating the political within the cultural ways of the society, the political has a significant place that determines the relationship between people. Rawlsian *Political liberalism* offers a model of *political* justice that, unfortunately, fails in its experiment. Rawls presupposes that the well-ordered society resulting from the *original position* 'automatically' guarantees 'just' political institutions. The same can be seen in Habermas's discourse ethics constitutive of rationally negotiating individuals. There is no element of coercion in the process of universalization.⁷ Similarly, Scanlon's *reasonable reason* too is driven by such kind of guarantees.⁸ This is a presupposition of righteousness of reason. Negotiation seems to be taking place in two ways - ideological and

ventions in the [(London: Verso, 2001, 76)], where he discusses the extrication of human dignity from the self; especially, in his discussion of the Muslim being treated as "less-than-animal ... intermediate step between animal and man".

⁷According to [U]-principle - "What one gets is a dialogical principle of universalization (U): "A [moral norm] is valid just in case the foreseeable consequences and side-effects of its general observance for the interests and value-orientations of each individual could be jointly accepted by all concerned without coercion." See his work *Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, C. Cronin and P. DeGreiff (eds)., (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998).

⁸T. M. Scanlon, *Being Realistic About Reasons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

non-ideological senses. But Habermas's discourse ethics can be far-stretched to see whether there can be a negotiation between the oppressed and the well-off. The supposition that rational human beings make a rational society is absurd. Habermas and his discourse ethics fail in this regard. The problematic point is there is no clarity on what is to be equal and what can vary among us.

The dynamic nature of law, power and the sovereign affect socio-political relationships. Modern politics and economics created new forms of life, changing the human thinking process - the major consequences of it are exploiting others, violating other's dignity, and unlimited appropriation. Equality is not a logical consequence of freedom. Marx's critique of capitalism clearly implies that liberty is a constraint on freedom. It also implies that equality and freedom are counter-intuitive to each other. The opposition between liberalism and Marxism is explained through this fundamental opposition. Even Locke's proposition that one can appropriate as much as one can [as God has bestowed mankind enough wealth] has proved wrong. Western societies are stark examples of adverse impact of this principle of unlimited appropriation - like the 'white man freely treaded as long as he can on the saddle of a horse' resulted in the creation of the have and have-nots. It is the same western world that has given rise to the movements of equality through various forms of socialism.

What does the impact of capitalism⁹ and Marxism¹⁰ denote? They provide in-

⁹We can have a three phase argument for liberalism, the hardcore economic phase when Europe and major parts of the world caught up with the fever of Industrial Revolution; the hardcore political phase where it projected itself as a profound ideology challenging the Communist enterprise; and the democratic phase (though part of the political phase too) that gained currency under the cloud of triumph of capitalism projecting the post-communist era as purely apolitical, non-ideological and purely democratic. The point of apolitical nature democratic politics will be addressed in the later of th thesis.

¹⁰In the long tradition of Marxism we have a huge scholarship reflecting the gigantic impact Marx made that made Communism a truly universal principle

sights into critical reflections on human nature - focusing on human perfectibility from the given imperfections. For example, the writings of Fourier, Simon, and Owen profess that “it was the duty of all good men to promote the general happiness and welfare of everyone in society; they regarded this task as incompatible with the continuance of a social order that was maintained strictly on the basis of a competitive struggle between individuals for the means of living.” There is indeed a deep romanticization of the material life of humans that opposes ‘competitive struggle’. On the contrary, liberalism commits to the values of liberty and autonomy in terms of competitive struggle. When life [*life of all species as organisms*] in nature is defined by the principle of struggle [need be in terms of ‘survival of the fittest’], how do we expect creating a human world with a ‘no-struggle scenario’? We may ask this kind of question and be self-complacent on the indispensibility of conflict and natural inequality. If human society [even if one supposes that the social contract is just a speculative imagination] is the movement from the natural state to the social state [though there is no complete erasure of some of the natural states], it is expected of them to establish a society that reflects ‘overcoming’ all evils. It is not a transition from one state to another state. The movement should experience transformation *via* transition. It is not idealistic yet carries the utopian imagination. Why does the desire for a political condition that takes care of both bare life and social life is utopian or idealistic? To sum up both the early socialists and Marx thought and planned of an ideal state where there would not be a place of animosity among various sections of people, no exploitation, no misery and nothing else. In a sense the future society, would be, a socialist society, ideal in all respects and aspects.

What did the utopian/scientific socialists aim at? Taking note of the movements of radical transformation that emerged in Europe, it is unreasonable to say they

are unrealistic and utopian. However, the idea of practical politics and practical world became more popular with the course of events that followed these movements. Radical transformation becomes imperative if inequality is natural - the low conditions of life of individuals or the oppressed to be more particular will revolt and force changes. It is the moment of diffidence shown by individuals to live upto the promises of a socio-political order. We have to understand that every collective is contained by implicit promises and every polity too has an untold responsibility when repeatedly failed sow the seeds of revolution. Revolutionary transformations are always problematic. They confront the conveniently *make belief* that equality is a fictitious idea.

Denial of equality is reflective of a mistaken understanding of humanity. History provides us the best picture. From it we understand what is gained and what is lost in the process of coming together. Exlcusion is not a new phenomenon peculiar to modern times. If we admit this, there is no necessity of redeeming or reliving the past. The historical redemption and historical revival are two different things. While the former addresses the ‘tradition of the oppressed’, the latter sticks to the glorious glimpses of the past; both fictional and factual. Benjamin differs from Marx in this respect. There is no looking back at the historical success or failures for Marx. Contrarily, for Benjamin, historical time has not died, as the tradition of the oppressed and their failures dominate the present as lost causes.¹¹ It is also indicative of persistence of the old and invention of new forms of exclusion, exploitation and humiliation. The only way of redemption is to look forward with no mirror reflection of what humanity has experienced so far. The Twentieth century is swept by this futuristic imagination. An interesting question

¹¹Sami Khatib, “Where the Past Was, There History Shall Be,” *Anthropology & Materialism* [Special Issue: *Discontinuous Infinities*], 1 (2017). Online version available at URL : <http://am.revues.org/789> ; DOI : 10.4000/am.789.

arises here: Did the futuristic imagination inspire the great socialist revolutions of the twentieth century? Or the political revolutions showed the oppressed false dreams in the movement toward the future? To answer this, one needs a critical reflection of the socialist transformations everywhere. What are the guarantees of these revolutions? The sole promise of these revolutions is the hope of a better world - *the promise of a better tomorrow*. Though revolutions project themselves as bringing of practical changes [*actual emancipation*] carry in themselves the promise of redemption.

Socialist revolutions sound enigmatic to those societies outside the western world. The question is whether revolutionary changes sought had the true dialectical movement present in Marxian idea of historical materialism. Through committed revolutions we may achieve redemption from oppression [no more to be stated as lost causes] or begin the experience liberation [*social-cultural elevation*]. However, the historic recurrence cannot be denied. If ideas and ideologies experience the dialectical movement, so do the people, communities and cultures experience the same dialectical movement. We cannot stop the historic recurrence through a radical revolution that totally devastates the problematic social order. Even if it brought changes wherever it took place, the longevity and sustenance of the *transformed state* is the real problem. It creates, what Rawls emphasized, the necessity of intergenerational justice.¹² Not only the conditions of inequality vary from society to society, but ways to resolve them may also differ. Hence, only an abstract principle of equality and justice never provides insights the possibility of

¹²Rawls elaborately discusses the problem of justice between the generations. The Difference Principle suggests that a social minimum is achieved that sets a point at which it maximizes the expectations of the least advantaged. This difference principle is applied to the long term benefit of the least advantaged extending over future generations. See his book *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999[revised edition]), sections 44-5 [251-262].

transformation. In this sense revolutions carry those specific things strictly immanent to respective societies. To make a preliminary remark, for some, utopian futuristic imaginations are bearers of terror, violence and moral decadence, and for others, future is out there, about-to-come, to be grabbed, carrying the messianic element in it. This is one of the reasons why utopia is alive in much of the non-western world where there were no political upheavels bringing catastrophic changes amid bringing emancipation for the oppressed. In the first phase of the communist enterprise, the focus was brought to the economic liberation of the workers/proletariat, the march toward the classless society. In the second phase, with the cold fever taking a tight grip, the focus shifted to the creation of a stable political order guided by the ideology. In the last phase, the shameful collapse of the communist experiment and the declaration of the most infamous *the end of history* debate, the greatest ideology was reduced to a few social and political movements. It was strangled by the triumphalist claim of liberal-capitalist-democracy. The peculiarity of inequality in the second phase and after was that the political forces actually contributed predominantly to the sustenance of economic inequality. This resulted in the low social and cultural status [for instance India]. It implies that inequality is not just an economic condition emerging independently, but is contributive of social-political-economic evils. It also creates the ironical situation where the oppressed is supposed to *dream*, remain *hopeful* and show *perseverence*.

There are two ways in which we can understand the twentieth century. One, the period in which radical politics took its roots initiating the revolutionary [equalizing] *forced* attempts, or the period that contrived creative forms of human torture through unbearable violence. The former has been over-shadowed by the latter. In other words, inequality has become an existential condition affecting the *everyday*

life. Why should people or societies detest utopia or equality? They are repugnant to Utopian ideals because of the violence and also because of projecting these ideals as evilish. Much has been discussed on these two aspects and any reaction on this is redundant. A response to this would enable us to understand flagellations of the century - in terms of dehumanization, cultural oppression and having patronaged catastrophic violence. When it comes to the placing of the twentieth century on a historical plane it is always projected as nightmarish in nature. Taking into account violence from the first world war to the end of the Soviet empire, critics qualify the century as the worst in human history - even more precisely as the *century of genocide* or the *bloody century of barbarisms*. There is a gross failure of arrangement of human affairs¹³ and the experience of colossal tragedy must have shaken the world. Some attribute it to events during the cold war period and many others consensually opine that the western cannon grounded in the metaphysical assumptions led to that unbearable violence. George Kateb asks an interesting question here: “Is the canon of political theory adequate enough to the task of enabling readers of our time to take in and comprehend the awful events of the twentieth century?”¹⁴ We are not sure how convincing it is to qualify or paraphrase the century with the *atrocities* paradigm. A historical interpretation of it offers us many vital stories of these genocides. Keeping in mind the socialist revolutions, some questions would emerge, ‘why there have to be killings on such a mass scale? Are these killings carried out for the sake of equality? Who are the ones who were put to death *in the name of* either liberal-capitalist-democracy or socialist-communism?’ Mark Levene addresses a similar question speculating a neo-Marxist response - “because of the uneven historical development.” Every

¹³Mark Levene, “Why Is the Twentieth Century the Century of Genocide,” *Journal of World History*, 11.2(2000): 305-335

¹⁴See his article, “The Adequacy of the Canon,” *Political Theory* 30.4(Aug. 2005):482-505, 482.

genocide tells us a blood curdling story. Hatred for the *ideological other* had taken its toll. Jonathan Glover analyzes these terrible and real moral dilemmas in his book where he describes the heart wrenching realities behind the claims of just wars and utopian social projects.¹⁵ The scale of violence and death was so monumentally huge that it beggars one's imagination with aghast. The barbarity fell on humankind indulging itself into heinous crimes - the darkest phase of human civilization. Can there be any [*moral*] judgment of this violence? Many moral philosophers responded to these catastrophic events asserting that no morality can judge this violence. It is out of the bounds of moral judgment.¹⁶ For this reason, violence has been categorized as the *crime against humanity*. There is a sense of non-moral dimension to this. According to George Steiner, "There is no human form of language adequate to the conceptualization and understanding of Auschwitz." What kind of judgment can be given to such crimes? The same can be stated about other historical crimes, especially, the oppressed conditions of people in their everyday life. The most scarier part is normalization of this oppressed condition. The socialist revolution definitely carried the spirit of redemption from all those evils rooted in our everyday life. The noted historian Eric Hobsbawm states, "The destruction of the past, or rather of the social mechanisms that link one's contemporary experience to that of earlier generations, is one of the most characteristic and eerie phenomena of the late twentieth century."¹⁷ Hobsbawm attempts to find reasons for why matters went the way it happened. Before proceeding on to various issues concerning the failed promises of socialist utopia's *another world* and self-proclaimed success of liberal-capitalist-democracy [here af-

¹⁵See his book *Humanity: A Moral History of Twentieth Century* (New York: Yale University Press, 2000). Also see <http://www.nytimes.com/books/00/10/29/reviews/001029.29pinkert.html>

¹⁶Gabriele Nissim, *The Righteous in the Gulag*. Emmanuel Droit, "The Gulag and the Holocaust in Opposition: Official Memories and Memory Cultures in an Enlarged Europe,"

¹⁷See his book *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (London: Abacus book, 1994), 3

ter in the thesis used as *LCD*] through realistic utopia, we have to address the deep-rooted *requiem* about the experience of a troubled century.¹⁸

We should not dare to overlook the traumatic experience of the people while expediting out those ‘so-called’ profound ideologies. Like Rousseau who talked about forcing oneself to be free¹⁹, the socialist enterprise too followed the principle of forced equality coloring it as necessary. The idea of forced freedom is enigmatic in nature. “How can you create a community which protects all its members, yet leaves them as free as they were in the state of nature?”²⁰ If Rousseau’s general will is strong because it has the “we”/common element in it - people come together to legislate the enforcement of their common interest, here, the protection of everyone’s [not just one’s own] private wills. It may have the sense of equality of freedom. However, the subject matter of common interest is always the pressing concern of any society - in the sense that, it may, petrifyingly, mean that nothing can be done if the people [to be precise either sections or powerful sections] are disinclined and spitted.

On the other hand, did the socialist-communist enterprise ground itself in the idea of transformation/emancipation with prefixed condition of can-use-coercion? It is very difficult for scholars to assess living in those societies who had no true experience of socialist experiments barring a few movements challenging the state’s

¹⁸How are we to make sense of the Short Twentieth Century, that is to say of the years from the outbreak of the First World War to the collapse of the USSR which, as we can now see in retrospect, forms a coherent historical period that has now ended? See Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes*, 5.

¹⁹Self-interested individuals might try to enjoy all the benefits of citizenship without obeying any duties of a subject. Thus, Rousseau suggests that unwilling subjects will be forced to obey the *general will*: **they will be forced to be free**. For detailed discussion of this see Steven G. Affeldt, “The Force of Freedom: Rousseau on Forcing to Be Free,” *Political Theory* 27.3 (June 1999): 299-333.

²⁰www.philosophyetc.net/2004/03/rousseau-and-general-will.html

barbarity [though present with welfarist policies]. Natural equality is a difficult assertion, except the fact that the *inalienability* of liberty is equally present in all. It has a transitive implication because everyone is bestowed with inalienable freedoms they possess the equal right to attain a standard of living; may be also a place in the culture. It is very pertinent to have a recapitulate the foundations notion of equality in both liberalism and Socialism/Marxism. Liberalism's understanding of equality of men [humans]²¹ drew its inspiration from philosophers like Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, Tom Paine etc. These thinkers inspired two great political revolutions of the European Enlightenment era; American [*The Immortal Declaration of Independence*²²] and French [*Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen*²³]. Definitely, there is no natural equality in either of the cases, the reason being individual is the focal point and collective institutions are treated as a necessary evil. It has a message in it. It failed in its mission of assuring *self-preservation* to everyone [*as per covenant*] and violated its own philosophy. In other words, the social condition continues to be as brute as the natural condition. After all, a society is no replica of the natural state [though many desired to get back to that state relinquishing the desire for a collective life]. Even in the Rawlsian sense, every individual makes a choice as a rational being against every other individual, i.e., *equality through non-discrimination*. The

²¹This is mentioned in this manner intentionally. One does not find a linguistic representation of women till the last decades of twentieth century. It may seem funny but nothing to be funny about the fact that women did not occur to intellectuals' imagination of the past.

²²It says, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. In response to this, Frederick Douglass delivered a scathing rebuke to the hypocrisy of America's celebration of freedom in the shadow of slavery. In his famous 4th of July speech at Rochester, Douglass asked: "What have I or those I represent to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us?"

²³Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. **Social distinctions can be founded only on the common good.**

term ‘non-discrimination’²⁴ pushes the idea of justice or equality into the socio-political zone. How adverse is this depends upon the nature of the civil society and political institutions in a more broader sense than what Rawls discussed in his *Political Liberalism* and *Laws of the People*.

Argument for equality arises from the adverse effects of collective life [sometimes also referred to the *capitalist modes of production*]. Some have found it as a limiting factor - having confined the understanding of inequality as merely economic inequality. Instead, it contributes to an already immanent manifest condition of existential inequality.²⁵ There are other aspects of inequality. How should we address this issue? Is it possible to address other inequalities like racial, communal, social and cultural? There are two aspects: [1] Either economic inequality has to be addressed independently of other forms of inequalities. The calculation of well-being begins with the achievement of the basic standards of living [*Rawlsian minimax principle*]. [2] A counter argument to it is that inequality is a holistic condition. Backwardness in one sphere is reflected in other spheres of social life [*the oppressed conditions*]. There is an important concern here. How does a society overcome inequality? It has a twofold answer to it - an affirmation and a refutation.²⁶ Carina Fourie *et al.* make an interesting beginning to

²⁴Amartya Sen begins his book reflecting on this issue. According to him, the idea of equality is confronted by two varieties of diversities: [1] the basic heterogeneity [**diverse humanity**] of human beings and [2] the multiplicity of variables in terms of which equality can be judged. See his book *Inequality Re-examined* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995), 1.

²⁵John M. Echols mentions the same point: much of the attention is being paid to the “well-being by class.” - result of which is no complete picture of inequality under socialism. See his paper, “Does Socialism mean Greater Inequality? A Comparison of East and West along Several Major Dimensions,” *American Journal of Political Science* 25.1(Feb. 1981): 1-31, 2.

²⁶Marx’s concept of socialism follows from his concept of man. It should be clear by now that according to this concept, socialism is not a society of regimented, automatized individuals, regardless of whether there is equality of income or not, and regardless of whether they are well fed and well clad. It is not a society in which the individual is subordinated to the state, to the machine, to the bureaucracy. Even if the state as an “abstract capitalist” were the employer, even if “the entire social capital were united in the hands either of a single capitalist or a single capitalist corporation,” this would not be socialism. Excerpt from *Capital* mentioned in

their *Social Equality* where they opine that though the ideal of equality contains distributive implications, “equality is foremost about relations between people.”²⁷ Among many attributes to equality in social relationships, they also emphasize on the political and institutional level. It also needs something more than this. Besides, political and institutional guarantees, the most pressing concern is the civil equality of our attitude toward others. This is a way of looking backwards.

Taking into account the discussion above, one may ask, ‘What are the promises of those revolutionary transformations? What is the shape of that new world? Proponents of blue-print models of [revolutionary] changes must address these questions. While addressing these questions, we should also put in a perspective what is natural and unnatural to human condition. Under this guise they attempted to transform the world in their respective ways, like the world and history being torn apart in opposite directions. How can one explain the difference between ‘to let things happen’ and ‘to force things to happen? Finding the difference between the two one can grasp the escalation of the great rivalry of ideologies. The past century, i.e., *the age of ideologies*, has to be analyzed in this light. While doing so we need to look into the reasonability of many great attributions of violence to the dominant presence of the western metaphysical canon. As far as communism is concerned, historians and others qualify it as a **tragedy of planetary proportions**.²⁸

Erich Fromm’s *Marx’s Concept of man: Milestones of Thought* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961).

²⁷See Carina Fourie, Fabian Schuppert & Ivo Walliman-Helmer, *Social Equality: On What It Means to Be Equals*, forward by David Miller, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), Introduction chapter, “The Nature and Distinctiveness of Social Inequality”

²⁸See Stephane Courtois *et. al.*, *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression* ed. by Jonathan Murphy and Mark Kramer (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999), x.

The communist experiment turned out to be calamitous not only in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China, but also in many other regions all over the world. It is so disconsolating to see utopian movements indulging into *crimes against humanity*. It is paradoxical because a profound philosophical-political ideology proved politically pervert bewildering to moral philosophers to analyze. Martin Malia speaks of this paradox in a more provoking manner: “it takes a great ideal to produce a great crime.”²⁹ Tzvetan Todorov sees it as the effecient lure of a totalitarian system. The desire to change the world, for him, is a common desire of all human beings. However, the difficult argument he makes is that “communist society strips the individuals of his responsibilities. It is always somebody else who makes decisions. People submitting themselves to a totalitarian system are escapists of responsibility. By pushing the burden on to others they perpetrate “voluntary servitude”. It directs our attention to the falsity of the utopian glare [that clouds the society from its penchant for oppression]. The violence is characterized as a genocide and a politicide. The annihilation of utopia is accompanied by the unbearable burden of being labeled as criminal. On the contrary, the transition in the post-communist era does not free us from similar dilemmas. Did LCD not commit any crime? It is one of the enigmatic questions here.³⁰ Rather than hating the violence the communist world inflicted wherever it pushed themselves, the western *LCD* seemed to have had hated the very principle of equality. The enmity between them is not simple, but the driving force of the entire twentieth century. Either you are a democratic or anti-communist.

Revolutions were initiated in the name of socialism-communism. Were people

²⁹Stephane Courtois *et. al.*, *The Black Book of Communism*, 12.

³⁰“Capitalism is a system which has no philosophical pretensions . . . The only thing it says is: ‘Well, this functions.’ And if people want to live better, it is preferable to use this mechanism, because it functions.” Slavoj Zizek, mentioned in Benjamin Kunkel, *Utopia or Bust: A Guide to the Present Crisis* (London: Verso, 2013).

thrown into forcible participation and then threatened to extend conformity to the philosophy? The entire century has gone by without valuing the will of the people at all. Alain Badiou throws a remarkable reflection on the notion of the century, in the context of the dismissal of the previous century as what Hobsbawm called the age of catastrophes. He asks “A century, how many years is that? A hundred? That’s time. It’s Bossuet’s question that commands our attention: What are a hundred years, when a single instant effaces them?”³¹ Stating that Badiou stressed on the difficulty in framing the century into a paradigm. It involved the affirmation of an absolute future. While it is open to politics-to-come it also does not close the door to political tyranny. It is a paradox. There is no indifference to the fact that the inception of the century is forced through sacrifice, torment and death of the innocent. The legitimization of the most violent means is done under the promise of a new man with a steadfast indifference to costs. Badiou equates it with voluntarist subjection of history to violent politics. Hannah Arendt and many other great philosophers emphasized on the impossibility of moral judgment of such catastrophes brought-upon human beings. As mentioned in the previous section, philosophically speaking, there cannot be a respite in just making a counter-claim that such violence has no moral justification. Critics opine that it is larger than morality. The persistence of evil throughout the twentieth century raises our suspicion over the legitimacy of social contract. We might have contracted for a civil society for the purpose of self-preservation. But we did not anticipate the variegated forms of experience we come up with in one life span. Meaning, we have failed to grasp the *moral* foundations of mutual co-existence. There is immense failure in reconciling the plurality of life-forms. Arendt refers to the *banality of evil*, the phenomenon of evil deeds, committed on a gigantic scale, which could not be traced to any particular instance of wickedness, pathology

³¹See his book *The Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007) [English Version].

and depicts extraordinary shallowness.³² These evil facts indicate that we have not evolved as moral beings and have also failed in constructing broad morals for us [Arendt categorizes it as ‘inability to think’]. Arendt rightly says that evil acts are not only acts of omission but also sins of commission. Her reflection of the Holocaust compels us to think that these are indicative of moral failure at the individual level. Her analysis of evil is incomplete. She focuses on a bigger crime [the Holocaust] – which made Kateb and Strong almost negate the western metaphysical canon of transcendental principles.³³ Alternative to this is our concern about how we design our processes of everyday life. We are not undermining Arendt’s understanding of radical evil, but evil has to be understood in a different way in order to critically evaluate our moral experiences. What would be Arendt’s theses on evil supposing that she lived through the cold war to the post-cold war times? On the one hand, we have atrocities committed that are [we can be metaphorical to twentieth century as century of ‘atrocities’³⁴] of very gruesome kind [overtly noticeable], and on the other hand, evil that has become the culture of everyday life. The terms that shaped the world are ‘us and them’, ‘we and they’, and ‘friend and foe’.³⁵ A different understanding of evil is required here. We call it as *elusive forms of evil* as pointed out by Zygmunt Bauman and Leonidis Donkis in their book *Moral Blindness*³⁶, though we take cues from Hannah Arendt. We will not be able to explain these elusive forms unless and until the scope of Arendt’s notion is expanded. Expressing an irony, Bauman

³²This point is elaborately dealt by Hannah Arendt in lecture “Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture”, *Social Research* 38.3(Autumn 1971): 417-446, 417.

³³See Tracy Strong, *Politics Without Vision: Thinking Without Banister in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Yale University Press, 2011), 325-330.

³⁴Claudia Card, *The Atrocity Paradigm: A Theory of Evil* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

³⁵Though this point is pointedly explained by Carl Schmitt in his *Conception of the Political*, it is even harshly dealt by Slavoj Žižek in his book *Living in the End Times* (London: Verso, 2011).

³⁶*Moral Blindness: The Loss of Sensitivity in Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013). Backleaf and chapter 1, 1-16.

brings to light the possible hell-like situation one can create for the other refusing her individuality, dignity and sensitive language [emphasis added].³⁷ Bauman's concern is very well reflected in Peter Unger's more touching work *Living High & Letting Die*³⁸, where he explains apathy of the most part of the world toward suffering. Our claims to innocence of these aspects is truly an illusion and indicates moral apathy or indifference.

There are two opinions here. People who argue that the entire century is fraught with such 'inhumanity' deny any moral light on it. Contrarily, the possibility of a moral interpretation of the entire period is retained despite claims to the futility of doing so. How does one understand the century? The *belle epoque* has been transformed into a tragedy. It cannot be morally judged because "communism [as is opined] was barbarous because its passion for the real placed it beyond good and evil, creating a sharp opposition between politics and morality." Though it is a tautology, it is treated as politics turned into tragedy, the tragedy of unfailing manipulation of human material. The irony is to believe that the century was lived as epic and heroic. It was followed by another irony - translating/representing the century as pervert. People like Raymond Geuss treats the story of the twentieth century as the story of the failure of Marxism.³⁹ This is a significant observation though Geuss's focus is a dent on moral philosophy. Here, he opines that there

³⁷See Zygmunt Bauman and Leonidas Donskis, *Moral Blindness*, 8. The one mentioned above is the one who is seemingly a kind neighbor, a family man, and fine human being. They have a serious point to convey. The evildoer is fabricated with moral caricature [always reflective of the abstract morality], but displays, overtly or covertly, her sheer sense of cruel thinking about the other. Here it is apt to mention another view of theirs: "Evil is not confined to war or totalitarian ideologies. Today it more frequently reveals itself in failing to react to someone else's suffering, in refusing to understand others, in insensitivity and in eye turned away from a silent ethical gaze".

³⁸Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

³⁹For him, Marxism presented the only genuine and potentially viable attempt at reconstituting some notion of objective moral authority ... while attributing to production an absolute social and political authority...but it failed. See Raymond Geuss, *A World Without Why* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 46.

is a sense in talking about the failure of Marxism. The latter is in the true sense universal - in the sense of *emancipation of all the suffering and the oppressed*. Even more bigger concern is, ‘what can we say about the interlacing of the totalitarian century, the soviet century and the liberal century.?’

1.2 Politics Without *Banister*

Tracy Strong in his book *Politics Without Vision* makes a thoughtful reflection on the futility of ‘transcendental’ paradigms of the canon in western political theory. He examines critiques’ claim that the past century is morally the worst century in human history⁴⁰. The Twentieth century is marked by several utopian claims that have utterly proved destructive, violent and morally decadent. The phrase *without a banister* means the radical step forward avoiding the transcendental concerns, and potentially emerging as a ‘new’ foundation of civil and political society. To sustain this alternative approach, we need to re-visit our understanding of human nature – both in terms of thinking and judging. Strong rightly feels the need for ‘reflective thinking’ and ‘careful judgment’ *vis-a-vis* metaphysical doctrines. Twentieth century politics calls for such an approach, *i.e.*, broadening of the horizons of ‘thinking’, which involve our comprehension (in theory and practice) of human nature, rationality (constitutive as well as acquisitive), and the temperament toward the *Other*. Besides, it also measures our judgment of utopian ideals. Strong walks us through western (political) philosophy, persuading us to contemplate whether, we, in *contemporary times* (political theory in particular) can avoid and also look beyond the canon. Strong seems to indicate that the

⁴⁰Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, x

canon failed substantially in its promise of a better tomorrow (human condition) (a reference is made to James Joyce's notion of the 'past as nightmarish' in nature)⁴¹

Michael Marder makes an interesting point here: The political reality of the twenty-first century "is a comet tale of these ancient blazes ... that seemed to be older than time itself."⁴² He refers to two important aspects here; the exhaustion of metaphysics and the smothering of all the revolutionary desires amid catastrophic events. The priority is the 'revealing aspect' (experience) of the world we live in, not something *beyond* the reach of human beings. The question, "What is the quality of the world that is hidden from us?"⁴³, has to be addressed from this perspective. But one must ask another question here: "Does the absence of a banister result in replacing awe and wonder with naive common sense?" Understanding Nietzsche (considering his question, "How the true world finally became a parable?")⁴⁴, it would be interesting to see how humans themselves resolve their disoriented world for which they are responsible. Responding to the question, "What sort of individual is able to live a critical life?" Defenders of Kant [his third Critique] and Arendt describe the possibility of such a life where the individual and the collective are indistinguishable. Another question that would emerge here is, "how does this new scheme [radical Kantianism] bridge the gap between philosophical thinking and the conduct of life?" It is very much evident that in order to answer this we must value and credit the place experience occupies in our lives. Virtue theorists emphasize the significance of 'lived-experiences' [context in precise] in response to Kantian and Neo-Kantianism in political theory. If reason guides us in the rectification of past errors, it cannot be devoid of experi-

⁴¹Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 11.

⁴²See Michael Marder, "After the Fire: The Politics of Ashes," *Telos* 161(Winter 2012): 163-180.

⁴³Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 13.

⁴⁴Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 55.

ence. Politics without banister ought to address this question: “On what grounds do one’s political judgments rest if thinking is to be without a banister?”⁴⁵ It appears as if politics is safe with anti-foundationalism [*antimetaphysical*]; hence, human condition can take control of the possible evils. Strong is not in line with critics who treat *thinking without banister* as without *metaphysical foundations*. *Without banister* is to think without reference to either ‘unquestioned categories’ or unquestionable ones. These are the qualities intrinsic to metaphysical considerations - a *fixation* with a suspicion of contingency. Strong quotes Arendt from *Thinking and Moral Considerations*, “thinking is the habit of examining and reflecting on whatever happens to come to pass, regardless of specific content and quite independent of results.”⁴⁶ Rightly, individuals in any political society should take note of the sense of thinking in this manner. Presence of transcendental categories hinders one’s freedom of thinking. Nothing to rely on at any point of time it becomes a moral responsibility of individuals toward their actions. However, this would not truly resolve the problems of intergenerational justice. The backdrop of Arendt’s idea may be Kantian influence on her and the prominent work *Eichman in Jerusalem*. What would Eichmann do even when his moral conscience had prevailed over loyalty to follow the orders? This remains enigmatic. The choice of people to commit violence on others is not always because of a lack of moral conscience or thinking. The question she asked, “Is our ability to judge, to tell right from wrong ... dependent upon our faculty of thought?”, is itself an abstract question. May be faculty of thought is just a necessary condition. We can fall in line with Arendt who opined that inability to think, judge right or wrong comes from thoughtlessness also. However, we cannot overlook the credit she gave to Kant on the act of thinking. Arendt very aptly opines that thinking

⁴⁵Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 57.

⁴⁶Hannah Arendt, “Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture,” *Social Research* 38.3(Autumn 1971): 417-446, 418.

involves stepping into the realm of extra-appearances. Either thinking causes us to infer idealistic terms or it enables us to speculate the alterity of the given. It is true if we merely confine ourselves to *beyond-appearances*, to avoid serious like ‘thinking as resultless enterprise’⁴⁷

Let us show our confidence in the combined acts of thinking and judging. The question is how does one conceive a political community that avoids, say, exclusion (Jean Luc-Nancy is skeptical about the same). Nietzsche’s special sympathies for music and Greek tragedy, they being central to communion with others are significant in understanding the human condition (transforming the soul of music into a body politic).⁴⁸ To understand a body politic one has to set the foundations for commonality. Commonality is to be staged in terms of ‘radical’ diversity - especially with respect to contemporary modern societies. Weber is right in asserting that modern societies face far higher challenges than earlier periods.⁴⁹ These challenges are different because of the nature of the modern world - disenchanted, de-magnified, scientific, rationalized and projected as value-free (all these being mere projections). Weber’s argument would mean that the political dimension is lost amid these developments.⁵⁰ This transformation not only occurred in the political realm but also brought changes essentially in human character. One can assert that implications of these changes compelled thinkers like Strong and Kateb to denounce twentieth century as progressive. Modern politics, Strong states, has given rise to the problem of political theology - however, it is doubtful to claim that the western individual live in a fully rationalized world.

⁴⁷ “Thinking and Moral Considerations,” 418, 424, 426. Also see Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 334.

⁴⁸ Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 83.

⁴⁹ Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 94.

⁵⁰ Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 144.

The immediate task here is the recovery of the political. Is it regained by recovering the magical that Weber talks about? The recovery of the political by reclaiming the 'magical', nevertheless, may not solve the problem of political theology. The reason is that we have lost the ability to draw desired distinctions between these two realms. Then, how do we understand the realm of human existence in terms of a modern political society? Strong states Sigmund Freud's question, "Can one attain more than hypocrisy and inhibition in life?"⁵¹ It looks at the Kantian question in a renewed fashion, "What it is to be human?" Freud's question compels us to reflect back upon Weber's reference to the rationalization of the modern world. Freud throws it open by stating that human beings are naturally prone to good and evil. Besides, these irreconcilable psychic divisions further affect social morality. In Freud one can find mixed reactions - on the one hand, he talks about the importance of morality, and on the other, he is pessimistic about the ability of human beings to cope up with the life of *the* community.⁵² It means that we can no longer find a moral justification for determining the direction society ought to move toward. The importance of psychoanalysis is that it elevates all human beings, attempts to grasp the nature *outside of oneself*.⁵³ The challenge here is to overcome the 'unfinished I' and exhibit the ability to be better than one is created. This challenge can be taken either in social or political realms.

Further, Strong focuses on the necessity of philosophical enterprise to grasp the idea of 'politics without vision'. He mentions Lenin's question, "What is the source and nature of authority for those for whom there is no transcendental standard to rely on?"⁵⁴ In this question, one can trace Lenin's seriousness to

⁵¹Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 156.

⁵²Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 156, 174, 177.

⁵³Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 180.

⁵⁴Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 189.

reclaim the significance of politics in social life with an emphasis on the truth of the concrete - the practical realm of human affairs. Lenin was apparently talking about social reality. It further enhances the moral significance as he assumes that there are no non-historical timeless truths. History may have to pass through one truth to another truth consequent of human actions. Nevertheless, Lenin's idea of transfiguration of being-in-the-world itself possesses the scare of becoming an absolute truth.

Subsequently, Strong shifts his attention to Carl Schmitt's notion of the political that represents truly the human characteristic.⁵⁵ Schmitt's identification of the neutralizing mechanism of the (liberal) political sphere compels us to question the possibility of a neutral space among human beings. The irony is it lacks an ontology. Like Weber and others, Schmitt too was concerned about the recovery of the magical parallel to the recovery of the political. Both of them go hand in hand. How do we address a similar concern in the contemporary times? The interesting aspect of Schmitt's account is that the recovery of the political is also re-figuring the human that has disappeared due to the influence of liberal democracy [characteristic of both rationalization and secularization]. His version of political theology, nonetheless, challenges modern liberal politics.

What is the effective way of recovering the political? Strong mentions that the concern for the political implies that philosophy should serve practical life. It needs an understanding of the relation of knowledge to human existence. Strong elaborately discusses the sensitivity of Heidegger's philosophy on the one hand, and his political inclinations on the other.⁵⁶ Though Heidegger underscores the

⁵⁵Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 227.

⁵⁶Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 282.

realization of the 'Being', he resists a certain standard of human collectivity. If one understands his reference to *poiesis* [making] keenly, political community is never a completed project. In fact it cannot be in the true sense. The question, "How do we understand the world we live in?" remains an open question. But, how do we rescue humanity from *the loss of Being*, resulting from technologization of the world? What music is for Nietzsche, art is for Heidegger. His understanding of the political is derived from his understanding of art. In his understanding of art, there is an assumption of integration of individuals through the shared meanings of life - a progress achieved only through constant struggle [The essence of the political is conflict unto death].⁵⁷

Finally, Strong discusses the Heideggerian assumption that the *polis* is the encounter of beings [self and other] - that can also be seen in Hannah Arendt's reference to a space where individuals make sense only in the presence of each other. Arendt is concerned about grasping human affairs rather than worrying about philosophers' fantasy for the absolute and the ultimate. Her concern for plurality makes her ideas more contemporary, where one departs from being concerned about *beyondism*. For her, any reference to the absolute is violating the human category. The implication of it is the inevitability of moral demands in the absence of an over-arching system of reasons for making a choice. Arendt asks a very fundamental question, "How do humans relate to each other?"⁵⁸ Her approach is certainly makes an epistemological rupture - especially in the contemporary world, where human beings face the responsibility of shaping a world free from categorical transcendental principles. The importance given to 'thinking' without a banister is a big challenge, wherein there is prominence given to

⁵⁷Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 305, 318.

⁵⁸Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 333.

s specific context [a historical epoch]. Arendt is positive about the power of reflective thinking that enables us to understand the human condition free of all prejudices.⁵⁹ Here, one realizes that 'I and you are both human' - resembling the Kantian principle of reciprocity through rationality. Thinking and judging go hand-in-hand [Resonating Kant and Heidegger]. Both are not only human but also belong to the same world.

All the philosophers that Strong thoroughly discussed in the book express some sort of suspicion of and lament over the human condition in the modern context, especially, twentieth century. This suspicion is suspicion of the philosophical doctrines themselves. Strong speaks through these philosophers about ways that human beings are related to each other, ways that shape their social-political life *vis-a-vis* aesthetics, and ways that morality guides us. It is true that the absence of a banister throws open many opportunities in terms of what Arendt refers to as 'thinking' - with only a positive attitude toward renewed power of judgment. Freeing ourselves from age-old banisters is not freeing us from the category of the 'universal'. But whether it enables us to view the past afresh, unburdened by canonical traditions, is doubtful. Nevertheless, it gives rise to expansive horizons in experiencing the vastness of human diversity - for this; we need to go beyond Arendt's concern for plurality. Strong rightly mentions Jean Luc-Nancy's concern here, "How to exclude without fixing, and how to fix without excluding?"⁶⁰ It truly needs an acknowledgment of the 'other' that is in some sense only possible in the political realm. In this sense, one understands the fragility of human life.

⁵⁹Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 348.

⁶⁰Strong, *Politics Without Vision*, 386.

Conclusion

It has been observed in the last two sections: [1] how the century is subjected to a kind of *over-statement* of extreme moral downfall and [2] in the process, the manner in which metaphysical absolutism too faces the similar fate of socialism/communism. The supposition is that all *grand narratives* have gone on a vacation. Under the guise of the western metaphysics, for the critics, a great distortion of the political had taken place. It has further distorted the values of justice and equality. It is obvious from the facts of violence that it has attained the status of ‘no-stopping’. It has really shocked the intellectual world as to its possibility. Yet, the question that critics cannot answer is the mode of transformation that societies are to experience. Societies are no static entities. The insufficiency or the unbearability of the *present* calls for a movement from the given social condition. The denouncement of a historical epoch has reached its excess, as if the world got stuck there, conveniently shouldering the blame on the grand narratives. As mentioned in the chapter, and also will be maintained in the thesis, there is no moral justification for the staging of the idea of communism on a such violent scale. After all the question, ‘how does one make the world just’ is fundamentally enigmatic because it is always perceived and understood through an ideological lens. May be the critics are right in their several denouncements, looking for alternative models of the world - desiring a separation between philosophy and politics. In other words, from a kind of normative politics to political realism - *no banister no ideology*. That it guarantees *sanity* itself is greatly a blind supposition. The direct consequence of it is fixing the final nail to the coffin of revolution. Violence drawn from the influence of the grand narratives is only one side of the story. A gauging of a period in terms of standard parameters makes it

more myopic. More important is the messiness of everyday life - where people are subject to injustice, irrespective of the presence of a metaphysic, and that injustice transmitting through generations after generations. The banality of evil that Arendt talks about is a permanent possibility with human societies. The question, 'how do humans relate to humans?' is a question to be interrogated all the time. For this question cannot be settled with a convincing answer, settled within the bounds of a generation. Nevertheless, it raises the concerns of individuals being fair to each other in the social realm and the political realm resonating a kind of radical equality that individuals at times may not imagine in the social realm.

Chapter 2

Failure of Utopia or *the lost causes!!*

But once the hopes in that class's redemptive project were utterly dashed, as the New Left faded into history and orthodox Marxist movements lost their grip on power in parts of the world where they once ruled, the question of why the proletariat failed seemed less urgent

Martin Jay

2.1 The Collapse: *A Lost Cause!*

Communism is nowhere but everywhere. A lot has been written and can be written on why they failed in their great promise of a classless society. Marx's formula of revolutionary transformation is pushed into the realm of a painful historical past. Those whose hopes are dashed by the socialist/communist experi-

ment itself have no hesitation in addressing it as: Once upon a time called Marxism/Communism. The collapse has been addressed variedly and exhaustively within the western world. On the contrary, the event itself has a profound impact on all those societies where Marxist philosophy has manifested as a motivational transformatory-emancipatory rhetoric. The need is to address the *fall* [which is addressed most of the times keeping in mind the former Soviet Union and the Eastern Europe] outside the western world - in those decolonized societies that embarked on the path of social progress. This transition does not tantamount to transformation. The *rhetoric of failure* is more compelling than the fact itself. What does the failure symbolize? Roland Boer says that failure means “that they came to an end, and also they are not eternal.”¹ Marxist Critics are very much vocal about the resemblance of the failure as *the actuality of communism*. LCD hates the idea of equality for two reasons. First, due to aversion to the principle of equality. It takes us back to the very fundamental element of the formation of the western world [Europe and North America]. Second, they also suspect and look down upon the very idea of revolutionary transformation.

In the preceding chapter, it has seen how the previous century is labeled as the most violent century. They object to the west's absolutist notions of knowledge of the world order. Any metaphysics of the social combines both totality and absoluteness. The result of this totalitarian approach [the socialist experiment being one of those totalitarian systems] is violent forms of the implementation of the idea. Experiences of the unbearable violence makes the idea of the revival of communism meaningless. Violence is the outcome of their inability to estimate what is possible of a transformatory politics. Hence, communism must

¹Roland Boer, “The Failure of Communism: A ‘Fall’ Narrative” <https://philosophersforchange.org/2014/20/28/the-failure-of-communism-a-fall-narrative>

be completely severed from the question of power. A most pertinent question is ‘what is left after communism?’ Antonio Negri asks a very important question here: “Can we be a Communist without Marx?”² One way of interpreting the collapse rhetoric is that societies that failed communism have shown their utter disinclination to justice and equality. Upon extrapolation, their reluctance to a just world complements to capitalism’s aversion to a just world in the true sense.

The triumphalist paradigm is successful in disqualifying any kind of futuristic imagination. An important question emerges here: If communism calls for the overthrow of oppressive state of affairs [**the present**], can this abolition, this destruction, or this suppression of the present state of affairs also bring about the real movement of recomposition? Transition, transformation or recomposition are heavy loaded terms. These terms are understood as deterministic within the boundaries of revolutionary Marxism: Capitalism will take over feudalism, and will establish a dynamic means of production, which when outgrown, causes self-destruction and subsequently leads to the final stage of the historical formation. It reflects *over-determinism* of the transformation thesis. It is over-deterministic in the sense that it underestimate the previous social forms, and their modes and relations of production [*this is reflected in Marx’s Eighteenth Brumaire that avoids any spectrality of past revolutions that confronts the indefinite prodigousness of their own goals.*³] This over-deterministic approach had been outrun by social-cultural stagnation in much of the world in the twentieth century. The failure also symbolically means the mistaken grounding of the idea of emancipatory

²See his paper, “Is it Possible to be a Communist Without Marx?” *Critical Horizons* 12.1(2010): 5-14.

³See Katja Diefenbach, “Im/potential Politics: Political Ontologies of Negri, Agamben and Deleuze” *eipcp: Institut Européen Pour Des Politiques Culturelles en Devenir*1(2011). <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0811/diefenbach/en>

politics.⁴ This is a big allegation. It also stereotypically qualifies Marx's philosophy as merely economic determinism. If we ill-treat Marx's political stance, we must also be undermining his idea of emancipation itself. This would be grossly unreasonable. Wolfdietrich Schmied-Kowarzik states that Marx's philosophy is committed to the goal of human emancipation linking political emancipation and economic development - return of man to himself.⁵ Revolutionary change and social emancipation aim at liberating the oppressed from the existing social evils. It is obvious that revolutionary struggle may not be able to encompass all social and cultural evils. However, the liberation of individuals from a particular evil may lead to evaporation of a few others. In this sense, what is the implication of Marxist revolutionary struggle? Politics and its relation to philosophy will explain whether the change is transformatory or not. Revolution and its impact on the everyday life, an assessment of it is always important. As argued elsewhere in the thesis, the economic backwardness has its roots in the *socially* oppressed conditions of the people. We have to see whether understanding of political existence is adequately thought over.

Marx's emancipatory politics does not contain an impoverished political ontology.⁶

This allegation seems to be emerging, George Lukacs clarifies, from the *supposed*

⁴Diefenbach discusses Marx's idea from *The Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* as negation of politics, as anthro-ontological automatism, reflecting the complete loss of man and a re-winning of man again.

⁵See his article, "Karl Marx as a Philosopher of Human Emancipation," in *Poznan Studies* ed. by Allan Smith, 60(1985): 355-368. Online version: <http://www.thur.de/philo/emanc.htm>. "Every emancipation is a restoration of the human world and of human relationships to man himself. Human emancipation will only be complete when the real individual man has absorbed into himself the abstract citizen; when as an individual man, in his everyday life, in his work, and in his relationships, he has become a species-being; and when he has recognized and organized his own powers [forces propres] as social powers so that he no longer separated his social power from himself as political power." *Marx/Engels*

⁶This follows from the Marxist negation of metaphysics, and thus ontology, both, in idealist and materialist forms. See Timothy S. Murphy, "The Ontological Turn in the Marxism of Georg Lukacs and Antonio Negri," *Strategies* 16.2(2003): 163-184. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1040213032000151584>

ontological hierarchy of base-superstructure relationship placing the economic factor over all other factors. He defended Marx stating that the ontological priority of the economic does not mean their heirarchical relationship.⁷ Economic determination is not brute heirarchy of economics over other social values. Here lies an interesting aspect. Lukacs was confident that Marx's rejection of an ontological heirarchy explains how economic value is linked to other social values. That the economic processes produce or create the social realm is very much central to Marxism. He provides a very interesting explanation here. The very term social makes a preliminary demarcation [from the economic], of abstract and declarative nature.⁸ This preliminary demarcation does not create the ontological divide. The connection is explained by the material foundations of sociality and the reproduction of human life by transforming natural objects into social values. The misunderstanding seems to be arising from supposing that the economic reality 'permanently' produces and reproduces social reality . It may imply that a non-economic value does not produce a social being [in the Marxian sense], but need not be the case as such - where the social being is a *given* fact. Our concern here is the manner in which a specific mode of production results in the subsequent relations and social condition at large. Marx is confident about the changes non-economic value brings with the change in the mode of production.⁹ This point needs a more deeper discussion. Societies [like India] that are characterized by profoundly complex [*historically driven*] social strata defy such clear-cut schematic delineation of a causal mechanism. This defiance gives a sense of the movement from the heterogeniety of these values to the level of opposition. There is a so-

⁷"the social existence of the superstructure always ontologically presupposes that of the process of economic reproduction ... ontologically inconceivable without the economy." See his book *Marx's Basic Ontological Principles* td. by David Fernbach (London: Merlin Press, 1978), 151.

⁸George Lukacs, *Ontology and the Social Being 2, Marx*, 152.

⁹George Lukacs, *Marx's Basic Ontological Principles*, 154.

ciality that is always *already given* [social value] and another sociality, which Lukacs refers to, created by the economic value on an extended scale.

Inequality is reflected in the kind of relationship between economic and other values. Lukacs states that the latter is not an orderless diversity of transient values. The relationality or the unity depends on the understanding of individual(s). We have seen that in the case of Marx, an individual is seen in her/his individualistic existence *via* the *social being*.¹⁰ Self-realization is possible with individuals transcendence of private property, as *human-self-estrangement*. Though Marx is not explicit about psychoanalysis, his understanding of human nature reflects the point. It is seen in our understanding that human beings are not only understood in terms of economic and anthropology but also psychologically. Hence, individual consciousness is the outcome of a social life. Is human dignity/esteem/abode self-evident in the conception of species being? Marx links it to the emergence of communism equating it with humanism and ultimately with naturalism - the characteristic feature of it is settling the dispute between [*man and nature*] “man and man, the true resolution of strife between existence and essence ... between individual and species.”¹¹ The return of the human to one’s own self restores the person to a natural state. Isn’t there an echo of Rousseau in Marx in being romantic about human beings’ natural condition?¹² We cannot deny it. Achieving the natural state means humans are freed from all forms of alienation/estrangement

¹⁰Marx explains the relationship between man to man, and man to woman while addressing man as a species being. Though Marx reduces everything to a natural given relationship we need not agree on everything that he had stated [for instance, “ **man’s need has become a human need; the extent to which ... the other person as a person has become for him a need ...**” See Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, td. by Martin Milligan, (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1988), 102. Also mentioned in Erich Fromm, 1961 <https://www.marxists.org/archive/fromm/works/1961/man/cho4.html>.].

¹¹Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 102,3.

¹²This point is addressed in a more elaborate manner in the next chapter while discussing about Rousseau and Rawls. In all these philosopher, the ‘natural’ state is treated as sacro-sanct, having had expressed the desire to have its mirror reflection in the social condition.

[*human-to-human*] - religion, family, state etc. The return to the social mode of existence can be interpreted as a return to the community. How is social existence understood in a community? The social mode of existence contains in it 'natural existence as human existence' and *vice versa*. An emancipated life-world values the relationship of human-*qua*-human - in a non exploitative sense. The social character is the determining force of all the movement - where, the society [*collective conscience*] produces the humans, not the other way. The reason, to infer from Marx himself, is even to carry on the individual activity the raw material is provided by the society only.¹³ If individual is a social [*species*] being, then the relation of individuals to each other within the social framework becomes important. What about the natural differences that Rousseau talks about in his *Discourse on Inequality*? Species being brings forth the humaneness to humanity equally. Only a unified conception can apply equally to all. Human relationships are also explained by the appropriation of the world - the operation of the principle of golden rule. The challenge here is to see how these ideas fared in the twentieth century's socialist experiment. The human condition turned greatly complex since the days of Marx. Marx(ist)'s philosophy is much about telling the ill-fate of the society driven by those private desires of possession and appropriation. These two had created several contradictions within the bounds of capitalist production conditions. These contradictions cannot be justified while asserting that human nature is fundamentally selfish. The fact of human nature will not forever seal the fate of the human condition. The skewed story told by liberals/liberalism is that human nature is selfish and partial, and repulsive to socialist and egalitarian principles is only. The fundamental supposition of liberalism is that an individual holds a high moral value than the society leading to methodological

¹³"my own existence is social activity, and therefore that which I make of myself, I make of myself for society and with the consciousness of myself as a social being." Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, 105.

individualism. Liberal-capitalism lacks in its discourse any scope of revolutionary transformation. Liberalism lacks any idea of radical political transformation prior to socialism coming into the scene. Liberalism's aversion to revolution has to be seen in two phases - before and after the fall. Lenin viewed that the farther the revolution progressed the more was liberalism afraid of the "victory of the people."¹⁴ Skhlar also has an interesting point here: Other than securing *political* conditions for enjoying personal freedoms, liberalism is not a doctrine of principles underlined to make choices and seek doctrines for conducting of lives. She seems to understand liberalism from the absence of cruelty and torture by state that ensures personal freedoms. This has nothing in it about the collective life of individuals - life where the social realm grows uncontrollably complex and weird. The notion of cruelty that she explained in the essay is about avoiding physical and emotional pain upon a weaker person or group. It should be noted that the fear of cruelty that she pinpoints lies even in contemporary societies today. Besides, not just institutional power but the civil society itself has acquired power and ammunition to perpetrate the acts of cruelty.¹⁵ Fear comes from our fellow citizens through the failures of political guarantees. It is indeed frightful to fear a society of fearful people - but of a different kind, where social cohesion is completely absent. Lack of a doctrine about the social conduct of personal lives publicly reflects the poverty of liberal thought.

Jan-Werner Muller makes a very interesting argument here. For him, Shklar's liberalism of fear is "primarily avoiding the worst, rather than achieving the best."

¹⁴V. I. Lenin, "What Our Liberal Bourgeois Want, and What They Fear," See <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1905/sept/14.html>

¹⁵"The fear we fear is of pain inflicted by others to kill and maim us ... when we think politically, we are afraid not only for ourselves but for our fellow citizens as well." See Judith Skhlar, "Liberalism of Fear," in *Liberalism and the Moral Life*, ed. by Nancy L. Rosenblum, (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989), 21-24, 29, 37.

Muller interprets Shklar's fear thesis as a shift in her focus from being critical about cold-war liberalism to mere survivalist political theory. Shklar's 'Liberalism of fear' can be seen as parallel to Arendt's 'thinking without banister'. Both of them wrote their masterpieces after the experiences of evil [*Holocaust & Gulags*]. These two ideas were wary of dreadful violence [*totalitarian*] and had disbelief for grand "ambitious programmes". Muller seems to be stating that Shklar's liberalism of fear is reflected in the writings of Berlin, Popper and Aron. However, the latter did not come up with an exclusive political theory, except being anti-Marxists. Through out the period before the fall liberal philosophers were stuck to the ideas of an open and a tolerant society. These arguments can be seen even in the post-communist liberals - importance of value pluralism or wide variety of values.¹⁶ The crisis of liberalism lies here. It is very late even to assert that liberalism stood and still stands committed to openness and tolerance. After all, what is a tolerant and an open society? Undoubtedly, the demand of liberals for realizing personal freedoms through minimal state intervention is genuine. These personal freedoms also take the shape of social freedoms in the process of forming social relations. The unconvincing point here is the taken-for-granted that *wider pluralism* results in an open and tolerant society. Rather, it should only be taken as necessary and desirable. Most of the liberal philosophers do not show interest in the issue of conflict and interesection of values that could lead to perverse clash. Victims of this violence are doubly victimized; from the state and from fellow citizens. Muller raises an important concern asking "how societies without the appropriate traditions of moderation and compromise were to be liberalized."¹⁷

Wendy Brown makes an interesting remark in the context of neoliberalism: "In

¹⁶See Jan-Werner Muller, "Fear and Freedom: On 'Cold-War Liberalism,'" *European Journal of Political Theory* 7.1(2008): 45-64 [Special Issue: *Twentieth-Century European Liberalism*]

¹⁷"Fear and Freedom," 45.

ordinary parlance, neo-liberalism refers to the repudiation of Keynesian welfare state economics and the ascendance of the Chicago School of political economy — von Hayek, Friedman, et al. In popular usage, neo-liberalism is equated with a radically free market: maximized competition and free trade achieved through economic de-regulation, elimination of tariffs, and a range of monetary and social policies favorable to business and indifferent toward poverty, social deracination, cultural decimation, long term resource depletion and environmental destruction.”¹⁸ All revolutionary and emancipatory paradigms believe in the *will* of the people. The will to change is not literally measured in terms of the actuality of the event. Emphasizing on the pathology of neo-liberal rationality, she makes an apt remark that liberalism does not focus on the human capacities for “ethical and political freedom.” Rather, it eliminates the possibility and realization of true realm of freedom - work as the expression of life.¹⁹ It is important to see how this bigger ideal influences our everyday life - especially, the plight of the oppressed. For David Estlund, if every event is estimated by its causal antecedents indicating the futility of doing anything extra, “then the issue about justice and human nature isn’t of any further interest.”²⁰ This view can differentiate a radical

¹⁸See her article, “Neo-Liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy,” *Theory & Event* 7.1(2003) *Project Muse*, doi:10.1353/tae.2003.0020.

¹⁹See her book *Understanding the Demos: Neoliberalism’s Stealth Revolution* (Brooklyn: Zone Books, 2015), 43. “The realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; 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.” Karl Marx, *Economic Manuscripts: Capital*, Vol 3, Chapter 48.

²⁰“Human Nature and the Limits of Political Philosophy,” *Philosophy & Public Affairs*,

revolutionary and emancipatory appeal from all other approaches that operate within the bounds of *standard-normal* human capacities. Estlund opines that people can do other than what they actually do. This needs to be interpreted in terms of a concerted forceful collective act. The condition of capitalist production will itself ignite the spirit of such revolutionary changes, even while speaking in the non-Marxian sense.

Emancipation is the realization of freedom and morality. The difference between capitalist freedom and socialist freedom is by now clear to many. This difference itself sets the stage for human emancipation. What is sought in human emancipation? With specific reference to Marxism, human emancipation is liberation from those practices of human beings that causes alienation of social relations - restoration of the human world by way of a return of the human to oneself - "to the world of human beings, to the conditions of people themselves."²¹ Individuals are brought back to the proper consciousness of social practice. The elevation of economic conditions is elevation of the human social condition. This seems a more restricted way of understanding human emancipation. One emancipation leads to the other is only one side of the story. It has a fragmented sense to it either. Cultural and social freedoms matter more when we talk about people, communes and their ways of life. The return to the human imparts in us empathy for others. This automatically transforms the nature of production function itself. The *return* also symbolically means that there will not be exploitation [rather ought not, though it sounds very idealistic] - as sensed by Bertold Brecht.²² The unconvinc-

39.3(2011): 207-237, 210.

²¹Woldietirch Schmied-Kowarzik, "Karl Marx as a Philosopher of Human Emancipation," www.thur.de/philo/emanc.html

²²In his poem, "In Praise of Communism," Brecht makes a poetic expression of the very idea of communist transformatory politics in this manner:

...
The End of Madness.

ing questionable aspect of Marx and Marxisms is the creation of a vanguard of revolution - the proletariat is the carrier of the revolutionary spirit. The burden is laid in the hands of the oppressed who gain consciousness of self-emancipation and the humanity at large. The irony is that we cannot very skeptical on the strength of collective consciousness of the revolutionary class. Nevertheless, there are other serious concerns some of which are already addressed by many scholars. The fall narrative itself is an incomplete story with a defective critique of the Utopian project. Many things that Marx proposed, have been embraced by his followers in several forms - the beginning of world history after the end of prehistory, the first true total revolution, no natural poverty, no longer a class of serfs, no intrasocial oppression, social nothingness, emancipation, the end of every class struggle, and the liberation from the materialism of class interests as such²³ - but have not happened the way it was expected to happen.

Critics may advance the argument of fundamental flaw in both the communist philosophy and the experiment. The present thesis has a *differing* view here. The very fact that they have not occurred partly/totally indicates the *not-yetness* - they may/will take place, if not today, but *tomorrow*. Marxism is defended not only because it believes in the just and egalitarian management of capital, but also more because it is the force for some kind of levelling process of the uneven world. Though the *given* imperfections are not perfected, yet we will have a clear understanding of how much inequality is permissible. We have to keep in mind that imperfection and perfection are attributes and are ideologically

It is not the riddle
But the Solution
It is the Simple thing
So hard to achieve.

²³Ernst Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia* [Crossing Aesthetics Series] (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 240.

driven. Whether humans can be perfected or not is a matter of debate. First and foremost we require suitable social conditions or else these conditions may be forced to occur [*revolution*]. The creation of a just society requires the commitment of its members toward that value. Hence, it is important to understand what is expected of us and what is possible of us. The latter can be seen as a constraining factor as it takes us back to the human nature and its fixated conditions. In the current times, we need to have a more holistic approach to the understanding of an individual, society and state. It is one thing to assert that every individual is requisite of dignity and a place in the world - not to be treated as an excrement. All the three above are in a unison, not just carrying out [material] production and reproduction of human life, more importantly the production and putting to strife - the most dangerous of all *identity*. This is very well addressed by Žižek and many others. Post-communism is not a condition of *jouissance* but the beginning of an heinous sorrowful religious, ethnic, genocidal violence happening on a wider scale. Huntington's and Fukuyama's writings may not have intellectual rigor - but the world has been the way they are described in their writings. The fall narrative very complacently shoulders the guilt [by focusing on certain events that affected only Europe] on the totalitarian programs. Contrarily, owing to the escalation of violence on a gigantic scale after 1989, we can estimate how the world itself in shaped in the name of the superior virtue of capitalism. In other words, *LCD* has generated dangerously harmful complex orders of domination.²⁴ These complex orders are indicative of the moral decay of the collective life, further, creating

²⁴Wendy Brown mentions Rousseau besides many in explaining this point. "For Rousseau, humans are the only creatures capable of generating complex orders of domination from their needs, of enslaving themselves by giving free rein to *homo oeconomicus*, by letting it overtake their personalities, social relations, and politics: this is the essence of Rousseau's critique of emerging liberalism. Thus, for Rousseau the deliberate and fierce cultivation of *homo politicus* (and it is most definitely not *homo juridicus* or *homo legalis*) is the only antidote to this peril. *Homo politicus* understood as self-sovereign through collective sovereignty must literally subdue the creature of self-interest and self-absorption." See *Undoing the Demos*, 95.

the paradigm of ‘eternal oppressors and eternally oppressed’. No ideology or a political formation is an exception to this.

‘The socialist ideology’ met its miserable death. There are many for whom it is difficult to admit this. The socialist cause needed a strong justification after its [political] collapse. It means that they lost all the *moral right* to say that socialism is still a legitimate social political philosophy. This would undermine the radical nature of the revolutionary spirit itself. The loss of this moral right has changed drastically the nuances of emancipation. How is emancipation and transformation achieved under conditions of alienation and oppression? Sympathizers of Marxism would like to disassociate it with the idea of utopia altogether. Among others, to mention Cornelius Castoriadis wishes to disentangle the utopian meaning from the meaning of a revolutionary project. For the latter, the project of individual and collective autonomy is not utopian but a socio-historical project bound by peoples’ understanding, imagination and determination.²⁵ The important issue is not the success or failure of communism - but ways in which capital operates in many newer forms than before.²⁶ This enables us to grasp, what Andrew Tosel calls, the hegemonic intellectual system of neo-liberalism. This is reflected in the targetted attack hinting at the horrific violence that happened in the name of communism. It is not being prejudicist to assert that the portrayal of the twentieth century as the tragic period is super exaggeration and a one dimensional story [Marxism supposedly belongs to a past of errors and horrors].²⁷ It also

²⁵See his book *A Society Adrift: Interviews and Debates, 1974-1997* ed. by Helen Arnold, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 3.

²⁶Jacques Derrida talks about this in his *Specters of Marx, The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the new International*

²⁷Andrew Tosel mentions this in his essay, “The Development of Marxism: From the End of Marxism-Leninism to a Thousand Marxisms – France-Italy, 1975–2005,” in Jacques Bidet & Stathis Kouvelakis, eds., *Critical Companion to Contemporary Marxism* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 39.

reflects the reduction of history of an epoch to a specific few instances. Paradoxically, only a savageous pervert mind can defend the violence occurred in the name of communism. There is no denial of the degeneracy and perversion of the crimes committed in the name of Fascism, Nazism and Communism.²⁸ Tosel speaks of ramification of rather confusing “thousand Marxisms” and starting anew overcoming the tragic phase of the by-gone century. The issue is whether we could erase that memory? What, asks Andre Tosel, is the minimal consensus as to what may legitimately be called a Marxist interpretation?²⁹ The most important issue is not whether a particular ideology or philosophy sank itself or met its end. On the contrary, the issue is amid the violent ruptures in erasing the present and a creating an altogether different new society, the torsion that people must have had undergone that magnificently affected their everyday lives. When a revolutionary project attempts to topple down the heirarchical, oppressive and complex *human* order, it is important to see which aspects of social life are ruptured for radical change. Violence as the means to radical change always makes us apologetic. Did Marxism fail at the level of *praxis*? It is not as simple as the question. It cannot be answered when we are brainwashed [consciously and unconsciously] that it is fundamentally violent and terror-driven. Can revolutionary projects such as of the scale of the socialist experiment avoid anykind of criticism? It is really a problem of all revolutionary projects.³⁰ Revolution aims at far reaching social change - not

²⁸The focus of the thesis is not in the first two but on communism. However, the study makes a remark though it falls outside its scope: What about crimes committed in the name of opposing the spread of communism and in the name of democratization of the world? This is just a reference to post-world wars and post-colonial scenario.

²⁹See Daniel Bensaid, *Marx for Our Times: Adventures and Misadventures of a Critique*, td. by Gregory Elliott (New York: Verso, 2002), xiii. He further explains the complexity. If one either emotionally or practically inclined to the Philosophy of Marx - the biggest challenge is to [re]discovering Marx for every other generation [43].

³⁰Marxists and non-Marxists face this problem. True. When one attempts change on such a gigantic scale many knock-down attempts take place. Though the transit is sought with an abrupt, the conscience for such a movement is never abrupt. The existing conditions [here, the capitalist modes of production] definitely are breeding grounds of such transformatory and evolutionary consciousness. This consciousness is not empty at all. We need to observe only on

any kind of minor changes here and there, like error-solving in epistemic theories. This point is well argued by Bentley Le Baron. Long before the collapse itself, he referred to the impoverished nature of attempts for ‘replacement for revolution’ that calls for re-reading of Marx as a “restoration of richness, complexity and human substance.”³¹ This kind of an argument very much suits those societies where hierarchy is deep rooted in their cultural formations diffident enough to level the dehumanized status of certain communities, identities and individuals. The inevitability of exegesis itself shows the magnitude of revolution and hardships of its implementation. In the case of Marx, revolution means a thorough-going change in the modes of production that result in a thorough going change in relations-of-production. The latter implies change in the conscience of beings, their ideas, relationships, their habits and pleasures, and more importantly their institutions they are part of.³² Not really sure about the Rawlsian framework, the formula of Marx if successful in its deterministic scheme would certainly result in the social upliftment. This formula suits those conditions where social backwardness is merely due to economic backwardness. In other words, there is no strict and exclusive economic sphere distinct from others. There are several overlappings. While analyzing Marxism *vis-a-vis* equality and justice, extra-economic factors are to be more seriously considered. How did Marx(ism) survive the cultural turn or the cultural politics? Cultural Marxism employs Marxian theory to analyze

the realization part. What went out of the control of the revolutionary spirit? Whether post-Marxists’ attempts to reform Marxism were fruitful not? Liberal-capitalist-democracy meets the same criticism. One interpretation bluntly classifies the historical growth of capitalism, then liberalism, as a constant but also consistent to maintain the vertical nature of the complex human social order. Otherly, people in the LCD camp can deny this. But they cannot deny those things that went out of control over a period [referring to 1776 and 1789]. Locke, who inspired the American Revolution, stated that God created enough wealth for one to appropriate as much as one can, yet, much enough remains for the rest of the humanity. We are clear that it never happened that way. In every society history has witnessed abundance on the one hand, and depravity on the other.

³¹See his article, “Marx and Human Emancipation,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 4.4(Dec 1971): 559-570, 559.

³²Bentley Le Baron, “Marx and Human Emancipation,” 559.

cultural forms in relations of production, their obsession with society and history, and their impact and influences on audiences and social life. This is a serious issue. Marxism is classified as vulgar for having a great omission of issues of art, culture, ideology and everyday life. The same thing happened in the former Soviet Union, China, East Europe and other communities. Cultural concerns were subdued to the scientific laws of dialectical materialism.³³ In other words, a particular ideology's internal criticism is disvalued resulting in no guarantee of the emergence of a revolutionary proletariat against the capitalist domination. Internal critics may say that Marxism could not go on to show the world the success it preempted through the formula of revolution. The principal reason for this failure is the avoidance of culture. If this is right then Gramsci and later, the Frankfurt School for social theory, are more appropriate to have stressed on the aspect of **cultural hegemony**. It is pointless to put forth what their approach was as it would be mere repetitive in nature. The question is what is the fate of cultural Marxism after the rhetoric of the great fall? David Harvey remarks, "To pretend there was anything interesting about Marx after 1989 was to sound more and more like an all-but extinct dinosaur whimpering its own last rites."³⁴ Herbert Marcuse had and still has a great influence on latter generations. Three of his ideas are profoundly relevant today: *great refusal of capitalism, valuing the subjective conditions of life, and as good as the objective conditions*. Simultaneously, his writings expressed the suspicion of metanarratives [**history as the realization of freedom or progress** (linked to the postmodern turn)]³⁵. Though there are criticisms of overdoings of the *culture industry*, the nexus between hegemony and culture is well

³³Steven Best, *The Politics of Historical Vision: Marx, Foucault and Habermas* (New York: Guilford Press, 1995). <https://drstevebest.wordpress.com/2011/07/26/the-cultural-turn-in-marxist-theory>

³⁴See his book *Spaces of Hope* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 5.

³⁵Jean Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition* (Mineapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983).

theorized. Combining Jameson, Deleuze and Guattari, Steve Best states: "Post-modern culture ruptures narrative and decenters subjectivity in a schizophrenic dispersal of **fragments** [emphasis added]. Individuals are overloaded with information and the complexities of hyperspace that disable their ability to situate themselves within larger systems of meaning..."³⁶ This is not an easy task here. The apprehension of cultural Marxism brings us back to the same position and the same question; *the lost cause of emancipatory appeal*. Jameson classifies it as the *cultural logic of late capitalism*. See his work *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991), Chapters 1 & 6..

Socialism is not capitalism's **radical other** and *vice versa*. Ideology itself has become hybrid over a period of time. It was convincing for many that freedom is a superior goal seriously threatened by totalitarian/authoritarian regimes with their ambitious projects. Antonio Negri makes an interesting remark: "To my mind, 1989 corresponds to 1968. While 1968 had broken down the walls that closed our society, 1989 broke down the wall that defended real socialism, keeping it outside the world market."³⁷ However great the ideal it may be people do not want to forget the violence wherever it perpetrated. This actuality distanced communism from the people's imagination. The fall also indicated the moral bankruptcy. Do we have a right to remain nostalgic to the idea of communism? For many, the era of Communism came to an end in 1989, and it has indeed become tautological - communism is vulgar Marxism. Yet, the anti-communist slogans weren't less vulgar.³⁸ In opposition to this, it is believed that "While there is no doubt that the Soviet Union collapsed as a result of its own contradictions, the nature of these contradictions needs to be explored."³⁹ The abolition of the free market and the creation of an alternative modern society and realization of popular sovereignty itself is questioned greatly. It is needless to go into the discussion of the reasons for the great failure. The challenges of globalization precipitated the failure. How do we analyze the performance of Communism? Though it is pertinent to keep in mind the changes that occurred in the Soviet Union and East

³⁶See "The Culture Turn in Marxist Theory".

³⁷See his book *Goodbye Mr. Socialism*, td. by Peter Thomas, (Toronto: Seven Stories Press, 2006), 9.

³⁸Zizek begins his book with an interesting observation in opposition: ...generates the vulgar anti-communist cliché - "You are right-today, after the tragedy of twentieth century totalitarianism, all the talk about a return to communism can only be farcical!" See his *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce* (London: Verso, 2009), 1.

³⁹Richard Sakwa, "The Soviet Collapse: Contradictions and Neo-Modernization," *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 4.1(January 2015): 65-77, 66.

Europe, it needs a different interpretation. Is the fall symbolic of a certain form of cynicism - that these societies never wanted to proceed in the line of writings of Marx? Can we say that the problem lies in the incongruency between the actuality [in the Hegelian sense something already given from which abstraction proceeds] and the possibility? The collapse sounded as if the actuality of communism ran counter to its own philosophy. The experiment somewhere lost the political strategy. Necessity of pure political ontology in the realm of communism is sought by many. This remark comes from the allegation that Marxism rests on a flawed understanding of politics - **deheroization of politics** and “not existentializing politics properly.”⁴⁰ Further Deifenbach states that this shows that Marx(ism) oscillated between an economic and political perspective. Žižek poses a paradoxical situation here: The East-European experience is rather a night mare of the twentieth century European history. There is no denial of the fact that the idea went pervert in the process of the execution of the idea. Yet, through many of his writings, Žižek exposes the irony and back-stabbing of the global *LCD* that misdirected much of the world. He makes an interesting remark here: “... the time for liberal-democratic moralistic blackmail is over. Our side no longer has to go on apologizing; while the other side had better start soon.”⁴¹ Communism need not be perceived as an utopian *not-yet* for which reality will always fail to be often an adequate match, but as something always already there is every moment of refusal to private appropriation and collective appropriation. Badiou presents an argument that was used by the capitalist west for a long time:

At the level of the state, this socialist ‘totalitarianism’ must be contrasted with representative democracy which, ... is ... imperfect, is ... least bad form of government. At the moral level, ..., we must preach the values of the ‘free world’ centred on and protected by the United States ... it has ended in failure all over the world, the communist hypothesis is a criminal utopia that must give way to a culture of ‘human rights’, which combines the cult of freedom ...⁴²

This also sounds as another deterministic account like that of Marxism. Stating this Badiou does not deny the failure paradigm. May be this is the kind of treatment communism got in France after the post-communist wave. Badiou

⁴⁰Marx’s diagnosis is the process of revolution will evade a complete fall, from tragedy to farce. By being self-critical “until the historical moment of transformation is produced” and most importantly “conditions themselves cry out”. See Katja Diefenbach, “Im/potential Politics: Political Ontologies of Negri, Agamben and Deleuze”

⁴¹*First as Tragedy, Then as Farce*, 8.

⁴²See his book *The Communist Hypothesis* ed. by David Macey & Steve Corcoran, (New York: Verso, 2010), 4.

greatly addresses the meaning of failure with respect to the understanding of history - takes cognizance of Mao's reference to failures as stages in history [historical growth]. For him, it is a matter of relationship between politics and its historicity. Addressing the failure Badiou rightly points out that success has to face fear than the failure. Badiou's treatment of failure is really an eye opener. To come back to the same question - How do we treat the thesis/ideology of failure? To put failure in a perspective is a monumental task. The failure hypothesis subverts the reality into a fake truth. Attempts were made to denounce forever Marxism/Communism their ontological status. As mentioned earlier, either the basic philosophy of economic revolutionary transformation is grounded on mistaken assumptions or it is badly strategized politically. What did the fall narrative put at stake? To mention Badiou again, "the difficulties of a politics are never universal, as enemy propaganda — along the lines of 'your communist hypothesis is nothing more than a chimera that cannot be put into practice, a utopia that has nothing to do with the real world'"⁴³ Unlike many others, Badiou's focuses on the Chinese Cultural Revolution that greatly impacted France for some time. For him, it is a great lesson in history and politics, "in history as thought and from within politics. How different is the failure of the cultural revolution from that of the failures of the Bolshevik Revolution? All this discussion is at the level of ideologies, their manifestation *contra* power and state. The focus has to be the excruciating affect on peoples lives all over under the cloud of either transit or transformation. Revolutionary brings turbulence to lives of the people.

A question can be posed to both the sympathizers-defenders and the denouncers of the idea of Communism. What is attractive in Marxist philosophy? Equality? Struggle? Emancipation? Definitely, the idea appealed to many as the oppressed

⁴³ *The Communist Hypothesis*, 39.

condition naturally aspires for an alternate world - impersonating all *fantasmic* perfections of an ethical world. These suppositions take into account the liberated conditions of everyday life. For instance, a leftist ontology is about everyday political practice defined by struggles of everyday life. In the process the image gets fixated as if the knowledge of the perfect world [here a world of no exploitation and oppression] has ontologically *a priori* presence. On what basis does we say this is not the world that we are supposed to inhabit? The recognizable conditions of inequality or injustice are always tricky, and at times may not escape the myopic condition of one-dimensionality. That, we the oppressed, with a certain collective consciousness, come together, to overthrow the dreary condition, by all means, attain equality, and thus justice. Nancy boldly states that communism is no longer the unsurpassable horizon of our time. To him, this is not because humanity has traversed all horizons - owing to our resignation of things - horizons themselves must be challenged.⁴⁴ True, humanity has witnessed no alterations at all. Later, Benedict Anderson explains that alliances based on identity proved a lot more fruitful than alliances on ideological grounds.⁴⁵

2.2 So, Marx is Right! *via* Terry Eagleton

The world is divided into two parts - the one that hears Marxism with a discord, and the other that still wishes to romance with the idea. We can find these two sides not just in the western world, but also in the non-western world where

⁴⁴Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community* ed. by Peter Connor; td. by Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland and Simona Sawhney, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 8.

⁴⁵Anthony Faramelli, "What's Left of Communism? Part I of II," *Critical Legal Thinking* 7 October 2013

Marxism had a profound impact. Marxism receives utter cold treatment. One witnesses a wide variety of allegations against Marx(ism) for which neither Marx nor Marxism can be really held responsible. Discounting Marx is always accompanied by a stronger claim of 'triumph of capitalist democracy'. It is to be noted that it is not an easy task to propose how the world ought to progress and while progressing what it needs to take account of. Critics have given several explanations as to why both Marx and Marxism is an outmoded doctrine. Is it that Marx's ideas are off the target, no more suitable to our times? Many scholars in the past opined that there is a good sense of anachronism in his thought. Has that been lost now? How do we interpret and evaluate the nature of the world we live in the advanced globalized world? While addressing these questions, a cautious and ruthless critical reflection of the contemporary times is indispensable. Terry Eagleton's book *Why Marx Was Right* very elaborately delineates all the possible allegations leveled against Marx and Marxism. In the beginning and at the end of the book, Eagleton asks two striking questions: Can Marxism now be safely buried? Was ever a thinker so travestied?⁴⁶ All his analysis runs between these two questions - purporting several arguments that assimilate to pronounce that there is still much sense in Marx, and he was right on various fronts.

Firstly, Eagleton takes on the allegation that "Marxism is finished, has no relevance in the post-industrial society".⁴⁷ In this claim, we can see a self-righteous attitude of post-industrial capitalism. We can say that it is a faulty supposition.⁴⁸ It means that the western capitalist framework has resolved all the dilemmas of inequality and problems of justice created by excesses of wealth and power. 'All-is-

⁴⁶See his book *Why Marx Was Right* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), x, 239.

⁴⁷Eagleton, *Why Marx Was Right*, 1.

⁴⁸For this, see James Petras & Chronis Polychroniou, "Nature of Capitalist Transformation: Continuing Relevance of Marxism," *Economic & Political Weekly* 304(Jan 1995): PE38-PE44.

well' is the principle on which capitalism functions. It is a form of self-deception. However, there is no proper distinction set between permissible inequalities and impermissible inequalities. The second allegation is that Marxism is good only in theory, and in reality had resulted in violence, tyranny and mass murder on an inconceivable scale.⁴⁹ There is half-truth in this allegation. However, only Stalinism, Maoism and other socialist influences are not the ones only to bear the burden of guilt of violence in the twentieth century.

The third allegation is that Marxism is a form of determinism, strips of freedom and individuality as representative as Marxist states.⁵⁰ If Marxism is deterministic, it is to the extent that those capitalist excesses are to be subdued. These unendurable excesses confirm the principle of history's internal logic of radical social transformation [of one stage paving way for the other] that make socialism inevitable. In this sense, Marx rightly identifies the responsibility of individuals- what they do as free men and women become more central to understanding of the human condition. Does Marxism possesses a bigger promise totally utopian in nature? Eagleton addresses critics' allegation that Marxism is utopian, believes in the possibility of a perfect society, without hardship, violence, suffering, conflict ... reflects the absurd reality of his politics as a whole.⁵¹ Breaking away from the *present*, seeking change in the social relations of production, it demands real action on the part of those who desire that change. This way, it can be seen that it is not mere intellectual dialogue. But critiques attack Marxism stating that it advocates violence and only believes in the principle that 'the end justifies the means'.⁵² Nevertheless, Eagleton's defense does not give the sense of making

⁴⁹Eagleton, *Why Marx Was Right*, 11.

⁵⁰Eagleton, *Why Marx Was Right*, 30.

⁵¹Eagleton, *Why Marx Was Right*, 64

⁵²Eagleton, *Why Marx Was Right*, 179

Marx(ism) an absolute idea. However, Eagleton should have elaborated on three important aspects: (1) it is obvious that Marx's understanding of human nature is totally different from liberalism. One can see a hidden sense of hardcore moralism being attributed to the working class. Can we sustain that? (2) In Marx's determinism, *inevitability* is also implied as *desirability*, which makes communism as the ultimate desired human condition. Eagleton could have thrown more light on the issue of historical closure in Marx(ism), *i.e.*, the failure of the historical movement. To answer this, we have to posit history as either teleological or non-teleological in nature. (3) While talking about transformation, Eagleton could have discussed more on Marx's scheme of collapse of the state into an administrative body. There are several instances where the vehicle of revolution could not cross the barrier of the socialist state, which ultimately made some part of the world terror stricken.

2.3 Vanguard of the Oppressed

What happens to the revolutionary spirit of the oppressed people of the world? It seems as if the idea of emancipation has lost its relevance or has become anachronistic amid the collapse narrative. However, from Eagleton's defense of Marxism, we can state that the world still needs a mega-revolution that integrates all radical movements of the world. How does one understand the condition of post-capitalism? The discussion here takes note of the Zizekean claim that liberal-capitalism after the fall has given rise to false aspirations of global capitalism. Its assertion as the only alternative to socialism is a thing one must debate. Whether it has the potential to shelter the sorrows of the oppressed is another thing. Let

us assume that the end of metaphysics or a banisterless politics is the end of violence, the end of domination and the end of ideology. The stereotypical interpretation of the Soviet disintegration was that Marxism stood disproved and capitalism prevailed. Capitalism is not just to be viewed as a form of economic organization. Through liberal-democratic political culture, it operates differently and through this process it sustains hierarchy within the human condition. Society, politics and culture create and sustain various forms of hierarchy - even in non-totalitarian societies. It means that hierarchy exists in every form of society not one form being an exception. The result is exclusion through the denial of respect, dignity and freedom. Denial, deprivation and confiscation of these that are supposed to be intrinsic in everyone creates the category of the oppressed generation after generation. Persistence of the oppressed condition through generations calls for emancipation that operates on its own logic. Emancipation takes radical break with the idea of society as shared meanings of life. Politics without banister does not take away the messianic magic or revolutionary force. Existence of the oppressed *vis-a-vis* the oppressing force requires a dichotomous dimension. Ernest Laclau is right in saying that the impossibility of the total radical otherness is part of the constitution of the social fabric. But why it does not dissect the totality of emancipation? How is the possibility of emancipation conceived? The oppressor-oppressed relationship is a very complex phenomenon - to be oppressed is part of my identity as a subject struggling for emancipation; without the presence of the oppressor my identity is different. The paradox is that the constitution of the oppressed needs the presence and rejects the presence of the oppressor. Emancipation has to confront the society's totalizing effects of culture and politics. What does one mean by totalization process? Opposing totalization with an anti-metaphysical approach offers the emancipatory possibility. The supposition is that proper reconciliation of radical diversity has the liberating force

in it. Laclau asks, “Does this mean that this death of the universal, with the impossibility of emancipation as its corollary, leaves us in a particularistic world in which social action pursue limited objectives?”⁵³ The response of laclau is debatable. He responds by stating that the universal is an ensemble of many constituent particularities. The particular is threatened too whenever the universal is threatened. It implies that totalization and emancipation are inseparable. The Marxist position is that the distinction collapses only after the realization of the utopia. In seeking emancipation we aspire for the freedom from the universal - the freedom of belief and way of life. Universality and totality is imposition of a particular *as* the universal. All the particulars are in race to attain that universality. Once universality is attained the momentum for totality begins. Intergal to it is the oppression and deprivation of what is inalienable from oneself and what one deserves as a social bring. The transition from being particular to universal is made possible by power. Laclau’s dependent explanation sounds like the chasm between the universal and the particular is unbridgable. It means that totality and its opposite are implicit to any society. Pure particularism is self-defeating. The implication of this is procrastination of liberation forever, where certain people remain in the same dehumanized condition since the traditional times. Such conditions will certainly proliferate pure particularistic stances. For political theology and other eschatological paradigms the difference between the universal and the particular is maintained. There is universality in proletariat, Laclau opines, with a sense of secular eschatology. It means the redemption is not external to the world but from and within the world itself. What constitutes emancipation? One has to keep in mind that both the aspects of achieving a fair society economically and reasonably in other realms go hand-in-hand. The important concern here is, ‘how important is the idea of *difference* while discerning the restoration of a

⁵³ *Emancipation(s)*, 13.

just world. Practices like apartheid, casteism, racism etc., are large instances of atrocities of totalities of a certain kind. The totality imposed on them is forced through violence and other means. Yet, they are outside of them in terms of social and cultural ontological status. Badiou makes an important reflection: “if we simply invent the relation of oppression, the other is maintained as what is now oppressed and repressed, but the inversion of the contents leaves the form of oppression unchanged.” In this way oppression becomes a regulative principle of socio-political-cultural life of people. What is wrong in imagining an alternate world? Why should the social imagination be always a political possibility? It needs to be a political possibility because the oppressed have to be literally driven out of their degraded condition. However, it is assumed that politics cannot reside in the ideal-realm is not convincing fully. The scare of political realism is that it may set very low standards of what is possible of ‘human will practically.’

nancy

Chapter 3

Realistic Utopia

The twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall should have been a time for reflection. It has become a cliché to emphasize the miraculous nature of the fall of the Wall: it was like a dream come true. With the disintegration of the Communist regimes, which collapsed like a house of cards ...

Slavoj Žižek, *Living in the End Times*

Socialism/Communism failed, proved violent, totalitarian and oppressive. It means that they had a distorted picture of what a political society ought to be. Liberalism, especially the pragmatic tradition refers to the triumph of democracy and capitalism. Anti-utopians' [projected as 'democratic-capitalistic triumphalism'] approach is more realistic [pragmatic] in terms of grasping the human condition [in terms of ideal and non-ideal, and perfect and imperfect]. Rawls's idea of social justice, for instance, [though does not comment on failures of other utopia or non-liberal utopias] deals with the realistic utopian concerns, where he proposed the idea of a well-ordered society, guided by the *chosen* principles of justice. Neverthe-

less, the open society concept is fundamental to realistic utopia. The chapter will probe into the difference between the just human condition and the ideal human condition. Post-communist liberalism strengthened the idea of justice as workable justice. The pragmatic liberalism's approach conceives that human condition cannot be redeemed from imperfectness, but can only worry about a *workable* social reality. Most importantly, the *endism* argument is critically analyzed.

3.1 The Triumph of Captialism: *The End Syndrome*

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, action verbs and motion adjectives have dominated descriptions of events in the postcommunist world.¹ As has been discussed earlier, the Western paradigm of liberal-capitalism in its various forms could tell us a soothing story of the great fall of communism. The Soviet's and East Europe's failure is taken as socialism/communism's failure. Contrary to this, the world treated it as the triumph of liberal-democratic-capitalism. Fukuyama's thesis of *The End of History* sounded as convincing as Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations*. Let us reflect on the point of failure and the claim of triumph. What has failed and what has triumphed? It may be a by-gone thought now as the world is exhausted in reflecting on this point. However, for those outside the frame of reference, the penchant for equality and justice has failed utterly and prevailed over by the force of liberty/freedom. The triumphalist thesis goes beyond the end of history argument. Latter to the collapse, Huntington [and anti-

¹Michael McFaul & Kathryn Stoner-Weiss (eds.), *After the Collapse of Communism: Comparative Lessons of Transition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 2.

islamists] began forceful claims of *LCD*'s success to the openness of the western world. The discussion will not be taken in this direction anyways. Again thanks to the convincing nature of *LCD*. The issue has been debated even in many formal theories of equality and justice on the one hand, and rights/liberty on the other. How should one understand them prior to seeing them in that light? Is it a mysterious triumph or an obvious outcome? Paul Krugman makes a reflection here. For him, the collapse of communism and the triumph of capitalism need more of an explanation than mere stories.²

Whenever the end was conceived, a new beginning was hoped for. Marx too [even Hegel for that matter] had conceived of the end of history. What is the difference between Marx and Fukuyama on this issue? Marx's idea of the end of history has to do with the emancipation of man from all ills of capitalism.³ Even for that matter, what difference it holds from the Hegelian teleological conception of the end of history? As far as Hegel is concerned the issue is what happens to history though there is enough thought on humanity, freedom and reason. For him history is the process during which the spirit realizes itself - to develop a total concept of world history.⁴ However, it is debatable as to whether there is a difference between the two or not. On the other hand, Howard Williams lists out a couple of assumptions they share in common with respect to the understanding of history. They are historical epochs, with a progressive sense of world history, material, cultural and moral improvement, realization of freedom, and teleologi-

²Paul Krugman, "Capitalism's Mysterious Triumph," *Economist View*, February 28, 2008.

³"... as Marx could believe that one day there would cease to be exploitation of man by man and that thereafter a fully humanized society would persist indefinitely." See J. J. Clarke, ""The End of History," A Reappraisal of Marx's View on Alienation and Human Emancipation," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 4.3(Sept 1971), 367-380, 367.

⁴Herman van Erp, "The End of History and Hegel's Conception of Modernity," *Ideas Y Valores*, 107(August 1998).

cal conception of history.⁵ Marx's reference to the end of history is more of an emancipatory rhetoric [**scientific socialism**], which means that the exploited and the oppressed will be redeemed from their miserable conditions. Gregory Elliot narrates seven pillars on which Marx's scientific socialism rests. The most relevant ones are [1] vision of the broad trajectory of human history and a periodisation of it, from primitive communism, *via* various forms of class society, to advanced communism, which effected the 'expropriation of the expropriators' and sealed the end of human pre-history. [2] The inevitability of the epochal transition from capitalism to communism did not entail its logical end. Accomplishment of what was indeed inevitable nevertheless required a collective human agent: 'scientific socialism' appointed it.⁶

What did scientific socialism aim at? Did it really fail in its mission? Is there a change in its attitude from its transition as a philosophical principle to a revolutionary spirit of the world's oppressed? It is a well known fact that the colonial rulers [though were detested by the colonized] could instill in the minds of the colonized, western style of politics. At the middle of the twentieth century, the major political ideologies available certainly had influenced the post-colonial politics too. The newly independent societies [with their own age-old social evils] carried those societies into the next generation. New epochs, new beginnings, could not disentangle themselves with the past in totality. One will find that all political constitutions [influenced by either freedom or equality or both] the promise to safeguard the integrity of certain things that really make human beings as human beings.⁷ Whether it is individuals or institutions, societies or cultures,

⁵See Howard Williams, "The End of History in Hegel and Marx," in *The Hegel-Marx Connection*, T. Bruns & I. Frazer (eds.), (London: Macmillan, 2000), 198-216, 198.

⁶Gregory Elliott, *Ends in Sight: Marx/Fukuyama/Hobsbawm/Anderson* (Ann Arbor: Pluto Press, 2008).

⁷The proclamations of all political constitutions is interesting to have a critical reflections. For

communities or states, these remain as mere words if not realized.

It is somewhat the apocalyptic tone typical to the western [christian] world. The high time of communism was viewed by the capitalist west in the similar manner. At the point of collapse, the world witnessed two major slanders; the capitalist west could successfully spread the word that **socialism has no human face**, which, in fact, was factually true seen in various parts of the world that compelled them to speak out loudly - **socialism has lost the human face**. Should we judge the strength of the idea by the political facts, facts that had been colored variously projecting it in the negatory terms? If the idea had got some strength then, it would have got deeply rooted into the social structure. The apocalyptic representation of the communist ideology challenged the moral worth of the idea. One can say that the political collapse of 1989 also caused a great dent to the moral worth of the ideology itself.

As mentioned earlier, we are looking at this not as an issue on a global scale, but as a contestation between two competent political ideologies that had also attached many valuations and disvaluations. It is no doubt that the fall of the Berlin wall gave birth to another false-consciousness, *endism*. There are people who have declared this as an illusion. Jean Baudrillard nicely puts the argument that the notion of the end is part of the fantasy of linear history. Instead of arriving at the end, Baudrillard argues we are moving backwards further entrenched into the black hole of the past. This is true in some sense as most of the catastrophies of the past and present centuries can be traced back to past antagonisms. Baudrillard is also right in saying that this is nothing but fatal strategies of time clinging on to the

instance, the Indian constitution declares in its preamble - **We, the Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic, Republic...**

imaginary end. This has become more problematic under the transformation of reality to hyper-reality.⁸ The end itself is a created hyper reality. It is indeed the end of history for western capitalism as it has no challenging rivalry. Has anything changed with the collapse of communism and the triumph of capitalism? Is there a change-in-scenario of the downtrodden or the oppressed? The latter is a very significant category. Theorists of justice, equality and freedom may keep talking about bridging the gap between the haves and have-nots. Can we say that under *LCD* one does not find oppression and deprivation as indicators of miserable living conditions? Is there a difference between the end times and the time that has ended? One has to critically introspect whether people's struggles for existence have lessened, increased or have taken a different sense and shape altogether. The moment we realized that humans are not to be ill-treated this way or that way, we invented new forms of human torture.

The ill-effects of ideological struggle have ravaged the world in very great dimensions. *Hard* times never have changed for the oppressed. This may seem to be a bold assertion but not unreasonable. In the western world one assesses the change-in and changing times since the 'Declaration of Rights of Man', followed by the revolutionary spirit of the latter times, and finally the surrender to western capitalist-liberalism. These ideas have indeed impacted the rest of the world after post-colonialism. There is a problem here. Social transformation means, truly speaking, is an incremental scaling down or rather, diminution of the numbers of the oppressed, deprived, denied and in more harsher terms the 'unfortunate lot'. Theorists of justice and equality are conscious of the misfortunes of the past people, then, aim at rehabilitating the future in advance [*without bringing-in the*

⁸Jean Baudrillard, *Illusion of the End*, td. by Chris Turner, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

argument of desert]. The issue is how does one resolve the problem of equality or injustice or social respect by taking into account the dangerous terrain of comprehensive doctrines?

In the context of declaration of the *end of history*, we can say the world hardly cares now whether history has come to an end or is in the mode of repetition. Take the example of the Civil Rights Movement in the US or Caste movements in India, and many such movements outside the western world. These movements were initiated to put an end to the age-old annihilations and humiliations of the people experiencing them through historical times. Emancipation can never be achieved without a radical conscience. Upliftment of the oppressed, those revolutionaries and other scholars felt, would elevate their social status. The reason is there is a causal relationship between the economic, the cultural, the political and the social. They are not wrong in their assumption. Economic scaling may give the backward-status people the chance of social negotiation of their status and their access to public institutions. Policies of economic upliftment could bring only minimal change in the lives of the downtrodden. For a moment, imagine that certain reconciliation of the equal moral presence of all human beings, in what ever way they are and they live is noticeable. Yet, the conscience of individuals toward them [to speak in the Levinasian terms, the **other is othered as worthless**] has not changed after so many centuries. This argument holds valid if we take Baudrillard's reference to the *reversal of history* as a right. Is the end of history the end of metaphysics? What is the shape of post-politics? Does the triumph of capitalism mean freeing of politics from the vestiges of ideology? Does the dichotomy of liberal-capitalism and socialist-communism exhaust the political field? Disappearance of a significant historical tension was supposed as the *disappearance of the political*. Instead, the realm of the political has become

more relevant with struggles for political representations. It is viewed as an occasion for *reimagining the political*. The latter is taken as an indicator of one's position in the ladder of social hierarchy. How do these paradigms view individuals, social life, politics and self-appropriation? Answering this question will provide us with a value position - the mind set of mine *apropos* fellow human beings and *vice versa* within the same social realm, sharing the same social space, the way I think about my fellow human being(s), their identities, values and associations. Capitalism, its efficiency and tenacity to prevail over any other form of economic system, has been discussed in the post-communist scenario and the discussion is far more redundant now. The focus should be on the capitalist mode of production [modes of relations] along with its political version, i.e., liberal democracy has been claimed as the best among all. There are two issues here. Inclining oneself to either socialism or liberalism indicates ideological commitment. Or else ideology doesn't matter, but achieving the three cardinal values of any social-political formation [freedom, equality, and justice] is what is to be critically reflected. The irony is these values are not achieved by any political ideology whatsoever under any social condition. On the other hand, the paradox is it is not achievable outside the realm of ideology. To shape the collective life on these principles is to make better the living conditions - access to the material conditions of life, exercise of social, political and cultural freedoms, guarded by the law and most importantly the freedom to consent with and dissent from the collective. Jacques Ranciere needs a mention here, *dissensus* is more important than consensus. As long as socialism/communism was a part of the regime, people looked toward it as a motivational life-form. Imaginatively the notion that all are equal, free and it is the only just condition of the world, is always appealing. Inequality and injustice are not mere historical conditions. They have been all through history subjecting human social beings to infinite kinds of hierarchies; some vanished over a period

of time, and some others persisted through the ages. Political theorists have an obligation of re-interpreting the claim that the modern times is the darkest hour of human history. Socialists and later Marx(ists) identified specific forms of inequality that resulted out of embracing a specific form of modes of production.

The collapse of communism and the dashing of hopes, and the resistance to admit that the grand utopian social imagery that it promised [Another World is Possible] proved them wrong followed the triumphalist argument. Gregory Elliott makes an interesting observation here. He argues that the triumphalist argument of western capitalism betokened the “endpoint of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.”⁹ What is lost is ideology as a way of life. Michael Freeden asks, “How can we bring home the point that ideologies are not visions of alternative worlds, be they alluring or terrifying, but conceptualizations of the political worlds we already inhabit, even when critical of those worlds?”¹⁰ On the one hand, ideology is treated as totalistic that determines one’s *mode* of existence. On the other hand, ideology is, as Freeden says, is just a conceptualization of the (only) political world [*emphasis added*]. But that politics is integral to our life, our existence is only social/collective [for the time being supposing that the liberal and the libertarian suppositions of a private life is discounted] and all is elevated to the level of politics [and the political] is to be noted seriously. The end of ideology is only a one-dimensional thesis. When politics and ideology are not seen distinct, trumpetering that ideology doesn’t, but politics exists is a logical error. The criticism of post-politics is an evidence for our unease about the projected

⁹*Ends in Sight*, 37.

¹⁰See his unpublished paper, “Confronting the Chimera of a ‘Post-Ideological’ Age, Paper prepared for the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Uppsala, April 2004 Workshop 3: ‘Working with Ideology in a ‘Post-Ideological’ Age’, 1.

consensus, of western *LCD*, on a global scale. The condition of post-politics does not foreclose the possibility of politics.

Fukuyama's thesis of *end of history* need not be eliminated, but only can be pushed to the realm of historical imagination. If it breaks out of the boundaries of historical imagination, then the *end of history* paradigm deserves a different interpretation. It also means that the historical processes have come to an end - humanity is emancipated from the historical [social] evils. Now the issue is of the sustenance of this achieved human condition. Rawls talks about the intergenerational justice. The question he raises is , "How is it possible that there may exist over time a stable and just society of free and equal citizens profoundly divided by reasonable though incommensurable religions, philosophical and moral doctrines?" The modelling of freedom, equality and justice is not bound by contingent conditions of times in which people live. We have already addressed the issue of the attribution of violence in the execution of socialist philosophy. Unbridgable gap between philosophy and politics indicate that certain ideologies failed because they operated through the determination of social totality. Is anything less than totality worth embracing? Experiences of the Holocaust and Communism led many scholars of the twentieth century to proscribe totalitarian principles. Western economic and political liberalism is projected as purely non-totalitarian open systems. Is *LCD* non-totalitarian in its attitude? The propaganda messages seem to project it like that. One can even assert that the endism story is one political fiction on a global scale. Besides, endism still reflects theological dimension of western politics, which is particularly obsessed with apocalypse.¹¹

¹¹ "Rather than the proclaimed end of history, we are, in fact, witnessing the incessant though aimless motion of this machine, which, in a sort of colossal parody of theological *oikonomia*, has assumed the legacy of the providential governance of the world; yet instead of redeeming our world, this machine (true to the original eschatological vocation of Providence) is leading us to catastrophe." See Peter Gratton, *The State of Sovereignty: Lessons From the Political Fictions*

The end is no respite to any society that had adopted the socialist ideals in some form or the other. Elliott also mentions the diminution of George Plekhanov's argument that the "historical train" will lead us to the goal in the sense that "all roads lead to the Disneyland" argument.¹² Did the capitalist model transform or create a just society? The question is important because the Rawlsian model of a well-ordered society [*driven by the spirit of Dewey's pragmatic philosophy*] became popular during the cold war period itself. Though there isn't any reference to this as such Rawls still had the belief in liberalism. The promise of socialism/communism is the definite and determinate follow-up of a revolutionary struggle [In Herbert Marcuse's terms "socio-historical possibilities"¹³] opposing the capitalist modes and relations of production resulting in the victory of the working class [by way of abolition of (current) state of things] . A certain mode of production activity would bring this desired change.¹⁴ If it is a movement toward a movement the movement pushes things away from the present state of affairs - the movement never realized its telos. In the case of Marxian revolutionary philosophy the movement reaches its finality by taking over the state and withering away of the state eventually. We have to see the reasonability of the latter generations' taking it as a resolution of **everything** that sounds unequal among people.

Elliott makes another interesting observation "While the left targeted the social inequality between classes belying a formal equality of citizens, the right trained its fire on a spurious denial of natural human inequality in an artificially imposed

of *Modernity* (Alban: State University of New York Press, 2012), 188.

¹²*Ends in Sight*, 38.

¹³See his book *Five Lectures: Psychoanalysis, Politics and Utopia*, trans. J. J. Shapiro and S. M. Webber (Boston, 1970), 62. Also see Bertell Ollman, "Marx's Vision of Communism."

¹⁴"Communism is for us not a stable state which reality will have to adjust itself. We can call communism the real movement which abolished the present state of things. The conditions of this movement result from premises now in existence." Marx and Engels quote from *The German Ideology* mentioned in Ollman, "Marx's view of Communism".

civic equality.”¹⁵ This argument seems to be sympathetic to liberal egalitarianism. Either the western capitalism or the western Marxism has misunderstood in understanding the possibility and impossibility of human will. The former assumes that liberty is the driving force of all societies and hence it is the universal principle. Further, Fukuyama supposes that “even the best liberal society” cannot completely resolve the tensions between liberty and equality. The consequence of it is the “persistence of major social inequalities.” What is the trade-off in this tension? One finds in Rawlsian liberalism the idea of permissible inequalities. Rawls accepts inequality, but argues that it is only permissible when it benefits everyone [the least advantaged members of the society]¹⁶ and when opportunities to move up in the social ladder are open to everyone. There are three possibilities: [1] Liberty can be traded-off for the sake of equality [2] Equality can be traded-off for the sake of individual(s)’s freedom and [3] The trade-off argument is very simplistic, convenient and rests on mistaken assumptions about collective life. The trade-off between liberty and equality is not possible. It is catastrophic if done. May be this is the reason why Marx was also concerned about genuine freedom, rather than mere liberties. Liberalism’s supposition that they are inherently incommensurable itself rests on a mistake. If they are inherently contradictory, what is the job of *LCD*? Just giving-up stating we can hardly do anything about that!! If the trade-off is a right argument, then the world had traded-off equality for the sake of liberty [what the western world earlier and now much of the world calls an **open society**]. David Held makes an interesting observation. For him, that liberty and equality are in conflict is an economist’s supposition of a trade-off.¹⁷

¹⁵ *Ends in Sight*, 48.

¹⁶ John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 98. Also mentioned in Roy C. Weatherford, “Defining the Least Advantaged,” *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 33.130(Jan. 1983): 63-69, 63.

¹⁷ David Held, *Political Theory Today* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 56.

Let us come back to the *end* argument. Althusser has an interesting point here. Very much before Fukuyama, he talks of the end of pre-history [that is constitutive of all exploitation and alienation] and the beginning of authentic history - the movement toward universal harmony, the end of dialectic and contradictions. On the *prima facie* itself it sounds unreasonable yet appealing. In order to defend such claims, the burden fell on the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat. For Fukuyama, this is in contradiction with the capitalist ideology. Elliott says it is nothing but an “inversion of the inversion” - the inversion of the end of pre-history: “the very notion that History harbours goals present in germ at the origin and progressively realises them.”¹⁸ The end argument is not confined to Fukuyama. The collapse of Soviet Union, East Europe and the fall of the Berlin Wall definitely had given enormous boldness to the world in repudiating the relevance of the left and resulted in the launch of global capitalism. The end debate might had been overpowered by the historical debates of the supremacy of ideas. The issue is how these great ideas impacted the lives of individuals.

Elliott makes another interesting observation: The deletion of communism in the second world, sanitisation of social democracy, and the exhaustion of nationalism in the rest of the world, Fukuyama’s declaration of the end of history is descent into darkness and ascendance of neo-liberalism.¹⁹ A lot of scholars agree on this. What can we say after almost three decades after the fall? The fear that neo-liberalism will rule has become true. Justice is brought to most [if not all] of the past injustices. What is history before and after the line of collapse? For the opponents of *endism*, history has begun with the ascendance of socialist/communist transformation and for the critics of totality, the history has ended

¹⁸*Ends in Sight*, 53.

¹⁹*Ends in Sight*, 116.

abruptly. At the time of the collapse and three decades later, the attitude of communism and liberalism toward *retributive justice* is worth reflecting. How are the past injustices taken care of? To understand this the change explained in both ideological paradigms have to be looked at. Capitalism succeeds through material *Re*-production and freedom of appropriation of individuals. This way some aspects of the social contract remain operational. Social formations, when they proceed from one historical phase to the other, do not just succeed a new historical time-period. It also brings change to the very form and content of the society, sometimes, wiping out the traces of the previous epochs. Radical futures may sound like this, purely emancipatory. Though it may not sound ironical, yet, there is some hypocrisy in it emerging from the totalization tendencies.

Perry Anderson makes an interesting remark, “No reply to Fukuyama is of any avail ...if it contents itself with pointing out problems that remain in the world he predicts. An effective critique must be able to show that there are powerful systematic alternatives that he has discounted.”²⁰ It is clear from the self-appraisal of *LCD* that it lacks a genuine sense of critical self-reflection. The supposition that western capitalism has no challenge after the failure of the socialist experiment is one side of the story. The other side of the story can be quoted from Žižek’s claim [that would be in consonance with Anderson’s]. He mentions that the communist paranoia [Žižek’s analysis of communism (changing moods of defense and negation) comes from the East European nightmares of communist violence] after years of its debacle: “If capitalism is really so much better than socialism, why are our lives still miserable?”²¹ The irony lies here: if everyone wants equality why it is not there? Opponents of equality may say that makes equality a mis-

²⁰See his book *A Zone of Engagement* (London: Verso, 1992), 336.

²¹*Living in the End Times*, viii. (Chapter titled: The Spiritual Wickedness of the Heavens)

taken ideal. There are three possibilities here: [1] One can create an equilibrium condition [not just economic] [2] this condition is impossible to achieve and [3] the most convenient of all - **of letting things go as they are**. The situation has become precarious for many years after the fall. People are afraid of embracing socialism. Any allegiance to it is feared as submission to totality. Žizek says people worry about social security, solidarity, some kind of justice, they want the freedom to live their own lives outside the purview of the state control²², and to add more to it, **any form of social control**. The question that “how are we to read the collapse of these hopes” may have had collapsed on to those societies that had experienced the decadent conditions in the name of a great transformation. However, it was more pertinent to all societies who have had the splinters of the same. Žizek’s argument is that people are dissatisfied with the capitalist system. The disappointment of the communist experiment has shifted the utopian expectations on to *LCD*. But the result is no complacent. Žizek, further, poses another big question - “should we ... dismiss the utopian impulse which motivated the anti-Communist protests as a sign of immaturity, or should we remain faithful to it? For him, the global capitalism has reached an *apocalyptic* endpoint characterized by the explosive growth of social divisions and exclusions. Rightly stated by Daniel Bell that this situation is nothing but the cultural contradictions of capitalism.²³ What is the real issue here? The Real issue is to grasp the truth of a certain existential, or a specific political reality. Endism might have brought forth certain suppositions that lost their seriousness upon critical reflection.

²²*Living in the End Times*, viii.

²³*Living in the End Times*, ix, x, xii. The puzzle is how is it possible that a person is radical in one realm, moderate in some others, and a total conservative in the rest? For more elaborate discussion of this question, see Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), 33-84.

3.2 Living in the End Times : Certain Ironies

It is never a simple task to understand the nature of a Just Society and what justice refers to. While numerous perspectives seek to understand a ‘pluralist’ ‘diverse’ ‘multicultural society’ on the one hand, characterizing certain normative frameworks, on the other, dogmas of social and political justice seeking multicultural world make it a fantasy unrealized. In this sense, Liberal, Marxist, or any other philosophical frameworks, does not grasp the principle of living with differences – superficial and substantial. Realizing diversity becomes a meaningless enterprise unless an autonomous space of civil society lies with the subjects deliberating within the inter-subjective framework. In the contemporary world, pluralism, diversity, multiculturalism, identity, global justice etc. have become buzzwords. Everyday usage of these words is nevertheless without much critical philosophical reflection. What makes the world just? How do we realize in practice the theoretical claims to justice, equality and diversity? Can we realize multiculturalism without laying epistemic foundations of diversity? Is multicultural-diverse society a regulated society or an open society? What has it to say about the necessity of normative foundations? Answering these questions would require much critical understanding of these concepts that are infested with several contradictions. There is no need to be cynical here. Rather sufficient thought needs to be rendered to peel out the hidden contradictions. In particular, while linking multiculturalism to justice, one has to undergo a thorough thought-reflection – where justice can be located, in sanctioning that conflict in the world is redeemed only by manifesting a hardcore notion of cultural relativism [furthering the idea of Us & Them] or in claiming that despite the presence of multifarious cultures, drawing the clear line of distinction, a panoptic application of the concepts of justice and

equality will enable us to handle conflicts more efficaciously. The pressing issue is the manner in which we address the issues of contention – integration of cultures or segregation of cultures. It is argued in this paper that there are other ways too, but these ways are brought to fruition only accompanied by certain ironies.

It has become apparent, in all those theories that deal with diversity, with scathing criticisms of liberal philosophy, that universalism is no more an acceptable point, that plurality [to some ‘radical relationality’] is, what the given nature of the human condition is. This makes cultures opaque to one another – in the sense that “we-are-we and they-are-they.” This feeling has strengthened amid superficial talk of global triumph of democratic capitalism [The more I get into the other, the more I recede into myself.] That is how social knowledge and social reality are manufactured. ‘We’ are so different from ‘Them’ that they cannot be us and we cannot be them. Secondly, going by the tenets of cultural relativism or cultural diversity, there is no way of intervention of one in another. Thirdly, most important of all, problem is with the nature of the social space. ‘Reciprocity’ has become a rare human trait in the context of diversity. The ability of this transformed public sphere to fit in ‘infinite’ claims to justice and equality. The important aspect here is the ways cultures negotiate for mutual recognition in the public sphere [multiple valid claims]. At times it appears as if there is no intention for negotiation, only a sheer exhibition of ‘hate’ for one another.

One may argue that the transformed cultural spaces [public sphere] take care of this refraining nature people to come to terms with one another. In this sense, incommensurability would mean that values by which people live are irreducible and incompatible, and are hindrances to realizing diversity. One can go even further and ask whether the two – diversity and multiculturalism are at all realizable

human conditions. The focus needs to be diverted toward understanding human existence and thinking about the existence itself. Assuming that someone says that these two are feasible by championing ‘ethnocentrism.’ Ethnocentrism can be catastrophic either. It is, nonetheless, not an all-in-all concept that takes us to a level – where ‘all cultures’ in the multicultural framework attain a just society [more effective than that of Rawls’s ‘well-ordered just society’] and they lived happily ever after. The reason is human condition is predominantly driven by two vital aspects: one, conflict is perpetual²⁴ and second, human beings still carry symptoms of the Naturalistic savage – to have ever been possessed with greed for power, passion and glory.

To further this point cultures are to be treated as conditionally imperative. Unless we are cautious about ‘matters of culture’, the fear is individuals will be subjected to violence from cultural totality. We need to take account of the diffusion and transmission of human beings from one culture to another. Cultural appropriation is a dynamic process that throws substantial challenges to understanding social justice in the world context. It is right that social justice has been a central normative component of contemporary political philosophy despite being ambiguous in many ways. Nevertheless, it is not to be confused with the universal and the contextual notions of justice. Critics somewhat miss this point. Foundational notions of justice are needed. Suppose that multiculturalism, diversity and justice are desired conditions, yet they reside in mutually conflicting irreconcilable domains. These desired human conditions, though cannot be seen independent of conflict and struggle, nevertheless, could ill-afford to flout ‘ideal notions’ of a world order.

²⁴Stuart Hampshire, “Justice in Conflict: The Soul and the City,” *Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, Delivered at Harvard University, October 30-31, 1996.

It is also true that the pursuit of social justice calls for establishing an egalitarian society that takes care of the living conditions of all the members of the society. This cannot be said with confidence. Here, the individual is brought back as the focal point, though socio-political dimensions challenge individual-centric approach. Or it may have to be addressed like this: There is no going back to the individual. Human associations through out history have gifted the humanity with peculiar problems, and the world is busy in resolving them. This has a deeper philosophical significance. What should be the renewed focus of multiculturalism? It should be, as will be argued further in the paper, the epistemic notion of human diversity. Further, we, the people of the world today, have to realize the principle that ‘as we [*us*] have a right to live, *they* too have a right to live’. This universal principle is strictly immanent. Nevertheless we have to remind ourselves that it is no paradise gained where everything is what is dreamt of.

Justice and fairness are very complex ideas. While numerous perspectives seek to understand a ‘pluralist’ ‘diverse’ ‘multicultural society’ on the one hand, characterizing certain normative frameworks, on the other, dogmas of social and political justice seeking multicultural world make it a fantasy unrealized. In this sense, Liberal, Marxist, or any other philosophical framework, does not grasp the principle of living with differences – superficial and substantial. Realizing diversity becomes a meaningless enterprise unless an autonomous space of civil society lies with the subjects deliberating within the inter-subjective framework. The focus should be (i) Argument for a diverse world involves a fit between ideal and non-ideal notions of society – social reality of the desired kind is possible only when we accept the ironies of democratic liberalism. No socio-political perspective can perfectly achieve ‘reciprocal recognition’ as an existential condition. (ii) Giving up the sluggish notion of ‘cultural good’ which acts as ‘tyranny of the Good’. The point is

individuals ought to be free not only in embracing a particular cultural framework, but also free to oppose it. (iii) Any hope of a harmonious world of cultures should accompany our suspicion toward any normative framework. We cannot realize a just social order unless freed from the blues of a moralistic cohesive world.

Irony 1: Democratic Liberalism

The need for a diverse world is where plurality of values is the central driving force of the society. Value pluralism is really a realistic utopia. Political philosophy in some sense has to account for the utopian ideal principles. The challenge that Rawls's theory poses is the difficulty to accept the existence of profound and irreconcilable differences – the fact of pluralism as a permanent feature of any just society. Nevertheless, this is a challenge to us. The difficulty of the fact of pluralism should not make us depart from value pluralism, and needs to be treated as fundamental to our socio-political structures. Rawls does not close the discussion on the question he raises: “How is it possible that there may exist over time a stable and just society of free and equal citizens profoundly divided by reasonable religious, philosophical and moral doctrines?”²⁵ Though Rawls preempts a liberal-democratic political order, it throws open the debate as to what should be the nature of a just society. The possibility of co-existence is not always driven by the principle of avoidance, but by searching a way for inclusion of comprehensive doctrines in the socio-political structures.

Can the multicultural framework adopt the Rawls's model, whereby the basic structure of society is concerned about distributive and the rest is part of a com-

²⁵John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

prehensive philosophical framework? Such a society can exist in reality, but its social relationships remain extremely fragile. It is always a puzzle, philosophically speaking, as to what form of socio-political system is conducive to realize the goals of diversity. The contemporary re-enchanted world [like the *post-secular* world] has grown to such an extent that it is gone beyond the circle of universal human reason. The role is not to seek unifying principles, but to reconcile the immanent ‘diverse human condition’, as a fundamental principle. We live or are bound to live with essentially contested doctrines filled with contradictions and disagreements. Any claims to resolving these contradictions means inadequate grasp of the depth of the human condition. Modern world, an imperfect garden, with conflict and plurality is further characterized by ‘irreconcilable ethical and political’ systems [reference made to incommensurability and incomparability]. Two things are very vital here: morality of everyday life and politics of everyday life that demand the need to rise above our routine everyday existence. Isaiah Berlin’s account is to be taken more seriously here. Truly, political philosophy is possible only in a world where ends collide, and does not lie in human conformity to culture blindly. It is crucial how this collision takes place. This is an ideal condition, ideal in the sense that we are differently placed existentially but can ‘mutually’ recognize the differences.

Slavoj Žižek in his book *Living in the End Times*²⁶ rightly argues that global capitalism is reaching its terminal crisis, with all its mischief wherever possible. So is the fate of democratic liberalism [not to miss the ill-fated socialist and communist doctrines]. It is quite interesting to see Rawls and others who have something to offer as a solution to the growing inequalities. On the other hand, genuine shortcomings of democratic liberalism need to be reconciled. Diversity

²⁶(New York: London, Verso, 2010).

brings ever-growing rivalry among ways of life that not only influence the moral facet of our lives, but also display a constant tug-off-war among each other. Zizek labels it as ideological interplay. The irony of democratic liberalism is it projects itself as a neutral domain strictly concerned about rights and liberties. Hence, it is condemned to neutrality. This can be distantly connected to Kennan Malik's point that multiculturalism is one of the ironies we live with – where individual identity is lost in the collective identity; Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Western, American, Indian etc.²⁷

We need to conceive a form of life that is liberated from primitive ideological indoctrinations and prevailing cynical hyppocracies. The developments of the second half of twentieth century and later have definitely collapsed the hopes of many, not only under liberalism but also under Marxist-socialism as well. Ideologies themselves have become a disgrace to the growth of societies. In the world context, one can say that the 'liberal utopia' has failed largely, not only in fulfilling its promise of a reasonably just society [ripping us from all sorts of illusions of egalitarianism], but also failing in recognizing a diverse world. However, it is unreasonable on our parts if we allege democratic liberalism itself being responsible for the world we live in [after all whoever we are, we do have certain instincts categorically called as human]. This point in some sense is shared by George Kateb and Tracy Strong – that the twentieth century is the worst in human history from the moral point of view [this point is discussed in the previous chapter]. Many promises are made for a perfect world but none is fulfilled.

It is unreasonable to treat liberal-democratic framework as an idea right-in-itself.

²⁷ "Multiculturalism at its Limits: Europe talks to Europe", Bratislava (10 Sept, 2010). <http://www.kenanmalik.com/debates/bratislava.html>

A question is raised keeping in view economic and social justice on the one hand, and moral and political justice on the other. How should we live to realize the utopia of a diverse world bestowed with justice and equality? Žizek rightly argues that when we read an abstract ideological proclamation, we are well aware that people do not experience it abstractly. In order to pass from abstract propositions to people's real lives, it is necessary to add unfathomable density that a life-world constitutes. It is important indeed to reflect upon whether social and economic justice, local and global justice are achieved or not, but it is even more pertinent to look into the components of justice. Justice may take several forms. Current day problems are also perceived as problems of intolerance, besides they being problems of inequality, exploitation, injustice. Why is toleration the desired remedy, not emancipation, political struggle, even armed struggle?²⁸ Žizek attributes this to culturalization of politics, reducing everything to cultural differences – precisely projected as ‘tolerating the intolerable’ [present in mainstream notions of liberal multiculturalism]. He is right, as this kind of an approach misses the actual point of contention – a grand retreat from the substantive visions of justice.

In some sense, multiculturalism is hegemonic [with no exception to liberal multiculturalism], rightly put forth by Žizek, as it does not explain predominant form of social relations – culture and its components are assumed to be right-in-themselves [Žizek is probably right in strongly claiming (as a response to Sara Ahmad) that that multiculturalism as anti-racist itself is illusory.].²⁹ To prove Žizek wrong one has to explain and give a convincing answer to the question, “how could people who differ in their fundamental religious allegiances co-exist?”³⁰ The possible ob-

²⁸Slavoj Žizek, “Tolerance as an Ideological Category” *Critical Inquiry* (Autumn 2007). <http://www.lacan.com/zizek-inquiry.html>.

²⁹*Living in the End Times*. 44.

³⁰See his “Tolerance as an Ideological Category.”

jection to the liberal multicultural approach is in the intimate spaces predicated on fantasies of global justice, reciprocal recognition and love; thus, masking serious issues of contention. May be due to this reason multiculturalism is a ‘fantasmic’ idea. Žižek’s interpretation of Sara Ahmad’s ‘fantasy-claim’ appears to have defended the presence of such an illusion. He explains the point of Jacques Rancière in this form:

This gap between the “appearance” of equality-freedom and the social reality of economic and cultural differences can be interpreted in the standard symptomatic way, namely that the form of universal rights, equality, freedom, and democracy is just a necessary, but illusory expression of its concrete social content, the universe of exploitation and class domination.³¹

If the ‘appearance’ of equality has a power of its own in the re-articulation of social relations, then the ‘fantasmic’ notion of multicultural world too has the power of distorting the oppressive forms of domination in the world [speaking in Žižek’s terms only]. It should not be as fantasmic as [in a way Sara Ahmad refers to] saying that ‘another world is possible’ where there is no collision of ideas, values and commitments. But, political philosophy is possible only where ends collide. Or else we may have to address multiculturalism as no more a political idea. How can one imagine a non-ideological political realm? The political cannot be reinvented with any kind of indifference to irresolvable conflicts and the politics of everyday life. It is true that profound and grand philosophical questions do not figure in our everyday political life. Nevertheless, they figure in the lives of individuals in one form or the other, visible in their everyday existence. They are not to be addressed distinctly. The basis of a well-ordered society ought to widen

³¹Sara Ahmad, “Liberal-Multiculturalism is the Hegemony – It’s an Empirical Fact – A Response to Slavoj Žižek” <http://www.darkmatter101.org/site/2008/02/19/98liberal-multiculturalism-is-the-hegemony-its-an-empirical-fact-a-response-to-slavoj-zizek/>

the discourse ethic by increasing the range of reasons for justification of holding variety of values. Otherwise there is no way that value pluralism is given due recognition within a liberal democratic framework.

Irony 2: Tyranny of the [Social/Cultural] Good

It should be emphatically noted that cultural norms are only conditionally imperative. In this sense, social justice in particular and justice at large, by definition, ‘ought’ to be giving ample space for radical alternative ways of life. The claim here is that Rawls’s political liberalism scores over communitarian claims to a multicultural world. For this, we need to give up the imperative of cultural good. It may be important, as communitarians and proponents of multiculturalism speak, to regard the shared meanings of life, but it is even more vital to examine the nature and components of shared meanings of life. The argument of communitarians becomes somewhat redundant in continuing the debate on multiculturalism. It is doubtless that shared meanings of life shape and influence our collective lives to a large extent. Tradition formation and sustaining the tradition taking into its fold the ‘dynamic’ nature of culture is quite appreciative. This entire process does not grant us any ‘autonomous’ civil space. Autonomous in the sense individuals are none but free beings capable of making choices, here, to represent a particular cultural process too. Whenever justice is debated in the context of diversity [in terms of ethnicity and culture], we need to discuss two forms of diversity; internal and external. Internal diversity refers to the variety within a particular culture. External diversity refers to diversity between cultures. Whether we speak of economic [global] justice or social justice [global is missing in this phrase for several reasons], it is right to underscore the point of distinctness of persons. If distinct-

ness of persons is a valid criterion, then priority of the right over the good remains one of the core characteristics of Justice as Fairness. 'Fairness' is about individuals' natural inclination to a cultural identity, not an expression of 'intolerance' for the 'other'. Communitarians have to realize that the 'cultural good' projected as 'social good' becomes tyrannical and 'oppressive' in many ways. Most philosophers who are profoundly affected by the Holocaust and the Soviet Communism have focused on exposing in how many possible ways the social or a collective may turn totalitarian.

An anthropological defense may be drawn for the presence of closed cultures, whereby individuals become the bearers of cultural heritage. Robert E. Park may be right in claiming that cultural good is not something that is sold or exported, rather, diffused or transmitted in the process of exchange of economic goods.³² How does it guarantee a fair interplay between cultures? In a lecture Clifford Geertz discusses Levi-Strauss [written in 'The Anthropologist and the Human Condition'] stating that ethnocentrism is both a good and a bad thing.³³ Ethnocentrism is treated as one of the social goods. Perhaps ethnocentrism can never entirely disappear, but it can grow dangerously weak, leaving us a prey to a sort of moral entropy. Further, Geertz mentions the argument of Strauss, which says, "...one cannot enjoy the other, identify with him, and yet at the same time remain different". This is quite true. This can be referred to as cultural modifications or transmissions. The latter is nevertheless a challenge to anthropologists and sociologists in accounting for breaking up of cultural complexities. How is this possible? Can this go beyond the Us & Them divide as foreseen by Carl

³²See his essay, "The Problem of Cultural Differences", in Jenks, Chris, ed., *Culture: Critical Concepts in Sociology*, (New York: Routledge, 2003).

³³Clifford Geertz, "The Uses of Diversity" *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, delivered at The University of Michigan, November 8, 1985.

Schmitt? Breaking up of cultures does not mean in any sense erosion of cultures. Traditions formed through ‘shared meaning of life’ need not make the situation pathological, in the sense that we maintain strictly ‘we-are-we and they-are-they’ principle. One has to see what should be the focus of diversity and achieving a diverse world. It is certainly not just a reciprocal recognition of existence of multiple cultures impermeable and impenetrable. The issue is whether each one of us possesses the will to hear that voice that doesn’t belong to oneself or her life-world. There is partial truth in Geertz’s point that “an easy surrender to the comforts of merely being ourselves, cultivating deafness and maximizing gratitude for not having been ... will be fatal...”.³⁴ However, we are not attempting to move toward universal consensus regarding the questions of justice, in local and global contexts. Geertz’s understanding can be linked to our present claim of debunking the ‘tyranny of social/cultural good’, which is more committed to the aspect of the ‘culture of self-critique’. For instance, an American may be compelled to think that ‘liberal-democracy’ is one of the sources of harsh inequalities all over [where the predominant focus is on ‘individual utility maximization’]. Richard Rorty [making reference to a ‘super community’] rightly points out that one cannot be irresponsible toward a community of which one does not think of oneself as a member.³⁵ Geertz argues that the trouble with ethnocentrism is not its [rigid] cultural inclinations, but its tendency to impede us from discovering at what sort of logic we stand to the world, what sort of bat we really are. If an alien sensibility influences certain specific cultural phenomenon to which one belongs to is at times interpreted as arbitrary intervention or erosion of native cultures [the clash between the Orient and the Occident/Continent]. The challenge is, rightly pointed out by Geertz, to throw oneself into the collage of diversity without blurring one’s

³⁴“The Uses of Diversity.”

³⁵Richard Rorty, “Postmodernist Bourgeois Liberalism”, *The Journal of Philosophy*, 80.10(Oct 1983): 583-589, 583.

own sense of one's own location yet trying to get sense of other locales too.³⁶ He also argues that we must learn to grasp what we cannot embrace. However, there should not be any preemption regarding this as there will always be scope for 'what can be embraced'. Multiculturalism becomes really hegemonic in nature. If at all multiculturalism has to be a meaningful phenomenon toward reciprocal recognition [even in the imperfect sense], it has to take care of the two most important things: the right to embrace a culture and the right to (psychologically) withdraw from a particular culture. It has to give way to the interruption of certain social phenomena.

Irony 3: Culturally Moralistic

Human thinking ought to be reflexive and imaginative is treated by many moral-political philosophers as a way out to choose between avoidance of conflict and persistence of conflict. Moral philosophers argue for a system of moral codes that in some way brings reconciliation between pluralism and disagreement. Stuart Hampshire's point is crucial here. We need to tackle a pluralistic world of different languages, different ways of life, and different conventions within a shared life. The point of observation is how well it explores the idea that value pluralism is more than what is referred to as an empirical fact of cultural difference and diversity. The book very finely draws the debates regarding the 'possibility' of reconciliation from incommensurability and incomparability. This takes us to what most of the contemporary moral and political philosophers argue for – value

³⁶ "The difficulty here is enormous. Comprehending that which is alien to us and likely to remain so, without either smoothing it over with vacant murmurs of common humanity, disarming it as with each-to-his-own indifference, is a skill we have arduously learned. . . ." Geertz, "The Uses of Diversity"

pluralism. What is the aim of a political society or societies here? The aim of a modern political society ['modern' here also refers to the 'contemporary'] is not to bring into this world harmony and the comprehensive vision of a good life. Instead, political philosophy should aim at proper manifestation of the idea that modern societies are like imperfect gardens, rich with variety of life-forms, a fact to be reconciled. We live or are bound to live with essentially contested doctrines filled with contradictions and disagreements. Modern world, an imperfect garden, with conflict and plurality is further characterized by 'irreconcilable ethical and political' systems [reference made to incommensurability and incomparability]. Two things are very vital here: morality of everyday life and politics of everyday life that demand the need to rise above our routine existence. Truly, political philosophy is possible only in a world where ends collide. It is crucial how the collision takes place. The approaches of Weber, Berlin, Hampshire, Gray, Rawls, Habermas and others compel us to think of a rational [political] discourse with fair ways of negotiating both 'negation' and 'loss'. However, the very nature of the 'political' itself leaves us with perpetual conflicts that in turn challenge our theoretical perceptions of fairness and reasonableness. Hampshire's question as to what is the business of politics can be approached afresh. Politics has a dual role here; the search for an account of an ideal society seeking universal principles of justice, and second, protection against the perennial evils of good life – in both macroscopic and microscopic ways. These universal principles act as a necessary evil only.

Without being too moralistic, can multiculturalists agree to the notion that 'reasonable people do not fight other 'reasonable' people'? ³⁷ If human nature is

³⁷Review of John Rawls's *Laws of the People* by Mark Van Roojen, *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 36(2002): 555-562, 555.

egoistic; there is no way to change it, then what is needed is a mechanism that make private vices work for the common good. In the previous section, we have already seen how ‘tyrannical’ the notion of common good can be unless ‘distinctness’ of persons’ and ‘autonomous civil sphere’ are promoted and guaranteed. The drawback in Rawls’s *Laws of the People* is that he recommends the identification of common core of political ideas about which we can agree with other reasonable people. This makes the argument for global justice very simplistic, veiling several forms of discrimination. The main argument here is that liberal societies too are as ‘morally tyrannical’ as non-liberal societies. Any hope of a harmonious world of cultures is not suspicion toward any normative framework. We need to admit, rather than tackle, a pluralistic world of different languages, different ways of life, and different conventions within a shared life. The assumption that political liberalism’s [also referred to as ‘realistic utopia’] will realize the realistic utopia – eliminates all human evils, through public political justice, is subject to skepticism. Rawlsian idea weakens the understanding of human nature is essentially good and good political institutions will nurture their goodness. It is not ‘good’ that is problematic, what is considered good is subject to open debate. The entire moral-political contention lies here. The challenge that Rawls’s theory poses is the difficulty in accepting the existence of profound and irreconcilable differences – the fact of pluralism as a permanent feature of any just society.³⁸ The complexity of the fact of pluralism should not make us depart from value pluralism, with an undesirable recourse to universalism. Rawls does not close the discussion on his question that we mentioned earlier: “How is it possible that there may exist over time a stable and just society of free and equal citizens profoundly divided by reasonable religious, philosophical and moral doctrines?” His public reason and Habermas’s discourse ethics may bring fairness and reasonableness on the one

³⁸Peter Lassman elaborately discussed this in his book *Pluralism* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011).

hand, and rationality on the other, aiming for a common public culture. It has to explain how rich is this common public culture and the extent to which it can be value-plural.

Their arguments seem to continue what Immanuel Kant has argued for in *Perpetual Peace*: “The guarantee of perpetual peace is nothing less than that great artist, nature. In her mechanical course, it is seen that her aim is to produce a harmony among men, against their will and indeed through their discord.”³⁹ Though the Kantian supposition gives us a rosy picture of a harmonious world, a gloomy picture of impossibility of such a world follows it. In *Laws of the People*, Rawls mentions one very crucial point: people are free and independent, and their freedom and independence are to be respected by other peoples. Both the positions miss a crucial point. Harmony among individuals and reasonable negotiation among reasonable people are not guaranteed even in the liberal ‘rational’ societies. At least Rawls cannot [taking into account the time during *Laws of the People* is written] claim that liberal societies are hallmarks of representing ethical states. Either Rawls is ignoring everything, extending arguments discussed in A theory of Justice or he is conditioned to think that liberalism is still the better option despite its failed missions in several ways. There is a point here to be made clear. Let us for a moment bring back Geertz’s conclusion of his lecture. Geertz refers to an example and says, “We have more than sentimental sympathy with that refractory ‘American Indian’ [why not a white American taken as an example here], it is not because he holds his views. Alcoholism is indeed an evil . . .”⁴⁰ There is a problematic assumption in both the cases. In Rawls’s case, liberal societies are politically and ethically just societies and in Geertz’s case, that issues

³⁹See Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, First Supplement - “On the Guarantee of Perpetual Peace.”

⁴⁰“The Uses of Diversity.”

of diversity can be addressed using impartial [moral] principles are unconvincing. The apprehension of Sara Ahmad should be taken seriously: In multicultural love, there is a serious threat. The threat ‘become us, become like us’⁴¹ is no different from ‘our culture is the best’. In this a liberal is no different from a non-liberal.

The enigma of ‘harmonious culture’ amidst diverse cultures and diverse moralities brings back our claims to internal and external diversity, there is/will always be a fit between universal claims on the one hand [universal claims here refers to any one particular ideology claiming itself to have ‘encompassing’ answers to our existential dilemmas], and pluralism and relativism on the other. The dilemma of rejecting/embracing universalism and shifting to radical relativism subject individuals to moral conditions. Cultural relativism may have certain rightful arguments, but concerns for justice in the world context seek to avoid closed cultural practices. Every claim of a cultural relativist possesses the possibility of ‘reconcilability’ by foreign cultures. Probably Geertz was referring to such possibilities. It may well occur to anyone that what is it that is justifiable to an insider that an outsider doesn’t comprehend. There is a twist here. This would go in two directions. One, the over-determination of universalism that assumes an all-encompassing value [right-in-itself] and second, self-examination of what would ‘I’ do in her place, in her cultural context. Opposition to overdoing of cultural norms focuses on the second part. Democratic liberalism has missed the chance of becoming the ‘super-hero’ or ‘savior’ of the world. The world becomes a collection of just societies only when each and every culture departs from the ‘cultural prejudice’ that ‘we need to tolerate the intolerable’. Here, the only utopia that we need to attain is ‘we don’t tolerate’, rather, we live in different life-worlds that make up the diverse world. To attain this state, cultures everywhere need to imbibe in themselves

⁴¹Zizek, *Living in the End Times*, 53.

internal and external diversity. Global justice is not just attained by readjusting some resources that bring changes in economic equations of societies.

3.3 Humanity and Fairness

John Rawls's political philosophy is one of the most influential thought experiments of the twentieth century, rightly states Timothy Hinton. The experiment was about: "which principles of justice would a group of individuals choose to regulate their society if they were *deprived of any information* about themselves that might bias their choice?" [emphasis added]⁴² It is indeed a great thought experiment within the formalist framework. Rawls's idea is that justice stands 'for the sake of the theoretical speculation'. This idea succeeds another great social as well as thought experiment [more than a thought experiment]. Rawls's theory drew more attention after 1990s, the high time of liberal-capitalist triumphalism, with his publication of *Political Liberalism*. Marx definitely was action-oriented - pushing for things if they don't turn-up themselves, "the real task is to change it". The revolutionary spirit is explained in this manner. Human beings are aware of what has to change and move toward a past-disentangled future. On the other hand, Rawls also stressed upon the non-metaphysical, political sense of understanding of justice [one can say in addition to economic justice]. Pitching them together is like a revolutionary in head-to-head confrontation with an epistemologist. We should not shy away from asserting that social experiment scores over thought experiment.

⁴²See Timothy Hinton (ed.), *Original Position* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

With all experience at their disposal, the exploited clearly seeks to grab what they deserve from their exploiters, to redeem themselves from all possible forms of economic exploitation. In the case of Rawls it is taken-for-granted that the *zero-sum situation* constituted with rational individuals, by virtue of fair-play, experiences the reasonable behavior from them reflecting the principles of justice.⁴³ In order to achieve a well-ordered society these assumptions are necessary in order to escape from radical skepticism. Both Marx and Rawls are optimists in this sense. Why does Rawls develop such a theory of justice? Had he seen any impossibility in Marxism? Does he do justice to Marx in his *Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy*? Though there are answers to these questions, yet, our focus is on the principle of “justice as fairness”, where it is treated as *the* outcome of just institutions driven by the idea of “overlapping consensus”. To carry ahead the meaning of this idea - we have to either blindly lay faith in our *chosen* just institutions to safe-guard our political guarantees, i.e., complete protection and preservation of basic liberties of each and everyone, or to infer that Rawls’s theory has no way of tackling the issue as it is outside the scope of the theory. It is admissible that for the sake of theory and for forcing-change *determinate* assumptions are needed. Like other traits such as reasonableness, rationality, if fairness is also an in-built and *a priori* present, why do we need the game of the *original position* or the *overlapping consensus*? It means that even with those traits, individuals [rational and reasonable] can subvert each other’s social life. May be this is what ultimately capitalism can take us to. This may contradict the defendants of rationality of capitalism. For instance, to speak through John Locke, if enough wealth had been created on Earth where even if one amasses as much as s/he can, then also enough

⁴³John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Harvard University Press, 1971). His theory of justice is like a scientific theory - it proceeds with suppositions and assumptions [like the Kantian way]. These suppositions are building blocks of his theory. Like individuals are rational, in the sense, they are fair to each other, make just institutions and form a well-ordered communion.

is left for the rest of the humankind. How do we tackle if this logic fails in the real world? When this logic fails concern for equality and justice comes into the picture.

Tackling this crisis is getting into the contestations between the central values of liberty and equality. Rawls has definitely rescued liberalism but not to a greater extent. There is a moral conception of liberty in Rawls combining Rousseau and Kant. The idea of liberty is acting in accordance with the law that we give to ourselves.⁴⁴ The face of *LCD* still represents the idea that in everyone there is dignity and liberty inextricable from oneself. Who is this everyone? The missing element even in contemporary liberal political theory is indifference to the proposition that collective life can be responsible for deprivation and denial of things felt as given. The role of just institutions is meaningful here than anywhere else. Nevertheless, Rawls raises a very powerful question, “how is it possible that there can be a stable and just society whose free and equal citizens are deeply divided by conflicting and even incommensurable religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines?”⁴⁵ Rawls has a major influence of Rousseau. The well-ordered society is an outcome of sense of justice - Rousseau’s [later Kant’s] understanding of it is one’s capacity to understand and to follow the principles of justice based on the contract.⁴⁶ For Rawls, the community is guided by a conception of right, while for communitarians, human beings are social beings guided by the principle of good. There are very interesting accounts in Rousseau and defenders of Rousseau too. General Will is made important because it aims at the prevention of inequality or disorder. Sklar’s understanding is that the general will wills justice and equal-

⁴⁴“John Rawls’s Rousseau: From Realism to Utopia”

⁴⁵John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 133.

⁴⁶John Rawls, *Lectures on the History of Political Philosophy*(), 219.

ity.⁴⁷ The will to equality has to be grasped more deeply. What kind of equality is central to Rousseau's political imagination? That things wont be let to remain natural is itself an indication of the presence of human element in the construction of a society. For Rousseau, the idea of equality comes from the understanding of an order that tackles inequality.

Maurizio Virolli puts the argument of Rousseau nicely: "Now, the form of inequality which, for Rousseau, represents a real moral and political problem is the inequality in the degree of dignity and esteem which each individual is able to command in his dealings with others." The idea of order "as the allocation of everything in its right place" is central to western philosophy.⁴⁸ Identifying the *right place* of everything is not as easy as thought by Rousseau, Kant, and Rawls. What is that Rousseau must have not anticipated? Rawls's thought experiment should have taken care of those missed anticipations. The difference between the traditional social contract and the Rawlsian social contract is to be seen. Identifying the difference if any would enlighten us with whether Rawls made any considerable refinement of the idea. Achieving the perfect state of esteem and dignity depends upon, in view of the present times, the placing of individuals *via* their identities in the social order. It remains fundamentally skeptical in the entire intellectual tradition of liberal-capitalism. It is doubtful as to whether it induces individuals to abstract from their actual positions reflecting their rankings in the social order. Virolli states that Rousseau does not meddle with the differences in **social standing**. The hypothetical social contract serves only limited purpose in the actual world. Individuals are not mere distinct entities, but enter into

⁴⁷See Judith Skhlar, "The Force of Freedom: Rousseau on Forcing to be Free," *Political Theory*, 27.3(June 1999): 299-333.

⁴⁸See his book *Jean jacques Rousseau and the Well-Orderd Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 55-60.

different communes owing to their common interests. The fact that Rousseau is complacent enough not to disturb the social standing/ranking individuals already hold - “disorder springs from pride and the desire to be more highly esteemed and honoured than others.”⁴⁹ How does one interpret this idea: “that differences of rank should be respected and preserved just as they are. If it were not so the body politic, like the universe, would fall into chaos.”⁵⁰ What difference does it make in our understanding of the community and society at large? An immediate response to this goes like this: Rightness mediates individuals drawing the legitimate basis of their claims [to be more precise **kantian conception of right reason**].

Macintyre, Walzer and Sandel have been strong critics of Rawls and liberal political theory has come a long way from addressing this theoretical rivalry. While addressing the debate between [Rawlsian] liberalism and communitarians, we treat this as an issue within the larger paradigm of liberal-democracy only. The difference that is to be noted here is, while Rawls’s well-ordered just society confines itself to clearly defined formal notions. For instance, they realize the significance of the public conception of justice - attaining clarity on what is agreeable and what is disputable. In other words, rational human beings also possess the sense of *public* reason. Communitarians, on the other hand, put their case in a different yet interesting manner. Contrary to the choice-thesis, they claim that our ends precede us, because the space [of culture, community, identity] is prior to us. All that precedes us is part of already shared experiences. Our understanding of society in this sense is not distanced away from our understanding of community [whether it is the originary community or something else is discussed while discussing about Nancy and the problem of *inoperative* community.]. Nevertheless,

⁴⁹Maurizio Viroli, *Jean Jacques Rousseau and the Well-Ordered Society*, 57.

⁵⁰Maurizio Viroli, *Jean Jacques Rousseau and the Well-Ordered Society*, 56.

we can re-interpret two principal claims of both the sides: [1] necessity of separating the conception of the good from the right and [2] their inseparability. The advancement of the idea in Rawls is that it is not *presupposed* on the anthropocentric approach. One has to see how the conception of inequality affects the idea of equality in Rawls. What does Rawls attempt to rectify? Natural inequalities or social inequalities? This is a difficult proposition as such.⁵¹ Equality of individuals has occupied a great deal of thought for a few centuries - but as individuals formed communes, cultures and more greatly identities, the notion of individual does not carry the same connotation. The interesting aspect is how this equality of individuals shapes up as equality of communes [identities]. Contrarily, for communitarians, a community whose members do not share a conception of good, lacks a conception of justice.

Distinction between natural and artificial inequalities is informative and insightful. The usefulness of it now determines the strength of liberal political philosophy. For social traditional contractualists natural inequalities [as they naturally exist] are less serious and less violent than artificial inequalities. The ability of humans to “harm and wreck havoc in the lives of others” is considered as an outcome of the civil law. Virolli mentions an interesting observation of Hobbes interpreted by Barbeyrac and Cumberland: “Hobbes ... was concerned only with the equality of natural powers, inasmuch as this equality, which can be described as purely physical, causes men to fear each other; he notes that all the consequences of this may be reduced to a maxim of prudence, which is that one should restrain

⁵¹ “While the qualities of body or of mind are described as natural, the inequalities of rank and social status are said to be accidental or artificial. They are artificial because subject to change. But what is even more important is that these inequalities give rise to ‘natural envy’ and are a source of ‘conflict and slandering or ceaseless complaining’. By contrast, the ‘natural’ differences produce neither envy nor disputes.” See Virolli, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the Well-Ordered Society*, 65.

oneself from rashly insulting others, because, since they are as strong as we are, they can return the same to us with interest.”⁵² By saying so, Hobbes and later Rousseau seemed to have had their own idea of **permissible inequalities** - in other words, social contract is desirable despite the persistence of natural inequalities that are given a different shape by the civil law and civil society. This has a far-reaching impact on individuals coming together in various communes. Pufendorf is right in saying that this idea of the social contractualists is very simple. That which is naturally bestowed is not treated as unjust. The general assumption is that natural inequalities barely affect social inequalities.⁵³ This is anyway greatly contestable. To preserve the bare life [let us treat it as *physical life*] may be the only purpose of the social contract.

Rousseau explained the reasons why natural inequalities [in his *Discourse on Inequality* he maintained them as ‘natural differences’ that might turn into conditions of inequality in the social condition] potentially transform into moral inequalities, *via human consent*. Inequalities of some kind [*of body and mind*] normatively imply hierarchy [natural they may say] of human beings too. Things that are naturally bestowed, by human convention, become worse in the form of social and moral inequalities. How does Rawlsian original position treat permissible inequalities? Does the original position take individuals back to that natural state [of mental and bodily gifts] by way of abstraction from the actual situations? One can interpret the original position likewise as all comparative existence of social beings is negated. The advantage of taking the negotiable condition between individuals is the *supposed certainty* of fairness. If comparison is the cause of inequalities, we must assume that the original position projected as comparisonless [rationalistic]

⁵²Virolli, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the Well-Ordered Society*, 65.

⁵³Fred Neuhaus, “Rousseau and the Nature of Inequality” - Unpublished paper, 3.

negotiation. It is not a return to the condition of the state of nature, but, abstraction from the actual social relations. More than Rousseau, Rawls was aware of individuals as distinct persons and was also conscious of the necessity of particular social structures. Virolli presents another disputable proposition - "Perfect equality ... has its price: it rules out the very concept of individual."⁵⁴ What can be implied from this? Individuals gain identity in a society but it is falsely presupposed that this identity is as individuals only.

Liberal philosophers' dependence on this hypothetical thought experiment is at times unsatisfactory - society and inequality are outcomes of chance circumstances. "No individual can be appreciated, esteemed or valued except through the agency of others". The independence of being unto-oneself is lost once we enter the society. A question can be posed to both the traditional social contractualists and later social contractualists: Entering into an agreement, are we announcing that our lives are secure only when we give each other while also taking from each other? This idea of the **golden rule** seem to have no role eventually. Mads Qvortrup discusses the same - the principle of the golden rule [*do unto others as you would have do unto them*] is not simple and its implications on moral and economic theory is difficult to estimate. Various forms of liberalism have different ways of overcoming the over-determination of individuals' self-interest mediating their preferences and choices. In socialism, the utopian element is the absence of greed and exploitation in the moral sense and a just effective control of distribution. The utopian element in liberalism has a distinguishing element from other liberal thinkers, treatment of individuals as mere rational entities does not take us much far. Equality of all means equality of all identities is no logical consequence in liberalism.

⁵⁴ *Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the Well-Ordered Society*, 71.

Fairness is conceived in two important ways. One, things that are distributable with institutional and constitutional guarantees. Second, other than those mentioned in the realm of distribution, individuals share their meanings of life and existence, and seek dignity and respect from each other. Is it mutual for communitarians? This has been discussed phenomenally in response to Rawls in the past few decades. How do individuals display their sense of fairness toward each other? Rawls's *justice as fairness* may not be convincing to anti-rationalists and suspects of public reason. However, his theory seems to have very clearly realized the dangerous terrain called **common good**, and takes a different tour to explain the same. The issue is whether his public reason and comprehensive domain keep alive the traditional liberalism's distinction between the public and the private. What is it to share a conception of good? Is it the social space? Is it the anthropic notion of social space? Rawls's critics create problems for themselves. While critiquing Rawls they need to have a convincing idea of 'sharing the public space' - in other words, the shape of the common good? Rawls must have had an escape route [escape from metaphysics of the self and the community] to the analytic domain of *distributive* justice. Both liberalism and communitarianism associate themselves with an impoverished notion of pluralism. *Fact of pluralism* is not just value pluralism⁵⁵, instead, it needs to be more radical than is defined in these political theories. Pluralism begins with a level down of universalism and ends with the individual. The basic structure of political institutions should infact reflect the principles of justice. This point is not just confined to the aspects of distributive justice but it should reflect the actual social justice. Infact the latter is the result of deplorable conditions of social inequality. There is no allegation that Rawls is not aware of it. It has been mentioned in the earlier chapter that Jean-Luc Nancy frankly states refuting Sartre that Communism

⁵⁵Isaiah Berlin, John Kekes, William Galtson etc. are the important proponents of the idea.

is no more an unsurpassable horizon of our time.⁵⁶ Later, Benedict Anderson explains that alliances based on identity proved lot more fruitful than alliances made on ideological grounds. Identity comes into picture and can play, contrary to what Anderson says, a great havoc. In other words, if justice is the first virtue of institutions, both polity and civil society should have the conscience of justice dependent on equality of all identities and individuals. A fair society requires this as the *bare minimum* condition. It implies, though one cannot say whether Rawls had this in his mind, that *all* differences are kept in mind - in the original position. Theoretically sound but practical possibility is always to be suspected.

Liberalism understands equality and justice differently. The difference that Rawls's theory of justice holds is discussed above. Besides, we need to take a position as to whether liberal-democracy's idea of egalitarianism scores over the socialist idea of equality. Marxism/Communism focuses on the economic liberation, so too Rawls's theory of justice. This may need some reflection even when the comparison itself is absurd. Their focus is mostly different. One simple difference is that the latter is more radical than the former. The challenge to liberalism is even more greater. We can agree to the fact there are/can be agreeable inequalities. The certainty that these differences are constitutive of individual capabilities to rise after the given minimum is ensured has to be established. To understand justice and equality in order to discover the redressal process is a must condition. This cannot overlook the socio-historical-political conditions of the society. All liberation and emancipatory movements take their inspiration or derive from these given conditions. Socialism takes account of these inequalities and injustices. Interpreters and defenders of Rawls claim that his theory is more about the

⁵⁶Jean-Luc nancy, *The Inoperative Community* ed. by Peter Connor; td. by Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland and Simona Sawhney, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 8.

workable conditions of a possible well-ordered society in the pragmatic sense of the term. On the contrary, *political liberalism* compromises with the radical rupture of the basic structure of society. What is the basic structure? Basic structure is not just a collection of *rational* individuals with explicit or implicit consent, but also the collection of their **conscience** that reflects in their attitude toward each other. Rawls, like Marx, gives priority to distributive justice. Economic upliftment definitely elevates social position. There is reverse possibility too - social/cultural backwardness can create economically hazardous life. Rawls and Rawlsians strongly pronounce that the 'unsettled questions of the collective or community' is beyond the scope of the core of the theory of justice and political liberalism. Rawls gave preference to those realms where agreement is possible. The idea of the common good has a different sense from that of the communitarians. Whether this common good takes care of the *value pluralism* is doubtful in both the cases. The principle of a well-ordered society is that the political institutions are the result of the consensus of the consenting individuals in the original position and in the democratic political order. Is such a kind of socio-political existence possible? Difficult indeed. This point is discussed earlier. We have gone far ahead of Rawls and Marx in adhering to a specific dimension of justice and equality. There is reductionism in both. On the one hand, there is lot of merit in Rawls's idea of *justice as fairness* that appears like a simulated society. On the other, Rawls's theory can be qualified as a blue print model - who, under the influence of Rousseau and Kant, talks of moral-rational equality of human beings.

In the Rawls's model what is to be equal and what is to be differential is clearly set. This is reflected in principles of justice for individuals being differently from that of the basic structure. For both, the basic structure is supposed to be the just structure. The pressing question is how does Rawls ensure the practical

reality of the original position? Liam Murphy criticizes Rawls stating that Rawls's division of moral labour is to take the task of 'securing justice off people's plates in their day-to-day lives.'⁵⁷ Is it true? Are institutions that are outcome of human imagination not supposed to keep up the promise? Do just institutions make any promise or do they have any implicit promise in them? Individuals play an important role here than institutions. Both Murphy and Cohen⁵⁸ give primacy to individuals. Nagel too defends the significance of choice of individuals. But there can be a response to all these criticisms. Just institutions themselves reflect the choice of individuals of the principles of justice. The importance given to social institutions pushes Rawls a few steps closer to Marx - *i.e.*, individual consciousness is influential of collective consciousness. Even Rawls thinks that an individual's mentality is shaped by the presence of just institutions of the society

The guarantee of fairness in this just basic structure has to be looked into. Samuel Scheffler makes an interesting observation of the moral division of labour: "While stating that it is not a burden on individuals, it does not provide a justification for unlimited self-seeking in the economic choices of individuals, and it is not a device for reconciling divergent aspects of life. What is difficult to negotiate is radical pluralism even within the liberal-democratic political framework. There is an irony here. Pluralism is the mark of an open society that *LCD* proudly claims itself to be. What an open society it is that undervalues radical differences and radical pluralism? Totalitarian political regimes lack even minimal sense of pluralism. Post-1989 has evinced that liberal-democratic societies are also inca-

⁵⁷Liam B. Murphy, "Institutions and the Demands of Justice," *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 27.4(Autumn 1994): 251-291.

⁵⁸Cohen expresses his disagreement with Rawls in the nonliberal sense. The completion of human emancipation lies in translating individual powers into social powers. Here the person realizes freedom and equality in terms of everyday life. See his book *Rescuing Justice and Equality* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008), 1.

pable of instilling true value-pluralism while they are supposed to be. Radical pluralism requires justice to be treated as both individual as well as an institutional virtue. If socio-political institutions are designed in conformity with the principles of justice, then, it suggests that individual conduct within those institutions may legitimately be responsive to various norms and ideals that govern our political-personal lives and interpersonal relationships.

Equality, justice and freedom are equally important. However, these would create a complex ideological fix, the notion of freedom in equality and the idea of equality in freedom. Among the existing forms of liberalism, Rawlsian political liberalism offers individual liberation from all possible ill-drives or vices. That is how dignity is actually realized, not left to the fate of our speculation that certain things are inalienable from all human beings by virtue of being human. This is very significant. How can individuals/collectives/communities/religions/nations develop the conscience of humaneness to conceive institutions on the principles of justice. Liberalism seems to have violated its own principle. It could truly realize the principle of equality of natural freedoms - only anticipated, yet remain complacent about, the social condition violating these [rights] inalienable assets of human beings.

How is Rawls justice as fairness possible without a proper understanding of the political in order for a society to be well-ordered? Its major institutions must not only be just but also framed so as to encourage the virtue of justice in those who take part in them. Thus, justice is not only morally just but also politically just. Liberalism cannot be any more radical than this. Rawls's theory shies away from discussion of the *intersections* of life-plans or processes of realization of life-plans of individuals. He takes this for granted: a life-plan would imply that every

individual forms for herself ought to be rationally-morally justified that is measured outside the light of consequentialism. Rawls's theory fits into the framework of liberal egalitarianism that never, like all other forms of liberalism, penetrates into realm of the political. Only the virtue of non-consequentialist approach the collision of ends-persuasion is averted or doesn't take place. Egalitarianism is all about permissible inequalities that searches for convincing explanation [though in vain] for 'letting those differences' remain. Roberto Alejandro says that his idea is compatible with several accounts of the political realm. Political liberalism is governed by the centrality of juridical institutions, which are the embodiment of public reason. He asks the question: What is political about Rawls's political liberalism?⁵⁹ It is true that the basic structure shapes the way the social system produces and reproduces itself over time to form a certain kind of culture shared by persons with certain conceptions of the good.

Rawls seems to have had extreme faith in his assumptions - the most significant being a just basic structure will have political institutions guided by the principles of justice. A well-ordered society by itself takes care of the goals of justice. The issue is not just about the distribution or distributive justice. The issue is 'who is the target of distributive justice'? It is important to address the question of which ideology scores over the other. Rawls might have avoided this discussion cleverly or shrewdly. He assumes the superiority of or the only *givenness* of *LCD*. The latter is the logical outcome of individuals **consensual** choice of principles of justice that further logically creates liberal democratic political institutions. This supposition would also mean that *LCD* automatically takes care of backward condition of the people. Cohen is not convinced with Rawls. He is skeptical of

⁵⁹See his article, "What's Political about Rawls's Political Liberalism," *The Journal of Politics*, 58.1(Feb 1996): 1-24.

the principles of justice differently placed for institutions and individuals. Rawls's separation of principles has an implication [1] a just basic [economic] structure has the obligation of a certain form of justice, where, [2] simultaneously individuals can carry on their [economic] activity that goes against the principle of justice.⁶⁰ There is every possibility that these two lose a kind of harmonious relationship. It is very much possible in a liberal-capitalist mode of production. It implies, to summarize Cohen, that the idea of a minimal state [later Ranciere qualifies as *police*] of traditional liberalism maximally transforms itself into a minimal welfare society. For Rawls it is sufficient enough to achieve his *minimax* principle - the minimum standard of living for the maximum disadvantaged. That the [just] basic structure will take care of hard inequalities without encroaching upon the freedoms of individuals consists in itself a weak determinism. There is every possibility of no-other regarding actions creating miserable conditions for others. What does Cohen mean by this: "pile up your earthly goods on the mundane plane of civil society but be a saint in the heaven of politics."⁶¹ He opines that the important aspect of any theory of justice is to give an idea of society with an ethos of everyday life. This is very important. Economic and social activities are inconceivable without deducing the abstract notion of *equal dignity* into our concrete everyday life.

Now it is an established fact that all major political ideologies think about society as more than mere collection of individuals. One's life is impacted by the life of others - encounters and intersections. Cohen's claim is that deep inequalities are not permissible to calculate distributive justice. Liberalism permits that deep inequality. The negative affect of it is the violation of ethos of every day

⁶⁰G. A. Cohen, *Rescuing Justice and Equality*, 2.

⁶¹*Rescuing Justice and Equality*, 2.

life. We began here stating that Rawls's is considered to be one of the greatest thought experiments of the previous century. The issue is moral dependence on such a thought experiment that is ignorant of certain facts about the world. Cohen's worry is that normative politics with the exclusion of sociology, real politics and history will rescue justice and equality. Critics have attacked Rawls's theory in two respects. [1] Justice as fairness, political not metaphysical is an impoverished notion of community, as communitarians would say. The allegation is that liberalism lacks any conception of the common good [Mouffe] reduced to juridico-administrative concerns [Connolly, Honig]. [2] The idea of justice is gross under-treatment of politics. His political liberalism is too smooth to admit of a strong theoretical model. The two criticisms are important because there is no escape from society and politics.

Rawls's rational individuals are ignorant at the time of original position. The ignorance has to transform into knowledge when they are responsible for the shaping-up of liberal political institutions. The possibility of *inter-generational* justice lies here, not to pass injustices into the next generations. In *Leiter Reports*, Raymond Geuss states an interesting point: Rawls's states that his service in the second world war triggered the idea of justice. Geuss responds to this asking, "What ... would one have to believe about the world to think "What is the correct conception of justice?" is the appropriate question to ask in the face of concentration camps, secret police, and the firebombing of cities?" This is a very sharp question to Rawls. The war condition is not a condition of economic inequality. It is the reflection of the very attitude of human beings to life and death. He further raises a question that creates problems for Rawls: "are reflections about the correct distribution of goods and services in a "well-ordered society" the right kind of intellectual response to slavery, torture, and mass mur-

der?" These questions challenge *LCD* its moral ontological status. Rawls's idea of basic structure is *janus faced* - a just basic structure is imminent and sounds *prima facie* substantial. Upon deeper reflection sounds just basic and superficial.⁶² His theory *prima facie* sounds promising because of the Kantian spell - all is well about justice [and equality] by virtue of being principles. Cohen identifies this in the writings of Rawls. For the latter, individuals act through a sense of justice in their daily life deriving motivation from the principles of justice. The problem lies here. Individuals are brought to original position - the zero-sum situation - creating a no-negotiable condition for groups. The implication of it is "I do not care if you cannot negotiate [owing to the latter's disadvantageous condition in the real world]. Cohen is not the first one to give a critique of absence of historicity in Rawls. What is important in Cohen is to focus on the requirement of an ethos governing daily life that is more than mere obedience to rules.⁶³

Critics find Rawls's suppositions very problematic. The biggest criticism of Rawls is that he had subverted politics by placing morality [rationality] above it. Rawls's theory is a pragmatic theory and an ideal theory as well. For liberals, Rawls's theory is pragmatic and for the critics, his is an idealistic theory. The realist critique is very vital as it questions the validity of normative politics or normative political theory.⁶⁴ Normative political theory is grounded in some kind of brute foundational assumptions of full sufficiency of the abstract principles. With this faith in abstract principles individuals extend their free and fair terms of social co-operation. Social co-operation is always a scary idea. Who co-operates

⁶²Especially feminists find his idea of basic structure too shallow. G. A. Cohen, "Where the Action Is: On the Site of Distributive Justice" *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 26.1(Winter 1997): 3-30. Also see Mari J. Matsuda, "Liberal Jurisprudence and Abstracted Visions of Human Nature: A Feminist Critique of Rawls's Theory of Justice," *New Mexico Law Review* 613(1983): 614 - 630.

⁶³"Where the Action Is: On the Site of Distributive Justice," 18.

⁶⁴James Gledhill, "Rawls and Realsim," *Social Theory and Practice* 38.1(Jan 2012):55-82.

with whom? It is always within the bounds of social control. It means that the disadvantaged have no much to negotiate that they are forced to cooperate in achieving the overlapping consensus. Cohen argues that Rawls's basic structure requires coercive implementation of the idea of social co-operation.⁶⁵

The core idea is that inequalities in the advantages that people enjoy are acceptable if they derive from the choices that people make, but not inequalities from unchosen circumstances, which are taken to include social factors like class and wealth of the family into which one is born. We cannot accept inequalities arising from people's unfortunate circumstances. Does Rawls take cognizance of the unfortunate circumstances? Discrimination based on race, religion, community, ethnicity, caste, gender etc., cannot be permitted. Discriminations have acquired different shapes and forms in the twentieth century. J. S. Mill stressed upon the informal social pressures that take away one's liberty as much as coercive laws. Cohen is right in saying that personal is political - "personal choices to which writ of the law is indifferent are fateful of social justice."⁶⁶ Liberal-capitalism carves its own crisis by not attempting a total resolution of these discriminations, affecting miserably the dignity and social life of the oppressed. The *LCD* framework fails to grasp the dependent relationship of individuals in a society that questions its hierarchical structure. If we value the dependent relationship - we can grasp the point that the nature of relationship between individuals as **social beings** affect their social condition. The emergence of haves and have-nots or the oppressors and the oppressed is identifiable from these social relationships. Communitarians score over the liberals/libertarians here considerably. Cohen would not refute that liberalism is more idealistic and unrealistic than the socialist experiment.

⁶⁵G. A. Cohen, "Where the Action Is: On the Site of Distributive Justice".

⁶⁶"Where the Action is: On the Site of Distributive Justice," 24.

There is a given hierarchy. Any attempt to crumble this is unrealistic and utopian. Cohen would say the other way. Society under liberalism lacks that will to equality. The principal reason is an individual under the spell of liberal-capitalism assumes that she is all by herself. It undermines the existential rule of *interdependency*. The idea is that people's choices should not be affected by the unfortunate circumstances. All discriminations have to be brought to point zero or maximally erased. This is possible only through realistic politics or political realism, not through normative politics. The erasure takes place only when individuals are conscious of either obliterating all hitherto existing inequalities or lessening them to the maximum possible extent. All these are missing in Rawls's both theory of justice and political liberalism. The consequence may be disastrous if there are any serious omissions in the original position. Normative politics do not take into account many aspects. Take for instance, retributive justice is in some way different from that of the distributive justice. Appiah discusses about the contested elements of liberal political tradition though liberalism takes them for granted. They are dignity, liberty, equality, individuality, toleration and political life.⁶⁷ The institutions should recognize and guarantee them with protections. If this is all done then the subsequent obligation is to see to it that a theory is developed to tackle the lopsided condition between the well off, better off and worse-off - in the holistic sense of the term. Appiah's discussion of state and the shaping of identity sounds interesting. Retributive justice is not only concerned with compensatory practices, but also initiating in the minds of the people "equality of existence" as a conscientious understanding.

On the face value, Rawls's public political justice sounds good. This need not

⁶⁷Kwame Anthony Appiah, "The State and the Shaping of Identity," *Tanner Lecture on Human Values*, April 30, May 1(2001): 236 - 299, 235-6.

reflect on the truth about justice. What is the reasonable condition of his political conception of justice? David Estlund rightly puts forth the discussion asking what counts as reasonable and what does not. It is not within the reach of ordinary language. Due to this the usefulness of the idea is questioned. Further, Larmore states that political liberalism must be cast as a moral principle of respect that has its authority independently of public reason.⁶⁸ How do individuals treat each other in the context of public reason as real-actual persons with identities? Rawlsian liberalism cannot afford to shy away from this question. Possibility and impossibility of justice depends upon the possibility and impossibility of achieving it. Justice is bivalent in the sense that theorists are obligated to come up with the possibility of justice, but also adequately address the causes of injustice. Otherwise probability of conceiving justice or injustice is at stake. Is conceiving justice a cognitive state? Procedural is as important as many other aspects that add to social justice. People who oppose any normative sense of political theory opines that yearning for a world beyond politics at best is diversionary, and at worst destructive.

Realistic politics or political realism needs to take into account the presence of radical pluralism in every society [even in totalitarianism]. Political realism will then have to value the historical conditions of people that determines their place in the society. Geuss states that this is needed [in the Hobbesian way] to structure and organize collective action “so as to limit and control forms of disorder that they may find excessive ...”⁶⁹ When we begin to realize the complexity of the realistic politics, we also realize that the Rawlsian framework only fulfills the basic

⁶⁸David Estlund, “The Truth in Political Liberalism,” in Andrew Norris and Jeremy Ekins, eds., *Truth and Democratic Politics* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 256.

⁶⁹See his book *Philosophy and Real Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 22.

required criteria. Pluralism is to be more wider than what is being understood in reasonable pluralism. Commonality and common good require radical rupture here. Fairness is not a self-implied feature of liberal-democratic order. Instead it is an ought condition given the real fact of *deep pluralism*. To ensure that we are fair to each other [mutual reciprocity] in actuality we need to have a wider understanding of *we*. It is characterized by a deep-rooted social fragmentation - “with many values and interests, and a range of corresponding behaviors.”⁷⁰

Fairness, in this sense, is not just a concern of distributive justice. It is more concerned with the treatment of pluralism and the psychological attitudes of people toward one another. These attitudes emerge from the actual identities that come to interact with each other. Appiah talks about the same - how racial identities should figure in our moral and political lives reflecting ethical significance of difference.⁷¹ Appiah mentions Robert Post’s distinction between treating people equally and treating them as if they were the same or the other. The issue is the shaping and re-shaping of identities. These are important because identities keep emerging with newer spirit that structures the culture of a democratic society. Equality as a social ideal is a matter of not taking irrelevant distinctions into account. That may be only a legal issue. It is of no ease to identify relevant distinctions from irrelevant distinctions. Rawls does not address this in his political liberalism. He opines that the stability of a democratic pluralistic society depends upon moral psychology of *rational* individuals ensuring overlapping consensus [by way of public reason].⁷² Such a kind of approach, Egalitarians argue, does not

⁷⁰Bernard Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed: Realism and Moralism in Political Argument* ed. by Geoffrey Hawthorn (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), xvii.

⁷¹Kwame Anthony Appiah, “Stereotypes and the Shaping of Identity,” *California Law Review* 88.1(January 2000): 41- 53 at 41.

⁷²Bernard Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed*, 2. John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 141, 147.

bring any harmful discriminations drawn on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, and religious affiliation for disparate treatment.⁷³ It is one thing to discriminate people on the above mentioned grounds for appointment to public offices. It is one kind of socio-economic injustice. It is another to meet the discriminatory violent attitude just because one is part of the social milieu. Appiah further states that “what is made available by the state should be made available to everyone.”⁷⁴ Estlund argues that one person’s interests conflicting with others’ is not moral deficiency in either of them. It involves only paying attention to ordinary conditions of life.⁷⁵ That may be the Pareto optimal condition for attaining distributive justice. It may cause social conflict of cultural space. Liberalism should depart from its stereotypical assumption that “all things being equal everyone will act morally with the presupposition that others are doing so. This presupposition should have rational justification. Any political theory that doesn’t take into account dominance as a social ontological category has an impoverished notion of fairness. Estlund rightly states this is an utopian condition [*What ought to be the basic structure given that nothing is going wrong morally.*]⁷⁶, and fine as long as we talk about *prime justice* only.

Estlund’s analysis of *prime justice* implies that Rawlsian social justice is based on certain utopian-idealist-perfectionist assumptions within his claim of imperfectionism of political liberalism. Earlier we mentioned it sounds as if justice is beyond politics. Political realism also has to answer the meaning of real-life conditions. Estlund argues that antinormativists opine that the success stories of

⁷³Appiah makes an interesting point. He argues that the distinction between males and females are not to be drawn just because they are male and females is logically impossible and crazy. For him, sexuality makes such distinction. See his article “Stereotypes and the Shaping of Identity,” 43.

⁷⁴See his article “Stereotypes and the Shaping of Identity,” 45.

⁷⁵See his essay, “Prime Justice,” in Weber & Vallier eds., *Political Utopias* (2017), 36.

⁷⁶“Prime Justice,” 36.

justice depend upon the kind of practical goals it sets for itself. How can we know what is possible for us to achieve? Rawls's theory is realistic utopianism that is minus the beyondist arguments. Political realists may not agree on this. Estlund states that utophobia is the unrealistic or unreasonable fear of utopianism that can lead to the marginalization of insights. We agree that Rawls's theory is no realistic utopia, but hold another *kind* of unrealistic idealistic suppositions. It may lack moral standards for people or institutions that is beyond their abilities even to line up to them. Estlund argues that a theory is unrealistic, utopian when it proposes a society laying out moral demands not within the capabilities of its members. Realistic Utopia has two main ideas as motivations: [1] The great evils of human history *via* political injustices. [2] The disappearance of these great evils in the presence of just basic institutions and just political institutions.⁷⁷ Rawls's conditions for the realization of realistic utopia needs a critical reflection. For justice to be realistic it must rely on the "actual laws of nature" that allow it - on the Rousseauian principle of "men as they are and laws as they may be." What do these actual laws of nature permit? What are they constitutive of? Rawls's political liberalism seems to be too confident of its principles-based approach that is always focused on the virtuous nature of its citizens.

Estlund draws an interesting argument - the implication of *ought implies can*: "that if something is not within someone's abilities, then it is not required...if it is unlikely ... then it is not required."⁷⁸ Achieving fairness should be within the ability of individuals. Individuals may be capable but may not *will* it. Things that are possible of human beings is not a simple task to recognize. As far as Rawls is concerned, it is taken as a tautology. The standards of social justice

⁷⁷John Rawls, *Laws of the People* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999), 4.

⁷⁸See his article, "Utophobia," *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 42.2(2014): 113-134, 116

entail ability. What is social justice about? Is it within the abilities of humans or beyond? How does it address the issue of natural equality? Estlund makes a very good argument here. The likelihood or unlikelihood of justice is not determinate of agents' ability; not unlikely because it is beyond us. Even if moral standards entail ability, they are not refuted by justice's low probability. Many things are within our abilities but will never be completed. It is not ability that is the issue, it is the will of the people to treat each other and see each other as respectables. Estlund defends standards even though, the supposition is, they are not to be met.⁷⁹ He discusses the possible difference between 'beyond ability' and 'reluctance to meet' as two different conditions. There is a hell lot of difference between impossibility and reluctance. Likelihood is *contra* possibility at times, dependent on the *will* condition.⁸⁰

Estlund further states, "Institutions in which victims of injustice can claim compensation might have an unfortunate tendency to think like a victim in order to get the benefits of victimhood to which the victim is entitled." The reference here is to the undue advantage derived in the name of injustice. This issue is strictly society-specific. Estlund should realize that compensation is never seen in the *will* of the people. Estlund seeks a theory with "appropriate standards that are not only possible to people and institutions to meet, but that it is also reasonable to believe they meet." It can be interpreted in two ways: One, as a specific theory of justice, like Rawls[ian], Estlund directs our attention to acceptable **compromise**

⁷⁹Moral demands make moral agents assume that everyone will act morally, thus, the duty to principles. On the contrary, there is a different demand which is even more bigger. We are talking about the existential difference part of which economic difference is addressed. Even though cultural relativism is not the desired goal, the difference of *identity* is the focus. Breaking the profound oppressive hierarchy, valuing the difference in *other* is a bigger moral demand. We can tell this from one the scale of global violence the world experiences. Why should *I* agree to disagree, and still be extending my respect for others?

⁸⁰"...that kind of impossibility, which is about probability rather than ability would not engage with the assumption that *ought implies can*."

[*trade-off*] that convincingly draw a relationship between worse-off, better-off and well-off. Second, on a larger scale, as a condition of social justice, it has to do with the attitude of individuals toward one another. Rawls's public reason is tested here. We cannot leave the situation where people fail to line up to *theoretically*⁸¹ reason thesis by Kant sound moral requirements. In another context, he considers a theory that requires everyone to refrain from nepotism in government hiring. Estlund asks, "what should society be like if people were good?" Cohen argues that the only practical consideration that an idealist political theory has to heed to is the fundamental presupposition that there is no such thing called 'good or perfect people do not need politics.' As long as society exists or human collective exists politics matter. The discussion of morally perfect people and less morally perfect is important always. An ideal theory that acknowledges the zero probability has to relook into its own postulates. However, Estlund shows sympathy to the idealist normative theory recognizing our limited knowledge of the limits of human possibility. He rightly states that 'human social life has been typically preceded by incredulity to their very possibility, much less their likelihood.'⁸² He argued that a theory of justice, however action-guiding may be, may not be of much use if there is no commitment to justice. It directs our attention to the common saying [even greatly referred by Kant] that "that may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice." How can we extend it to explain social transformations? Kant certainly expressed his discomfort in this regard. Kant emphasized on the will of the human character. Estlund mentions a very provoking idea of Kant from his

Critique of Pure Reason:

⁸¹All the neo-Kantians seem to inherit the unity of theoretical and practical reason. This point is profoundly discussed by Kant in his *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* and *The Critique of Practical Reason*. Also see Pauline Kliegeld, "Kant on the Unity of Theoretical and Practical Reason," *The Review of Metaphysics* 52(December 1998): 311-339.

⁸²See "Utophobia," 133.

What the highest degree may be at which mankind may have to come to a stand, and how great a gulf may still have to be left between the idea and its realization, are questions which no one can, or ought to, answer. For the issue depends on freedom; and it is in the power of freedom to pass beyond any and every specified limit.⁸³

Upon an extended interpretation of this idea of Kant it comes closer to Marx than to Rawls. The fruition of a revolutionary idea also has to be understood in this manner. The issue is not just *for theory-sake*, to repeat the point, the issue is the conscience of individuals that affect the interpersonal relationship in the society. Liberalism posits society as if the interactional space is between rational individuals. Fairness is not just about achieving a certain economic standard of life. Even it is not possible unless the social space is meant for everyone. How far can we stretch the meaning or implication of “fair terms of social co-operation”? Robert Heilbroner wrote, We turn to Marx, therefore, not because he is infallible, but because he is inescapable. Everyone who wishes to pursue the kind of investigation that Marx opened up, finds Marx there ahead of him, and must thereafter agree with or confute, expand or discard, explain or explain away the ideas that are his legacy.

Conclusion

The comparison of Rawls with Marx cannot be stricken-off. Marx thinks that remedy for capitalism is socialism. Jeffrey Reiman says that for Marx one can learn to fear socialism - “states are already dangerously powerful, with their police forces and armies” - focusing on the former Soviet Union, China and Eastern

⁸³ “Utophobia,” 133.

Europe. These were not hospitable to freedom. The oppressive element in socialism and communism is the failure in the realization of material conditions of freedom⁸⁴ This is a standard criticism against the socialist experiment. But we have seen in *The Soul of Man under Socialism* that Oscar Wilde believes that humans realize their free spirit in the society of socialism. What kind of freedom has the *LCD* manifested in itself? What kind of freedom does it uphold, preserves, protects, guarantees and desires? Socialism is morally decadent, violates human moral agency and coerces. What is being coerced in the process of our attempts to eliminate injustices? Reiman talks of a combination of liberalism and Marxism. What does it look like? Liberalism holds that we have a general right from *to be free from unwanted coercion*. It may mean that “I do not trade-off without not letting off what I can grab.” How does the logic of possessive individualism work in understanding the relationship between worse-off, better-off and well-off? Liberalism, further, presupposes that people’s liberty can be enhanced by increase in the material production. Material production ensures decent standard of living across the social fabric. The consumer age draws its own logic of relating production, distribution and consumption. Capitalism in union with liberalism and democracy projects that the imbalances are seen between the modes of production and relations of production. In other words, there is more emphasis on the progressive means of production. Reiman argues that poverty statistics are about income, and have no reflection on people’s actual standards of material living. He makes a thought provoking observation: For him, there are reasons for fearing socialism, and at the same time, advanced capitalism preserves individual liberty, and prevents alienation and dehumanizing aspects of labour [that Marx points out].⁸⁵ This is a bold claim. Reiman believes that Marxian-Liberalism

⁸⁴See Jeffrey Reiman, *As Free and as Just as Possible: The Theory of Marxian Liberalism* (Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).

⁸⁵*As Free and Just as Possible*, 21.

will support the formation of a capitalist society that takes care of the difference principle. This also guarantees individual liberty and political equality. Does Marxian Liberalism, which takes cues from Rawls's original position, overcome this structural coercion grounding in the principles of justice? Reiman focuses on expanding the horizons of the field of justice. He might have overlooked the aspect that liberal-capitalism's understanding of state is itself subverted. It means that the sanctioned freedoms politically give rise to social inequalities. Marxian Liberalism supposedly collapses all forms of liberal-capitalism. Reiman brings forth an important issue - the distinction between the state and civil society. There are ways to differentiate the state and civil society. One way of distinction lies in treating the political realm as the realm of possible equality of individuals [*citizens*] and economic realm as the realm of private activities of freedom or liberty. This distinction may not hold good for a long time. Economic activities are not at all private activities and not mere expressions of individual liberty. The argument gets impoverished as the new paradigm too sticks to making room for liberty.

Chapter 4

Politics, Utopia, Emancipation

4.1 [Re]Drawing the Utopian Spirit

We need a conviction of wholehearted attempt to attain ‘utopian resurrection’ liberating it out of its ‘tragic fate’. While it recognizes the many recent claims to utopia, it specifically draws the spirit from Kolakowski, White, Bloch and Jameson. Though these had inclination to Marxism, we can draw the spirit of hope, the right to *daydream* that one day the human condition desires no more change. For anti-utopians, the world is deceived by the utopian futuristic imagination. The promise that the past and present will be redeemed, will let us into a new future is felt absurd. Besides, the triumphalist claims renders ‘politics driven by ideology’ with utter suspicion. Such widespread propaganda jeopardizes dreams of an ‘Earthly Paradise’ resulting from our great human effort. The question is “is utopia a by-gone idea on a global scale?” Necessarily not. The new political

imagination reconciles this tension between the ideal and the actual. To alleviate our conscience levels we need to build what Louis Mumford called “castles in the sky,” similar to what Landauer referred to the inability of language to capture the utopian spirit.¹

Historical forces cannot come to an abrupt end or run out of ideas. *No-where* becomes *now-here* with no necessary reference to socialism. It is to be noted that the ontological basis of socialism is risked by keeping utopia open-ended, without any pre-emption. We have to take such a risk to restore utopian thinking. What kind of hope it manifests in the mind of its believers? To answer this we should raise another question: Is it the doomsayers or the romantics who are generating the more compelling insights into the unsettled topography of contemporary world politics? Utopias that provide a cracked mirror of the past and a distorted analysis of the present cannot hope to tell us much about the future possibilities. This kind of futuristic concern invoke a certain ethic – in the name of people or community-*to come* (as emphasized by Benjamin, Derrida and others) we need to be honest about our present convictions for the future. Are justice and equality eternal concerns for us? If they are it shows our reluctance for a fairer world, which takes care of both individuality and the promise of a (coming) community. There are a lot of philosophical-political contestations regarding the ethics of transformation – especially, the messianic element of the transformation. With a renewed urge for utopia we can grant the messianic role to utopia. However, we are not sure, considering the opposition between Benjamin and Zizek, about when it will come – *after the day* (Benjamin) or unconditional presence of the messianic moment (Zizek).

¹Ruth Kinna, “Politics, Utopia and Ideology,” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 16.3(Oct 2011): 279-294.

The magnificent challenge is to initiate a change (or transformation through revolution) and sustain the change. Looking at the twentieth century's experience of revolutions, the reliability of spontaneity, rebelliousness and expression of an unfilled social imagery is questioned. We have seen how vehemently suspicious are post-holocaust critics about any utopian principle and also of any metaphysical doctrine. Looking at the way 'hope' and 'revolutions' affected human affairs brings bewilderment to one and all – how could the human condition display such low morality in the name of hope? Change is desired when a society lives through dark times. Hannah Arendt's principle of 'thinking without banisters' is a possible way of looking at the revival of utopias. The idea of 'shared imagery' itself is a big problem, thanks to the penchant for *difference* and diversity'. It is even more severely impossible in the post-failure scenario. William Morris's *News from Nowhere* is treated as a utopia without utopianism with a preference to fellowship or brotherhood. It isn't a simple idea to make a collective feel that the current state-of-affairs demand a radical change. The reason why we have to retain the hope is ephemeral nature of the utopian condition – in other words, there is an urge to escape or take a flight away from the place we land. This hope is jeopardized by capitalist denouncing the hope thesis through its suspicion and disregard for other paradigms. In the following sections we will revisit some of the classical works that talk about the significance of utopia.

Leszek Kolakowski makes one of the profound discussions on the idea of 'death of utopia.'² He points out the pejorative sense of utopia, from our everyday speech to grand socio-political discourses. Referring to philosophy, he says that it is full of epistemological utopias - that have aimed at absolute certainty of knowledge. It

²Leszek Kolakowski, "The Death of Utopia Reconsidered, Tanner Lectures on Human Values," Delivered at the Australian National University, June 22(1982): 229-247.

hints at our age-old obsession with absolutism and perfection. The best example that can be taken from the history of philosophy is Rene Descartes's obsession [further seen in Edmund Husserl] for finding a solution for the ultimate foundations of knowledge. Looking for ultimate foundations is like looking for perfect harmony, not only in the epistemological sense but also in the transcendental sense. For Paul S. Macdonald those were the radical beginnings of philosophy at different stages of history witnessing 'cognitive affective orientation of the whole self' [pure subjects of cognition]. It comes with an urge for unprejudiced approach to knowledge. It calls for identifying the ultimate ground of grounds [also seen in Kant] – realizing the absolute without the divine. The idea of certainty is an epistemological concern. In what way it is connected to political utopia? It would mean that if knowledge is certain in its attainability, so too the perfect state of the human condition.³

This project was not without adversaries. On the other hand, critics of this project like Maurice Merleau Ponty and Martin Heidegger were not interested in such meta-considerations.⁴ Utopia is generally understood as creation or attaining of a better world. Going by this definition, how do we label totalitarian tendencies as utopian? They are suspicious about the absolute transparency of knowledge. The focus shifted from transcendence to philosophy of the culture. Kolakowski rightly opined that philosophy cannot discover any universal truths – despite some advancement made in science. He argued that the 'cultural' role of philosophy is not *Truth per se*, but building the spirit of truth.⁵ We will come to this point as to how it affected the politics of utopia and social imagery. It

³See his book *Descartes and Husserl: The Philosophical Project of Radical Beginnings* [SUNY Series in Philosophy] (New York: State University of New York Press, 1999).

⁴Kolakowski, "The Death of Utopia Reconsidered," 233.

⁵Kolakowski, "The Death of Utopia Reconsidered," 234.

brought to philosophy the primacy of 'being-in-the-world' – where social, cultural and political forces shape human world. Departure from the transcendental or the absolute characterizes human beings as meaning-making creatures.

Kolakowski's revealing of philosophy's inability to trace truths, assigning to it the cultural role, exposes philosophy to several antinomies. His understanding is that philosophical perfectionism is seen in utopian understanding of a perfect world. Further, intrusion of culture into philosophy has simultaneously affected people's belief and attitude toward utopia. The imperfectness of human existence is seen in the Kantian reflection that "out of the crooked timber of humanity, no straight thing was ever made."⁶ If humans possess deeply fundamental imperfections, they cannot carve out a perfect social order with absolute equality and justice. Kolakowski argues that that life of the modern mind is predominantly anti-utopian. What is anti-utopian understanding of utopia? What is the shape of a perfect world? We can have two arguments here: First, utopia is understood as attempts made to bring a perfect harmony [even when unwarranted] and seek absolute conformity through superimposed ideals of greatness [fascism and Nazism]. All these are externally imposed characteristics. On the other hand, a perfect world is also understood as eradication of all injustices, inequalities and hierarchies among human beings [Marxism]. At least the former two ideas did not embark on the principles of justice and equality. In the course of time, philosophers began giving considerable attention to the realm of the political. Carl Schmitt's understanding of the political is worth mentioning here. Attacking the liberal ideal, he conceived the political as something that manifests the relationship of the members of a political society into friends & foes, and us & them. Both imperfectness and political

⁶Amelie Oksenberg Rorty & James Schmidt, *Kant's Idea for a Universal History With a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 129-150 [chapter on "The Crooked Timber of Mankind"]

seem to sabotage the goal of ‘everlasting fraternity’. Every attempt to realize this goal subjects the human condition to extreme oppression and evil. This is a *post facto* assertion of anti-utopian claim. Kolakowski refers to Zyamiatin, Huxley and George Orwell. It is doubtless about their profound satires about a perfect world and its debasement of the human itself.

March of humanity toward ‘everlasting fraternity’ is highly likely to bring phenomenal violence to the world. Anti-utopian sense deep monism [sameness, perfect consensus] in utopian philosophy. In this sense, any forward leap in this direction is bound to suppress people who refuse to converge. Under this condition, all collisions are brought to a halt or nullified. In other words, people are treated as creative and free, but they are all directed toward achieving a particular goal. The variety of human life forms is lost in this process. Due to this reason utopias later turned into dystopias in nature. Kolakowski says that the greatest works of the twentieth century political theory focus on anti-utopia crushing all utopian notions. This can be linked to the problem of perfectibility again. If the world is an imperfect garden, attempting to perfect it is a disaster. Human perfectibility, in the context of political utopias, is treated as making the society monistic. The above political regimes formulated their respective notions of a perfect world and laid down their respective plans to achieve them. All of them turned despotic in their pursuit for everlasting fraternity or universal brotherhood eventually. Kolakowski classifies them as “kakotopias”⁷ due to their adoption of violent means. He sees the possibility of universal brotherhood of wolves, but not human beings. This has a counterpoint too. That perfect equality is always the path to despotism is one-dimensional thinking. It undermines the forceful change attempted contrary to the idea that change happens in the due course of historical progress.

⁷Kolakowski, “The Death of Utopia Reconsidered,” 238.

Critics have an anti-utopian bias. We can deduce two important arguments from Kolakowski: [1] An attempt to implement a conflictless order by institutional means can be indeed successful only in totalitarian regimes. [2] A utopian vision once translated into a political idiom becomes deceitful or self-contradictory; providing new names for old injustices.⁸ Kolakowski categorized Rousseau's notion of 'one has to compel people to freedom' as possessing totalitarian tendencies. He felt coerced fraternity in Rousseau's idea. Life necessarily involves tension and suffering, and nothing is illogical in this reasoning. Kolakowski stated that there is deception in utopia's promise of the glory of progress. The glorious future is seen as already existing hitherto as a logical inevitability, as a psychoanalytical condition; more real than the real. Anti-utopian bias is that they suspect any path toward wiping out evil from the society, and evil intrinsic to human nature. They consider it as the dogma of utopianism. They undermine the confrontation and deep-rooted tension between the hostile basis of human relationships and its opposite, love and friendship. Our relentless lust for domination and our urge to replace it with love, friendship or fraternity are under ever-mutual deception and suspicion.

Kolakowski stated that a fixed notion of utopia that matches some sort of a Platonic ideal is not always an ethically blessed society. He basically talks about the philosophical poverty of utopia, but also says that the impossibility of it is undesirable. He maintained that after the Marxist revolutionary phase of the late 1960, the idea of utopia did take a beating, but is coming back. Kolakowski said that if utopia were to ever succeed, then it would result in a society that would be authoritarian and/or totalitarian. On the other hand, he says that if we keep on doubting utopia with our skepticism, then we will find it difficult to

⁸Kolakowski, "The Death of Utopia Reconsidered," 241.

build anything that would even start approaching utopia, even if not achieving that state or realizing it. This is what he calls a hopeless stagnation. Further, he says that this state of stagnation will result in immobility and could lead to a situation of chaos.

Lewis Mumford boldly claims that history is the sternest critic of utopias.⁹ This has created an alleged antipathy between history and utopia – translated as where there is history, there is no utopia; where there is utopia, there is no history. Utopia is mere wishful thinking and daydreaming. Discussing this point, Hayden White brought the place and non-place debate here, referring to utopia as anything but historical. Further, he also mentioned the main argument of Karl Mannheim: “In the course of history, man has occupied himself more frequently with objects transcending his scope of existence than with those immanent in his existence.”¹⁰ These two positions seemed to challenge the realistic nature of utopias. Their understanding goes like this: As long as utopias project themselves as ideologies, independent of their socio-historical structures, they remain unrealistic lacking in any concrete forms of social existence.

White also understood ‘history as utopia’s other’ rather than taking ‘utopia as history’s other.’¹¹ How does the former differ from the latter? In simple terms, the former tends to place utopia as a modernist enterprise following the principle of disenchantment. It seems to place it as a free-standing principle to derive universal appeal. The latter speaks of the ahistorical condition of utopia, absence of a temporal condition. White argued that in the case of the latter, it becomes

⁹Louis Mumford, “Utopia, the City and the Machine,” in Frank E. Manuel (Ed.), *Utopia and Utopian Thoughts* (Boston: Boston University Press, 1967).

¹⁰Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1954).

¹¹See Hayden White, “The Future of Utopia in History,” *HISTORIEN* 7(2007): 11-19.

a repressive desire; a desire for a future against the claims of the present [social system]. Further, he puts forward two versions of utopia; past-oriented and future-oriented. We mourn for a past that we never had [*historical*], and we mourn for something we cannot live without [*poetic*]. White makes an interesting reference to Marcel Proust and aesthetic modernism. In this realm, one can imagine oneself [in terms of everyday life] being liberated from the ills of a liberal present and future, being placed in a world that fulfills her fantasy.

George Kateb criticizes that utopia is not only anti-historical but also fails to value temporality and glorifies immortality. This is like what Fredric Jameson states that every historical phase has its own utopia. Kateb's concern can be translated like this: how is it possible that we can manifest utopian principles as a permanent possibility of the human condition. By being skeptical over this possibility, Kateb, like other critics, seems to be wary about human beings. Prior to judging Kateb's worry, we have to make a presupposition. The presupposition is that it is inevitable to get lured into the idealistic imagination, when the actual condition seems completely adversarial in nature. If one is asked to conceptualize a 'just world order', one cannot be indifferent to the idealistic approach by mere focusing on the practical politics. For fundamental changes, Judith Shklar opined, we need a hardcore radical approach to sociopolitical transformation. We need to be attentive to one important aspect: utopia is the only thing through which change is desired for a better future. Most of the theoretical paradigms take a flight from the 'given'. It is a matter of utter disregard for the current accepted realities. Modern utopia seeks an escape from modernity, discontinuous with earlier religious and mythical chronotopes. They should not dream of the glory of the "once upon a time" in the past, rather, focus on the philosophy of the 'not-yet'. From the political theory point of view, both are nostalgias, one for

the past and other for the future [the tension between what might be and what ought to be]. The present is caught between these obsessions. White came to an understanding that what is realistic and unrealistic about utopia is not to be decided by history alone. He mentioned an interesting example from Sigmund Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents*. Freud opined that if civilization itself is the cause of certain illness we are suffering from, it is delusory to think of society as a remedy. It is contradictory that we seek solutions from history when it is nightmarish in nature. For White, utopias of the past are regressive and of the future are progressive in nature. Eventually, he showed bias toward utopian thinking, referring to American situation [assuming that it has overcome utopian fantasies], stating it as a dead idea, and is now history.¹²

Fredric Jameson threw sufficient light on the utopian representation of reality. So far, we have seen how utopia is characterized as something unrealistic and also abominable in nature. In his path-breaking article, Jameson begins his argument stating that utopia offers the "spectacle of those rare phenomena whose concept is indistinguishable from its reality."¹³ It sounds as if utopia has a reality of its own and yet has normal social functions. Jameson speculates the presence of two worlds, one absolutely characterized by misery and poverty, and the other driven by unparalleled wealth in many walks of life. The interesting aspect is he saw that utopia is made-irrelevant in both the domains. Unlike in the case of Kolakowski and Hayden, utopia was placed closer to politics, besides textual, generic and historical. Jameson talked about the possibility of utopia in the context of globalization. For him, any consideration for radical political program systematically outlines other alternative society, which we call utopia. Any practical politics

¹²"The Future of Utopia in History," 18.

¹³See his article, "The Politics of Utopia," *New Left Review* 25(Jan-Feb 2004):

has to consider utopia seriously. Utopia seemed to promise the elimination of the ‘root of all evil’, greed and arrive at more humane forms of life. He referred to Plato, Thomas More, Joseph Proudhon, Ezra Pound and Henry George who had argued for the abolition of private property. How does this become a political tool? Suppose that greed is to be controlled by a certain form of repression of desires [psychoanalytically]. We are not sure how this guarantees elimination of desires. Desires are definitely the source of hierarchies. Marx and some of his predecessors saw property relations as one of the sources of social hierarchies and individual injustices. One-way of putting it is ‘if desires are conditioned, you can control injustices’. This kind of an understanding is based on some [psychological] essentialist [biological] reductionism about human nature. But injustices are not tackled by reference to drives, passions, power, greed or drives only. Marx was right in making it socio-structural. It makes a lot of difference in shifting the focus from drives to historical processes. How is the ‘root of all evil’ eliminated without elimination of drives? In Marx, we find the belief in the material conditions of life accessible to one and all through the structural transformation of the system. Jameson identified the root of all evil in a society’s inability to cater to the productive capacities of all its citizens.

Jameson seemed to have followed some of the principles of Thomas More. The latter tells us that utopians are easy going, good-tempered, ingenious and leisure loving. He also states that these individuals cling on to the pleasures of the mind. This sounds problematic and absurd too. It needs a proper understanding of the political. Jameson stated that utopia is either too political or not political enough. But once utopia is attained, the political is erased along with history, indicative of a general will. Is Jameson’s point reflective of Fukuyama’s claim that there is no possibility of history in the post-ideological world? General will seems to be oper-

ative in the context of political utopias. By this, he meant that there is something fundamental that cannot be challenged within the system. It is understandable that total elimination is meaningless to imagine. Further, Jameson posed a very serious question, “How should we formulate the position of utopia with respect to the political?” As an immediate response, he says that the utopia emerges at the suspension of the political. On the other hand, he says that politics is always with us in every sense. It means that it is in the mode of a ceaseless mental play, changing from time to time, so too the political institutions. Jameson gives us a situation: political institutions seem both unchangeable and infinitely modifiable. It is a paradox. There are possibilities of revolutionary changes and equally countervailing forces that contain any such change. Jameson qualified political utopias as imperfect and impractical, yet necessary. For him, most changes in human history occurred in the worst impotent situations. For changes to take place, the political has to become external to the social life, preparing its ground for change in whatever fashion it may be. In times of utopian progressions, reality seemed malleable but not the system. This is the most profound observation of Jameson. It speaks of internal repulsions that a system generates against any attempt to bring radical transformation. These challenges hinder the creative free play of utopia, meaning, they may be restricted to one’s imagination but not affect concrete changes.

This distinction of utopia being present in the mind, but has no correspondance to the times we live in keeps alive the endless play of fantasy. It would be an interesting exercise to look into the manner in which this endless free play again manifests into a political idea. But there is an ongoing process where utopia in the form of ideology is subjected to negation. Jameson, then asks, “Is this to say that we can form no substantive or positive picture of utopia, short of

embracing all the multiple contradictory pictures that co-exist in our collective social unconscious?”¹⁴ He states this as the fear of utopia or the anxiety of the utopian impulse that confronts us. However, one cannot escape from these utopian impulses. All those hierarchies and injustices Jameson listed can only be sorted through an understanding of emancipation. Jameson mentions Adorno’s understanding here: “He who asks what is the goal of an emancipated society is given answers such as fulfillment of human possibilities or the richness of life. . . .”¹⁵

How do we understand the world we live in? How do we address a transition from one historical phase to another? The past lineages lead us through the present to an unknown future. This is acceptable when the present is acceptable to us. When we have an unbearable burden of the past on us [unbearable because of the deeds of our predecessors], we are not sure about ‘where to go from here.’ This brings anxiety and fear of a loss of hope in such situations. Ernst Bloch expressed this uneasy thought to any form of hopelessness. In his great work *The Spirit of Utopia*,¹⁶ he talked of bringing hope to the human condition. The emotion internal in us never lets us tolerate a suppressed life. The question that bothers us in this anxiety is, “What can best help the world become a sane place to live?” Bloch’s mind blowing work focused on the significance and inevitability of *daydreams* [utopias as daydreams] – of a smooth everyday life, not just the prerogative of the rich. At the individual level, Bloch claimed that a life without dreams cannot be imagined. This dream brings enables us to go beyond, thinking of a better world. We have been talking about change [radical or otherwise]. Change is possible only when we *tread beyond* – nothing but creative free play of imagination. Bloch carefully avoids abstractions here. He attaches these adventures

¹⁴“The Politics of Utopia,”

¹⁵“The Politics of Utopia,” 17.

¹⁶Ernst Bloch, *The Spirit of Utopia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

to what goes on around us, and which is in continuous motion. It is like history is always operated through the dialectic. Giving primacy to *dreaming beyond* is like always living in the futuristic imagination. For Bloch, we always live in the future. It means there is ceaseless wait for tomorrow waiting for today to pass by. This futuristic approach is driven by our fear and anxieties. Bloch values hope and means in which it is kept alive. To live in the future is to dream of the world ‘unbecome’. People living in unfortunate circumstances are bound to fantasise for a better future. For Bloch, Marx was one of the first to venture beyond or becoming conscious of it. This act also brings to our conscience the NOT-YET-CONSCIOUS or NOT-YET-BECOME. Bloch very often talks about the “Unbecome”, “Not-yet”, or “Future”. He brings forth the idea of Hegel. For the latter, ‘what has been’ [past-present] overwhelms ‘what is approaching’. Things that have *become* totally obstructs the possibility of Future and New. There are political fairytales and fantasies of the world to be realized, like the Marxists belief in “Another world is possible.” These fairy-tales have a peculiar character of the fantasy of a perfect world like that of the geographical scales of the Eden of Eldorado. The not-yet-conscious and not-yet-become are connected to these fantasies of perfection. May be the continuous historical denial of a just place of an individual, her community etc., for a just world order makes it a daydream fantasy. This has to do with the profusion of human imagination, which becomes concrete only with the help of utopian function of that imagination. By refering to Shakespeare and Dante, Bloch signified the dependence of non-social utopias on the social. Thus, Bloch signifies what lies in the front, than what has been with us.

4.2 Intersubjectivity, Isn't it a Lie!

Great deal of investigation has gone into the nature of the relationship between the individual [self] and the social [qua other individuals] in phenomenology, moral philosophy and political theory. It is well understood that certain dynamics is basic to the relationship between self and other [subject to harmony or radical break]. The issue is more than that of *ontopoietic*, the extent of our self-creative consciousness. The question is who sets the stage for self-realization in an intersubjective world. Temporality of the self has been placed at the fulcrum of the intersubjectivity thesis – the claim that everything isn't inwardly determined, but there is a significant influence of the social realm]. However, it leads to two main among them are whether to argue for the (a) 'return from otherness' or (b) 'positioning the self-other in the radical relational state'. Simultaneously, we ought to be apprehensive about the 'actual' intersubjectivity in the real life-world. The claim is that a more radical look into the self-other relationship becomes necessary in view of the concrete existential gap. The focus is on the nature of distinction. While doing so, the characterization of self-other cannot eliminate from its realm the 'existential fear or distaste of/for the other' as one of the defining elements of intersubjective life. 'What is the human being?' is the question we address again and again. It implies that this is not just a philosophical concern but has even a larger scope to it. The two predominant anxieties are to comprehend oneself and intersubjectivity. With the advent and tremendous growth of phenomenology and existentialism, emphasis is laid on the post-Cartesian and post-Kantian reference to the self [psycho-corporeal]¹⁷, signifying the materiality of the body and phenomena of existence. Decipherment of complexities of collective life [hu-

¹⁷Meyers, Diana T. (Fall 2005). Who's There? Selfhood, Self-regard and Social Relations. *Hypatia*, 20(4), 200-215, 205.

man condition, referred as cultural, social, political etc.] is treated equally or more important than confining ourselves to spell out the characteristics of human nature.

The peculiarity of human life is that every individual self in it is concerned about its fulfillment [need not be *a priori* nor teleological]. At least it is taken as a supposition. We all belong to some or the other life-world with an equal right to live. Meaning every human self is not merely indulgent with the mechanical aspect of organic life, but thinks of sustaining the duration of living from life to death. Let us connect this to the idea of *ontopoiesis*,¹⁸ with principal being the individuation of life acquiring the creative consciousness, in other terms, the fruition of the self. Besides biological process, the self has both social and psychic life, distinct from the metaphysical renderings. This is treated as an unfolding of the self in various ways. We need to make sense of ourselves as part of *a priori* life-world [in the Husserlian sense] and the actual life-world¹⁹, i.e., *a posteriori* of the collective habitat, i.e., being-in-the-world. What humans have to seek after? What explanation can we provide to our belongingness to the world? What is the nature of the engaged self? Answer to this question would further our concern looking at the embedded self's gaze of the *other*. Valuing otherness becomes more important than valuing the other. Embodiment also means that the self is not *a priori* given [may be just an individual living entity [being]²⁰, but it has to be experienced through living *with* others. For instance, Nietzsche claimed that the subject of the self is not something given, something invented and projected

¹⁸Susi Ferrarello, "The Axiology of Ontopoiesis and its Rationality," in Tymieniecka AT. (eds) *Phenomenology/Ontopoiesis Retrieving Geo-cosmic Horizons of Antiquity* [*Analecta Husserliana* (The Yearbook of Phenomenological Research)], vol 110. (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011): 217-225.

¹⁹Tomislav Zelic, "On the Phenomenology of the Life-World," *Synthesis Philosophica* 46.2(2008): 413-426, 4414.

²⁰Jean-Luc Marion, *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of the Given* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 1-6.

behind what there is.²¹

Let us assume that the unfolding demands are freedom, autonomy, and personhood in order to make sense of social life. Then two important questions emerge here: What is the self? What is the “I” that appears to be the subject of all ‘my’ thoughts and imaginings, my experiences and desires?²² We can provide different answers depending on the philosophical platform on which it is staged. If it is the question of metaphysics, then it has to address the question of inward and outward aspect of one’s existence. Defenders of the metaphysical self may assert that freeing us from the metaphysical concerns amounts to the negation of the question itself. It may also call for the renunciation of autonomous agency. Why do we need to have an understanding of personal identity, even when we are concerned about others’ image of us? J. David Velleman talks of reflexivity of the self, arguing that more than the self-image, the person’s identity is given by psychological connections that make past and future persons accessible to one’s reflexive thought.²³ There must be some other way by which selves are connected. We have to see whether self definition, self-regard and self-definition grasp the nuances of social life [or *life in association with others*]. It faces the challenge of a sociological concern.²⁴ Velleman’s argument certainly provokes us into a phenomenological discussion of continuity of the self [synchronic or diachronic]. Phenomenological reality is more about the embedded nature of consciousness. An understanding of the self has a tremendous impact on the self’s understanding of the other. Dan Zahavi sumptuously discusses the issue of the relation between time and self (Za-

²¹Robert Guay, “The ‘I’s Have it: Nietzsche on Subjectivity,” *Inquiry* 49.3(2006): 218-241.

²²Roger Trigg, “The Metaphysical Self,” *Religious Studies* 24.3(Sept 1988): 277-289, 277.

²³J. David Velleman, *Self to Self: Selected Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

²⁴Trigg, “Metaphysics of the Self,” 278

havi 2012).²⁵ He mentions the classical view that self is conscious of plurality of experiences, remains invariable and unchanging (Christine Korsgaard and Henry Frankfurt). On the other hand, a narrative approach to this issue is believed to take care of mutations within a lifetime (reference to Paul Ricœur) . This has a counter concern. Supposing that these mutations are about our differences sets of experiences at different phases, how do we draw the relationship between these several short selves that run through the stream of consciousness? Self [identity] persists through time, for some philosophers metaphysically, for some others through narrative story. These two impact self-other relations differently, but does not resolve the crisis.

The shift from consciousness to existence brings along with it a strong sense of intersubjectivity. Zahavi interprets this as more than the problem of other minds. Intersubjectivity is not just face to face interactions between individuals but also emotions, desires and different types of self-awareness. When we say selves, they are not just minds but actual human persons. Sartre, Levinas and others call this concrete encounter with factual others. Zahavi raises a very significant question here: “How is it possible to experience the other in a way that preserves both subjectivity and otherness?”²⁶ Here, treating other as a transcendental subject is considered ineffable and elusive. Existential phenomenology takes a few steps further. For Sartre, there is a distinction between being-for-itself and being-for-others [this being possible only through exteriority, interaction with the other]. It is possible to treat others as subjects-in-themselves. This is not impossible if embodiment is treated *a priori*. However, what is not clear is whether me, as an embodied subject *I*, also treats the other *a priori* embodied subjects as

²⁵Dan Zahavi, “The Time of the Self,” *Grazer Philosophic Studien* 84(2012): 143-159.

²⁶Dan Zahavi, “Beyond Empathy: Phenomenological Approaches to Intersubjectivity,” *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 8.5-7(2001):151-167, 158.

individual selves. If all of us are embodied subjects, then valuing others is not impossible as we all share a common history. It should be possible to conceive of such human condition. Here, we are left with only two options: a cohesive whole or a fragmented world of beings. For many philosophers, the human condition should be guided by some principle of goodness, minimal or maximum.²⁷

4.3 The [Im]possibility of Community

Never was the word “community” used more indiscriminately and emptily than in the decades when communities in the sociological sense became hard to find in real life.

Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes* (1994, 428)

The increasing nostalgia for the idea of community follows an increasing inclination to individualism. It is our mere bias to say that the latter is solely the root cause of all social inequalities and the disruption of social cohesiveness. Possibility of justice and equality is linked to the possibility and impossibility of community. While looking into this aspect it is imperative to reflect on the idea of everyday life. The conduct of everyday life signifies the strength of all the profound ideas that surrounds our imagination or practical reality. The challenging task here is linking of too many parameters like individual, freedom, collective, radical diversity and most importantly common good. The relation between the individual and the collective continues to be one of the most burnt-out issues in utopian think-

²⁷For instance, Levinas states, “No matter how many horrors, atrocities, abominations and evils let lure on ourselves, poor kindness holds on, it is a ‘mad goodness, the most human there is in man. It defines man.” P. J. Gehrke, “The Ethical Importance of Being Human: God and Humanism in Levinas Philosophy,” *Philosophy Today* 50.4(2006): 428-436.

ing because while the equality of individuals is a fundamental principle of utoian thought, the collective is always inimical to individual fulfillment. The conflict between individual and society has taken a newer form. It is not the freedom that is the only problem. Social cohesiveness emerging out of cultural forms backed up by political forces have complicated it further. The common good connects individuals, but unclear on how it would accommodate radical diversity that may be brought down to any/every single individual. This issue is important in the context of large scale increase of ethnic and identity-based violence.

Differential ontology is an indication of a liberated society or a social condition where we can afford to maintain the distinction as well as the relation. Common good had also been conceived from a particular perspective only. Communitarians opine that community is constitutive of shared meanings of life. What about different individuals constructing and belonging to different life-worlds? Answering this would take us beyond even radical multiculturalism that confines the argument to cultural groups for the considerations of justice.²⁸ The problem is of internal differences within a society or a community. What role does shared meanings of life has here? We have seen in the previous chapter that liberal justice is driven by the idea of Kantian *right reason*. Communitarians find any approach to justice outside the idea of the *common good* as empty. Radical pluralism goes a step further. It is also different from the idea of radical pluralism of Iris Marion Young.²⁹ Radical pluralism *prima facie* expands itself from cultural relativism. We can boldly say that *LCD* maintains double standards in denying

²⁸Michael Duche, "Radical Multiculturalism versus Liberal Pluralism," *Ethical Perspectives* 4(2004): 238-249, 238.

²⁹In *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Iris Young outlines a feminist politics that has much affinity to radical plural democracy. Young defines justice as the institutionalized condition that make it possible for all to learn and use satisfying skills in socially recognized settings, to participate in decision making and express their feelings and perspectives on social life in contexts where others can listen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 91.

to recognize individual as individual and also as a social being. This double-side of the individual makes her a **constitutive self**. The simultaneity of liberty and the common good is needed in order to understand the inevitable clash of life-projects. Rather than looking beyond the social collective to the cultural, we need to come back to the idea of social collective. Why do identities clash? Due to intolerance? Power relations? These are obvious answers that mean to state that there are processes of domination [*societies of control*] that creates the problem. A community is not merely an ensemble of beings. Perhaps it could be just like that. In the process of living together people make judgments of each other's social life - in terms of what they are associated with. The togetherness is not explained by mere mediation of moral principles or play of intuitions. This is the reason why all social violence also is a kind of moral violence.

Anthony Cohen argues that community is to be understood less as a social practice, and more as a symbolic structure. It gives an anthropological meaning only.³⁰ Gerard Delanty opines that the term community reveals both longing for belonging and also a particular phenomenon.³¹ Community is both an idea and an experience. However, it does not or should not have a totalitarian control over the individuals, despite the fact that the identity of a person depends on culture. It is true that community is always in the formative mode. But the formation is not prolonged indefinitely. There is no doubt in Delanty's claim that there is always ambiguity in grasping the nature of common life. This ambiguity can reach to radical extremes under attempts to enforce totality. Delanty states that disagreement over common life seems to lie within the nature of community and fact of language - expressed in communicative contexts and social recognition of

³⁰It reflects the excesses of the cultural turn. Critics say that the cultural turn has resulted in the loss of community that disentangled itself from the social.

³¹See his book *Community* (New York: Routledge, 2010), xii [Second Edition].

the other.³² The consequence of this then ought to be radical pluralism. Creation of communicative contexts unfortunately makes it a linguistic affair. One has to ask, ‘are various life-worlds incommunicable to each other’? The answer may be in the affirmative if these differences are radical. The supposition seems to be that community is impossible when there is nothing common to share as part of the *social milieu*. There is no doubt about the basic requirement of communicability of life-worlds. But it may end up becoming moralistic - once we leave the fate of community to mere linguistic communicability, morality takes over the totalitarian principle that may turn out to be socio-culturally violent.³³ The issue is whether they are communicable outside the structures of languages - like experiences and ways of life.

There is always a search for community at every historical-political-epochal crisis. Let us note that the search had begun with the fall of “total community” of the socialist experiment. Before making a critique of the rationality of *LCD*, we need to understand the symptom of social alienation that Robert Nisbet points out long ago. For him,

...it has become clearer to me that alienation is one of the determining realities of the contemporary age ... but a cultural and psychological condition implication ever larger sections of population.³⁴

The condition that Nisbet depicts can be noticed in many societies [both western and non-western] that lacked progressive conscience. For instance, in societies

³² *Community*, xv.

³³ By stating this an objection is raised to this point of Jurgen Habermas: “The morality of a community not only lays down how its members should act: it also provides grounds for the consensual resolution of relevant conflicts.” see *The Inclusion of the Other* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998), 4.

³⁴ See Robert A. Nisbet, *Community and Power (Formerly The Quest for Community)* (London: A Galaxy Notebook, 1962), viii.

like India [*that boasts itself to the greatest multicultural society*] recognition of individuals as citizens is only for the purpose of electoral politics. Otherwise, many sections of the society are like ‘head counts that do not count at all’ - the dehumanized who can be qualified as *part who has no part*, in Ranciere’s terms. Nisbet rightly states that these individuals find the social order remote, fraudulent, develop despair and even develop hostility to the enforced social order. In this light Rawls’s well-ordered society sounds underworked despite being speculatively appealing. Delanty presents a very interesting point that has a lot of truth in it. He presents the idea of a German Philosopher Helmut Plessner who strongly stated that the idea of community is overvalued and *latently* authoritarian.³⁵ No culture or society is an exception from the inclusion of *LCD*. The malaise of the social in the modern times, critics say, [scarily] land us again in the specters of the traditional community. It collapses any futuristic imagination or community futures. Simmel’s idea of tragedy of culture is worth mentioning.³⁶ Society produces cultural products that get fetishized and gain power they don’t inherently possess. Community has no escape from both social and political processes. The fall of the socialist experiment certainly has created social crises in all those societies that had been inspired by socialist equality. The fall also created a deep dent to the idea witnessing the profoundly increased boldness of *LCD*. Anthony Giddens writes, “On each side of the political spectrum today we see a fear of social disintegration and a call for a revival of community”.³⁷ This reflects a social theorist’s interpretation of ideology and its devastating impacts resulting in the erosion of the social realm. Social theorists and some political philosophers

³⁵ *Community*, 13.

³⁶ “The Tragedy of Culture, Simmel theorized, occurred as societies modernized and the massive amounts of objective cultural products overshadowed (and overwhelmed) the subjective abilities of the individual. Presented with more options than one person can possibly ever hope to experience in a lifetime, the modern individual runs the risk of stunting his or her social psychological growth.” <http://routledgesoc.com/category/profile-tags/tragedy-culture>

³⁷ See *Beyond left and Right* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 124.

talk about social cohesion or an integrated social community. The capacity of this social integration is to take into account group differences and radical pluralism valuing individual differences.

Delanty claims that radical pluralism can be identified within communitarianism. It is interesting to see radical pluralism and shared meanings of life go hand-in-hand. Walzer makes an interesting proposition, yet not convincing. He claims that a near universal ideology and the politics of difference are possible at the same time. This possibility itself radicalizes and pluralizes the democratic framework. For him, this possibility arises in the context of collapse of the totalitarian project, and commitment to democracy and cultural autonomy.³⁸ Radical pluralism make room for radical differences where the only shared value is these radical differences. Faith is laid in this approach in empowering marginal groups. The search for a new community ought to take into account liberation of the oppressed from *continued* historical injustices. This is possible only when one makes a radical break by way of total dismantle of existing social relations. The movement toward a total closure for a new beginning is a herculean demand. If Rawls can propose an original position for achieving a certain kind of social justice, we can conceive of an original position as a thought experiment for re-negotiation of all socio-cultural identities. It calls for a fresh approach to political community.

No idea of common good would do any good if the political lays down firmer ground of legitimation of oppressive forms of social existence. Iris Young rightly states that oppressive and unequal consequences of social differentiations of many socio-cultural groups have tyrannical notion of common good. Such an idea results

³⁸See his book *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

in the creation of **deviant Other**.³⁹ Democratic societies too are no exception in this regard. Whatever form of society it is, the Schmittian idea of *Us & Them* very much exists as long as it inherits historical forms even in the minimum possible manner. If the historical forms represent oppression so too their successors. The matter of serious concern is the formation of social relations in the new community. The communitarian focus is on promoting social solidarity than overcoming social conflicts. Most of the integration approaches follow this method. The negative impact of this is society reaches a point where everything is treated as normal because it is a product of the social. The other way of looking at solidarity is from the point of differentiation and disagreement. Unequal status and unjust-oppressive conditions are not merely because of disagreement. There are many factors that contribute to this condition - constant push of certain people to economic, social and cultural margins. This is possible only when political institutions are repellent to reorganize & redress unequal social relations. Politics should take control of the civil society [in terms of radical equality] rather the *vice versa*]. The new community should take into account both politics and the civil condition. Whatever may be the political condition the manner in which individuals treat each other through mediation of social markers they carry is important. These markers act as a means to sustain the dominant hierarchy. It requires a drastic reformulation of the idea of the common good. The latter is not an average of people having high cultural value and people having the least cultural space. There is no merit in saying that on the whole it is a fair society. The *overall* gaze itself speaks that much has been overlooked or let-it-go. The oppressed condition is never redeemed because all the forces of the society are in league with each other. We call it as the dominant hierarchy. While we are forced to think about the community we are also compelled to think about the social

³⁹See *Inclusion and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000/2002), 81.

weight of things. Failures of both liberalism and communism caused the disillusion of radical diversity. Community is always an unachieved condition as long as socio-culturally sedimented hierarchies exist. The common good requires something more than shared meanings of life.

Community is lost - meaning thereby, the dynamics of shared meanings of life, under the conditions of radical diversity, lacks the sense of genuine togetherness. Many communitarians believe in bringing back the traditional community. It is their grasp of larger social reality. The charge is that liberalism gives insufficient weight to the value of fidelity to tradition in human life.⁴⁰ The choice is in our hands - either to depend on the idea of community [having historico-temporal context] or making community [collective life] as more of an ontological principle. Robert Putnam talks about the past American community expressing nostalgia.⁴¹ Is the return to the traditional community an indication of an *originary community*? There is a problem here. Authoritarianism is not a modern invention. Return to the tradition means return to the authoritarian forms of social life. There is no ruling out of this possibility. Re-instating such communal life is extending our true consent and conformity to oppressive hierarchies. Community and society get a fresh look in our endeavor for a new community. The formative aspect of the community is driven by what Jacques Ranciere calls *dissensus*⁴² *contra* liberalism's *consensus*-approach. To play the emancipatory role the community *via* the *public sphere* makes certain values inalienable not just valuationally but also actually. The freedom of social life cannot be taken away even when some enjoy

⁴⁰ Joel Feinberg, "Liberalism, Community, and Tradition," *TIKKUN* 3.3(), 38. Also see Joel Feinberg, *Harmless Wrongdoing: The Moral Limits of the Criminal Law, Vol. 4* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

⁴¹ See *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (Toronto: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

⁴² "The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics," in Paul Bowman & Richard Stamp, eds., *Reading Ranciere* (New York: Continuum, 2011), 1-17.

extreme social power and dominance. This can be seen as a new kind of original position or communicative game.

Political philosophers have enough debated on the distinct status of each individual and the relation of individuals to the social whole. What is important to speculate is besides these social guarantees, does the society/community ensure retributive justice? Social contract, for instance, is not just a contract for preserving one's self-preservation and other freedoms. It is also about drawing out ways through which denial and deprivation of one or a few or many is sorted out. Lest the new community should face dissent from itself by individuals while dissenting from others. Ranciere's way poses a true challenge to equality as distributable item. Ranciere seems to be taking an objection to liberal equality. The distributable aspects of equality always places someone in the receiving end while one distribute it. For him, a hierarchy is already in place *a priori*. Equality is not the outcome but must be the "presupposition of those who act"⁴³ - *the presupposition of anyone and everyone*.⁴⁴ "All are given equal rights," argues Ignaas Devisch, and are free to structure their lives the way they want to, so long as it is not detriment to the rights of another individual.⁴⁵ We can make this standard supposition though it is inherently paradoxical. Here, we should not miss the crucial point - that equality is treated here as complex equality.

The search for the new community requires an advancement in the understanding of individual autonomy. We need to progress from Rousseauian and Kantian

⁴³Todd may, "Democracy is Where We Make It: The Relevance of Jacques Ranciere," *Symposium* 13.1(2009).

⁴⁴Jacques Ranciere, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*. td. by J. Rose, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 17.

⁴⁵See his book *Jean-Luc Nancy and the Question of Community* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012).

understanding. Interestingly, by autonomy, Ranciere means that it is a form of thinking, practice and organization free from the presupposition of inequality, free from the hierarchical constraint and belief.⁴⁶ It is placed prior to any identity assertion through political action. Equality is an inaction perceiving all beings as equal in all walks of life. It implies that differentiation is a socio-cultural-political process. Another implication of it is collapse of the liberal distinction between freedom and equality. Equality has to it a primordial status. This gives a different outlook of civil society - the holding together of beings. Jean-Luc Nancy states that “a lost age in which community was woven of tight, harmonious and infrangible bonds is a constant in philosophical discourse.” Is it the case that, much of western political theorists, and to the agony of the rest of the world, that the oppressed condition of the people does not matter much for theory? If this is so, rationalistic approach and shared-ends carry empty and impoverished propositions. We have stated above that an hypothetical assumption of an original position for negotiations with knowledge of people’s historical conditions can be made possible. What is originary in our quest for the new community? The originary thesis comes from the nostalgia for traditional community. For instance, MacIntyre refers to the *modern* moral decay of the community through the loss of original communal presence. This qualifies that *all-is-well* with the traditional community. Devisch rightly argues that in order to overcome the loss of community the comunitarian plea to the social whole has to be broken. It would imply that there is every possibility of totality [*the fallacy of naturally shared characteristics*] in the communitarian obsession for the tradition. He asks, reflecting Nancy, “how can one speak today of we or a plurality without immediately turning it into a substantial and exclusive identity?” Nancy’s shape of the *immanent*

⁴⁶<https://autonomies.org/2017/08/jacques-ranciere-reflections-on-equality-and-emancipation/>

community takes note of the challenges of our time. What are the challenges of our times? There are many than Nancy would imagine while addressing the question of community. Post-ideological or post-communist age saw even greater violence, injustice and socio-cultural atrocities every where. Every historical epoch outperforms and outweighs the previous epoch. Societies and cultures have become ever greatly intolerant and shameless. First of all, with the loss of community came the loss of awe about the social life of people.

The *new* community requires achieving full immanence. It is a gigantic task. Alongside we have to think about the immanence of the political community. One cannot think of a community without the thought of a perceptual tomorrow. It acquires the character of an Utopia - the idea of a never finished tomorrow. Looking into its implication we can say as a political philosophical paradigm that Utopia lacks the phenomenological touch as all revolutionary projects aim at fruition of their pursuits. The framing of the community at every historical epoch gives birth to utopian aspirations. It is more of a psychoanalytical condition. It is as if someone forming a feeling of freeing oneself or a collective from of a particular life-world. Devisch presents a beautiful point of Nancy:

As long as one regards community as an immanent entity, and as long as this entity aims at the completion of a destiny and a truth, it will always be haunted by its opposite, i.e., social disintegration.⁴⁷

What is the use of a community if it does not take into account the repressive conditions of existence of the [historically] oppressed. There is always something to achieve, something left, to speak in the Derridean language - something is still left over. This preserves the futuristic imagination despite critics attempting

⁴⁷See *Jean-Luc Nancy and the Question of Community*, .

to blow away any futuristic political imagination. In the case of Benjamin it is that possibility that will be realized in the present-*now*, to emerge from the historical leftover. These historical leftovers are full of instances of unbearable oppressive conditions of every historical epoch. What we can infer from both is that the very condition of **leftover** will rupture the social whole, keeping alive the very practical possibility of dissent. The issue is why one ought to consent to the social dominant milieu? The *différance* or [*supplement* is never sublated. In this sense it is not a recovery of the community, rather, the discovery of a new epoch. Nancy asserts that violence is one of the significant stages to be passed to attain a free society. This needs a deconstruction from the inside - again indication of dissent from within. The challenge since Hobbes's time is gaining full-proof idea of social freedom. Social contract is needed time and again because everyone can be the victim of the other's social freedom. There is a lot of sense in the Hobbesian note of the community. The reframing of the community, the hypothetical original position, may have to begin with no preceding notions of community - no shared essence. Yet we begin to speak and think about the nature of *we* or radical plurality. We take cognizance of the Heideggerian idea of the *ontological thrownness* - the condition in which "the world is the horizon in which every individual existence is always and already related [in the sense that established]." Large number of scholars have argued for this in various many ways. Yet it deserves a repetition here. Nancy's take on his idea seems to be the basis of his social ontology - the powerful principle of *being-with-others*.⁴⁸ This is indeed a magnificent idea. Social ontology has the combination of being-with and plurality. To extend the Heideggerian principle, plurality is significant in the context of *being-with-many*; contributes common good, but also retain in *myself*

⁴⁸A primordial being-with clearly demonstrates how the self *I* thrives only because it is always placed in the situation of plurality, of being with many others.

the choice to with draw from it, *i.e.*, dissent. It makes us grasp what is being-*in*-common and what is not.

Society requires a constant rupture in the condition of being-with, positively as well as negatively. The fundamental nature of relation establishes the non-relation too - the incommensurable. The relation also establishes the relationality. Conflict is also primordial in this sense. The question is whether to reinstate the primordially or the originary. It doesn't exist for Nancy and Derrida. Anything that is supplemented is no longer originary. We are not better-off as liberal subjects where everyone takes care of herself and are all hedonistic subjects. Nancy argues that autonomy is not an alternative to social totality. The exercise of autonomy in the Rousseauan or Kantian sense is no less utopian than the supposition of a perfect[ed] equality. Even in the liberal-democratic societies unity is enforced in all walks of life - unity of reason and unity of morality. Modern social forms invented their own unifying mechanisms. Maurice Blanchot rightly states that societies in the twentieth century demonstrate unity if not fusion.

With ever great challenges than before, the present society is under pressure for the manifestation of diverse worlds. The questioning of metaphysical absolutism of the western philosophical canon throws us into post-foundationalism and *impolitical*. Metaphysics is treated as actuality's dialectical opposite. It is reflective of the excess of the infinite that transcends the finite *phenomenal* self. What is the ontology of community in the postfoundational context?⁴⁹ Nancy makes social ontology as first philosophy. The world in which we are placed connects me and others - being-in-common. There are several anti-metaphysical versions of po-

⁴⁹Devisch asks, "...following the disappearance of every foundation of community, how can we still speak about community?"

litical community and society. Then it ought to be like this: what totality is to metaphysics should be plurality is to actuality. The argument is, “if the original community requires a *mimetic moment* or a supplement, in order to be able to appear it is no longer original.’ Devisch’s and Nancy’s arguments pointing out a return to the original community is a negation of originality. It implies nothing has been lost.⁵⁰ There is no loss of community. If nothing has been lost then why do we need to reconfigure the society? And why is the question of community so important? Humanity might have had progressed in terms of culture, politics and knowledge. The very act of repetition or appeal to repetition is the indication of incompleteness and non-existent of complete originary. Political utopia is one such condition. Utopian pursuit mean that the requisite radical break with the past has not taken place. The liberation or emancipation has not been attained. Emancipation is not an act of creation but instead liberation of something that precedes taking place at the level of the ground of the social. Taking cues from Heidegger, Nancy develops the idea of being singularplural⁵¹ - “I am not an isolated individual. It is precisely the irreplaceability and singularity of my existence that puts me in relation to the world, to others ...” Further, the *being* is open to the world. What does the fundamental openness to the world signify? Does openness to the other take note of the Levinasian radical other? *I am open to the other* - doesn’t mean that *I* am/will be like you or my life-world overlaps with yours. Totality drags people to such consensus. Cultural consensus is more dangerous than the political consensus. Both mutually complement to each other. This is the most scariest part. Cultural violence violates all political protections to voices that have no voice. It affects the civil society drastically.

⁵⁰Interview with Nancy, “Liberation”

⁵¹the singularity of being is plural in its being and any plural being is always singular

The collapse of communism addresses the question of community differently because there is no communal past for socialist vision. The major contradiction is the paradox of a permanent fixation of what our lives have to be in relation to others. This permanent fixation is reflective of radical heterogeneity. A radical division between the self and the other is fine, but a deep abyss exists inside us/beneath us that may never conjoin with the exteriority or interiority of the other. The encounter between the self and the other is thus radically explained. Acknowledgement of respective abyss is desired for and encounters made possible. Can ethics mediate the self and other? Not really sure. If it does then the hierarchy cannot be the product of an ethical understanding. Having tied up oneself to a particular social identity [race, religion, community, class, caste, group, ideology] one can have a radical difference with the *radical other*. Radical emancipation requires the radical other without being reduced to the same. Difference is like *differance* whose relationship is indeterminate and deferred. This indeterminacy sets the stage for the *difference* of people's life-worlds and their identities. It becomes the regulation principle of the social condition. Nancy states that ethics is an insufficient ground for understanding co-existence and also otherness. The ontological anchoring explains the condition of being-*with*-others.

Conclusion

What is the feeling that one gets when one sees the *other* whose way of life is adversely distinct from mine? Why does fear or hatred come into my mind? Is it the result of the present social dominant hierarchy? Who is my neighbor? How should *I* connect to her? Nancy Rosenblum holds the opinion that neighbors

hold our lives in their hands. May be Nancy's shift from infinite to finite is an important idea here. Along with everything else politics is also placed in the finite realm - the shift from normative political theory to political realism happens here. The new community ought to explain the new politics - post-political, post-ideological, post-communist, post-political theological and post-messianic. One set of thinkers opine that there is a disentanglement of politics and theology not because of the route to disenchantment but also dumping of messianic politics or political messianism. Finite politics is the absence of political messianism. Anti-metaphysics deports politics into zones of finite operations. The issue is whether it is appropriate for radical politics. Politics must find its own finite zone of the existential ground that is revealed through the social ontology of co-existential analysis. Any negation of utopian imagination is pushing political theory to the rock bottom. Nancy makes an important point here: Instead of proposing a new politics, we have to think of what politics means, of what being-in-common means, and whether or not they are same. However, all discussions made about equality and justice must reflect on the necessity and determinate fixation of the end of communism or the driving force of all thoughts about new politics, new society and new world. For many years, thinkers have targetted all paradigms of totalization, laying confidence and faith in democracy. We have discussed that *LCD* perpetrates its own style of totalization. Have societies ever existed without totalizing forces? This needs a lot more deeper reflection - existence is far more a larger process than politics. But the latter has taken control of human lives - power is mitigated in the realm of politics. The political order can no longer be the completion of the essence of a communal existence. Social ontology is the existential departure point for politics, the movement into the realm of finitude.

Chapter 5

In the name of Democracy

5.1 The New Political

The new community retains the utopian ideal without necessarily being socialist or communist. By the same logic the new community need not be *LCD*. Michael Freeden asks, “So where do ideologies stand at the beginning of the twenty-first century, and where do their investigation stand? He proceeds to answer these questions claiming that liberalism encourages multiple future paths endorsing impermanence and non-doctrinal nature of political thinking.¹ The question of ideology is not resolved even when we show commitments to ideology. It also implies that ideological thinking takes place as long as politics exists between human beings. It means that both post-ideological-age and post-political age are false metaphors. The issue is, the relationship that ideological commitment has with

¹See his article, “Confronting the Chimera of Post-Ideological Age,” *Critical Review of International Social and political Philosophy* 8.2 (2005): 247-262, 247.

totality. It may remain as a possibility when social reality is driven by the principle of *telos*. Totality is devastating than enabling a social life. We have seen how Tracy Strong addresses the issue of political violence resulting from the western metaphysical canon [as discussed in chapter 1]. Can we treat this as an overstatement? May be or may be not. Even if we do not treat this as an overstatement, it may seem so as the criticism sounds too constrictive in nature. Post-politics can be a form of distorted politics - distortion in the sense that the mood of the civil society is driven toward consensus. Such is the nature of power politics. Political consensus is as dangerous as cultural consensus of hierarchy. Consensus is more frightful, and can harm basic human freedoms. It closes the possibility of political upliftment of individuals and communities, because breaking the hierarchy is absolutely negligible. In chapter 3, we have seen that Rawls's public political justice and overlapping consensus² fall short of many serious aspects. His thesis indeed denotes both wishful thinking and also political compromise.³ Freeden's assumption above sounds oxymoronic as if liberalism is interchangeably used as non-doctrinal. That politics can be non-doctrinal [*free of doctrine, belief and ritual*⁴] in nature sounds absurd. It is strange that liberalism in all its historical contexts has no instance of totalization and lacks any sense of totality. In chapter 2, we have discussed about *endism* as a half-baked idea. After the ideological collapse, opposing views are available on political reality. The only fact is *LCD* suppresses all dissent and dissensus. The desire for a non-doctrinal politics is the result of the fear of ideology induced into the minds of the people. Liberalism

²See his "The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 7.1(Spring 1987): 1-25.

³Michael Barnhart, "An Overlapping Consensus: A Critique of Two Approaches," *Review of Politics* 66.2(Spring 2004): 257-283. Gerald Gaus is skeptical to the idea of political consensus. This point is elaborately discussed in James Boettcher, "Rawls and Gaus on the Idea of Public Reason" in *Thinking Fundamentals, IWM Junior Visiting Fellows Conferences*, 9(2000): 1-19.

⁴See Erneso Laclau, "The Death and the Resurrection of the Theory of Ideology," *MLN* 112 (1997): 297-321, 297.

and its allies made it possible by constant re-staging of the memories of ‘those communists’. and ‘socialism means unfreedom’.

Zizek observes the ever presence of ideology as a spectre despite Frederic Jameson’s remark that nobody seriously considers alternatives to capitalism [may be after the fall]. It is the case though it is an indication of crisis of imagination of various possible forms of social life.⁵ This negligibility of transformation of lives is an indication of residue of things-to-occur. It retains in itself Benjamin’s idea of the awaited-arrival and Derrida’s yet-to-come. It straightforwardly says that democracy is not a closure of politics, in other words, there is politics-to-come. The *yetness* dismantles all hue-cry about a *lost world*. This new politics takes account of the new community by aiming at the expulsion of the sedimented social forms. These forms perpetuate in themselves the historical markers - cultural, racial, social, and political. Continuity of such forms distorts politics predominantly. The collective life has to give some thought to the possible ontological status of *extra-discursive reality* and *extra-ideological reality*. Both these permit abstraction from reality and facts. This is contrary to Habermas’s assertion of absence of an extra-discursive ground, i.e., dependence on a formal and deontological theory of morality.⁶ Ranciere, Badiou and Mouffe throw some light on this. The gist of their idea is the revealing logic of the political that opine that politics is just an establishing institutional order.⁷ Treating everything as political may have

⁵Slavoj Zizek, “The Spectre of Ideology,” in *Mapping Ideology* ed. by Slavoj Zizek, (New York: Verso, 1994), 1. Also see Fredric Jameson, “The Courage Called Utopia,” web entry “The Disorder of Things: For The Relentless Criticism of All Existing Conditions Since 2010” [<https://thedisorderofthings.com/tag/fredric-jameson/>]

⁶For this argument, see Patrick O’Mahony, “Habermas and Communicative Power,” *Journal of Power* 3.1 (2010): 53-73. Also see Byron Rienstra & Derek Hook, “Weakening Habermas: The Undoing of Communicative Rationality,” *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* 33.3(2006): 313-339.

⁷A lot of scholars had spent sufficient thought on the idea of the political since Carl Schmitt. It is presented as the *ontological condition of politics*. Its distinction with politics is made popular by Claude Lefort onwards. For him the political is the symbolic space

a totalitarian aspect to it. The issue of preservation and recreation of differences is the most important concern here. Inna Viriasova argues that the political is seen something as rupturing the *ordered reality* of politics in the context of post-foundational political theory. Oliver Marchart calls this preservation of politics by the political from depoliticization.⁸ This is a very important aspect. Critics of *LCD* will not radically differ among themselves if we say that it depoliticizes the political realm. De-politicization involves neutralization of the political by making the social as primarily reproducing non-political realms. There is some truth in it. It is not just political inequality but inequality being politicized through guarantees of political power.

Before proceeding to examine the emancipatory appeal of the democratic political order, it is important to understand the meaning of the *return of the political* - in the context of its corruption/subversion. The return of the political seems to be a disentanglement of politics from the clutches of philosophy. It may mean, in Ranciere's terms, restoring the pure state of politics - not in the sense of treating politics as a distinct way of life. For Ranciere, it is to recognize the vicious circle [anti-Arendtian stance] that characterizes the link between the political relationship and the political subject. It has to answer the question, "For what reasons do

of authority, the very subject of power. Eventually the political had retreated from politics [Nancy's *retreat of the political*]. Illan rua Wall, "Politics and the Political," Notes on the Thought of Jean-Luc-Nancy" *Critical Legal Thinking: law and the Political* 20 February 2013. <http://criticallegalthinking.com/2013/02/20/politics-and-the-political-notes-on-the-thought-of-jean-luc-nancy/> That everything is political can be found in Schmitt and Foucault. Mostly it is about power - "because power extends beyond the limited sphere of politics into a general economy of the political." See Inna Viriasova, "Politics and the Political: Correlation and the Question of the Unpolitical," *Peninsula: a journal of relational politics* 1.1(2011). <https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/peninsula/article/view/687/1925>. Nancy defines the political in this manner: "political" would mean that which goes beyond all the particular delimitation of discipline and activity, operating at the level of the entire society (even that of humanity), of its conditions of existence and meaning." See his book *Philosophical Chronicles* ed. by Franson Manjali, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 24.

⁸See his book *Post-Foundational Political Thought: Political Difference in Nancy, Lefort, Badiou and Laclau* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007).

human beings gather into political communities?”⁹ Though this question sounds profound, it still resonates the impoverished nature of any argument that could fall in line with the social contract. Jean-Philippe Deranty states that philosophy’s treatment of *polis* reduces it to a rationalistic approach, where it concerns itself with only distribution of powers and places. It is a direct justification of social hierarchy and domination. It also reduces individual to a non-political subject.¹⁰ The focus of rediscovering the realm of political ontology is the recognition of the *political community* as the product of *citizens’* activity. This approach definitely erases the authority of those who rule over the ruled [ones that are supposed *to keep quiet and bow down*]. Ranciere is clear on what needs to be overcome - *the political community as a collective body where distribution is done on the grounds of groups and individuals*.¹¹ This results in not only continuation of earlier forms of social domination [inclusive of oppression and violent submission] but inventing new forms of establishing newer forms of hierarchy.

Ranciere finds a deeper chasm between the social and the political. He supposes that the latter is constitutive of the principle of radical equality; equality of *all* individuals. If the political only can find the social, then equality becomes a political principle. It has an interesting implication. Civil society possibly becomes egalitarian by the grace of the political while there lies the fundamental recognition of pure *ontological equality* [as a regulative principle]. The definition of the political also depends on the polemic verification of equality. For Ranciere, politics has its own universal measure of equality.¹² There are two ways of addressing the rela-

⁹Jacques Ranciere, “Ten Theses on Politics,” *Theory & Event* 5.3(2001). Thesis 1. <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/32639>.

¹⁰See his essay, “Ranciere and Contemporary Political Ontology,” *Theory & Event* 6.3(2003).

¹¹See his essay, “The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics,” in Paul Bowman & Richard Stamp, eds., *Reading Ranciere* (London: Continuum, 2011), 1-17, 3.

¹²See “The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics,” 4.

tionship between the politics and the political; in terms of *agonism*, and political equality [*demos*]. Addressed by Schmitt first, and Mouffe later, the opposing view takes into account the “ineradicability of conflictual dimension in social life.” Why does Ranciere move away from Schmitt’s idea and stick to *ontological* equality? The irreducibility of the political lies in the fundamental equality of all human subjects - where everything happens in the domain of politics. Bert Olivier calls the *political* as determining the possibility and impossibility of politics.¹³

Politics is the perversion of the political. How does it distort the social? The retreat of the social and the return of the political has to be understood clearly. Ranciere treats the social as the ground of hierarchy of groups and individuals. It is true that the social [while also including the cultural] is the breeding ground of oppression, differentiation and dehumanization. It is also true that it becomes worse when these social processes are backed by bad politics. Distinctions like us/them and friend/enemy¹⁴ further distorts the realm of the social. It is surprising to see that the political is presupposed as ground for the principle of equality - of anyone with anyone¹⁵ - “Equality or inequality comes down to aporia and political philosophy.”¹⁶ Ranciere confidently believes that philosophy’s extension into the political will automatically transform the nature of politics.¹⁷ What is achieved with the return of the political or overcoming the death of the political?

¹³See his essay, “Ranciere and the Recuperation of Politics,” *Phronimon* 16.1(2015) *online version: ISSN 2413-3086*

¹⁴For Schmitt, the political is the name saved for the most intense human conflict we can conceive of - between friends and enemies. See Martin Plot, *The Aesthetico-Political: The Question of Democracy in Merleau-Ponty, Arendt and Ranciere* (Bloomsbury).

¹⁵Jean-Philippe Deranty, “Ranciere and Contemporary Political Ontology.”

¹⁶*Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, ix.

¹⁷Ranciere begins his book with a quote from Aristotle’s *Politics* - “The question we must bear in mind is, equality or inequality in what sort of thing? For this is a problem, and one for which we need political philosophy.” The question we should ask then is is the Ranciere’s revival/resurrection/return of the political a revival of the Aristotelian idea of politics? See his book *Disagreement, Politics and Philosophy*, td., by Julie Rose, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999). viii-xiii.

The miscount that Ranciere talks about as integral to democracy, will it be repositioned as the *count*? The reference is made to Plato's treatment of democracy and politics, which Ranciere refers to as "democracy's miscount ... after all ... the fundamental miscount of politics."¹⁸ What is being counted and miscounted here? To understand this, one has to understand whether one [an individual or a group or an identity] is recognized and valued as a part that is *actually* counted. What did Plato mean by democracy's miscount? In Ranciere's case count and miscount can be treated as referring to one and the same. It is one possibility. In other words, parts that constitute a political community are either not counted or over-counted. Radical equality enables the *demos* to achieve the count of the uncounted - the unrepresented. There is a twist to this assumption - uncounted is counted who matter only numerically resulting in the continuation of the miscount, *i.e.*, the social hierarchy. The difficulty arises from the difference that ontological equality holds from arithmetical equality. The difference is seen in the non-existent of qualitative difference of freedom - the whole lies in the many. However, we need to go ahead of treating community as mere part-whole relationship. That sounds typically Aristotelian.¹⁹ Ranciere's treatment of Plato is complex. Miscount of democracy can be seen in his hatred of democracy. How does it result in the fundamental miscount of politics? The miscount emerges from the wrong count of the parts of the community. May be, for Plato, over-valuing of many [Herodotus formula of **the whole lies in the many**] distorts politics. For him, the hierarchy brings its own justice in the society that super-sedes wrongs. The miscount reflects the difference between ontological equality and arithmetic/geometric equality.

¹⁸ *Disagreement, Politics, and Philosophy*, 10.

¹⁹ "Justice means that we move away from the single counting of who has what on an individual basis and instead come to realize that it concerns each party taking its share." See Clare Woodford, *Disorienting Democracy: Politics of Emancipation* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

Arguing for the return of the political is not just to re-install equality in terms of larger *demos*, the people. It is also to install new politics - which is more than mere *police* relieving people from different modes of subjection. The distinction that is set between political reality and social reality [*apolitical excess*] is not really convincing. If the struggle between the rich-poor, privileged and under privileged has two domains, resolution of one is not a resolution of the other. This dilemma is resolved by the coming of the new politics awaited here, *i.e.*, to institute a part that has no part. The poor who are supposed to be part of the counting of the uncounted has the expanded notion to it. They are part that has no part, not just in terms of economic life, but also not in terms of cultural and social life. This may contradict the differentiation established between social reality and political reality. To understand the re-staging of politics and political we need to acknowledge the valuable interpretation of aesthetics and politics. The new political and new politics are driven by the spirit of disagreement. What is this disagreement about? To make the uncounted part be part of the count we need to grasp the nature of the human world. More than this the attitude toward each other when every one of us is aware of the *difference* we live with. Ranciere's opinion imply that ontological equality would transform into ontological inequality when politics legitimizes the condition of 'part who has no part' - "ignorant of the existence of the *common* world."²⁰ Denial is an indication of *ontological* existence. This cannot ground on the idea that people are placed in the common world with places decided and destined.²¹

²⁰Jacques Ranciere, *Disagreement*, 53.

²¹Ranciere mentions, "Plato states that artisans cannot be put in charge of the shared or common elements of the community because they do not have the time to devote themselves to anything other than their work." This is reflective of the idea that a part that has no part. The Aristotelian idea that a human being is a political being does not apply to them - *unpolitical* in the Schmittian sense, which also looks like labelling it as 'part with no part' as mere demographical entity [resonating the idea of *zone of indistinction*]. This kind of distribution of the sensible is present in not so-discreditable in latter times. In a world of radical diversity Schmittian notion of fundamental polarization of life-forms is not to be taken lightly - "politics

Community and commonality are complex issues here. The distribution of the sensible reveals who can access what is common in the community? Common things are language, space, experience. Ranciere states that the idea of equality of speaking beings with “common capacity for speech” [May be like that of linguistic-grammatical universals] is both reasonable and unreasonable simultaneously.²² The incompatibility inherent to speech and communication is because of the indifference to the identity of the interlocutors. It is the reason why all speaking is not speaking. It is more than mere *reluctance* to recognize *others’* capability to speak/form words and expressions - even they do not matter at all. The distribution of speaking bodies where the manifestation of what is *just* is a reconfiguration of the perceptible²³ Disagreement arises from this difference in sound and voice.²⁴ This sounds like a communicative intervention in the Habermasian sense. However, the validity cannot determine the fate of an utterance on the common stage. All this depends upon the possible placing of human capacity to speak, discuss and most importantly *negotiate*. The language spoken or shared, if at all has to be aesthetic/poetic and open up the world, requires a more radical notion of linguistic community. It will be paradoxical to desire for an openness of languages yet legitimize the rules of communication. If equality is

is inscribed into a biological field in which the extreme possibility of a divergent distribution of intensities of friendship and enmity takes place”. Refer Jacques Ranciere, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, td., by Gabriel Rockhill, (New York: Continuum, 2004), 12. Federico Lusietti, “Carl Schmitt and Giorgio Agamben: From Biopolitics to Political Romanticism,” *Journal of Philosophy of life*, 1.1(2011): 49-58.

²²Ranciere writes, “An extreme form of disagreement is where X cannot see the common object Y is presenting because X cannot comprehend that the sounds uttered by Y form words and chains of words similar to X’s own. This extreme situation- first and foremost- concerns politics.” *Disagreement*, xii.

²³Jacques Ranciere, *Disagreement*, 53.

²⁴*Speech is something different from voice, which is possessed by other animals also and used by them to express pain or pleasure; for their nature does indeed enable them not only to feel pleasure and pain but to communicate these feelings to each other. Speech, on the other hand, serves to indicate what is useful and what is harmful, and also what is just and what is unjust.* - Aristotle, *Politics* <https://educationmuseum.wordpress.com/2012/03/22/jacques-ranciere-disagreement-wrong-and-subjectification/>

a priori regulative principle the communication pattern need to take into account background condition of ontological equality. Communicability is only aspect of the interaction process. The important aspects are *differing* voices and *different* senses. Only in this sense the relationship between politics, aesthetics and *dissensus* is understood. How should we interpret the Aristotelian assertion that “slaves understand language but don’t possess it.” To Ranciere, Aristotle has no substantial discussion on the possession aspect.²⁵

Ranciere claims here that the presence of aesthetics in politics is noticeable. By this he meant,

the exercise of power or the struggle for power, is the reconfiguration of a specific world, a specific form of experience in which some things appear to be political objects, some questions political issues or argumentation and some agents political subjects.²⁶

The aesthetic core of politics is identified here. It emerges from the Platonic separation of politics and art. The interesting element is understanding the aesthetic regime and the order of domination. It is also important to look at the intersection of *police logic* and the logic of equality. The latter needs the former. Modern politics must have overcome the Platonic reference to truth in politics. Ranciere interprets that Plato did not separate art for the benefit of politics. It is in the spirit of being concerned about one’s capacity to be other than what they are.²⁷ The Aristotelian assumption that slaves understand the language of the rulers but don’t possess it - “the definition of those specific places is bound up with the

²⁵Jacques Ranciere, “The Thinking of Dissensus’: Politics and Aesthetics,” 2. Also see Emiliano Battista, Ed., *Dissenting Words: Interviews with Jacques Ranciere* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 121.

²⁶“The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics,” 7.

²⁷Ranciere states that Plato declares that politics should be performance of its own principle, not an embodiment of the principle of community is not real politics. See *Disagreement*, 63.

equation between a form of art and a form of life.”²⁸ The difference in speaking creates what can be called in the Lyotardian terms of *differend* from his *Phrases in Dispute*. Herman Rapaport states that *differend* is a difference which exists in a blatant manner but which is structured such that the victim cannot find a means by which to address it.²⁹

Aestheticization of politics is useful for the re-arrangement and repartition of the perceptible. It should focus on what happens to politics in the process of entanglement with aesthetics. In the first instance, these distinct realities be placed in relation to one another. The possibility lies in the supposition that in the realms of art and politics individuals traverse the normally *thrown-into* places in the sense of opening up of one’s imagination. It is explained like this:

... these activities do, each in their own way, is to effect a redistribution of the sensible, that is of the ways in which human communities are ‘spontaneously’ counted as wholes divisible into their constitutive parts and functions.³⁰

Ranciere seems to be giving a superior role to politics. There is nothing wrong in this. All contemporary political activity is a drive toward consensus - the grand narrative [including Marxism and Rawls’s *political liberalism*]. All narratives of *social* emancipation are potentially and latently violent - but the history of social emancipation had always been made out of small narrative, specific contexts. A new relationship between sense and thought, and bodies and their environment has emerged. The exceptional aesthetic state would mean the radical dis-agreement

²⁸Jacques Ranciere, “The Thinking of Dissensus,” 8.

²⁹The latter is the case of linguistic injustice that is the inability to speak the voice of the abuser [the latter always resides in the linguistic grand narrative]. See Herman Rapaport, “Revire: *Le Differend*,” *Substance* 49(1986).

³⁰Jacques Ranciere, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, ed. & td. by Steven Corcoran, (New York: Continuum, 2010), 1.

of sense and thought. It means that the difference between senses resemble dissensus causing disruption to the normal social distribution, and is irreducible to the objectivity of the situation. What does this signify? It means that politics overturns normal distribution that reduces people to population.

Ranciere makes a distinction between citizens possessing rights in the membership of a state and people with no rights. This is one problem that has long been addressed by many concerned with *citizenship and rights*. The discussion here is not about this. Argument for human rights is only one part of the story. The other part is about ways through which the actual *dissensus* is realized. The importance is for the regulation function of equality and diversity. It is important to see how the radical equality in the political realm also accommodates radical diversity. Accommodating radical diversity is treating the unheard as speakers and render visible what had not been heard.³¹ It is a greater challenge instead. What kind of change would transform the voice into speech, the unheard into heard, and the unseen into seen? Dissensus, rightly states Ranciere, is more than mere conflicts, disagreements, hatred, and abhorrence. It is not the simple everyday confrontation of conflict between social parts - but the demonstration of a gap in the sensible itself.³² There is a lot reflected in the idea of the sensible; of individuals and community . Ranciere's definition of the sensible is reflective of his understanding of the realm of the social - the place for *objectionable* historical practices.³³ The apportioned parts and positions determine the common,

³¹Jacques Ranciere, *Dissensus: On Aesthetics and Politics*, 25.

³²Erich Daniel Luna Jacobs, "The Ignorant Philosopher?: On Jacques Ranciere's Political Ontology," *VIII Congreso Latinoamericano de Ciencia Política* [Unpublished paper]. Also see Jacques Ranciere, *Dissensus*, 38.

³³The distribution of the sensible is the system of self-evident facts of sense perception that simultaneously discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitation that define the respective parts and positions within it." See Jacques Ranciere, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, 12, 103.

nevertheless, contestable. It is contestable because the element of *play-of-power* is endemic to a collective. This play sometimes denies, sometimes doesn't grant what is *inalienable* and most of the times *snatches*, the denial or deprivation is either *tactical* or by inflicting *violence*. To speak in Ranciere's terms the absence is of both void and supplement. The distribution of the sensible is both about participation [partaking] and separation *via* exclusion. The reason is *one* may not have a share in the common by virtue of being something. Ranciere states that society consists of groups dedicated to specific modes of action. The dangerous aspect here is these specific modes may resemble social-cultural annihilation of one of the *hated other*. Human co-habitation is not a simple process. Even if members of the community/society perform those specified actions [contestable hierarchies] it will result in a particular form of hierarchy. However, these specified domains of actions cut cross their specified territory.

Politics arranges the joining of the *excluded* supplement with the community as a whole. If politics is first and foremost an intervention upon the visible and the said, does it mean politics is given the role of emancipation? Ranciere makes an interesting argument here. Emancipation makes us think of politics in terms of conflict of worlds.³⁴ Why is it not conflict of forces? How does one posit the conflict, prejudice, hatred as immanent to a diverse society? What do worlds refer to? One partial response could be that the more diverse the society is the more the presence of modes of oppression. It implies that individuals are unable to live with such sense of visible diversity. Equivalence as a principle *is* distanced from practical display in everyday practices. The possibility is very much there as it is not posited as a transcendent regulative principle. Intervention of politics into

³⁴See his blog entry of Verso, "Democracy, Equality, Emancipation in a Changing World," 13 September 2017. <http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3395/democracy-equality-emancipation-in-a-changing-world>.

the distribution of the sensible, and the visible and the said may bring people to persuasion for reconciling the principle of plurality itself. An ontological coloring of immanence³⁵ would depict it as concerning the purpose, the sense and meaning of human life.

There is a no doubt on the truth value of the individual as a social being. However, individuality and collectivity are not to be looked as distinct elements. Theoretically speaking, political philosophy, and political societies in particular have progressed beyond traditional debate. Ranciere rightly argues that the issue is more about the nature of social links. It would mean that no matter what name we give to a particular social form, all that is valued is the nature of the relationship among individuals. The grounds of their interaction matters the most. In this sense every socio-political form shapes a common world of its own and on its own principle. For Ranciere, capitalism creates a world of its own that reproduces inequality making the real world to exist that way. In the similar spirit, socialism should first *attain* equality or the equilibrium condition and then sustain it to reproduce it. Ranciere considers that the aesthetic is the potential site of emancipation. We can have a stance on what we mean by social emancipation - it would imply that not only the uncounted is to be counted, but also be treated as a *real* part as valuable as others. Radical equality is letting radical differences have equal social positioning. Oppressive Violence is the result of intolerance toward

³⁵For Deleuze, immanence requires the transcendental use of faculties that reveal the limits of experience. Yet for some, both absolute immanence and transcendental empiricism sounds paradoxical. Besides talking about absolute immanence, Giles Deleuze also discusses 'difference' and 'dispersion'. Significant in his thought are references to 'individuation' and 'multiplicities' [Bergsonian]. The likelihood of connection between individual psyche and cultural value or any other dimension [like that of rhizomes] is never obliterated. However, the complexity is defined in the relation between heterogeneous or disparate things, *i.e.*, of disparate worlds. Both difference and dispersion would talk of these multiple plateaus Deleuze refers to - these are the underlying spirits of the idea of 'becoming' [a movement beyond binaries]. In order to free his theory from such allegation, we need to see how difference and dispersion tackle the issue of 'ontology of [the] sense [sensible]'.

these radical differences.

Connell Vaughan explains Ranciere's point that emancipation presupposes radical equality to change the notion of political count. It is indeed radical as it demolishes social hierarchy.³⁶ Vaughan finds Marx's influence on Ranciere in understanding equality. Production is not just material production but also creation of social conditions of life. Elsewhere in other chapters we expressed the futility in supposing that distributive justice is larger than economic justice. It has been argued that Marxian theory satisfies this condition far better than all [liberal] theories of justice. Ranciere's idea of emancipation in opposition to Althusser's model gives proper role to the masses - no subjection of individuals to a dominant regime of power. People themselves are their own vanguard for liberation. In this sense, an individual is primarily a social being and also possesses individual agency.³⁷ Freedom is not just an inner trait and equality is not an external constraint, but processual. This point is missing in the Rawlsian idea of just basic structure. Rationality does not bring the conscience of processual equality. It is clear that Ranciere's idea is primarily about the distribution of the sensible that sets up the social order. The idea of dissensus places politics in a very higher realm. He states that "politics makes visible that which had no reason to be seen, it lodges one world into another ..."³⁸ The meaning of the world gets extended from a conceptual space to a life-world or one's own perception of a social life. Only then we can understand conflict latent to society and politics. Politics and the political can be said to have such roles conceived by Ranciere as long as they

³⁶See his essay, "The Political basis of Ranciere's Aesthetics," *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics* 4(2012).

³⁷Ranciere mentions an endorsement for emancipation: "I am able, we are able to think and act without masters ... to the extent that ...all other human beings are endowed with the same capacity." See "Democracy, Equality and Emancipation in a changing world."

³⁸See *Dissensus*, 38-39.

do not yield to, legitimize and overlap with social and cultural spheres. The fact is there is no overlap due to which there is no political emancipation for radical social evils.

In order for the unheard is heard and the unseen is seen, we minimally need the presence of certain subjects in order for the dialogue to take place. Throughout his writings Habermas presupposes a state of symmetry between the communicating subjects [*presupposition of partners in the communicative exchange*].³⁹ The issue here is that there are many ordinary subjects who engage in the domain of communicative praxis at any given point of time, in any given society. Yet, they are not part of formal/actual practice that make them counted. Ranciere addresses the issue of ‘who is the subject’ and ‘who is the subject of rights’. Such an approach does not result in the communicative justice of the kind of Habermas. Ranciere finds problematic Habermas’s pragmatic approach to universality where the presence of the visible ones claiming to share a common world of both counted and uncounted. For this to happen the communicative space [*public sphere*] should be able to accommodate unheard voices and ‘unequal relations’.⁴⁰ Agreement is never to be treated as imperative. The issue is how is the visibility of the unseen and audibility of the unheard established? Is it recognition [Axel Honneth] or disagreement [Ranciere] that makes this possible? What is the difference

³⁹There are several works in which Habermas bases this argument. It is the central running theme of all his works before and after the publications of *Post-Metaphysical Thinking*. One can see his *Justification and Application: Remarks on Discourse Ethics* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1994). Bernhard Forchtner, “Jürgen Habermas’ Language Philosophy and the Critical Study of Language,” *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines* 4.1(2010): 18-37. Also see Byron Rienstra & Derek Hook, “Weakening Habermas: The Undoing of Communicative Rationality”

⁴⁰Nicole Doerr, “Between Habermas and Ranciere: The Democracy of Political Translation,” ed. by Erika Doucette, *EIPCP: European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies*, web source: <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0613/doerr/en>. See Samuel Chambers, *The Lessons of Ranciere* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 180-190. Jodi Dean, “Politics Without Politics,” *Parallax* 15.3(2009): 20-36.

between these two? Recognition theory consists of idealistic and individualistic assumptions - aspects of socialization, identity formations and other intersubjective aspects. Honneth sees the problem as the struggle for recognition⁴¹ - making it a more ethical problem than social and political. All approaches are concerned with the same thing, the difference as an ontological condition. When the ontological status is not given recognition there have to be other ways of doing the same. Honneth seems to find the ethical way. This approach is summarized in this manner:

...social progress is based on the normative expectations of individuals, which must be construed as moral claims, rather than as socio-economic interests ... the political model to be derived from the framework of a struggle for recognition is a form of ethical life, in the precise Hegelian sense of social morality, not just an institutional framework designed by legal principles, but the structural model of a 'decent society' in which all aspects of individual demands for recognition are met.⁴²

What are normative expectations of individuals? It is interesting to see that Honneth also gives importance to issues other than socio-economic aspects. Other than distributive justice, recognition is concerned about "difference-friendly society"⁴³ - a world where one can lead a collective life without yielding to pressures of *social* assimilation. Pressures of assimilation is what is the prime reason is for social violence and oppression - the social control. It also comes from the non-recognition of *differing* ways of life. Radical difference would mean that there is

⁴¹His idea of recognition is crucial for his understanding of intersubjective relations between persons that act as preconditions for the formation of identity. The three important preconditions are love, respect and esteem. See Renante Pilapil, "Psychologization of Injustice? On Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognitive Justice," *Ethical Perspectives* 18.1(2011): 79-106.

⁴²Jean-Philippe Deranty and Emmanuel Renault, "Politicizing Honneth's Ethics of Recognition," *Thesis Eleven* 88(February 2007):92-111, 92.

⁴³Nancy Frazer, "Recognition Without Ethics?" *Theory, Culture & Society* 18.2-3(2001): 21-42, 21.

less similarity and more variance [incommensurable life-worlds] - like ways, that never meet. Both social and cultural realms could foster on such boundless diversity. Amid these radical differences it is interesting to see how this diversity operates in the social realm. The importance of social relationships may take away the radical element from the social realm.

The social realm is indeed the breeding ground to identity formations that are bound to be affected by built-in-hierarchies. To overcome this the struggle for the establishment of relations of mutual recognition is required. The argument moves in the direction of agency and discursive will formation. The argument is recognition has to be looked at as an ethical obligation, the exercise of agency, mostly by those who tend to violate others' self-respect, dignity and life-world. Honneth seems to seek a normative dimension of power. Deranty & Renault explain his concern that power relations and the order of domination are the result of conflict between individuals and groups about norms and values. Normative theory implies that the "lived experiences of injustice and domination cannot be taken into consideration."⁴⁴ The phenomenology of social domination calls for a methodological negation - where the idea of justice is provided impetus by practices, accounts and experiences of injustice. It prevails over a mere normative justificatory concern of discourse ethics. Whether we adopt normative or anti-normative approaches, all that matters is, finally, how is *change-gonna-come* into the lives of the hopeful, the hopeless and the oppressed. In order that to happen, speaking in Ranciere's term, the social and moral *ought* to be far greatly radical than what they usually are. Besides, justice and equality are to be *a priori* principles of society. However, a radical break is what is required for a change-in-the-ways of social life. The shift from consciousness to intersubjectivity has to bring the element of

⁴⁴ "Politicizing Honneth's Ethics of Recognition," 95.

not just managing but elimination of hegemonic forms of communication. There is a problem in the recognition approach. It assumes that it establishes the diagnosis of the pathologies of the social in terms of interpretation of the “grammar of social conflicts.”⁴⁵ Conflicts are tackled only with a presupposition of one’s moral inclination to society. Indignity, disrespect and humiliation [*physical abuse, denial of equal rights, denigration of individual and cultural practices*] in socio-cultural life turn into moral violations. It takes the shape of moral suffering. Honneth is right in this regard. Pilapil aptly states that the experience of injustice or moral suffering has become an inescapable feature of our world.⁴⁶ We should think about the implications of recognition. Honneth is convinced that the measurement of injustices is consonant with the legitimacy of the recognition thesis.⁴⁷ Individuals may reasonably recognize fundamental differences among themselves. However, living through these differences is altogether a great challenge to any collective.

Society should be able to bear the unbearable burden of this radical diversity. It is unbearable as individuals are conditioned in all ways to be intolerant to what is not validated by the dominant coalition of the society. That is why, as Judith Butler rightly says, extending from Foucault, “power is not something we oppose but also, what we depend on for our existence and what we harbor and preserve in the beings that we are.”⁴⁸ Honneth gives attention to the moral and psychological dimensions of social life. The entailment of morality on individuals as collective beings presupposes congruency between individual and collective morality. Deranty makes an interesting proposition: The fundamental claim of normativity of social orders lies in the experiences of injustice. It results in the

⁴⁵Jean-Philippe Deranty, “Ranciere and Contemporary Political Ontology”

⁴⁶See “Psychologization of Injustice,” 81.

⁴⁷Axel Honneth, “Recognition and Justice,” 47.4(Dec 2004): 351-364.

⁴⁸See her book *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 2.

critique of society leading to the invention of alternative to political liberalism.⁴⁹ There is a possibility of politics here even in the case of Honneth. The real concern is the *negative* experience of the denial of equality. He makes an interesting distinction between morality and politics. With respect to social injustice, political action denies peculiar [rather discriminatory & oppressive] social situations defensible against uprooting when required. The commonality between Honneth and Ranciere is the attainment of an egalitarian society.

Deranty discusses these two points highlighting the issue of politics. [1] Experiences of injustice is of paramount importance than the positive representation of moral principles. [2] The logic of political action is not just for consensus but also for dissensus. The struggle for recognition results from the unbearable conditions [*feelings*] of social existence. Ethics becomes the basis of political action. Stating that the struggle for recognition involves violent means to achieve another social order that ensures self-respect, self-esteem and confidence of all individuals. The goal of this new social order is driven by a normative framework.⁵⁰ The difference that the affirmation of politics does from the advent of social orders is important. Ranciere conceives of an incompatibility between the logic of community and the logic of equality - community of equals will never cohabit with the society of unequals. Badiou criticizes Ranciere stating the latter provides no actual alternative that reflects the community of equals. There is a problem here. We have seen that Ranciere projects the realm of the political as the only place for radical equality. The return of the political takes up the task of revival of politics. not just as mere *police*. However, it is not clear as to how it tackles failures of the political.

⁴⁹See his article, "Injustice, Violence and Social Struggle. The Critical Potential of Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognition," *Critical Horizons; A Journal of Philosophy and Social Theory* 5.1(2015): 297-322.

⁵⁰"Politicizing Honneth's Ethics of Recognition," 98-99.

It is true that in Ranciere's writings we only see the political being placed above all others. One interpretation would be that the return of the political is with discovery of new role to politics away from depoliticization. This repoliticization takes care of the social inequalities not to protrude into the political realm. How does one explain this *new* political scene? Nancy Luxon quotes him stating that a spectacle will not lead to grasping of the state of affairs - no actual change directly from its theoretical speculation.⁵¹

Honneth raises a concern here. Failure of institutions in taking care of normative expectations of individuals [identities and collectives], denigrate their distinctive life-worlds lead to feelings of injustice.⁵² However, it has to be treated as a fact of injustice. The interesting aspect in Honneth is the point of moral suffering, individual and collective, that translates into political resistance. It implies experiences of moral suffering of individuals affects the collective and *vice versa*. These experiences of moral suffering resulting from social alienation, cultural dehumanization and identity-violation acquire normative considerations of recognition. Honneth is apt in stating that these moral injuries are not tackled by Habermasian *linguistic* concerns. We have argued elsewhere that the communicative theory is problematic when it comes to individuals' linguistic competences. Language is inherently hierarchical, and will help little to resolve the intersubjective deadlocks. Oppression and marginalization go beyond communicative framework to let us understand the nature of social pathologies. Pilapal states that this makes Honneth's recognitive justice seek a normative theory of a just society.⁵³ What

⁵¹See his article, "Ranciere's Lessons in Failure," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 49.4(2016): 392-407, 395.

⁵²Pilapil, "Psychologization of Injustice," 82.

⁵³Pilapal, "Psychologization of Injustice," 82-4. "in so far as the desire to be recognized can, when injured, reveal the normative expectations of the subjects, recognition provides a potential interpretative framework for social conflicts." For this quote, see Axel Honneth & Jacques Ranciere, *Recognition or Disagreement: A Critical Encounter on the Politics of Freedom, Equal-*

is the focus of this political interlocution? It may require an extra-linguistic approach [also extra-validity condition] - in the sense of the ordinary social stage. In communicative action, and people with diverse life-worlds [that may never meet] validity conditions will never be arrived unless discrepancy between who merely makes utterances and the one who holds the power of validation/justification is retained.

Avoiding of performance contradiction is not the goal of communication. Does Ranciere's disagreement avoid or retain contradiction? Ranciere states that "to submit utterances to the conditions of their validity is to place in dispute the mode by which each party participates in the logos."⁵⁴ There are two kinds of diversity - diversity that draws individualistic freedoms and the other, the multiplicity of all social identities. Amid this the interaction is more complex. The social hierarchies also indicate varieties of speech situations - those who have the power to validation, those who have no obligation to validation and those whose utterances that are not heard. This is one kind of asymmetry, like Us&Them. Ranciere presents another kind of overlooked asymmetry. The division is established by a forced bifurcation of languages into those who command and those who obey.⁵⁵ The asymmetry here is that those who wish to make others understand are not understood; hence, the hierarchy. Intolerance too results from this diffidence. Treating this in terms of language and communication would imply that cognitive abilities and disabilities are natural facts. It overlooks the serious point what Ranciere refers to - "we understand you if you don't want us to [rather even when you don't feel the need]. Language, communication and power together simply

ity and Identity, ed., by Katia Genel & Jean-Philippe Deranty, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 12.

⁵⁴See *Disagreement*, 45.

⁵⁵*disagreement*, 46.

incline to this supposition: “inequality exists because of inequality.”⁵⁶ It implies that it is easier to be complacent with this brutish proposition and a far more difficult task to prove the point of equality. Ranciere is right here too. In the public realm the more important issue is whether the uncounted/no-part could garner the attention of others, in terms of what Honneth says, recognition.

Radical equality in Ranciere or recognitive justice in Honneth, does take care of the actual possible referent points of disagreement and recognition. Pilapil states that a just society is where autonomous individuals could, in the least sense, be able to live their way, even when they are not recognized. Social and political conditions are differentiated. The distinction is not valuable if it overlaps with Rawls’s public political justice. Honneth seems to fall in line with Rawls on this institutional approach.⁵⁷ Unlike Honneth, Rawls clearly throws light on the importance of just political institutions. On the other hand, principles of recognitive justice apply to how social institutions secure social conditions for mutual recognition.⁵⁸ Traces of similarities between them [the focus of *institutional-recognitive justice*] would not really strengthen the political justice. To reiterate, the rupture of the social is necessary in order to penetrate into the unequal relations. Emancipation’s primary prerequisite is affirmation of radical equality. Pilapil states that Honneth’s idea of recognition is reflective of institutional *orders* of capitalist societies. Justice is the outcome of the transformation of orders.⁵⁹ Honneth’s difference from Rawls is not a radical difference. The only difference is, the political, for Honneth, unlike for Rawls, is within the bounds of social theory. To be more precise, Ranciere’s radical equality is distinct from these versions.

⁵⁶ *Disagreement*, 49.

⁵⁷ We can make this claim despite Pilapil arguing for the difference between them.

⁵⁸ Pilapil, “Psychologization of Injustice,” 86.

⁵⁹ “Psychologization of Injustice,” 22-3.

Here, we have two ways: First, where the political is within the bounds of social theory. Honneth is more serious about the values embodied in institutive orders where they are realized. Realization of these values is an indication of justice. Honneth's thought operates within the bounds of foundational political thought. Yet his opinion is that the analysis of a just society depends upon values "that are to be embodied within the various spheres of social life."⁶⁰ He depends on Hegel for his understanding of moral decay in abandoning the normative approach. However, foundationalism and normativity stick to the argument of the presence of certain overarching values - "only social forms of social life that can be treated as ethical are those that embody universal value ..."⁶¹ Honneth's idea sounds like communitarian. Yet traces of communitarianism *proper* can be seen here.⁶² Normative reconstruction and social [re]production aim for social integration *via* ethical norms that embody shared goods. He uses the phrase "generally accepted values" denoting social justice as one of the many overarching values. Yet it remains an abstract condition. Realization of overarching values - indeed decides individuals, collective their hierarchical positions. It is not overcome in the Hegelian scheme. Hegel states that the member belongs to the organization actively, implying that recognition is very much there that ensures the contribution to social welfare. So far so good. What does one imply from his statement, "... in his class he has honor"?⁶³ Honneth too says that social practices confirm justice only when enabling realization of generally accepted values. This point seems to be falling in line with the Post-Kantian liberalism. We have seen such

⁶⁰Axel Honneth, *Freedom's Right: The Social Foundations of Democratic Life*, td. by Joseph Ganahl (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), viii.

⁶¹Axel Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 8.

⁶²"... distributive justice does not make sense unless the subjective identities of individuals threatened by social identities are taken into account." See Pilapil, "Psychologization of Injustice," 89.

⁶³See G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, td. by S. W. Dyde, (Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books Limited, 2001), 192. Also see Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 10.

blind assumptions even in the case of Rawls [chapter 3]. The basic structure guided by the principles of justice logically leads to overlapping consensus. In the case of Honneth, it is important to know the bundle of generally accepted values. Mere assumption of justice will not produce justice. Pilapal's contrast between Rawls and Honneth is not so convincing. It has also been discussed in chapter 3 that Rawls's *political liberalism* is not helpful after a point. It talks about the vulnerability of individual's autonomy to the disruptions in her relationship with others.⁶⁴ Ironically, Honneth's sticks to his recognition thesis as a response to vulnerability. However, his cognitive justice is tied to the concept of good life whose primary focus is self-realization.

Does Honneth's normative reconstruction ensure breaking-through that vulnerability? The test of intersubjectivity lies here. Individual vulnerability lies in their positions as social beings, belonging to this or that identity. The issue is bringing recognition to the unrecognized, like counting the uncounted. The reconfiguration of the social is never achieved in the desired sense [*of equality*] unless the entire social realm is radically shaken-up. Honneth should have focused on this idea of radical recognition. Recognition too becomes radical because it becomes a moral obligation. This is possible, apparently, due to critical theory's [*posited as an alternative to mainstream liberalism*⁶⁵] specification of an emancipatory social reality. The worry is accepting its possibility without radical breaks and breaking prejudices seen in the form of social markers. Accounts of non/misrecognition

⁶⁴ "Psychologization of Injustice," 88.

⁶⁵ It is interesting to see this maintained difference. Yet the difference is not appealing. If his theory is no liberal then it is communitarian. It is not unreasonable to say this. However, we need to see the difference critical theory makes in transforming social realities. It is presupposed that, unlike the modern ethical theories, it brings to ethical agency practical relations of self constituted through recognition. For this point, see Bert Van Den Brink & David Owen, eds., *Recognition and Power: Axel Honneth and the Tradition of Critical Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1.

will certainly motivate a struggle for recognition. Honneth is concerned about the demeaning social standards of social pathologies that have their own logic of sustenance. The positive aspect here is that understanding social pathologies is not a mere diagnosis of a state-of-affairs, but the actual ongoing social processes that are to be eradicated.⁶⁶ The apparent absence of radicality may also show the absence of a immanent social critique. This becomes a more serious concern here. Nancy Fraser's objects Honneth's reduction of social suffering into an individualistic concern with a focus on the self-realization of life-plans [*psychologization*]. Her objections imply this: [1] Recognitive justice brings the focus to the individual away from the society - also focusing on prepolitical suffering. Fraser's objection implies that overcoming psychical damage does not imply overcoming social subordination. Self-realization, certainly, is an important aspect as everyone possesses the moral right to a life-plan that calls for moral recognition. It is only one aspect of the social life of beings. Fraser is more interested in placing the subordinated party as full partner in social life, as a peer [social parity] (Status Model).⁶⁷ It is possible only when the social realm values divergent notions of the common good. Radical diversity not only takes account of multiple ways of life but also the inherent conflict. [2] Understanding of injustice in terms of failure of self-realization makes it very personal. In this sense, it lacks publicity conditions of justice. The question for Fraser is how valid is the distinction between individual and social? It also means that recognitive justice lacks any kind of political appeal. [3] Fraser is critical about shifting the focus of social justice to identity politics, i.e., *a difference-friendly world*. This shift from distribution to recognition is viewed at suspiciously. Fraser's concern is that this shift also has

⁶⁶Fabian Freyenhagen, "Honneth on Social Pathologies: A Critique," *Critical Horizons*, 16.2(May 2015): 131-152, 133.

⁶⁷Pilapil, "Psychologization of Injustice," 90. Nancy Fraser & Axel Honneth, *Redistribution or recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, td. by Joel Golb *et al.*, (New York: Verso, 2003), 30-1.

given rise to a false dichotomy between redistribution or recognition, and more importantly between multiculturalism and social equality.⁶⁸

The question is whether justice can be treated as an holistic idea or it has to be seen in terms of *spheres* of justice. This has also been discussed keeping in view the Marxian notion of equality and Rawls's public political justice. It is indeed true in the contemporary times, where individuals are reduced to mere consumers, that justice/equality in one realm need not be justice/equality in other realms. Justice in all realms of human existence is a difficult idea. We should not rule out the possibility of justice achieved in one realm will positively affect other realms. Search for justice is bound to happen, like the utopian imagination, indicative of the search for some kind of emancipation from social evils and evil practices. The paradox is that we may look at economic and social injustices as distinct symptoms or we may not.⁶⁹ The question is what is the most desirable remedy for social injustice. Fraser expresses this apprehension in the context of lost status of communism or the post-socialist condition.⁷⁰ She opines that the shift-in-focus from redistribution to recognition results in the marginalization of the socialist strategy.⁷¹ Fraser's critics point out that her idea of injustice rests on a mistaken analogy between class and other social identities. It is also based on an abstract notion of economic injustice. Nilsson argues that a definitive distinction

⁶⁸See her Tanner lecture, "Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition, and Participation," *Tanner Lecture on Human Values*, Delivered at Stanford University, April 30-May 2 (1996):1-67, 5.

⁶⁹Honneth assumes rectifying the cultural order frees the society from maldistribution. It is certainly a possibility. See Nancy Fraser "Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics," 29.

⁷⁰Fraser borrows the term from Jean-Francois Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* mentioned in her book *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition* (London: Verso, 1997), 1.

⁷¹Nancy Fraser, *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 12. Also see Magnus Nilsson, "Rethinking Redistribution and Recognition: Class, Identity and the Conditions for Radical Politics in the "Postsocialist" Age," *New Proposals: Journal of marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry* 2.1(Nov 2008): 31-44.

is warranted between class and other social identities. What is the advantage of it? Are we supposed to still view the distinctive status of economic and social injustices? The focus of this work has not been the reformulation of the distinction between class and other social identities. For instance, Nilsson also argues that a distinction needs to be made between class injustice [exploitation of surplus labour] and other economic injustices suffered by the status of collective identities. Further, Nilsson talks about the need for a concerted approach to radical politics critiquing the post-socialist condition that addresses both economic and cultural injustices.⁷²

Fraser offers an alternative to this dilemma. We concur with her on the idea that one's interest cannot be sacrificed for the sake of the other. They are always in tandem with each other. For her, the challenge is to combine them [perspectival dualism] to have a more radical understanding of social equality. Social practices are instances of both recognition and redistribution, both as economy and as culture.⁷³ In response to theories of justice that focus on economic redistribution, emphasis on other social injustices are called for. Ohlstrom states that social justice is not just about the predetermined distribution of a predefined set of rights and goods. Further, Ohlstrom strongly asserts that mere equalization of rights and redistribution do not redress social injustices at the deepest level.⁷⁴ Tackling cultural injustice involves symbolic exchange, revaluing identities and socio-cultural value of maligned individuals/groups. For both redistribution and recognition, social injustices won't be mitigated without an intervention of the political. The latter has to be guided by the principle of radical equality. Ranciere's

⁷²See "Rethinking Redistribution and Recognition," 32.

⁷³"Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics," 5-6. Also see Marcus Ohlstrom *et. al*, "On Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth 's *Redistribution and Recognition: A Political Philosophical Exchange*," *Iris* 3.5(April 2011): 206-221, 207.

⁷⁴"Redistribution or Recognition?", 206.

point is to be brought forward here. The idea that equality is not a goal but lies immanent to society makes it radical. There is no method for equality. Equality remains as the only universal principle in politics.⁷⁵ The return of the political acquires justification here. One can really make an introspection here. The supposition that the radical equality, say, recognition of a *difference-friendly* social realm is possible only by re-staging of politics while the political is not to be underestimated. It may relieve us from a mindless imposition of an harmonious social universe. Social-recognition-integration thesis sees the possibility of resistance to social forms of domination through a normative recognition of diverse life-worlds. The institutional structures then should protect individuals and groups from any kind of violent humiliations and oppressions.

Fraser puts forth an important question, “does justice require the recognition of what is distinctive about individuals or groups, or is recognition of our common humanity sufficient?”⁷⁶ The response to this would be indifference is shown in the case of display of actual recognition. Political philosophers should think beyond this easy distinction of individual and collective. This may subvert the genuine understanding of injustice and inequality. Fraser also argues that recognition is a matter of justice than having no recognition. Fraser asks another important question, “what normative approach remains for those who seek to integrate distribution and recognition?”⁷⁷ One important issue is that she asserts that the duality model where redistribution is not reducible to recognition. Fraser herself mentions this stating that demands for cultural change may look for economic change. Yet the issue is not completely resolved. Honneth’s recognitive justice may not be achieved for it’s focus is integration and universality. Ranciere is

⁷⁵*Recognition or Disagreement*, 65.

⁷⁶See “Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics,” 24.

⁷⁷“Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics,” 30.

right in stating that this is typical of the German intellectual tradition - fear of asymmetry and distortion. What makes the oppressors listen to the oppressed is a serious issue. Ranciere is thinking of a demanding form of universalism that first locates itself in confrontation. The strength in Ranciere's point is that recognition involves validation of those that pop-up in the way of construction of a common world.⁷⁸ These may not resemble what already exists. The moral aspect of recognitive justice is that it understands community or commonality as constitutive of intersubjective relationships. Honneth is right in stating that there is an internal connection between individual identity-formation and social recognition. Honneth states that out of the diversity of social reality only those institutions and practices capable of realizing general values are normatively reconstructed.⁷⁹

Honneth's recognitive justice requires a new social ontology. It is because his normative reconstruction prefers giving away ethical institutions and practices that insufficiently embodies general values.⁸⁰ How is this different from Ranciere's idea of compelling form of universalism? The difference lies in understanding subject and its constituents. First of all, there is no denial of the fact that the misrecognition and social failures translate the experience of disrespect into concerted struggles. The difference between Ranciere and Honneth is seen as one defining 'a subject without subjectivity' where the political subject [understood as subject without subjectivity] is independent of otherwise existing subjectivities, while the other links the recognitive justice to identity assertion.⁸¹ Fraser extends

⁷⁸See Honneth & Ranciere, *Recognition or Disagreement*, 83-5.

⁷⁹See *Freedom's Right*, 10. The serious concerns are: What happens in this normative reconstruction? How do individuals and groups attain the realization to value other realization that fulfills conditions of a difference-friendly society? In Honneth's theory struggle aspect is missing.

⁸⁰*Freedom's Right*, 10.

⁸¹Fraser's objects to this point of Honneth. See Marcus Ohlstrom, "Redistribution or Recognition? A Philosophical Exchange," 208.

her critique of Honneth stating that grounding ethical judgements in theory of good, rather than right, makes recognitive justice more problematic. She opines that Honneth's approach doesn't offer us any answer by which the intersection of pluralistic world-views is addressed. Complying with Fraser, Ohlstrom argues that Honneth brings too much to the table without formalizing the demands to the extent that there is neither a controversy nor a contested substance. But this may be impossible to conceive either.

Ohlstrom argues that these struggles indicate what are at stake of the subjects [in groups] who must have had experienced injustices. Fraser and Ohlstrom seems to be hinting at the presence of a mechanism that differentiates warranted and unwarranted experiences. Again, we may not find this much different from Rawls's distinction of political from the comprehensive. Ohlstrom mentions about the unreasonable claims of libertarians [Nozick] and just freedom loving individuals [Parjais] whose claims do not carry any weight.⁸² However, the distinction that he carries out should not negatively affect the *historically-socially* disadvantaged sections of the society. Honneth's recognition thesis and Fraser's point of psychologization critique may create this confusion. Here, individuals' genuine suffering may also go unrecognized. In *Freedom's Right*, Honneth emphasizes on the mode of definition of universal values. Only then we can bother ourselves about normative reconstruction in the context of *post-traditional* ethical life. The point of serious concern is whether the post-traditional is located in the post-foundational or post-metaphysical thinking. A ray of hope is still present in Honneth provided the shape of the normative grounds traverses the foundational concerns.

Honneth's recognition-thesis has led to an interesting interpretation. Possibility of

⁸² "Redistribution or Recognition?" 209.

addressing economic and social injustices emerge from the *abandonment* of base-superstructure relationship. It leads to the presentation of an unified theory of recognition.⁸³ Solinas discusses Honneth's position that even the distributional injustices are stark instances of utter social disrespect. Rather than moral experiences being unjust, the unjust experiences instead give rise to ethical issues of recognition. The issue that why a particular social order is in question is very important. Moral violations of self-realization is one reason to question the social order. Salinos argues that Honneth's idea vigorously overcomes economism and anti-normativism.⁸⁴ He is right in stating that disrespect serves as the triggering point of all social struggles giving rise to certain political experiences [the presence of an *ethico-political context*]. Pilapil mentions in his paper Simon Thompson's critical attitude toward her idea. For both, Fraser would have bothered "whether physical abuse, denial of equal rights and denigration of rights lead to psychological death, social death and moral injuries respectively."⁸⁵ There is no reason why these three give rise to the latter. Social injustice will lead to moral corruption of the human condition. Further, Pilapil inquires about what is being identified as unjust in subordination, marginalization and exclusion? The issue of harm is involved here. Bernstein opines that a moral norm is one that harms individual in violating the norm. Struggle for recognition requires shame and moral injury. Fraser is not completely wrong in stating that it gets too personalized. It is also not wrong to suppose that humiliation and shame can ignite struggles for recognition. It is also true that these social-moral injustices shape-up political struggles. Pilapil very aptly opines that more than the social condition the morally dehumanized sub-human and nonhuman treatment of certain people transform the

⁸³Marco Solinas, "Redistribution or Recognition?" [*On the Motivational Bases of Social Struggle*], 213.

⁸⁴"Redistribution or Recognition?" [*On the Motivational Bases of Social Struggle*], 216.

⁸⁵"Psychologization of Injustice," 94.

social resistance into radical struggles.⁸⁶

A clarification is required on why the relationship to oneself is used as a reference point to explain forms of injustice and inequality politically institutionalized. Ranciere's worry is the presence of a *telos* that explains some kind of a relation to oneself. The debate here takes an interesting shape. The exchange between them deals with the idea of social pathology. Ranciere's view is that it is not to be projected as a pathology of identification and cure. He stresses on the notions of *disagreement* and *dissensus* that explain the conflicting nature of the making of the common world. Saying so it means that the issue is of conflict of norms rather than a movement from the pathological to the normal. To quickly respond to Ranciere, aiming for a cure for social pathologies is not to aim for the normal conditions. It is just one of several possible suppositions. Honneth states it is nothing but giving an account of moral status of the social condition putting forth reasons for that particular state-of-affairs. Interpreters of Honneth analyzes certain social pathologies like ideological recognition, reification, invisibilization, rationality distortion, and institutionalized self-realization operating through second-order disorders.⁸⁷ What is the difference between first-order social disorder and second order disorders? Understanding of these two depend upon reflexivity of social reality and phenomena. First-order explains the social reality *per se*; self-referential, *autopoietic* and inescapable systems. Sociologists would not disagree with each other drastically on social reality. The second-order reality is about the discourses of social reality that explain the relationship between observation and observer

⁸⁶He states that that blacks were reduced to second class citizens is not the primary reason for social resistance and struggles for justice, rather it was because they were reduced to sub-humans and nonhumans by the society in which they were living. See "Psychologization of Injustice," 96.

⁸⁷See Christopher Zurn, "Social Pathologies as Second-Order Disorders," in *The Critical Theory of Axel Honneth*, ed. by Danielle petherbridge, (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 200).

as part of a common reflexive social phenomena. Zurn opines that only under condition of incapacity to comprehend certain components of social reality does an individual subjects herself to oppression or domination. It is indeed the case most of the times.⁸⁸

Martin Jay seems to be sympathetic to Honneth. He states that the latter prefers recognition [*reciprocity of respect*] to cognition, the intersubjective interaction between subject and object, and self and world. He states that Honneth hopes for a transformation of human relations through recognitive justice.⁸⁹ Political subjectivation *contra* subjectification comes to the rescue when all competent forms of distribution place equality within the realm of inequality.⁹⁰ The interesting aspect is he defines the political subject as not arising from the instances of suffering. Why should a political subject be conceived likewise? What is the task of a political subject? Subjectivation is the outcome of dis-identification, and political subject, here, is treated as an invention.⁹¹ May be it is required for inventing new politics, new society, new community and a radical intersubjective sphere. It also means that a society is indeed impoverished that a particular dimension of the political dis-identifies yet reconciles them all through radical equality. Zizek too seems to be falling in the line of Ranciere. His position too challenges the

⁸⁸It has features which are unjust, undemocratic, cause suffering, prevent well-being, cause lack of freedom and autonomy, or prevent genuine solidarity. It results in misrecognition, oppression, domination and brute coercion of several sorts. Contra the incapacity to grasp the social dynamics, this happens even when the oppressed is aware of it because of the disguise of ideology. This results in the first-order disorder. Only through a second-order disorder, what Zurn calls, bad acts of recognition, that these are called social pathologies. See Arto Laitinen, "Social Pathologies, Reflexive Pathologies, and the Idea of Higher-Order Disorders," *Studies in Social & Political Thought* 25(2017): 44-65, 47. Also see Sarena Sandri, "Reflexivity in Social Reality," *Reflexivity in Economics: An Experimental Examination on the Self-Referentiality of Economic Theories* (2009): 31-51, 31.

⁸⁹Axel Honneth *et. al*, *Reification: A New Look at an Old Idea*, ed. by Martin Jay, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 8.

⁹⁰Jacques Ranciere, *Recognition or Disagreement*, 93.

⁹¹*Recognition or Disagreement*, 122.

rhetoric of historicist, discursive and performative approaches to subjectivity. The seemingly overlapping element is Zizek places subject prior to subjectivity or subjectivation. The political subject thus conceived is larger than the complex constellation of textual, material, institutional, historical factors due to its independent status.⁹² Yet the *a priori* subject is subjected to several kinds of socio-cultural subjectifications. Aligning with Badiou on this, Zizek comes up with the idea of a radical historical rupture that revolutionizes the subject characterizing epoch-shattering moments. Does it mean that the subject gets de-historicized? Partially, it may be true and required. What it does is it poses an incredible challenge to those who clings onto the victim-consciousness [repeated pursuit of loss] to posit the struggle for recognition differently. For Zizek, it subverts all roads to happiness in our inability to forget what went before. How does one appeal to a world beyond trauma and loss?⁹³ Ranciere expands the horizon of the political subject extending it to the *demos* - the *capacity* of anyone to share the power. All asymmetrical relations are subtracted from the political realm. It would imply political equality.

Political subjectivization is different from that of social subjectivization for it throws human being out of the frame of animal being. It would mean that the person is free from subjectification of socio-symbolic order. There are two primary concerns that drives the human condition to social imagination. First, the symbolic social order is constitutive of several oppressive social sedimentation. Second, its relation and extension into the political order that always is residual in its nature, by being like *police* or more than that. Such a political subject should

⁹²*Recognition or Disagreement*, 123. For Zizek's point see his book *In Defense of Lost Causes* (New York: Verso, 2008), 343. This point is well discussed in Derek Hook & Carum Neill, "Zizek, Political Philosophy and Subjectivity," *Subjectivity* 3.1(2010): 1-6, 1z & 2.

⁹³See Hook & Neill, "Zizek, Political Philosophy and Subjectivity," 3.

be able to overcome *voicelessness* literally and figuratively. Does the political subject display features that remain beyond our speculative texts [and imaginations]?⁹⁴ This may not resolve Honneth's recognition concern at all. It may be true that the return of the political provides a space for emancipation of social subjects. Ranciere's notion of the political is more than "mere management of the social."⁹⁵ But doesn't Ranciere's idea result in political *excess*? In the realm of the political resides the potentiality to act as equals. It also show us a dark picture of the social. Honneth thesis seems to have treated the individual-social confrontation as given to understand social pathology. On the contrary, Ranciere states that the political subject that he conceives represents individuals as collective entities. Suffering is not objectively given and doesn't provide a normative platform.

Ranciere argues that there is a difference between "something is wrong" and something that sounds pathological. The language of suffering gets into the mode of self-reproduction indefinitely [may be by way of inheritance] carrying forward, translating it into social pathology. Borrowing from Piere Bourdieu, he says that the *misery of the world* can be handled only by the removal of characterization of the world in terms of suffering. This is difficult to admit. Then what is the way to address violation, humiliation, and oppression immanent to the human social condition? Is the difference between injustice and suffering that Ranciere⁹⁶ useful? In the sense of retrieving emancipation from the vanguard of party, bringing it down to the people, Ranciere and Honneth have some similarities. Chapter 2

⁹⁴See Ranabir Samaddar, *Emergence of the Political Subject* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2010), ix.

⁹⁵Inna Viriasoya, "Politics and the Political: Correlation and the Question of the Unpolitical"

⁹⁶He argues that suffering denotes lack of money from living conditions. This is different from the suffering resulting from the denial of capacities, "experiencing a broken time." See *Recognition or Disagreement*, 16-7.

discusses about the issue of vanguard of the oppressed. Placing the responsibility in the vanguard will subvert the movements of emancipation. It will also subvert the realm of the political too. In other words no one has a monopoly on this.⁹⁷

5.2 The Emancipatory Force of Democracy

The discussion has reached a crossroad, of hope and hopelessness, of utopia and praxis, and of the socio-cultural and the political enigmas. It is needless to reiterate that there is a serious problem in the way we form our community, society and polity. There has to be a way to be free [forever] from these things that aren't supposed to be immanent to our lives. The human condition and the community is caught between the possibility and impossibility. How are people emancipated from these sufferings and injustices? People may be afraid of socialist utopia yet utopia is the very topicality of things. The utopian promise is violated leading socialist utopia to be treated as a profound lie. All this needs a fresh imagination under the *end-syndrome* - not just in terms of Fukuyama's theory, but in many ways laid down by the dominant hierarchy in every society. *Endism* is certainly a false consciousness. Our senses will not completely engrave the end of ideology debate. Michael Freeden is right in stating that *endism* can be an attribution to utopia, not ideologies. It may mean that end states attributed to ideologies will lead to unwanted depoliticization. He opines that a social world of ideological diversity is built into liberal individualism and pluralism. For him, liberalism

⁹⁷Martin Jay quotes Honneth, "The error here lies in the tacit initial premise that social movements can serve critical social theory as a kind of empirically visible guiding thread for diagnosing normatively relevant problem areas. What such a procedure completely overlooks is the fact that official designation as a social movement is itself the result of an underground struggle for recognition conducted by groups or individuals affected by social-suffering to make the public perceive and register their problems." See *Reification*,9.

works under the assumption that all groups are always represented. What is representation here? It is not *just* counting the uncouted. It is more of enjoying socio-cultural value in terms of dignity and respect. How can we best relate the study of ideologies to the study of politics more generally? Laclau rightly states that the decline of interest in ideology is not due to “narrowing of the field of operation but due to its indefinite expansion.”⁹⁸ This is evident in the entire second half of the twentieth century. Freeden presents another pertinent question: “Is it the frightening closure of time and space that so many ideologies impose on politics that puts paid to our illusions of an open world in our minds to it?”⁹⁹ There would be no convincing answer to this. Freeden further states that the notion of a post-ideological age is itself a masking device. He has to admit the fact that *LCD* is the one which intends to claim the current age as post-ideological, which marks plurality of life-worlds. The failed promises imply that there are left-overs, nevertheless, thrown into the world of multiple possibilities. These possibilities lead us to suppose many things - constitutive of fear and suspicion. Chapters 3 and 4 have focused on this aspect. The obsession for democracy has reached its zenith, and has taken the downward movement. Yet the belief that democratization ensures just political representation that in turn changes lives of the people is violated. Politics-beyond-ideology is certainly the condition of post-foundational politics, post-democracy and post-ideological age. Here, we are not going into the details of the nature of democracy; rather, the issue is its qualification as the only alternative to all other political paradigms and its merits. Such a high placing of it makes it an emancipatory principle -people having faith in its capacity to achieve a fair society, recognitive justice, a new community and radical politics.

⁹⁸ “The Death and Ressurrection of Political Ideology,” 298.

⁹⁹ “Confronting the Chimera of a Post-Ideological Age,” 248.

Democracy is everywhere and no where.¹⁰⁰ Taking note of the events of the previous century and that of the current times, it is claimed that pervert violence also resulted ‘in the name of democracy’.¹⁰¹ It is no exception. Democracy is projected as a liberating phenomena later to the obliteration of utopian imagination. We can also see it becoming an intellectual as well as strategic force attaining a consensual status among the critics of utopia. However, we will find two principal groups; people who attempt re-found the normative footing, while others vouch for its erosion. Whatever is the case, the logic of democracy too falls within the same principle - living with failed promises. What is the promise of liberal-democratic-capitalism while denouncing socialism? The embrace of democracy comes from the detestation of metaphysical violence - thus, relieving politics from all foundational thought. Nevertheless, politics and democracy in the post-metaphysical thinking too does not offer us much. As Ranciere refers to equality as an already existing principle, so too the principle of asymmetry and violence. Matthias Fritsch opines that the loss of metaphysical foundations acknowledges the presence of radical contingency.¹⁰² It is important to see how the latter gets reflected in the actual political realm. Some of the critics have even referred to this condition as post-politics and post-democracy. To a great extent liberal-democracy under the guise of post-ideology has contributed to depoliticization. *LCD* has come to terms with society where practices are captured by dispositions of control negatively affecting the *being-in-common*.¹⁰³ The distortion of the

¹⁰⁰This caption suits the context as democracy is now firmly and consensually established as the uncontested and rarely examined ideal of institutionalized political life. Japhy Wilson & Erik Swyngedouw, *Spaces of Depoliticisation, Specters of Radical Politics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 5.

¹⁰¹One possible interpretation of it can be found in Nick Mansfield, “Derrida, Democracy and Violence,” *Studies in Social Justice* 5.2(2011): 231-240.

¹⁰²See his article “Derrida’s Democracy to Come,” *Constellations: An International Journal of Critical and Democratic Theory* 9.4(Dec 2002): 574-597.

¹⁰³Matias Leandro Saidel, “Political and Impolitical: Two Perspectives to Rethink the Common and the Political in Contemporary Thought,” *La Torres de Lucca* 3(Jul-Dec 2003): 7-34, 9.

common causes the impolitical to come into the picture. Omission is central to the distortion of politics. Both distortion and the omission of what is genuinely common diverts our attention to the political. Roberto Esposito gives a profound treatment to this idea defining the notion as different from antipolitical, reminding the political its finitude in terms of the social imagination. The shift is from the positive to the negative dimension [emerging from *negative theology*] of politics and must be bound to its negativity. It is also treated as the end of the end of the political.¹⁰⁴

Treating impolitical as something other than itself of the political, we seem to be doing away with subjectification, and more inclined to subjectivation. Bosteels finds in Ranciere the element of subjectivization without falling a prey to the constricted nature of politics and its philosophical determination.¹⁰⁵ Esposito asks, “can one think of a subject against power? Or is power the *absolute* verb of the subject?” He opines that the political needs to be viewed in its irreparable inessentiality. The challenging task is to place radical equality, in other words, radical politics in the realm of the political [Ranciere’s way]. Esposito draws the attention to the *originary* problem - *the difference from itself*, the “continual coming to presence”¹⁰⁶ The lack of representability even comes to question the representational politics, hegemonic in every sense. Contrary to the politics of representation Ranciere argues that the moments of politicization emerge from the bottom with radical contestation of world-views. This may speak of the de-

¹⁰⁴Roberto Esposito, *Categories of the Impolitical*, td. by Connal Parsley, (Fordham University Press, 2015), xviii, “Politics cannot be conceptualized in positive form but only on the basis of that which draws its contours at its outer margin and which determines it negatively, constituting both its ground and its reverse side.” See Bruno Bosteels, *The Actuality of Communism* (London: Verso, 2011), 72.

¹⁰⁵Bruno Bosteels, *The Actuality of Communism*, 85.

¹⁰⁶This idea brings an openness to the notion of politics. To speak in the Derridean sense, *politics-to-come*, because it is never completely presented to itself. The lack of fullness also creates unrepresentability. See *Categories of the Impolitical*, xxvi.

mocratization of power.

Conflict is central to the idea of the community - where the common sphere is treated as a sphere of impossible harmony. This is a very crucial point. Community is a limit point and posed as a transcendental condition because it does not form relation, instead, it is the relation. Saidel makes an interesting point. Contrary to the shared meanings of life, impolitical draws our attention to the **impossibility** of community. We have seen this impossibility in Nancy's notion of *inoperative* community. It is claimed that a deconstructive act takes place between essence and appearance - "co-belonging without any ground other than co-belonging itself."¹⁰⁷ The impossibility of harmony of community demands the condition of *agree to disagree*. Almost all societies, democratic and non-democratic fail in reconciling this. The result of this is pushing the weak/dominated to the realm of subhuman or dehumanized condition. Societies after utopia have failed miserably as highly disciplinary societies - the Foucauldian notion that individuals [or groups] never ceases to pass from one closed environment to another. We can expand his idea to all processes within the larger social realm, especially, inter-subjective sphere.¹⁰⁸ The post-political is also understood to be intertwined with the real, the symbolic and the imaginary. It is expressed in the Lacanian terms referring to the ideology of the end of history [**imaginary**], reduction of politics to management of economic necessity [**symbolic**] and the erasure of political difference between the given social order and the social order present on an absent

¹⁰⁷Matias Leandro Saidel, "Political and the Impolitical," 20-2.

¹⁰⁸Giles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control," *October* 59(Winter 1992): 3-7. "In the disciplinary societies one was always starting again (from school to the barracks, from the barracks to the factory), while in the societies of control one is never finished with anything—the corporation, the educational system, the armed services being metastable states coexisting in one and the same modulation, like a universal system of deformation." See "Foucault and the Society of control." <https://thefunambulist.net/history/deleuze-foucault-and-the-society-of-control>

wrong.[Real].¹⁰⁹

Ranciere states that we have buried [socialist] utopia and even its possibilities. Liberal-capitalist-democracy is defended by providing a two-fold understanding; as a profound *pragmatic* principle and as one integral to everyday life. It means that the world-after-communism has undone the past, by moving toward a liberal-capitalist future. Yet democracy lacks the messianic role. If liberal-democratic-capitalism is the only way then it is supposed to play the role of the emancipator. It is indeed a monumental task for liberal democracy. The democratic imposture as the society of the masses, cannot act as the messiah because its understanding of politics and community cannot really liberate the oppressed. Wendy Brown argues on these similar lines. Democratic equality is no better than liberal or socialist equality. Radical equality that Ranciere and others argue for requires radical contingency - not in the sense of *public neutrality*, but accommodating radical differences. What kind of a society it would be if not democratic? No socio-political formation can completely liberate or emancipate people in its present-time and present form, also because [civil] society lacks that in-built mechanism to fight its injustices. It always requires the help of the political and politics - an *extra*-social perspective.

Radical equality calls for a new social ontology of community [Nancy's way]. Is it a community in which all members are equal yet by people's own hierarchy (religion, caste, identity, historicity)? Or is it a society which allows every member to speak her own story, to be heard, their own argument, without any *political* representative process? To answer these questions we may have to address multiple aspects and tie them together. First, if the past century is the worst because it has

¹⁰⁹Wilson & Swyngedouw, *The Postpolitical and its Discontents*, 7.

given rise to metaphysical-political violence, then violence should have lessened in the post-utopian scenario owing to the failure of all utopian pursuits. Second, belief in democracy brought people out of the morally decadent condition. It is complimented by the supposition that the post-political has shaped up better politics. However, there is no change in our perception of ‘eternal oppressors’ and ‘eternally oppressed’ through the ages. It requires a re-treatment of the political and the social. Third, imperfectionism in us, speaking the anti-utopian terms, makes both revolutionary violence and political utopia absurd. There is nothing like a forced-equality. Yet equality is not a reasonable desired condition. It is un-prejudiced to assume that the idea of the social contract and **self-preservation of everyone** that here is a way of achieving fairness in the world. The ontological status of new politics is at stake by distancing itself from any serious ideological politics.

Radical contingency refrains us from naming the community. The fear of another violence further pushed the ideology out of the frame of our political imagination. This is the paradox - the inevitability of the political [projected in ideological lens] and post-politics reduce the individuals to inert beings. This results in a deep sense of apathy for prevalent injustices of the historically and presently oppressed people. Situation in many societies, for instance India, is it is stuck with depoliticized politics, having politicized several social hierarchies through violent forms of oppression. It represents a perverse democracy. How do you address such society and such politics? There is an element of fear of brute force suppressing any appeal to radical equality. There is a presence of latent perverse hierarchy with an absent ground of self-critique. Arguments made so far have kept in mind this condition - utopia and its possibilities may have been engraved for the western world, but, still to be tested where there is impoverished politics.

The promise inherent in the political too is absent.

The shape of politics and the social condition remain yet to be figured in totality. Whether it is politics, society or history, the most important issue is the non-repetition of the past. In terms of injustice and inequality, the past is never done away; in other words, history is never, in the Benjaminian terms, completed as the oppressed continue to exist. Benjamin discusses the task of redeeming the **oppressed past** - differently from Derrida, without a reference to the future.¹¹⁰ Though Benjamin's works are prior to the witness of many evil spectacles that one finds in the latter writers, his offering of **weak messianism**¹¹¹ concerns itself with the oppressed classes; past and present. Though his idea has resonances of theology we can take it as an important argument for understanding society, politics and emancipation beyond totality. Benjamin also refers to the *messianic cessation* of happening that accounts for the possibility of revolution for the oppressed past. The oppressed past consists of the stories of the oppressed people. Derrida qualifies this idea as **weak messianism**.¹¹² Mention of Benjamin may call for criticism of reverting to political theology. Benjamin's idea can be extended to defend social emancipation because redeeming the oppressed past is the task of every generation and every politics. The important aspect is redeeming the part of the [genuine] past, in the Marxian sense of revolutionary change, will impact the transformation of politics of the present. Liberating the past [history], in the absence of futurism, is liberating the past oppressed. In this sense, the redemptive

¹¹⁰See Owen Ware, "Dialectic of the past/Disjunction of the Future: Derrida and Benjamin on the Concept of Messianism," *JCRT* 5.2(April 2004): 99-114, 100-1.

¹¹¹Benjamin states, "Our coming was expected on earth. Like every generation that preceded us, we have been endowed with a weak messianic power, a power to which the past has a claim..." See Walter Benjamin, *Theses on the Philosophy of History* uploaded on <http://www.sfu.ca/andrew/CONCEPT2.html>

¹¹²See Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 9.

force is yet to arrive, as it was left unfulfilled in the past historical time. Though ripped of its chronological nature, past injustices do count as an important base to fight for that revolutionary change. The messianic cessation definitely calls for profane time [politics of a certain kind] to redeem the past injustices.

To some extent naming the community becomes indispensable, Agamben develops the notion of the community as the *co-appearance* of whatever singularities.¹¹³ Agamben makes a different footing of the argument, politics free from messianism, renouncing the future as reflective of messianic “de-creation.” The interesting part of the argument is the characterization of singularity as attaining the freedom from being caught in the “choice between ineffability of the individual and the intelligibility of the universal.”¹¹⁴ The important aspect in his thought is that the notion of the community is freed from the sovereign power of the state. The characteristic feature of this community is the sense of [co-]belongingness that is the formative factor overlooking identities *contrary* to what the state does. It may imply that the socio-political realm is a collection of identities, yet not reduced to them. This kind of belonging to a community sounds practically-ideal [a community beyond identity(**the messianic community** or **reconciled community**)] - even in the Zizekian notion of *dis-identification* that calls for an *ethics of identification*. What they fear is the society may be subjected to several controls subjecting individuals to subjectifications. Does Agamben’s thesis of unrepresentation depoliticize the community? Laclau opines that going beyond exclusion is going beyond politics [may beyond actuality].¹¹⁵ The representation and unrep-

¹¹³ Agamben states that whatever must not be understood as “indifference” but, rather, as being such that it always matters...in order to construe a community without postulates and without “subjects”. Carlo Salzani, “Quodlibet: Giorgio Agamben’s Anti-Utopia,” *Utopian Studies* 23.1(2012): 212-237, 212.

¹¹⁴ Also see Giorgio Agamben, *The coming Community* <https://filthandglitter.files.wordpress.com/2010/10/comingcommunity.pdf>

¹¹⁵ All the arguments in this paragraph are responses to the discussion made by matias Leandro

resentability are at odds with each other. Laclau's concern that commonality is the result of an hegemonic representation cannot be discounted.

Agamben states that utopia is the very *topia* of things. The living time is in the *now* moment, needless to be pushed to the future. However, this *now* is about the future time, the coming community. There is a reason why this is so. Agamben writes,

Redemption is not an event in which what was profane becomes sacred, and what was lost is found again...is the irreparable loss of the lost... we can have hope in only what is without remedy...that thus is without a remedy, that we can contemplate it as a such ... only passage outside the world ... precisely evacuation of any thingness.¹¹⁶

The above quote puts Agamben close to the utopian imagination. The primary focus of any radical transformation is experiencing the changed condition in the very *this (now)* moment with an additional focus on the futuristic imagination. The entire focus shifts to the future when there is *no remedy* - implying that the hope for a tomorrow comes from the hopelessness of today. All the writers refers to a *loss* - but, something is lost only when it is possessed. There are many sections of society that never had to lose it. The historicity of the issue provides us the hint at what could have been the socio-cultural life of some, whose plight continues in terms of *tradition of the oppressed*. Only tomorrow's hope make human beings carry the imagination into extra-this-worldly imagination. The writings of most of the non-anglophone philosophy also lay down the possibility of messianic politics, of the world-to-come. To avoid *messianism-propre* we have to understand the future neither in terms of retrieval¹¹⁷ of the past nor the historical *telos*

Saidel in his paper "The Political and the Impolitical," 21-25.

¹¹⁶ *The Coming Community*

¹¹⁷ Salzon interprets the irreparable as the fragmentary and aphoristic treatment of ontology.

of the time-to-come. It is like a radical future, in the Derridean sense, with an openness to it, to be recounted as *whatever singularities*. Jessica Whyte asks a few interesting questions about the shape of the world-to-come: What would it mean, for us, today, to imagine a redeemed world in which everything "will be as it is now, just a little different"? In what would this difference consist, and how would it be possible to achieve it? And what inflection would it give to the very idea of "redemption"?¹¹⁸ Little difference is no radical difference. Redemption is to be treated as an existential angst against the abhorrent social condition. Interpreting Debord's *society of the spectacle* Agamben states that the book is reflective of miseries and slavery of society whose dominion got extended to a planetary scale.¹¹⁹ Whyte argues that this-worldly focus of redemption would throw-us out of redemption through divine intervention, and strengthens immanent social transformation. However, Whyte opines, it is affected by a rather bleak portrayal of the human condition. Not only Agamben's idea of the modern **camp culture** but also the normalization of the *state of exception* give rise to this skepticism. Though the current study has not addressed the issue of biopolitics, concerns about equality and justice in terms of social violence acknowledges the fact that socio-cultural mechanisms always control human bodies in terms of life and death [*zone of indistinction*]. Drawing from Benjamin's critique of violence in terms of means-ends relationship, Agamben infers that to be free from all forms of sovereign power, and to escape from the reduction of all forms of bare life [even taking control of it], all forms of legality must be destroyed to ensure a just so-

For him, irreparable means that the world is given irretrievably in its own *being-thus...*, of eternal exposition and facticity, making redemption an ontological condition. See "Quodlibet: Giorgio Agamben's Anti-Utopia," 220.

¹¹⁸Jessica Whyte, "A New use of the Self: Giorgio Agamben on the Coming Community," *Theory & Event* 13.1(2010) <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/377387>

¹¹⁹See *Marginal Notes on Comments on the Society of the Spectacle* available at https://libcom.org/files/agambenmarginal_notes_on_comments.pdf.

ciety.¹²⁰ His idea is different from Benjamin's in that the coming of the *coming community* waits for nothing specific - "the coming has no teleological valances, it is like a letter without a addressee, with no destination. The coming community is not predestined, but how it must be, without the specters of the past, aiming for a just society. It is achieved with a radical treatment of the present, discovering the potentialities of a new world, whose potential is always already there. It is the reason why utopia is very topos of things."¹²¹ The seeds of transformation is present in every *now* moment of the continuous historical time.

The irrelevance of what we are waiting for leads to another interesting idea - the Derridean notion of radically open future. His understanding of democracy and politics is derived from many other ideas of his that talk about fraternity and community. For Derrida, the idea of democracy emerges out of deconstruction. The current study takes the profound significance of his statement, "no deconstruction without democracy and no democracy without deconstruction."¹²² The idea of *to-come* does not signify an accomplish-able future; like a future possibility, but remains as a present impossibility. The future is never perfected, the present never completed, it remains as an impossible possibility - like a *differand* with eternal postponement/deferment. It is an ontological condition - the being-promise of a promise.¹²³ Paul Patton interprets the issue of future of democracy as such an impossible idea because it is riven with several contradictions. The biggest challenge is between force and law that has to tackle the tension between

¹²⁰See Jean-Philippe Deranty, "Agamben's Challenge to Normative Theories of Human Rights," *Borderlands* 3.1(2004). http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol3no1_2004/deranty_agambnschall.html. Also see Carlo Salzon, "Quodlibet," 219.

¹²¹Carlo Salzon, "Quodlibet," 223, 227

¹²²Paul Patton, "Derrida, Politics and Democracy to Come," *Philosophy Compass* 2.6(2007): 766-780, 772.

¹²³Mathias Fritsch, "Derrida's Democracy to Come,"

rule of law and the singularity of every individual [radical difference]. This is a greater challenge than Honneth's idea of recognitive justice. Democracy failed both as a condition of equality and as one recognizing the *singularity* of each individual. Democracy, to infer from Derrida, creates its own crisis, like capitalism for Marx. For the former, it is by the principle of **autoimmunity**¹²⁴, creating self-destructive antibodies. What are the antibodies of democracy? It is the very unachieved/unachievable condition, democracy is always the *to-come*.

There are no easy indicators of true democracy. It implies that much of social facts are superficial in nature. As there is no future present in the frame of things to-come, the present is also always in an incomplete form. Derrida too doesn't give much importance to teleological perspective. The lack of a *telos* also establishes *infinite* perfectibility of human beings. The deferral of the future that makes the *full presence* a forever possibility. The puzzling aspect is that Derrida talks more about democracy's constitutive incompleteness more than the social incompleteness. Though promise has historical nuances to it, Patton states that Derrida distinguishes democracy from its more or less inadequate historical determinations. He states that, on the contrary, Deleuze opines that the pure *event* of democracy is irreducible to any political system.¹²⁵ Ware gives a Levinasian kind of interpretation to Derrida's *future-to-come*. The idea of *yetness* or to-come is treated as a radical heterogenous **irreducible other**. The other is the arrival of the event of irreducible alterity. Justice too gets similar treatment. It is not seen as always *disjointed* within the bounds of fixed conjoined time.¹²⁶

¹²⁴Daniel Mathews. "The Democracy to Come: Notes on the Thought of Jacques Derrida," *Critical Legal Thinking: Law and the Political* web blog entry, April 2013. <http://criticallegalthinking.com/2013/04/16/the-democracy-to-come-notes-on-the-thought-of-jacques-derrida/>

¹²⁵See Paul Patton and John Protevi, eds., *between Deleuze and Derrida* (New York: Continuum, 2003), 24–5.

¹²⁶See Qwen Ware, "Dialectic of the Past," 107. A close reading of Derrida keeping in light

Fritsch makes an interesting observation: “The promise of repetition, and the open-endedness of the future to come, keeps the values and institutional structures open to different interpretations of what democracy means, allowing multiple voices to clash and negotiate with one another.”¹²⁷ There is no doubt in the polemical nature of Derrida’s idea of radical futurity of time argued in terms of messianic without messianism. Even more important than this is the clash and negotiation that Fritsch talks about. These take place under radical diversity that may bring obstinacy and also abstinence in people to come to an agreement. On a serious note, Derrida and the likes do not treat any form of political principle to govern a political state. It is more than that, an ontological condition. In this sense, then, what is equality to Ranciere can be paralleled as democracy in Derrida. The aporetic element of presence-absence, becomes, for Derrida, the deferment reflecting its aporetic structure. Todd may state that “Democracy becomes that which guides our action but which must remain open as a guiding concept, lest one should fall into the trap of deciding what it is and how it is to be imposed.”¹²⁸ The openness argument has a problem to it, the unbearable

Benjamin and Levinas provides a rather different understanding of the relationship between law and justice. The difference is, contrary to all preceding western philosophical traditions, one clear point of departure of these three seen in the profound assertion, “law is not justice.” Derrida aptly declares that law is based on ‘certain enduring possibility of force of violence’ – owing to its regulative and conserving nature. This is the reason why singularity is the missing element of law because of which a non-violent resolution of conflicts seems to be a far-fetched idea. The focus in “Force of Law” is taking justice out of the bounds of law – the latter always had been treated as emancipatory. Like in Benjamin, Derrida too sees that justice is neither within nor without, nor regulative in the Kantian sense – but justice has the characteristic of ‘Yet to come’, transcending the now in the mode of perhaps; hence, the undecidability. To this, Derrida attaches Levinasian ‘ethical infinity’ that is never satisfied. It may mean that it unfolds to some ‘future now’, though not utopian. This picture of Derrida results in certain dilemmas. One important one among them is: something is deconstructed yet there is something else undeconstructible that makes justice an extralegal concern; mystical. The mention of ‘mystical foundations’ is enlightening yet confusing. The dilemma is the foundational, but not-foundational element of his idea. The scare of such an idea is it may affect in the creation of another ‘realism’ – wherein the bounds of justice has an independent realm of its own because of which some aspect it still undeconstructible.

¹²⁷ “Derrida’s Democracy to Come,”

¹²⁸ See his article “Democracy is Where We Make It: The Relevance of Jacques Ranciere,” Symposium: Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy, 12.

excess. Jean-Luc Nancy states that if democracy is the only acceptable type of political regime for emancipated community, then the very idea of democracy loses its color. In a similar fashion, Badiou states that the politics existing under the name of democracy isn't democratic at all.

Final Remark

Derrida takes the argument onto a different plain. Arguments made in both *Specters of Marx* and *Politics of Friendship* appeal to unconditional notions of hospitality and forgiveness or gift opening it for renegotiation. This argument is extended with specific concern for violence on a global scale. The same argument is present in his *Hospitality and Forgiveness*. Patton asks how do these generate the normative force of democracy?¹²⁹ This normative force should be able to ground or reconcile the already-grounded nature of differing forms of life. Nancy rightly states that democracy signifies the admission of all diversities to a community which does not unify them, on the contrary, deploy their multiplicity. The argument for democracy seems to be complex. Accepting what Nancy argues above, it can be said that it too is prone to totalitarianism when individuals do not exercise their freedom of reason. We have to keep in mind that society is composed of more and more communities bounded by adversity, kinship, situation, with a refusal to converge on historical trajectories. The paradox is democracy is linked to capitalism, yet is desired a distinct status. Whatever is the case we need to agree to the point that the art of association is a reciprocal engagement between the public entity and individuals. The challenge falls back on the individual - how

¹²⁹See "Derrida, Democracy and Politics to Come," 774. Geoffrey Bennington, "Politics and Friendship: A Discussion with Derrida," (Dec 1997). <http://hydra.humanities.uci.edu/derrida/pol+fr.html>

her existence is determined not only socio-culturally, but also politically. The status of one's being spills out of oneself, in the sense that the insufficiency, both in the individualist and collective senses, is an opening to the world. This can have the features of a radical future as an ontological condition. Social erosion takes place when individuals are confined to **excessive** finite existence. Benjamin's and Agamben's diagnosis that the state of emergency/exception becomes the rule tells scores about the urgency to free the human condition from the power of the sovereign. The paradox is its impossibility. We are just caught in the force of power that has the impulse to dominate and the corresponding impulse to seek submission. Nancy's argument can be summarized in this manner: It is indeed difficult for us to reduce the interplay of power and its forces, and its incompatibility with morality or with the ideal of an **equal/just/fraternal community**.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Utopia, Politics and Social Imagination: *Endless Struggle*]

Anti-utopianism like utopianism loses its validity upon critical reflection of several ideas presented in the thesis. The study has been committed to the idea of a complex just society driven by these three cardinal virtues - Equality, Freedom and Justice. There is no closure to the socio-political imagination of the nature of a social realm that places these ideals in a just manner. From the discussions made in the thesis, we infer that a harmonious social world and realization of these values [in terms of individuals and institutions] is an ideal situation. In other words, an assumption that everyone is free and equal to the other, and seeing these two values in their respective *just* states is definitely a far-fetched supposition. Yet this is a non-refutable human conjecture. Non-refutable because, human societies

and their distinctness [not to speak in the anthropomorphic sense at all] are societies with a hidden motto - *life-for-all* under the latent ontological principle of existence. This approach is necessary even in the current context. The question remains open to all societies and cultures at every historical juncture - how to guarantee these three principles amid the nasty play of power, domination and oppression. The spirit of this work is centered around this idea. There are people and their identities whose status remain the same, at the bottom of social ebb, generations after generations. The condition continue to persist even now. There is nothing good about the way the world is, even in the times of the zenith of democracy. Under these conditions of difficult times, there is nothing pervert about imagining a society - which gets idealized, of extremely diversity. Every age has to debate this because the urge persists ever in our minds.

We have seen that we experience a psychological block where we are held captive by our own mental block - just looking at the previous century as starkly *night-marish*. Why do we need to be equality? To answer this question we need to question our very conscience. A century is colored, an epoch is slaughtered both by its critics and by its defenders. All promises have failed and more promises made to further fail them. A metaphysic is dispensed away with, yet, to the adversity of logic of anti-metaphysics, violence is more than before. We have referred in thesis that violence is historical, social and political injustices. Why does liberalism, and the world at large fear equality? The answer is written on the walls, needless to think about it. The previous century and the subsequent ones tell us one simple fact - socio-political imagination has taken its flight into the far unreachable horizons. In this attempt to reach the horizon, the imaginative, the utopian, we still think about a practical possibility. The practical possibility is letting each other, to live and experience the social. A banister-less politics is a

possibility not completely exhausted out. The important aspect is whether the post-banister world has achieved what has not been achieved by the metaphysical world.

Maintaining the above discussion, we claim that the world failed Communism including those that had embraced it or had long acted as its torch bearers. We have also seen, after all, what has failed- the philosophy or the experiment. Though it resembles a sort of scientific experiment, socialism/communism will not fit into that hardcore deterministic formula. May be the political experiment has failed but not the philosophy - that certain natures are integral to us as *social beings*, as constitutive selves cannot be forgotten. We owe this to the philosophy. Hence, the fall narrative is to be looked at as a historical *lost cause*, lost politically. A *return of the human to onself* can happen only when we value dignity as a principle. If liberalism is about rights, rights emerge only in the context of deprivation, calling everyone's equal right to the thing deprived. This is to be understood in the context of peoples, their identities, their associations, their ways of life slipping into the zone of radical incongruence. Liberal-capitalism deceive people by diverting from these issues. Eagleton has elaborately discussed. There are far greater implications of this phenomenal deception - people, especially, the oppressed, are ripped off of their revolutionary consciousness. The deception is that there is no room for revolution any more. The consequence is the loss of a vanguard of the oppressed affecting the thought of emancipation itself. Liberalism too did not keep its promise, to be the only alternative politics. The failure, once again, compels us to rethink about an alternative to liberal-democratic-capitalism. The reason is too simple. The open society paradigm does not work at all.

We have also discussed that the significant issue is not whether socialism has

demised due to the perverse element in it. In its absence, just remaining as a *specter*, the challenge is to look for a paradigm of social justice. Rawls's liberalism somewhat becomes an alternative to all political ideologies. The issue discussed is the possibility of a fair society. Fairness neither lies in our rationality nor in empathy for others. It emerges at the point of intersection of people and their ways that acts as the real test. The major drawback of his theory is his version of pluralism that is not useful to address radical equality. It does not fall into the scope of its theory. Nevertheless, it questions the possibility of formulating a theory of social justice with such vast parameters as we are concerned here. Original position and public political justice make an attempt to posit the difficulty - but we cannot eliminate the most crucial aspects for the sake of theory. How can we say that people are fair to each other? It is no easy task possible within the bounds of rationality. One possibility lies in the *trade-off* of not just the rich, but the socio-culturally privileged classes. Even if we treat overlapping consensus as a political need, social hierarchy may not consent to it. Whether hierarchy is to be done away with or not was not the concern of the study. Fairness is not just about [rational] individuals' consent to *principles* of justice. Conscience is built within the society or community - that makes us question whenever people are classified on several grounds, objectionable to accept.

Arguing this way is no submission to the paradigm of common good. Common good too is tyrannical in nature. On the *prima facie*, collective consciousness, shared meanings of life and culture seem very appealing, but can put individuals to dangerous subjections. Liberalism has not resolved this problem either. This explains the situation - our inability to grasp the nature of postpolitics, postideology and postmetaphysics. By losing a sense of community we became unclear as to what is to be corrected. In fact every thing requires a radical transformation.

Why are equality and justice treated as radical when they are supposed to be out there - ontologically speaking. It is very apt that this very radical thinking takes us out of this world - utopia. It is radical in the sense that it is not in the general agreement of that people that anyone can embrace any identity, religion, caste, community and most importantly, ideology. It is a failure of both politics and civil society. Here, we are left with another great paradox. Politics is the one which breeds the grounds of oppression, and it is the same politics which retains the power of a messiah. Practically, it may sound too religious an argument. If not in this manner, how do we expect change in the lives of the people? This is what the pursuit is about. The struggle is always there for many, while the rest are power's chosen subjects. We have defended people who have argued for the spirit of *hope* in this regard. This can be said by looking at the socio-political condition. Politics gets subverted or confiscated by the forces of the police, thus, hindering any radical transformation. This subversion makes society utterly impossible. It is impossible because the existing socio-cultural forms lack the strength to ground two great principles - *disagreement* and dissensus. Hence, the return of the political is desired.

Reclamation of political utopianism will never allow the triumph of liberal democracy. Utopianism synonymous with totalitarianism in which torture and mass murder are used as justified means to achieve their ends. We have seen in all the chapters that while negating socialism democracy is projected as an alternative to Utopia. Too much stress on utopian ideals puts humanity on the verge of catastrophe and perilous stagnation. This sounds like an inevitable dangerous paradox. While siding with either utopia or anti-utopia, we have to come to terms with what can be and what cannot be overcome by the human will. Equality and justice, undergoing vast expansion, targets a larger goal of social justice.

The principal aim of it being attaining ‘freedom to live the way one wants’ in a *contested* social space. The freedom to live is the freedom to follow any way of life, religion, belong to any identity, expressing dissent etc., besides being able to achieve certain economic standards of living. Berlin’s pluralism says the social space is limited. There is less truth in it. Utopia was not just something one thought or dreamed about, it is where you have to live - thus, solves the riddle of place. It is also where one is supposed to die also. This would mean that we only switch from one created utopia to another – from the above arguments needlessly socialist or communist. But as long as capitalism uses the triumphalist claims socialism does not lose its ontological status. Utopia and its realization get subdued over a period of time.

We have seen that all attempts to erase utopian imagination is more of defending liberal-democratic-capitalism than being aghast about the violence inherent in it. We have to keep in mind that after careful treatment of criticisms we come back to the same initial condition. What is our socio-cultural-political life supposed to be? How do we fight the possible conflictual condition. We have seen that in the urge for a new community recouping from the loss has always great challenges. The biggest challenge is drawing people’s allegiance to it - more importantly of the ones that are always dominated both politically and unfortunately culturally. There is an argument of circularity here. Meaning thereby, we are never free from fundamental questions of the social, the community, the cultural and the political. Though the latter is a modern invention it has become the determinant of individuals’ existence. In other words it has become the representative realm of people’s social existence. It is one thing to be concerned about ideology-driven social life and politics and something else to be concerned about the impacts these doctrines have on the people. Community should have in itself the liberating force

of dissent if the oppressed are not par of the respectable social milieu. It should not be difficult for the new society/community/politics to manifest the principle of **live and let live**. If it cannot then there is nothing new but just the specters of the traditional hierarchical structures. We know that we do not want it. In order that social space is not to be quantified but to be addressed as an idea. Virtue ethics, the communitarian hangover, has to lay its focus on the possible existence of people with their inclination to different-differing ways of life. The differentiation that Ranciere argues is to be treated as more sophisticated than Iris Young. It is to be seen in the sense of performative aspect of *a priori* supposed presence of equality. Derrida is right in saying that the difference is never sublated. The fact is that societies are turning to be regressive by forcing the social mood to consensus. If we question this we also question the Rawlsian approach of overlapping consensus. The conviction here is there is no strong argument that can defend it from the allegation that there is a kind of totality in it - *the liberal totality*. In finding social ontology in the Nancyian way, we need to accept that the reference to *originary* community makes no sense. It makes no sense because even if there is [hypothetical counter to Derrida] one it is no exemplification of lives lived, experienced and shared in the kind of radical pluralism or diversity. The insufficiency in Rawls rationality/reason bestows on individuals from *nowhere*. Though it is needless to reiterate one has to keep in mind, even in the state of freshness of imagination, that it is needful to keep stating again and again to show how human affairs can go beserk.

The recovery of the community definitely cannot be centred around the bare life. Unfortunately there are innumerable lives that are pushed to the margins of bare life or no bare life either. In societies like India, such condition is clearly visible for the mere reason that they belong to a certain identity that is the product of

society. There is another kind of people who exist people between bare life and political life. For them, Agamben and Ranciere's *zone of indistinction* applies truly. We have mentioned in the chapters about this referring to Alphonso Lingis's 'Community that has nothing in common' and Ranciere's 'part that has no part' - which means that count that has no count. It is also discussed that oppressive forces are historical mostly, yet new forms of social control may be inventions of the present and more specifically the *now time*. If normal legality is suspended that which is supposed to preserve the self-preservation of every individual has been suspended. At this juncture, the argument that the previous century had witnessed the depths of human decadence makes no sense. It is discussed that violence has taken a different form in the name of liberal-democratic-capitalism. Many societies are morally apathetic to take this into account seriously. Laclau's concern that even in this state one should not give up emancipatory possibilities can have two interpretations. When the oppressed is clear about the impossibility of liberation subjecting them to seductions of hope, liberation, emancipation and another world is something paramount. On the other hand, these possibilities retain in themselves practical realization of those revolutionary goals.

Many talk about justice and equality pointing out the fact of the unjust ways of the world. Yet, it remains an unaccomplished goal of the human condition. Emancipation of the oppressed is defeated by the profound impenetrable ways of the social realm. The continued oppressed condition leaves them as lost causes. The reason is their struggles are the same, for 'to be part', 'to be heard' and 'to be valued'. It is one thing to identify the practical possibilities of emancipation to regulate the social lives. On the other hand, how individuals, belonging to various identities they form, mark each other in terms of valuations and validations is the perplexing issue here. The sense of the political is the only means that can

promise the desired condition of a fair society. It can only face the recalcitrant socio-cultural forms that can turn perverse, and patronage fear and hatred that beget moral degeneration. If the political can distance itself from the social, not in the ontological sense, then there is a hope. Public realm is supposed to be such a superior realm, driven by the spirit of the political. We have also seen that the *adverse condition* is also possible - the totality functional within the socio-cultural realm. We have seen that the integration approach is futile in nature unless it also retains the parallel immanent condition of dissensus. Both political realism and normative politics should realize that - when lives continue to remain the same generations after generations reflective of no movement in the standards of living and no movement in terms of belonging to the community - utopia, the longing is for anything but not the present; dissent, the non-conformity to society and culture; and radical disagreement, the freedom to oppose the *singular* status of common good remain as great potentialities.

Bibliography

- [1] Affeldt, Steven G. "The Force of Freedom." *Political Theory*, 27, no. 3 (1999): 299-333.
- [2] Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- [3] Anderson, Perry. *A Zone of Engagement*. London: Verso, 1992.
- [4] Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "Stereotypes and the Shaping of Identity." *California Law Review* 88, no. 1 (January 2000): 41-53.
- [5] Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "The State and the Shaping of Identity." *Tanner Lecture on Human Values*, April 30, 2001, 235-99.
- [6] Arendt, Hannah. "Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture." *Social Research* 38, no. 3 (Autumn 1971): 417-46.
- [7] Apostol, Pavel, "Marxism and the Structure of the Future," *Futures* (Sept 1972): 202-210.
- [8] Badiou, Alain. *The Century*. Cambridge: Polity, 2007.
- [9] Badiou, Alain. *The Communist Hypothesis*. Translated by David Macey and Steven Corcoran. New York: Verso, 2010.
- [10] Baron, Bentley Le. "Marx on Human Emancipation." *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, no. 4 (December 1971): 559. doi:10.1017/s0008423900030043.
- [11] Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulations*. New York: Semiotext(e), 1983.
- [12] Baudrillard, Jean. *The Illusion of the End*. Translated by C. Turner. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994.
- [13] Bauman, Zygmunt, and Leonidas Donskis. *Moral Blindness: The Loss of Sensitivity in Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity, 2016.
- [14] Benjamin, Walter. "Theses on the Philosophy of History." <https://www.sfu.ca/~andrewf/CONCEPT2.html>.
- [15] Bensaid, Daniel. *Marx for our Times: Adventures and Misadventures of a Critique*. London: Verso, 2009.

-
- [16] Best, Steven. *The Politics of Historical Vision: Marx, Foucault, and Habermas*. New York: Guilford Press, 1996.
- [17] Bloch, Ernst. *The Spirit of Utopia*. Translated by Anthony A. Nassar. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- [18] Boer, Roland. "The 'Failure' of Communism: a 'Fall' narrative." *Philosophers for Change*. November 4, 2014. <https://philosophersforchange.org/2014/10/28/the-failure-of-communism-a-fall-narrative/>.
- [19] Brecht, Bertolt. "In Praise of Communism." *The Cahokian*. <http://thecahokian.blogspot.in/2013/07/bertolt-brecht-in-praise-of-communism.html>.
- [20] Brown, Wendy. "Neo-liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy." *Theory & Event* 7, no. 1 (2003).
- [21] Brown, Wendy. *Undoing the Demons: Neoliberalisms Stealth Revolution*. Brooklyn: Zone Books, 2015.
- [22] Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- [23] Card, Claudia. *The Atrocity Paradigm: A Theory of Evil*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002.
- [24] Castoriadis, Cornelius. *A Society Adrift Interviews and Debates, 1974-1997*. Translated by Helen Arnold. New York: Fordham University Press, 2010.
- [25] Chambers, Samuel. *The Lessons of Ranciere*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- [26] Clarke, J. J. "'The End of History': A Reappraisal of Marx's Views on Alienation and Human Emancipation." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 4, no. 3 (September 1971): 367-80.
- [27] Cohen, G. A. "Where the Action Is: On the Site of Distributive Justice." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 26, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 3-30. doi:10.1111/j.1088-4963.1997.tb00048.x.
- [28] Cohen, G. A. *Rescuing Justice and Equality*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- [29] Courtois, Stephane , Nicolas Werth, Andrzej Paczkowski, Karel Bartošek, and Jean Louis, Margolin. *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*. Edited by Mark Kramer. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- [30] Dean, Jodi. "Politics Without Politics." *Parallax* 15, no.3 (2009): 20-36.
- [31] Delanty, Gerard. *Community*. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- [32] Deranty, Jean Philippe. "Rancière and Contemporary Political Ontology." *Theory & Event* 6, no. 4 (2003).

-
- [33] Deranty, Jean Philippe , and Emmanuel Renault. "Politicizing Honneth's Ethics of Recognition." *Thesis Eleven* 88 (February 2007): 92-111.
 - [34] Deranty, Jean Philippe. "Injustice, Violence and Social Struggle. The Critical Potential of Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognition." *Critical Horizons; A Journal of Philosophy and Social Theory* 5, no. 1 (April 21, 2015): 297-322.
 - [35] Derrida, Jacques. *Specters of Marx: The State of The Debt, The Work of Mourning, and The New International*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
 - [36] Derrida, Jacques. *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, The Work of Mourning, and the New International*. Translated by Peggy Kamuf. New York: Routledge, 2011.
 - [37] Devisch, Ignaas. *Jean-Luc Nancy and the Question of Community*. London: Bloomsbury, 2014.
 - [38] Diefenbach, Katja . "Im/potential Politics: Political Ontologies of Negrì, Agamben and Deleuze." Translated by Aileen Derieg. *Eipcp Institut Européen Pour Des Politiques Culturelles en Devenir*1, January 2011. <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0811/diefenbach/en>.
 - [39] Doerr, Nicole. "Between Habermas and Ranciere: The democracy of Political Translation." *EIPCP: European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies* <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0613/doerr/en>.
 - [40] Droit, Emmanuel. "The Gulag and the Holocaust in Opposition: *Official Memories and Memory Cultures in an Enlarged Europe*." *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, no. 94 .2 (2007): 101-120. doi:10.3917/ving.094.0101
 - [41] Dusche, Michael. "Radical Multiculturalism versus Liberal Pluralism." *Ethical Perspectives*11, no. 4 (2004): 238-49. doi:10.2143/ep.11.4.519089.
 - [42] Echols, John M. "Does Socialism Mean Greater Equality? A Comparison of East and West Along Several Major Dimensions." *American Journal of Political Science*25, no. 1 (February 1981): 1-31. doi:10.2307/2110910.
 - [43] Elliott, Gregory. *Ends in Sight Marx/Fukuyama/Hobsbawm/Anderson*. London: Pluto Press, 2008.
 - [44] Erp, Herman Van. "The End of History and Hegel's Conception of Modernity." *Ideas Y Valores*47, no. 107 (August 1998): 3-16.
 - [45] Esposito, Roberto. *Categories of the Impolitical*. Translated by Connal Parsley. Fordham University Press, 2015.
 - [46] Estlund, David. "Human Nature and the Limits (If Any) of Political Philosophy." *Philosophy & Public Affairs*39, no. 3 (2011): 207-37. doi:10.1111/j.1088-4963.2011.01207.x.
 - [47] Estlund, David. "The Truth in Political Liberalism." In *Truth and Democracy*, edited by Jeremy Elkins and Andrew Norris, 256. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.

-
- [48] Estlund, David, and Andrew Norris. "The Truth in Political Liberalism." In *Truth and Democracy*, edited by Jeremy Elkins, 251-335. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.
- [49] Estlund, David. "Utopophobia." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 42, no. 2 (2014): 113-34.
- [50] Estlund, David. "Prime Justice." In *Political Utopias*, edited by Michael Weber and Kevin Vallier, 36. Oxford University Press, 2017.
- [51] Faramelli, Anthony. "What's "Left" of Communism? Part I of II." *Critical Legal Thinking*. November 11, 2013. <http://criticallegalthinking.com/2013/10/07/whats-left-communism/>.
- [52] Feinberg, Joel. *Harmless Wrongdoing*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- [53] Feinberg, Joel. "Liberalism, Community, and Tradition." *TIKKUN* 3, no. 3, 38. <http://www.tikkun.org/nextgen/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Liberalism-Community-and-Tradition.pdf>.
- [54] Feinberg, Joel. *Harmless Wrongdoing*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- [55] Finlayson, James Gordon. "“Bare Life” and Politics in Agambens Reading of Aristotle." *The Review of Politics* 72, no. 01 (2010): 97. doi:10.1017/s0034670509990982.
- [56] Forchtner, Berhard. "Jurgen Habermas' Language Philosophy and the Critical Study of Language." *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines* 4, no.1 (2010): 18-37.
- [57] Fraser, Nancy. "Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition, and Participation." *Tanner Lecture on Human Values*, Delivered at Stanford University, April 30-May 2, 1996, 1-67.
- [58] Fraser, Nancy. *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition*. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- [59] Fraser, Nancy. "Recognition without Ethics?" *Theory, Culture & Society* 18, no. 2-3 (June 1, 2001): 21-42. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/02632760122051760>.
- [60] Fraser, Nancy, and Axel Honneth. *Redistribution Or Recognition?: A Political-philosophical Exchange*. Translated by Joel Golb, James Ingram, and Christiane Wilke. New York: Verso, 2003.
- [61] Freeden, Michael. "Confronting the chimera of a 'post-ideological' age." *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 8, no. 2 (August 22, 2006): 247-62. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230500108918>.
- [62] Freyenhagen, Fabian. "Honneth on Social Pathologies: A Critique." *Critical Horizons A Journal of Philosophy and Social Theory* 16, no. 2 (May 21, 2015): 131-52.

-
- [63] Fritsch, Matthias. "Derrida's Democracy To Come." *Constellations: An International Journal of Critical and Democratic Theory* 9, no. 4 (December 2002): 574-97.
- [64] Fromm, Erich. *Marx's Concept of Man: Milestones of Thought*. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co, 1961.
- [65] Fromm, Erich. *Marx's Concept of Man*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1961.
- [66] Geuss, Raymond. *Philosophy and Real Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.
- [67] Geuss, Raymond. *A World Without Why*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014.
- [68] Giddens, Anthony. *Beyond Left and Right: The Future of Radical Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994.
- [69] Gledhill, James. "Rawls and Realism." *Social Theory and Practice* 38, no. 1 (January 2012): 55-82.
- [70] Glover, Jonathan. *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*. New York: Yale University Press, 2000.
- [71] Gratton, Peter. *The State of Sovereignty: Lessons From the Political Fictions of Modernity*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012.
- [72] Guay, Robert. "The 'I's Have it: Nietzsche on Subjectivity." *Inquiry*, 49, no. 3(2006): 218-241.
- [73] Hale, Henry E. "After the Collapse of Communism." Edited by Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner Weiss. *The Journal of Public and International Affairs* 120, no. 3 (September 2005): 511-12. doi:10.1002/j.1538-165X.2005.tb01393.x.
- [74] Habermas, Jurgen. *Justification and Application: Remarks on Discourse Ethics*. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1994.
- [75] Habermas, Jurgen. *Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998.
- [76] Havey, David. *Spaces of Hope*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000.
- [77] Hegel, G.W.F. *Philosophy of Right*. Translated by S.W. Dyde. Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books Limited, 2001.
- [78] Held, David. *Political Theory Today*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991.
- [79] Hinton, Timothy, ed. *The Original Position*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- [80] Hobsbawm, Eric. *The Age of Extremes, 1914-1991*. London: Abacus book, 1994.

-
- [81] Honneth, Axel. "Recognition and Justice: Outline of a Plural Theory of Justice." *Acta Sociologica* 47, no. 4 (December 2004): 351-64. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4195049>.
- [82] Honneth, Axel. *Reification: A New Look at an Old Idea*. Edited by Martin Jay. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- [83] Honneth, Axel. *Freedom's Right: The Social Foundations of Democratic Life*. Translated by Joseph Ganahl. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014.
- [84] Hook, Derek, and Calum Neill. "Žižek, political philosophy and subjectivity." *Subjectivity* 3, no. 1 (April 2010): 1-6.
- [85] Kateb, George. "The Adequacy of the Western Canon." *What is Political Theory?*: 30-53. doi:10.4135/9781446215425.n3.
- [86] Khatib, Sami. "Where the Past Was, There History Shall Be." *Anthropology & Materialism*, no. 1 (2017). Online version <http://am.revues.org/789> ; DOI : 10.4000/am.789.
- [87] Kleingeld, Pauline. "Kant on the Unity of Theoretical and Practical Reason." *The Review of Metaphysics* 52, no. 2 (December 1998): 311-39. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20131142>.
- [88] Kowarzik, Wolfdietrich Schmied. "Karl Marx as a Philosopher of Human Emancipation." Translated by Allan Smith. *Poznan Studies in the Philosophy of the sciences and the Humanities* 60 (1985): 355-68. <http://www.thur.de/philo/emanc.htm>.
- [89] Krugman, Paul. "Capitalism's Mysterious Triumph." *Economist's View*. Accessed February 25, 2008. <http://economistsview.typepad.com/economistsview/2008/02/paul-krugman-wh.html>.
- [90] Kunkel, Benjamin. *Utopia or Bust: A Guide to The Present Crisis*. London: Verso, 2014.
- [91] Laclau, Ernesto. "The Death and Resurrection of the Theory of Ideology." *MLN* 112, no. 3 (1997): 297-321. doi:10.1353/mln.1997.0038.
- [92] Laclau, Ernesto. "The Death and Resurrection of the Theory of Ideology." *Journal of Political Ideologies* 1, no. 3 (November 19, 2007): 297-321. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/13569319608420738>.
- [93] Laitinen, Arto. "Social Pathologies, Reflexive Pathologies, and the Idea of Higher-Order Disorders." *Studies in Social & Political Thought* 25 (2017): 44-65.
- [94] Levene, Mark. "Why Is the Twentieth Century the Century of Genocide?" *Journal of World History* 11, no. 2 (2000): 305-36. doi:10.1353/jwh.2000.0044.
- [95] Lukcas, George. *Marx's Basic Ontological Principles*. Translated by David Fernbach. London: Merlin Press, 1978.

-
- [96] Luna, Erich Daniel. "The Ignorant Philosopher? On Jacques Rancière's Political Ontology" Accessed January 23, 2018.
- [97] Lusietti, Federico . "Carl Schmitt and Giorgio Agamben: From Biopolitics to Political Romanticism." *Journal of Philosophy of Life*1, no. 1 (March 2011): 49-58.
- [98] Luxon, Nancy. "Rancière's lessons in failure." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 49, no. 4 (2016): 392-407.
- [99] Lyotard, Jean François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.
- [100] Mansfield, Nick. "Derrida, Democracy and Violence." *Studies in Social Justice* 5, no. 2 (2011): 231-40.
- [101] Marchart, Oliver. *Post-foundational Political Thought: Political Difference in Nancy, Lefort, Bafiou and Laclau*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2007.
- [102] Marcuse, Herbert. *Five Lectures: Psychoanalysis, Politics and Utopia*. Translated by Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shierry M. Weber. Boston: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1970.
- [103] Marder, Michael. "After the Fire: The Politics of Ashes," *Telos*, 161(Winter 2012): 163-180.
- [104] Marx, Karl. "Chapter 48. The Trinity Formula." Economic Manuscripts: Capital, Vol.3, Chapter 48. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1894-c3/ch48.htm>.
- [105] Marx, Karl. *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*. Edited by Joseph O'Malley. Translated by Annette Jolin and Joseph O'Malley. London: Cambridge University Press, 1970.
- [106] Marx, Karl. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. Translated by Martin Milligan. Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1988.
- [107] Mathews, Daniel. "The Democracy to Come: Notes on the Thought of Jacques Derrida." *Critical Legal Thinking: Law and the Political*, April 2013.
- [108] Matsuda, Mari J. "Liberal Jurisprudence and Abstracted Visions of Human Nature: A Feminist Critique of Rawls ' Theory of Justice." *New Mexico Law Review* 613 (Summer 1986): 614-30.
- [109] May, Todd. "Democracy is Where We Make It." *Symposium*13, no. 1 (2009): 3-21. doi:10.5840/symposium20091311.
- [110] Meyers, Diana Tietjens. "Who's There? Selfhood, Self-Regard, and Social Relations." *Hypatia*20, no. 4 (2005): 200-15. doi:10.1111/j.1527-2001.2005.tb00544.x.
- [111] Murphy, Liam B. "Institutions and the Demands of Justice." *Philosophy & Public Affairs*27, no. 4 (October 1998): 251-91. doi:10.1111/j.1088-4963.1998.tb00071.x.

-
- [112] Murphy, Timothy S. "The Ontological Turn in the Marxism of Georg Lukacs and Antonio Negri." *Strategies*, 16.2(2003): 163-184. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1040213032000151584>
 - [113] Nancy, Jean-Luc. *The Inoperative Community*. Edited by Peter Connor. Translated by Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.
 - [114] Nancy, Jean-Luc. *Philosophical Chronicles*. Translated by Franson D. Manjali. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008.
 - [115] Negri, Antonio. *Goodbye Mr. Socialism*. Translated by Peter Thomas. Toronto: Seven Stories Press, 2006.
 - [116] Negri, Antonio. "Is It Possible to Be Communist Without Marx?" *Critical Horizons* 12, no. 1 (2011): 5-14. doi:10.1558/crit.v12i1.5
 - [117] Nilsson, Magnus. "Rethinking Redistribution and Recognition: Class, Identity, and the Conditions for Radical Politics in the "Postsocialist" Age." *New Proposals: Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry* 2, no. 1 (November 2008): 31-44.
 - [118] Nisbet, Robert A. *Community and Power*. London: A Galaxy Notebook, 1962..
 - [119] O'Mahony, Patrick. "Habermas and Communicative Power." *Journal of Power* 3, no.1 (2010): 53-73.
 - [120] Olivier, Bert . "Ranciere and the Recuperation of Politics." *Phronimon* 16, no. 1 (2015): 10-17.
 - [121] Ollman, Bertell. "Marx's Vision of Communism." *Dialectical Marxism*.
 - [122] Patton, Paul, and John Protevi, eds. *Between Deleuze and Derrida*. New York: Continuum, 2003.
 - [123] Patton, Paul. "Derrida, Politics and Democracy to Come." *Philosophy Compass* 2, no. 6 (October 9, 2007): 766-80. doi:10.1111/j.1747-9991.2007.00098.x.
 - [124] Pilapil, Renante. "Psychologization of Injustice? On Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognitive Justice." *Ethical Perspectives* 18, no. 1 (2011): 79-106. doi:10.2143/EP.18.1.2066214.
 - [125] Plot, Martin. *Aesthetico-political: The Question of Democracy in Merleau-Ponty, Arendt, and Ranciere*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2016.
 - [126] Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.
 - [127] Ranciere, Jacques. *Dis-agreement: Politics and Philosophy*. Translated by Julie Rose. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.
 - [128] Ranciere , Jacques. "Ten Theses on Politics." *Theory & Event* 5, no.3 (2001).
 - [129] Ranciere, Jacques. *The Politics of Aesthetics*. Edited by Gabriel Rockhill. Translated by Gabriel Rockhill. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004.

-
- [130] Ranciere , Jacques . "Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics." In *Reading Ranciere: Critical Dissensus*, edited by Paul Bowman and Richard Stamp, 1-17. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011.
- [131] Ranciere, Jacques. *Dissensus: on Politics and Aesthetics*. Edited by Steven Corcoran. Translated by Steven Corcoran. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- [132] Ranciere, Jacques. *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*. Translated by Gabriel Rockhill. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016.
- [133] Ranciere, Jacques. *Dissenting Words: Interviews with Jacques Ranciere*. Ed., by Emiliano Battista, London: Blommbsbury, 2017.
- [134] Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971.
- [135] Rawls, John. *The Law of Peoples: With "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited"*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- [136] Rawls, John. *Political Liberalism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.
- [137] Rawls, John. *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*. Edited by Samuel Freeman. Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 2007.
- [138] Reiman, Jeffrey. *As Free and as Just as Possible: The Theory of Marxian Liberalism*. Sussex: Wiley- Blackwell, 2012.
- [139] Rienstra, Byron & Derek Hook. "Weakening Habermas: The Undoing of Communicative Rationality." *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* 33, no.3 (2006): 313-339.
- [140] Saidel, Matias Leandro. "Political and Impolitical: Two Perspectives to Rethink the Common and the Political in Contempoary Thought." *Las Torres de Lucca* 3 (December 2013): 7-34.
- [141] Sakwa, Richard. "The Soviet Collapse: Contradictions and Neo-Modernisation." *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 4, no. 1 (2013).
- [142] Salzani, Carlo . "Quodlibet : Giorgio Agamben's Anti-Utopia." *Utopian Studies* 23, no. 1 (2012): 212-37.
- [143] Samaddar, Ranabir. *Emergence of the Political Subject*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2010.
- [144] Sandri, Sarena . "Reflexivity in Social Reality." *Reflexivity in Economics: An Experimental Examination on the Self-Referentiality of Economic Theories*, 2009, 31-51.
- [145] Scanlon, T. M. *Being Realistic About Reasons*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- [146] Schmitt, Carl. *The Concept of the Political*. Chicago, Ill.: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2008.

-
- [147] Sen, Amartya. *Inequality Re-examined*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- [148] Skhlar, Judith. "The Force of Freedom: Rousseau on Forcing to be Free." *Political Theory* 27, no. 3 (1999): 299-333.
- [149] Solinas, Marco. "On the Motivational Bases of Social Struggle." <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/132328465.pdf>.
- [150] Spector, Celine. "John Rawls's Rousseau: From Realism to Utopia." <http://www.celinespector.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Rawls-Rousseau1.pdf>.
- [151] Strong, Tracy B. *Politics without vision: Thinking without a Banister in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Yale University Press, 2011.
- [152] Taskale, Ali Riza. *Post-Politics in Context*. New York: Routledge, 2016.
- [153] Tosel, André. "The Development of Marxism: From the End of Marxism-Leninism to a Thousand Marxisms – France-Italy, 1975–2005." *Critical Companion to Contemporary Marxism*: 39-78. doi:10.1163/ej.9789004145986.i-813.12.
- [154] Unger, Peter. *Living High & Letting Die*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- [155] Vaughan, Connell. "The Political basis of Ranciere's Aesthetics." *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics* 4 (2012).
- [156] Viriasova, Inna. "Politics and the Political: Correlation and the Question of the Unpolitical." *Peninsula: A Journal of Relational Politics* 1, no. 1 (2011).
- [157] Viroli, Maurizio. *Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the 'Well-Ordered Society'*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- [158] Walzer, Michael. *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad*. Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1994.
- [159] Ware, Owen. "Dialectic of the past/Disjunction of the Future: Derrida and Benjamin on the Concept of Messianism." *JCRT* 5, no. 2 (April 2004): 99-114.
- [160] Weatherford, Roy C. "Defining the Least Advantaged." *The Philosophical Quarterly* 33, no. 130 (January 1983): 63-69. doi:10.2307/2219204.
- [161] Weber, Elijah. "Rebels With a Cause: Self-Preservation and Absolute Sovereignty in Hobbes's Leviathan." *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, no. 29. 3 (July 2012): 227-246.
- [162] White, Hayden. "The Future of Utopia in History." *HISTORIEN*, no. 7 (2007): 11-19.
- [163] Williams, Bernard. *In the Beginning Was the Deed: Realism and Moralism in Political Argument*. Edited by Geoffrey Hawthorn. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.

-
- [164] Williams, Howard . "The End of History in Hegel and Marx." In *The Hegel-Marx Connection*, edited by Tony Burns and Ian Frazer, 198-216. London: Macmillan, 2000.
- [165] Wilson, Japhy , and Erik Swyngedouw, eds. *The Post-Political and Its Discontents: Spaces of Depoliticization, Spectres of Radical Politics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014.
- [166] Woodford, Clare. *Disorienting Democracy: Politics of Emancipation*. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- [167] Young, Iris Marion. *Inclusion and Democracy*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002.
- [168] Žižek, Slavoj. *First As Tragedy, Then As Farce*. London: Verso, 2009.
- [169] Žižek, Slavoj. *Living in the End Times*. London: Verso, 2011.
- [170] Žižek, Slavoj. *Mapping Ideology*. London: Verso, 2012.
- [171] Zurn, Christopher F. "Social Pathologies as Second-Order Disorders." Edited by Danielle Petherbridge. *The Critical Theory of Axel Honneth*, October 8, 2005.