MORAL PURPOSE, POLITICAL ACTION, AND LIBERALISM.

MORAL PURPOSE, POLITICAL ACTION, AND LIBERALISM: AN ATTEMPT AT A PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS.

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Abstract

This thesis represents an attempt at a philosophical inquiry into the nature of political action and its place in liberal theory.

I begin by considering whether action must be explained teleologically and whether non-purposive accounts of behaviour can be generally adequate. In finding that purposive behaviour fundamentally characterizes action, I question the assumption in liberal political theory, beginning with Hobbes, that mechanistic laws of behaviour can provide man with a science of politics.

Hobbes, represents for me, the first stage in the revolt against teleological politics. I consider the important contributions that Immanuel Kant and finally John Rawls make to the liberalism of anti-telelogical politics.

I then consider the liberal critique of Hobbes' portrait of man. This is represented by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau's critique is undermined by his failure to reject market politics.

Finally, I consider the market-model of society, which is seen to be the ultimate embodiment of mechanistic, anti-teleological politics.

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To Professor Derry Novak I owe more thanks than I am able to express here. His moral guidance and friendship have deeply influenced my thought and my personal conduct. He has helped me to understand that one can indeed be a good person, even in a society of indifferent and self-interested members.

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> All action is for the sake of some end, and rules of action, it seems natural to suppose, must take their whole character and colour from the end to which they are subservient.
>
> John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism

Introduction

In this essay, I attempt to use the concept of teleological explanation, that is, explanation of action premised upon some notion of moral purpose, to explore the nature of liberalism.

I consider the argument that action is necessarily premised upon some conception of telos, that is, upon some conception of moral purpose. I consider whether liberal political theory denies the possibility of action because liberalism appears to be devoid of teleology.

This essay is not an exposition or a defense of teleological explanation per se. Yet the inquiry into the nature of liberal political theory, proceeding on the assumption that it lacks an adequate conception of action or moral purpose, depends ultimately upon a teleological characterization of action.

It is because of liberalism's rejection of a teleological account of action that an inquiry into the

nature of action itself is necessary. If I were to begin by asking, "What is the place of action in liberalism?" I would only be able to answer by providing an account of the way in which liberals speak about action. But in beginning my inquiry, as I do, with an investigation into the nature of action, I am able subsequently to more critically explore liberal theory. For in the discussion of liberal theory, there is already a more adequate conception of action and its explanation.

In chapter 1, I consider whether action can only be appropriately understood in teleological terms. If action presupposes an actor (or agent), must all action be understood as a function of the purposive character of the actor? Action, involves the actualization of the actor's potentialities. Any account of action which ignores the questions of potentiality and moral purpose, denies the essence of the actor and treats him as a mere machine.

The explanatory system of Thomas Hobbes is discussed in order to show that while Hobbes certainly provides a mechanistic account of man and civil society he is unable to avoid the use of teleological explanation in characterizing human action. Hobbes becomes the central figure in the thesis, for he represents the first crucial stage in the critical revolt against teleological politics.

In Chapter Two I attempt to map out the evolution of

the liberal revolt against the politics of the teleological tradition. I argue that the liberal political tradition abandoned its appeal to "telos" and eventually replaced it with an appeal to "right".

The process of abandoning teleology and erecting a new political philosophy is illustrated by reference to the relevant aspects of the work of Hobbes, Kant and Rawls. These thinkers represent the liberal rejection of teleological politics.

In Chapter Three I examine the liberal perspective of human nature, in order to demonstrate that a politics prejudiced by that perspective makes political action prohibitive. Beginning with Hobbes, liberalism looks upon man as a creature of the market; i.e., the market is an authentic reflection of the natural condition of man. The market becomes the civilizing factor, whereby man can escape the "brutish" conditions of the state of nature while continuing to express his own "nasty" character. I argue that this approach to the construction of civil society is logically flawed because it founds conventional rules upon natural laws. I also suggest that the empirical quality of those "natural laws" is itself questionable.

I then consider the idealist response to the Hobbesian assessment of human nature, best represented by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. While Rousseau rejects the inadequate vision of

man propounded by Hobbes, he reluctantly accepts market society because he does not embrace teleology. In contrast to Hobbes, who defines the essence of man as "felicity", Rousseau sees "freedom" as the essential quality in man. But in understanding freedom as obedience to one's laws, Rousseau fails to make politics a truly responsible enterprise. He reverts to a Hobbesian justification of civil society, perceiving it as a refuge from the "precarious" conditions in the state of nature. Detached as he is from teleological considerations, he fails to provide adequate grounds for an alternative conception of civil society.

The three main sections of this thesis are designed to contribute to a larger, more comprehensive exploration of the nature of liberalism. This essay focuses on the problem of action and its explanation, suggesting that at the very heart of a politics of action there must be a conception of a person with moral purpose. It remains to be seen here whether liberalism has or appears to have such a conception.

CHAPTER ONE

ACTION AND THE NATURE OF TELEOLOGICAL EXPLANATION

i) The explanation of behaviour: Charles Taylor's insight (Teleology vs Behaviourism)

In this chapter I, consider the problem of the explanation of action using Charles Taylor's argument to direct the inquiry. In his first work, The Explanation of Behaviour, Taylor addresses the question, "whether animate beings must be given a different status from inanimate things in that their behaviour can only be explained in terms of purpose."[1]

Far from being an anthropological investigation, his work is concerned with the epistemological problem of the character of explanation. More precisely, his study examines and analyses the nature of the explanation of action. What makes the work so remarkable is the consequential link that Taylor draws between action and its explanation. His analysis reveals that there is virtually no way to speak about action without in some fashion reflecting back upon the nature of that speech.[2] His argument does not imply that action cannot exist without its own "explanation" in a linguistic sense, but it does imply that the information necessary for the explanation of the

action exists before the action actually occurs. This means that if that information were somehow accessible before the occurrence of the action, the explanation of the action, and consequently the prediction of that action, could be provided a priori. Taylor explains, however, that such information is generally not accessible to the scientist or observer.[3]

Taylor's work eludicates the crucial distinction between two types of explanation, teleological explanation and behavioural explanation. Teleological explanation is characterized in the following way by Taylor:

> Now, as we have said, explanation by purpose involves the use of a teleological explanation, of explanation in terms of the result for the sake of which the events concerned occur. Now when we say that an event occurs for the sake of an end, we are saying that it occurs because it is the type of event which brings about this end. This means that the condition of the event's occurring is that a state of affairs obtain such that it will bring about the end in question, such that this event is required to bring about that end. To offer a teleological explanation of some event or class of events, e.g., the behaviour of some being, is, then, to account for it by laws in terms of which an event's occurring is held to be dependent on that event's being required for some end.[4]

In his characterization of teleological explanation Taylor shows us that explanation is not at all incidental to the explicans[5]. The very opposite is true: explanation both defines and is defined by the explicandum. This is epistemologically problematic, as Taylor acknowledges,

because the possibility of verification remains doubtful, if not impossible. Taylor addresses the problem by arguing that there is no need to make verifiable claims any more than there is a need to postulate unobservable entities in order to explain a system in terms of purpose.[6]

> The element of purposiveness in a given system, the inherent tendency towards a certain end, which is conveyed by saying that events happen 'for the sake of' the end, cannot be identified as a special entity which directs the behaviour from within, but consists rather in the fact that in beings with a purpose an event's being required for a given end is a sufficient condition of its occurrence.[7]

In presenting his argument, Taylor exposes a very complex problem inherent in teleological explanation. The claim that the explicans can be derived from the explicandum is unproblematic if we unquestionably accept the thesis that an action must be understood in terms of a prerequisite for some desired end. If this purposive character of an action is not assumed a priori, there is no logical means of deriving it from the explicandum. This problem must first be acknowledged before the case for teleological explanation is to be given serious consideration. There are, in many instances, practical ways of determining whether or not an action was clearly purposive, but these instances may be infrequent and unreliable.[8]

A brief digression from Taylor's analysis will help to demonstrate that this logical problem is explained more

fully by Karl Popper. He argues that the problem is one of logical circularity, and consequently of the impossibility of validly deriving purpose from action:

> Consider the following dialogue: 'Why is the sea so rough today?' - 'Because Neptune is very angry' - 'By what evidence can you support your statement that Neptune is very angry?' - 'Oh, don't your see how very rough the sea is? And is it not always rough when Neptune is angry? This explanation is found unsatisfactory because . . . the only evidence for the explicans is the explicandum itself.[9]

The logical problem of teleological explanation is not trivial; it cannot be resolved with the use of logic.[10] If the logical status of the teleological argument is in question, then we must examine what Taylor suggests are compelling grounds for preferring teleological explanation to a different form of explanation, one which circumvents altogether the problem of an undecidable purpose. This other form of explanation is called "behavioural" explanation. Behavioural explanation does not understand action in terms of purpose or goal. Instead, it analyses "behaviour" in terms of stimulus-response theory. It searches for the cause rather than for the purpose of an action. The behavioural form of explanation is concerned with all the external factors in the environment in which the behaviour will occur. It seeks to establish "laws of behaviour" which can be empirically determined from careful observation and from "systematic" analysis of the conditions

which gave rise to particular behaviour. In fact, the language of behaviourism is radically different from that of the teleological tradition. Behaviourists do not speak of "purpose and action", or "design and actualization", they speak of "stimulus and response", "action and reaction", and of "environment and conditioning".

The behavioural mode of explanation has been justified primarily on empirical grounds as opposed to the teleological form of explanation which can be justified only in terms of the "form of its laws and not by reliance on some special type of antecedent variable".[11] It must become clear that as a behavioural attitude to "action" is exposed, the very concept of "action" as actualization of purpose evaporates. For the behavioral conception of action virtually denies the possibility of "self-expression" or "self-actualization", it attributes "behaviour" to externally stimulated reactions. Effectively, it denies the existence of a "person".[12] Taylor states:

> The attractions of the positivist arguments for thinkers of this cast (the behaviourist cast) of thought are evident. Opponents of the view that living beings are purposive, they wish to approach the study of behaviour with a method as close to that of the natural sciences as possible, and this for them means explaining behaviour by laws linking physical events. But the whole weight of our common-sense understanding of, and everyday language about, our behaviour is against this approach.[13]

Taylor is determined to show the unsubstantial nature of the

behavioural approach to the explanation of behaviour. He is resolved to rehabilitate the possibility of purposive explanation based on his conviction that man is, indeed, a purposive being.

Taylor acknowledges that the logical problem of circularity in the teleological form of explanation cannot be resolved or ignored. Nevertheless, he suggests that it cannot be proved to be incorrect.[14] In order to ensure the substance of the argument, he appeals to a commonsense view of purpose:

> Granted that we cannot summarily decide the issue in favour of 'mechanism' by showing the notion of purposiveness to be non-empirical, can we not nevertheless turn the tables and decide in favour of the contrary thesis by showing this notion to be inescapable? An argument to this effect would start from the fact . . . that the logic of our ordinary language, and particularly of terms like 'action' and desire', contains implicitly the assumption that our behaviour is purposive. If this is so, how can we doubt that we are purposive beings without introducing the implicit hypothesis that we may have been talking nonsense all these centuries? But surely this latter hypothesis is untenable, since we have managed to communicate, to verify propositions, to reach inter-subjective agreement in a great number of cases.[15]

In arguing that a purposive form of explanation is inescapable, Taylor is arguing that man's behaviour must be judged in terms of his aspirations and not in terms of his conditioning. While one might make the argument that one's aspirations are in fact directly or indirectly determined by one's conditioning, Taylor's thesis has asserted that human

actions cannot logically be derived from any set of external conditions, although they may vary tactically according to those conditions. Taylor has even gone so far as to show that the first-level correlations which hold between environment and behaviour (a behavioural approach) generally depend upon some notion of "action" or "goal".[16]

A restatement of Taylor's position might take the following form: Given that an appeal to some form of purposive explanation has been shown to be indispensable for an adequate understanding of action, the behavioural mode of explanation must either appeal to teleological assumptions at some hidden fundamental stage, or it must face the prospect of inevitable failure, scientifically and epistemologically, in its attempt to provide adequate accounts of action.

ii) Teleology an adequate explanation: Essentialism and the Aristotelian influence

I would like to consider here, the argument that any adequate account of action must rely upon teleological explanation, and, furthermore, that the very logic of teleological explanation involves the logic of essentialism.

Taylor has shown how any adequate statement about the origin and result of an action must be understood in terms of behaviour as a response to stimulus. He has thus exposed

the limits of the behavioural form of explanation. He has identified how, in behaviourism, even where the studies may be useful, they fail to properly locate the "responsibility" for actions and their consequences. In more extreme terms, this can be understood to mean that the behavioural form of explanation denies the fact of "responsibility" or "responsible action" altogether.[17]

The essentialist tradition in philosophy found its most powerful articulation in the works of Plato and Aristotle. This tradition is most often identified with the Platonic theory of "forms and ideas", with the notion of absolute values, e.g., goodness, justice, beauty, and truth. The fundamental claim of essentialism is the assertion of the existence of universals; it also stresses their importance for science.[18] It has also been suggested that Aristotle was the founder of the "methodological essentialist" school of thought. It was Aristotle "who taught that scientific research must penetrate to the essence of things in order to explain them".[19] While I do not intend to analyse Aristotle's philosophical oeuvre in this essay, I am obliged to recognize him as the most powerful and influential representative of the essentialist and teleological schools of thought. Throughout the essay I assume this Aristotelian position, without needing to consider any of Aristotle's texts.

An essentialist conception of "science" and "explanation" insists that very little of lasting significance can be asserted or discovered about an object or an action by appealing to factors which are extraneous or external to the object or action. What is intrinsic or essential is what counts. While it may be possible to observe external factors which exist separately from the object or action, and which may appear to be affected by some quality of the object or action, it is not possible to understand the essence of the object or action by logically identifying it solely with these external factors. The explanation of an action must be found in the nature of the action itself. The significance of an action lies in its own execution; its result is its intrinsic purpose.[20] Action has its generation within itself. That is the case of essentialism.

It is only through an understanding of an action that the consequences of the qualities of that action can be understood. It is, therefore, only through an understanding of a "person" that the actions of that "person" can be explained. In his essay entitled "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man", traces this position back to Aristotle.[21] His argument not only makes an important epistemological claim but it also identifies the crucial connection between knowledge and morality. He states that the human sciences

are

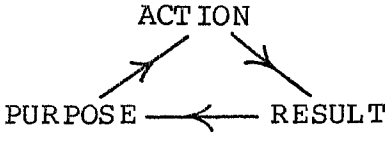
> . . . moral sciences in a more radical sense than the eighteenth century understood . . . their successful prosecution requires a high degree of self-knowledge, a freedom from illusion, in the sense of error which is rooted and expressed in one's way of life; for our capacity to understand is rooted in our own self-definitions, hence in what we are. To say this is not to say anything new: Aristotle makes a similar point in Book I of the Ethics.[22]

The appeal to the Aristotelian position cannot be overstated. It is especially in the works of Aristotle that this crucial argument is introduced; and the connexion between the explicandum and the explicans is made in terms of "telos" and essence. For Aristotle, telos is purely a "self-definition" or "self-expression) of the essence.[23]

If Taylor, echoing the Aristotelian position, is correct, then it is not the result of any inquiry but rather the fact of it which attributes purposiveness to that which we are trying to explain. By simply embarking on the explanatory enterprise, we attribute purpose to action. The results of our inquiry are secondary in the sense that the important assumptions have already been made. Like trying to pull ourselves up by our boot-straps, this enterprise appears unachievable. This is so because we are trying to prove the soundness of a system using the language of the system itself. The mathematician and logician Kurt Godel, for example, formulated the theorem of undecidable propositions.[24] This theorem proved that every kind of

statement which implies the existence of a consistent and complete system or language contains undecidable propositions. It follows that no system or language can prove itself to be valid within its own framework. It is thus necessary to use a meta-language to describe and logically prove the validity of the sub-language. The problem of logical circularity is seen here to eludicate the nature of explanation which does not possess a meta-language.

Human action, for example, is teleological only by virtue of the necessity of the "potentiality" for the realization of the "actuality". Thus, it is only when an action is completed that we (as scientists or observers) are able to determine its purpose.



The great difficulty with this is that the tendency to reconstruct events in terms of causes and effects instead of purpose is encouraged because the observer can more readily establish an apparently sensible relationship between a series of events, than he can by understanding an internal pre-existing disposition to action. We have a tendency not

to differentiate between potentiality and actuality, or simply to disregard potentiality altogether. In trying to explain this difficulty, one commentator asserts that

> The existence of change, Aristotle points out, depends on the fact that while certain things never exist except in fulfillment or actuality, others exist potentially before they exist actually. . . Change is always the actualization of potentiality as such.[25]

Here the notion of action is understood as change. But if we examine the relationship between potentiality and actuality, we see that the only difference between the two is one of state, or time and space; it is not one of essence. While the outward presentation or external appearance of the essence might be transformed by change, this represents only the expression of the same essence in a different condition. The concept of potentiality requires that explanation should seek to expose the pre-existing disposition to particular action. This cannot be seen to suggest anything about the cause of behaviour.

iii) Essence and Action: The Genetic Understanding

While I have discussed Taylor's account of the characteristics of the teleological form of explanation, I have not considered the factors which predispose actors to a particular action or type of action. I have said only that action is determined by the necessity to achieve a particular result. To put this somewhat differently, I have

suggested that the action and the consequences of the action do not come about solely because of the pre-existing circumstantial conditions; instead, the pre-existing conditions are contextually significant for the action and its consequence. The qualities which predispose particular actions must be understood to include the intention, desire, or design of the actor. In all cases, teleological explanation is necessary. This is because even desire cannot be understood to be independent of essence. The essence of any organism must profoundly influence its actions; in fact, it will determine those actions, at least to the extent of defining the organism's range of possible movement or potentialities.

While this statement may appear to be similar to the behavioural argument, it is indeed quite different. This argument asserts only that the essential qualities and structure of an organism define the "telos" of that organism; the argument does not imply anything about the relationship between the environment and the dynamics of the organism.

The concept of essence is crucial to further elucidations of this teleological characterization of action. When we say that change is always the actualization of potentiality, we imply that potentiality as necessary is already determined. Change is, at heart, transformation of

one state to another state. The proceeding state, however, is, in a real sense, the necessary extension or fuller realization of that which is contained in the matrix of potentialities in the preceding state. In this sense, the actualization of potentiality is the necessary coming into being of the nature of change.

In terms of the genetic metaphor, I might suggest that there is a code which exists in a pre-actualized state. This code contains the information which will determine the telos and which will eventually lead to the realization or attempted realization of that telos. In effect, the telos is itself a particular expression of the identical information contained in the code while in its pre-actualized state. This is an example of a kind of isomorphism. An isomorphism is an information-preserving transformation. Douglas Hofstadter explains it as follows:

> The word "isomorphism" applies when two complex structures can be mapped on to each other in such a way that to each part of one structure there is a corresponding part in the other structure, where "corresponding" means that the two parts play similar roles in their respective structure.[26]

The concept of isomorphisms can be used to understand both the essentialist and the "genetic" quality of teleological explanation and action. Human action must be understood in terms of change or the actualization of potentialities. In this sense, all change involves the notion of development, which is itself implied in genetic structure. The "two

complex structures" mentioned above, might be identified as the "purpose" (the information bearer) and the "action" or "development" (the information-preserving transformation).

Let us imagine that each person is like a cell in the human body. Each person, like each cell, contains all the "genetic information" for the entire range of future developments. From the transmission of the information contained in a human cell emerges part of a human being. In fact, the cell contains the information necessary to become a whole human being, but it is not specifically designed for this purpose. The human being, like the cell, carries an enormous amount of information, it has certain potentialities, it has a certain purpose. But, as in the case of the cell, its purpose becomes evident only upon its complete actualization. In the case of the cell, the human being was potentially there all along, although it was necessary for a major transformation to occur in order to recognize the essence of the cell. Each cell develops into one very specialized part of the human being. Human beings also have potentialities, and these potentialities are revealed when humans act.

In The Human Condition Hannah Arendt provides an account of the genetic metaphor, but with men rather than cells as actors:

> In acting and speaking, men show who they are,

> reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world, while their physical identities appear without any activity of their own in the unique shape of the body and sound of the voice.[27].

Arendt's crucial argument here, is that identity or essence is only revealed through some action. In making a distinction between the human world and the physical world, Arendt is suggesting that mere existence does not reveal personal identity or potentiality. When humans act, they reveal their identities. The process of becoming is not a function of physical identity or of causal relations; it is a function of what one might be - of potentiality.

iv) Condition and Conditioning: A "Commonsense" Interpretation

The genetic understanding I have alluded to above and the observation on action and identity by Hannah Arendt raise a most complex problem, namely, the problem of the nature of the "prime mover" or "factor of design". Some people would argue that the only way to sustain the teleological understanding adequately is to resolve it in terms of the notion of the prime mover, or, in other words, the adequate underpinning of all teleological explanation must be resolved in terms of some deistic notion - the prime mover. There is, however, another way of sustaining the adequacy of the teleological understanding and that is by an appeal to the "commonsense" understanding of action. While

the appeals to a genetic model and to Arendt's comment do not help us to locate the prime mover in the actualization process, they do provide a commonsense justification of the teleological position. Charles Taylor also appreciates this problem, as he appeals to common sense or to ordinary experience.

I would argue that the appeal to teleological explanation is deeply embedded in our ordinary language and in our commonsense thinking. We normally claim to judge a person by his or her actions. We mean by this that we assess a person according to the way in which that person expresses or defines himself or herself. This implies two things about our commonsense approach to explanation and evaluation. It suggests that we make judgments about people on the basis of what we take to be their "essential qualities". If we judge people by their actions, we mean that the action tells us something essential about the person who acts. This is very different from the behavioural position in which all behaviour is understood as a reaction or response to stimulus, or as a necessary response to environmental conditioning.

The second thing that the commonsense approach suggests is that we normally wait for the occurrence of action before making a judgment about a person. In the commonsense approach, we usually make assumptions about the essence of

human actions, but we do not acknowledge those assumptions, or have a clear understanding about those essences until the actor acts. We are then in a position to judge those actions on the basis of the assumptions we have made and on the basis of the acknowledgement of the assumptions which the actions bear out.

This commonsense understanding of action also implies a very complex notion of the relationship between the actor or person and his/her action. The action is in a fundamental sense an expression of the person. Hence, action always has within it the notion of responsibility - the necessary relationship between the actor and his/her action. The notion of person is necessarily tied up with the nature of acting. Even when we try to predict the actions of someone, in the context of a particular environment, i.e., in a certain situation, we normally do so on the basis of what we know about that person. We imagine that the person's actions would reflect his/her own qualities - potentialities - rather than merely reflecting the environment in which actions occur. We know that different people react differently in similar situations. We also know that if we were asked to predict the actions of the average person in any given situation, without knowing anything about the person, we would immediately try to imagine how we, ourselves, would act in the same situation.

The fact, once again, is that when we try to understand human action we rely very heavily upon that which is common to all persons, the common sense of action. This statement cannot be tested in any other way than through personal observation of others and more fundamentally in reflecting upon the nature of our own judgment of others. We are faced with the necessity of relying upon the delicate and difficult generalization of personal intuitions to all mankind, in order to find acceptance of the teleological understanding of action. This is not intellectually licentious, it is morally necessary. We have no other way of proceeding unless we assume that there are necessary and unavoidable "laws of behaviour". This latter argument, however, is premised upon a denial of the common sense of action which, I think is fundamental to an understanding of the nature of human action; and, which is at the heart of the nature of teleological explanations of action. Even Taylor's "inescapability" argument appeals in the final analysis to a commonsense appraisal of the notion of action.

It is important to recognize that the teleological argument does not deny a significant role for conditioning or environment in the explanation of human action. In fact, without conditions or environment there would be no way of actualizing potentialities. It is precisely the existence of conditions and constraints that allows us to express

ourselves in a meaningful sense. We do not act in a vacuum. Without limits or constraints there can be no direction. Without direction, that is, without movement that can be universally recognized (towards something and away from something else), there is no sense to action. All human action, in a fundamental sense, is circumstantial; it takes place in the context of human situations, in a particular environment, within circumstances which can be explored, described and analyzed. There is no way in which we can understand human action as non-circumstantial. Furthermore, these circumstances, or these conditions, or this environment, do have a definite impact upon the character of human action. That is simply the case. But, when we try to understand the design, intention, or purpose of human actions, and we look at the results or consequences of human action, we necessarily imply within our understanding an appreciation of those conditions or circumstances. In this fundamental sense, the commonsense understanding of human action has built into it an appreciation of the conditional or circumstantial nature of human action. But this does not deny the notion that human action is teleological. Teleological understanding, in the commonsense view that I am arguing respects this acceptance and appreciation of the conditional or circumstantial nature of human action. Therefore, man's existence must be conditioned or defined.

As Arendt puts it

> Whatever touches or enters into a sustained relationship with human life immediately assumes the character of a condition of human existence. This is why men, no matter what they do, are always conditioned beings. Whatever enters the human world of its own accord or is drawn into it by human effort becomes part of the human condition. The impact of the world's reality upon human existence is felt and received as a conditioning force.[28]

Arendt is not suggesting that it is in man's nature to be a conditioned being. She is suggesting that it is simply a fact of our existence that we are conditioned. It is simply a fact that we must act cognizant of our condition. This does not imply that our condition sets the agenda of human action; rather, it implies that we cannot act independently of our own context. Our condition does not determine our goals but it does influence the manner in which we try to achieve those goals. Taylor's account of teleological explanation allows for this influence:

> Of course, the action emitted would also be determined by the situation and, in some cases, the history of the animal; but it could never be entirely determined by them, for the effect of history or environment on behaviour would itself be a function of the goal or purpose of that type of behavior.[29]

Taylor's thesis challenges even the most secure of the S-R theories of conditioned behaviour, that is the theory of "conditioned reflex". Through a thorough investigation of learning theory, Taylor demonstrates that even conditioned

response is goal-directed rather than mechanical.[30] If Taylor's argument is sound, then the implications for the way in which we explain human behaviour are enormous. The very notion of "behaviour" in a purely mechanical sense would become irrelevant to the study of human affairs; for everything of importance that we would wish to explain should be reduced to a form of teleological explanation.

v) Mechanism and the Surreptitious Appeal To Teleological Explanation: The Case of Hobbes

I have stated that the roots of the teleological form of explanation can be traced back to Aristotle, and that Taylor's argument owes much to the philosophical foundation set down by Aristotle. Taylor's argument has two significant consequences. First, Taylor is asserting that we can conduct the science of human affairs properly and adequately only on the basis of teleological explanations. But he is also implying that at the heart of behavioural explanation itself, even if it is to be conducted in relation to non-human affairs, there is still a surreptitious or unacknowledged reliance on teleological explanation.

The ingenious work of Thomas Hobbes is an example of this surreptitious appeal to teleological explanation. There is hardly a doubt that Hobbes is the most powerful and clever critic of the Aristotelian conception of philosophy

and politics. I would certainly not suggest here that Hobbes's Leviathan even remotely resembles the Aristotelian polis. It is, however, very surprising that Hobbes', thesis depends upon a teleological form of explanation. Taylor even mentions this in The Explanation of Behaviour:

> With the modern era, and specifically with Hobbes, is born the ambition to account for the behaviour of organisms by means of a mechanical model, using the concepts of 'body' and 'motion', and even this has been relatively half-hearted until fairly recently; the 'mechanisms' were often mentalist in character, and the link between the 'ideas' and action was often surreptitiously teleological in form.[31]

Chapter 6 of the Leviathan, "Of the Interior Beginnings of Voluntary Motions, commonly called the Passions; and the Speeches by which they are expressed", is replete with examples of purposive language. Taylor's claim that the teleological argument is couched in the language of "mechanism" is supported in the very first paragraph of Chapter 6:

> That sense is motion in the organs and interior parts of man's body, caused by the action of the things we see, hear, & c.; and that fancy is but the relics of the same motion, remaining after sense, has been already said in the first and second chapters.[32]

Hobbes argues for a system of explanation which would depend upon the logical derivation of all consequences from preceding motion(s) and conditions.[33] This constituted the basis for the superiority of "scientific" over "prudential"

accounts of the world. And yet, in the very next line of Chapter 6, Hobbes reveals the inescapable appeal to a teleological form of explanation.

> And because going, speaking, and the like voluntary motions, depend always upon a precedent thought of wither, which way, and what; it is evident, that the imagination is the first internal beginning of all voluntary motion.[34]

The rest of Chapter 6 is devoted to the exposition of the characteristics of what Hobbes calls "endeavour". The most important characteristic is, of course, the purposive and "self-originating" quality it possesses. Hobbes speaks at great length of the two most fundamental purposive qualities in man: desire and aversion. It is out of a discussion of these fundamental qualities that Hobbes develops the several "passions" which define the character of man: hope, despair, fear, courage, anger, confidence, diffidence, indignation, benevolence, good will, charity, covetousness, ambition, curiosity, and so on.

Hobbes then proceeds to identify the ways in which these passions influence the behaviour and disposition of man. In providing an account of the process of "deliberation", Hobbes has made central to his whole system of thought a phenomenon which can hardly be divorced from the teleological form of explanation. The human passions which, themselves, have a purposive quality, will from time to time create conflicting dispositions in man. It is at

this point that the process called deliberation begins. The exercise of weighing the benefits and disadvantages of acting according to one disposition, rather than to another, is what Hobbes calls deliberating. The termination or resolution of the conflicting dispositions is the result of what Hobbes calls the "will". The act of willing is a response to "the last appetite or aversion" in the process of deliberation. The purposive character of the will is never left in doubt." For, a voluntary act is that which proceedeth from the will and no other."[35]

This process of deliberating and willing is precisely what Charles Taylor describes in his own explanation of action. The decision finally to end the process of deliberation, that is to tend towards one disposition or inclination and away from others, cannot be explained in mechanistic terms. It leads to what Taylor calls the "asymmetry of explanation".[36] Nevertheless, Hobbes attempts to provide for this assymetry mechanistically by arguing that actions resulting from the "will" are both voluntary and involuntary.[37] Hobbes is forced, nevertheless, to acknowledge that all actions have their origins in voluntary acts.[38] In light of these conclusions, Hobbes' suggestion, that all acts which follow from the original act are necessary or mechanical, might be considered with a degree of skepticism. While he states that each act is merely a

reaction to the "last inclination", its dependence on the original voluntary act is "inescapable". Two of the most central concepts in Leviathan would be without significance were they not inescapably dependent upon purposive action; these are "felicity" and "power" - both of which become essential to that which is called man, and both of which are the essential qualities of original action.[39]

Even with Hobbes, the concept of action cannot be divorced from some notion of "prime-movement", from the idea of a "will" that does not respond to any prior stimulus or appetite, but which itself determines the appetite. We arrive at the position that this concept of action is coterminous with the teleological form of explanation!

What makes Hobbes' appeal to teleological explanation difficult to discern is that he does not satisfactorily establish an account of "original acts" versus "consequences".[40] While the concept of action which we find in Hobbes' work cannot be disconnected from some notion of "prime-movement" or "will", Hobbes, does not help us to locate the critical moments of action. How do we determine the point of "origin", the initial act? Hobbes seems to be suggesting that everything follows consequentially from the first "motions". At the same time, his accounts of "deliberation" and "will" suggest that there is always room to make choices, to calculate various possibilities. Taylor

is unequivocal on this question, where Hobbes seems undecided. Taylor believes that all acts are in and of themselves initial acts; it cannot be otherwise.

Using Taylor's borrowed logic (i.e. borrowed from Aristotle), I have argued that Hobbes' system of explanation is inescapably teleological, and I have also argued that teleological explanation is self-referential and therefore that it appeals to the essence of the subject of action. It should follow from this that Hobbes was an essentialist, surreptitiously or by implication. This conclusion would appear even most surprising to many readers of Hobbes, since Chapter 1 of Leviathan seems expressly designed to reject Aristotle's essentialism totally.[41] Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that Hobbes makes man the "creator", the "artificer"; and if the Leviathan is man's creation, it can be said to be "of man". The essence of the Leviathan is not to be found in the institutions of the Leviathan but in man himself. It is in understanding man that Hobbes comes to understand the character of civil society. Through the process of introspection - "to read himself" - Hobbes "read" all of mankind.

In the work of Aristotle the essence of man finds its highest completion in the polis. Man actualizes "himself" only in the social context of political life. So it would appear that the polis is for Aristotle the "end" or "telos"

of man. It is his participation as a citizen in the life of the polis that makes man human. To live outside the polis one would have to be "either god or beast", but certainly not "man".

Clearly the objective of the Aristotelian polis and the Hobbesian Leviathan are quite different but there are some consequences which are common and crucial to both polities. Crudely stated; for Aristotle the end of man is to lead the "good" life. This can only be achieved in the polis. For Hobbes the "object of desire" is "felicity" - that is self-preservation or "commodious living". While this might be achieved outside of civil society, it is unlikely to occur. The Leviathan appears to provide the environment win which a condition of "felicity" is most readily established. Despite the difference of "ends" between Aristotle and Hobbes, both philosophers would have man pursue those "ends" in civil society. Aristotle sees life in the polis as inevitable because it is in the nature of man to be in the polis. Hobbes sees life in the Leviathan as chosen or preferred by man, in spite of the fact that man can still be human outside the Leviathan. Yet both philosophers see men as the building blocks of society. While for Aristotle man is inherently political, for Hobbes man chooses to be political. In both cases the state is "of man". This is true in spite, of the fact that man sacrifices a degree of

liberty to live in the Leviathan while he sacrifices nothing to live in the polis.

Taylor considers the possibility of Hobbes' man as being "naturally" political. Hobbes uses the language of "felicity" rather than "politics", but the felicitous condition can best be attained in civil society. In his book, Hegel and Modern Society, Taylor challenges the traditional view of Hobbes' man. This view holds that since man is a self-defining subject he is not "of nature" but "of himself". Taylor introduces a new view of Hobbes' man, a view of man acting "according to nature":

> Man as a subject of desires had one great second-order goal, that the first-order desires be satisfied. Their satisfaction was what was meant by 'happiness' (Hobbes' 'felicity') which was therefore given a quite different meaning than it had in the Aristotelian tradition. But then, whatever effect education (artifice) had in shaping the detail of our first-order desires, one could say that by nature and inescapably men desire happiness.
>
> Now if intelligent calculation can show how to shape men and circumstance so that men achieve happiness, and all of them achieve it together and compatibly with each other, then is this not the highest goal, and one that is according to reason (intelligent calculation) and nature (the universal desire for happiness)?[42]

What makes Taylor's argument so remarkable is the way in which he alters the foundation upon which Hobbesian man constructs his Leviathan. In making the universal desire for happiness (Hobbes's notion of "felicity") a natural inclination, Taylor suggests that politics is a natural

human enterprise - even for a Hobbesian man. While Taylor is not suggesting that Aristotle and Hobbes possessed the same conceptions of politics, he is certainly implying that both had teleological conceptions of political life.

In this essay I consider the argument that Hobbes is both teleological and an essentialist. I qualify Hobbes' teleology by arguing with Taylor that it is surreptitious and by suggesting that it is packaged as a mechanistic argument. Therefore Hobbesian man is not by nature political in the way that Aristotelian man can be said to be political.

Taylor's analysis is valuable because he stresses the importance of teleology in politics. There can be no politics without "telos". This implies that any account of political life which is devoid of teleological explanation, or which explicitly attempts to reject teleological accounts of action, must be inadequate. Whether Taylor "gets" Hobbes right or wrong" is not of primary importance here. What is important in Taylor's argument is that it exposes the tension between purposive and mechanistic explanation in Hobbes. Within Hobbes's own system of thought there exists a tension between political and apolitical man. The question of which is the dominant strain in Hobbes depends upon the extent to which Hobbes commits himself to a mechanistic account as opposed to a teleological account of

political life. I believe that the place of action or the absence of it, can be usefully explored in the context of this tension between purposive and mechanistic explanation.

Notes and References

[1]Charles Taylor, The Explanation of Behaviour (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 272.

[2]By "speech" I mean an account of or form of explanation. Although some interesting linguistic problems may arise from a discussion of the nature of speech, I do not want to digress from the central question of explanation.

[3]Ibid., pp. 6-9. This is with reference to the lack of empirical evidence to support teleological claims.

[4]Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[5]Explicans and Explicandum are terms used in logic to analyse arguments. They refer to that which needs to be explained and to that which explains. Also used by Popper in Obj. Knowl.

[6]Ibid., p. 10.

[7]Ibid.

[8]The most obvious way is to interview the subject; however, this poses the problem of reliability of memory of the subject, or the problem of "manufactured motives" a posteriori.

[9]Karl Popper, Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 192.

[10]While it cannot be logically resolved, it can logically be shown why it cannot be resolved. See my discussion in section ii of this chapter on Godel's Theorem, and my discussion in iii of this chapter on isomorphisms.

[11]Taylor, Explanation of Behaviour, p. 98.

[12]I shall be discussing this notion of "person" in later chapters. When I refer to the idea of "person", I attach to it a sense of responsible action and decision-making. A "person" is one who acts according to "ends"

which are recognizable to him/her. A "person" is not a mechanical being that responds in predictable and necessary ways to external stimulus. Michael Sandel's book Liberalism and the Limits of Justice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) investigates this notion of a "person", and he argues that modern liberalism, particularly as it is expressed in the work of J. Rawls, does not account for this "person".

[13]Taylor, Explanation of Behaviour, p. 99.

[14]While this sort of reasoning is characteristic of the worst sort of pseudo-scientific "justificationism", Taylor rescues it on the grounds that the teleological is logically inescapable. I think particularly of Karl Popper's attack on explanations which appeal to the impossibility of validation, testability and refutation, as a means of justifying a theory. "This theory cannot be refuted therefore it must be correct". Of course, Taylor does not employ such logic. He is clearly trying to find a way of coming to terms with the circularity of the argument. I believe that Popper would nevertheless attack Taylor's position on the grounds that is is not "scientific".

[15]Taylor, Explanation of Behaviour, p. 99.

[16]Ibid., p. 269.

[17]See my discussion in note #10.

[18]Taylor, Explanation of Behaviour, pp. 220-21.

[19]Karl Popper, The Poverty of Historicism. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 28. (See also pages 27-34)

[20]This view is harshly criticized on the grounds of a theory of "unintended consequences". This theory holds that it is wrong to assume that every event is the result of an original intention. If, as scientists, we search only for purposes of actions, we will invariable fail to consider the possibility that the action and its consequences were accidental or unintended. Karl Popper treats this problem extensively in Objective Knowledge and in Conjectures and Refutations. Consider the following passage from C. and R., p. 124:

> . . . Hitler, I said, made a conspiracy that failed. Why did it fail? Not just because other people conspired against Hitler. It failed, simply, because it is one of the striking things

> about social life that nothing ever comes off exactly as intended. Things always turn out a little bit differently. We hardly ever produce in social life precisely the effect that we wish to produce, and we usually get things that we do not want into the bargain. Of course, we act with certain aims in mind; but apart from these aims (which we may or may not really achieve) there are always certain unwanted consequences of our actions; and usually these unwanted consequences cannot be eliminated. To explain why they cannot be eliminated is the major task of social theory.

Popper clearly believes that people act with intent, that is, with aims goals. But he is suggesting that it would be unwise to expect that every social development is the product of design.

[21]Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man", Review of Metaphysics, 1972, p. . This passage was brought to my attention in a paper by Howard Aster (on the work of Charles Taylor) where he quoted it. "The Villainy of Liberalism: The Case of Charles Taylor." presented to the Political Science department, The University of Waterloo, 1981.

[22]Ibid., p. 51.

[23]W.D. Ross, Introduction to the Physic, by Aristotle (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), reprinted in 1960, pp. 40-48.

[24]See Douglas Hofstadter's account of this in Godel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid, (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), pp. 10-15.

[25]W.D. Ross, Introduction to the Physics, pp. 44-45.

[26]Hofstadter, Godel, Escher, Bach, p. 49.

[27]Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition: A Study of the Central Dilemmas Facing Modern Man, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), reprinted by Anchor Books, 1959, p. 159.

[28]Ibid., p. 11.

[29]Taylor, Explanation of Behaviour, p. 233.

[30]Ibid. This argument is made throughout the book; it

is particularly convincing in chapter VII (pp. 136-160), where he minimizes the significance of conditioning (conditioned response) in learning and learning theories, and where he maximizes the importance of goal-directed action (as distinct from what we might call "educated behaviour").

[31] Ibid., p. 220.

[32] Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, with an introduction by R.S. Peters and edited by M. Oakeshott, (New York: Collier Macmillan Pub. Co., 1962), p. 47.

[33] Ibid., pp. 41-46. See particularly Hobbes' account of "science" on p. 45.

[34] Ibid., p. 47.

[35] Ibid., p. 54.

[36] Taylor, Explanation of Behaviour, pp. 24-25, 28, 63.

[37] Hobbes, Leviathan, p. 54.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., see Hobbes' discussions of "felicity" on pp. 55 and 80. See also his discussion of "power" on pp. 72-73 and 80. The purposive quality of these forces is undeniable." . . . I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death", (p. 80).

[40] While Taylor is quite explicit in suggesting that all acts are intentional - and consequently "original" acts - Hobbes only goes as far as acknowledging that all acts are derived (consequences of . . .) from an original act. One might argue that action in response to coercion is not an act that has its true origin in the person who is coerced, in so far as his choices are either to submit or to be punished. But even in the case of coercion, Hobbes would argue that the action or "response" is purposive and originates not from the "coercer" but from the coerced" because his own objective is "felicity", peace and security. See Hobbes' discussion of "Covenants extorted by fear", Leviathan, p. 110.

[41] Hobbes, Leviathan, p. 22. See his reference to the teachings of Aristotle. (Distinction between "essentialist" and "mechanist" account of sense.)

[42]Charles Taylor, Hegel and Modern Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 64-75. Also see Arendt's discussion of Hobbes' "introspection", in The Human Condition, pp. 272-73.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ABANDONMENT OF TELEOLOGY: HOBBES TO RAWLS

The modern liberal account of political life abandoned the classical acceptance of teleological explanation. In liberal thought, as it developed from Hobbes to Rawls, we witness the degeneration of any positive notion of telos. In order to outline this most significant development, I will look at three representative thinkers in the liberal tradition; Thomas Hobbes, Immanuel Kant, and John Rawls.

i) Hobbes: Surreptitious Teleology and the origins of Deontology

I argued in the first chapter that in spite of Hobbes's express appeal to a mechanistic account of political life his explanation of politics is surreptitiously teleological. What distinguishes Hobbes from teleologists such as Plato and Aristotle is the manner in which he understood the ends of action to be determined by the human condition. I suggested earlier that teleological explanation must contain an essential premise and I maintain that this is the case in Hobbes' thought. But his essentialism is different from that of Aristotle. This marks the first break in the liberal tradition from pure teleological explanation of

political life.

The significance of Hobbes in freeing liberalism from teleological thought depends upon the transference of essence from man to the concerns of man. This I propose to call an ontological abstraction. I mean by this that essence becomes lodged in our person (consciousness) rather than in our empirical existence. The point of reference for action resides not in man but in his preoccupations. The process of rational calculation enables man to identify and investigate that which is most essential to him. He acts according to his knowledge of himself and of the world rather than acting according to his nature.

This does not make existence any less real but it does fundamentally shift the ground upon which normative theory is constructed. In Aristotelian teleology, political life is determined and ordered by nature; man does not logically derive conventional laws from nature, he merely actualized natural potentialities. For Hobbes, however, man consciously established the Leviathan as a necessary response, even a logically necessary response, to the conditions in the state of nature.

The classical position holds that what is desirable in political life is consistent with nature - that it is natural rather than conventional - and that man actualizes his potentialities or reveals his essence in political life.

Hobbes, however, finds it necessary to derive the conditions of politics from an understanding of the state of nature. It can therefore be argued that Hobbes derives conventional normative laws from natural laws. (This is what has been called the "naturalistic fallacy".) Hence, the ontological abstraction becomes apparent with a shift of essence from "being" to a concern with knowledge of "being" and rules of conduct. As a result, the appeal to teleological explanation becomes clouded by the more apparent concern with the necessary consequences (the mechanistic account) of Hobbes' knowledge of mankind.

In Natural Right and History Leo Strauss identifies the transference of essence and, consequently, of ends that I refer to as Hobbes' ontological abstraction.

> To return to Hobbes, his notion of philosophy or science has its root in the conviction that a teleological cosmology is impossible and in the feeling that a mechanistic cosmology fails to satisfy the requirement of intelligibility. His solution is that the end or ends without which no phenomenon can be understood need not be inherent in the phenomena; the end inherent in the concern with knowledge suffices. Knowledge as the end supplies the indispensable teleological principle.[1]

Strauss here refers to the problems raised by both the mechanistic and the teleological forms of explanation. In pointing out that the mechanistic account of the world is inadequate for Hobbes, Strauss exposes Hobbes' inescapable appeal to teleological explanation. But this appeal is

clearly different from the Aristotelian appeal to teleology in that Hobbes makes knowledge of nature an end rather than making the actualization of nature in man the end. In making knowledge an end, Hobbes facilitates the possibility of artificial construction. Instead of understanding politics as the actualization of man according to nature, Hobbes gives rise to the possibility of political life as a wholly human construct. But the one political act in which man engages, is the establishment of the sovereign. Afterwards there appears to be no politics for man, only for the sovereign.

The possibility of politics as a wholly human enterprise rather than as the expression of nature in man is due to Hobbes' ontological abstraction. Because man's essence resides in his consciousness, man is able conceptually to divorce himself from it. In making himself a subject of study, man is capable of divorcing himself from the results of that study. He is, therefore, capable of constructing the Leviathan according to his knowledge of nature, not according to nature. Although it can be said that nature remains the crucial point of reference for the construction of the Leviathan, the author of civil society is not nature but man, while for Aristotle the author of civil society is nature.

Knowledge of the world establishes man as "maker" of

civil society. Hobbes, however, gives up on the notion of complete knowledge.[2] It is the impossibility of complete knowledge which fully liberates man from the chains of natural design or teleology. This is because man can only "express the will of nature" if he knows what it is. This appeal to an unintelligible world, combines with the objective of knowing what little we can about such a world, is the formula which Hobbes employs to break from the classical teleological position. The problem of knowledge for Hobbes:

> We can have complete knowledge of nothing.
>
> We can have incomplete knowledge of Man and Nature.
>
> We can have no knowledge of God.

Leo Strauss elucidates this argument in this way:

> We understand only what we make. Since we do not make the natural beings, they are, strictly speaking, unintelligible. . . .For Hobbes, the natural origin of the universals or of the anticipations was a compelling reason for abandoning them in favor of artificial "intellectual tools". . . . Man can guarantee the actualization of wisdom, since wisdom is identical with free construction if the universe is intelligible. . . . Man can be sovereign only because there is no cosmic support for his humanity. He can be sovereign only because he is absolutely a stranger in the universe.[3]

It is a result of this world-view that Hobbes was able to establish the priority of the individual to civil society. Because the world is largely unintelligible, political life cannot be shown to be the expression of human

nature. Therefore, the individual must have existed, at least conceptually, prior to, or outside of, civil society. This led to the affirmation of the primacy of "right" over "duty", since man is indeed man independent of the Leviathan. Hobbes can therefore be seen as the founder of modern "natural right". Political life is the result of human choice, not of the inevitable expression of human nature. Man is therefore liberated from the primacy of duty over right, since he is mot defined as a being whose essence can properly be expressed only in political life.

This is perhaps the most striking contrast to the Aristotelian view that man could be man only inside the polis. To live outside the polis one would have to be "either god or beast". Hence, since human nature could find its full expression only in political life, for Aristotle, nothing precedes the duty of citizenship.

The grounds of legitimation or validation of the natural-right position can be traced to the priority of the individual to civil society. While the argument assumes a relatively unintelligible world, it, nevertheless, is rooted in a limited knowledge of that world.[4] As I suggested earlier, nature does not order and determine the Leviathan, but it is the point of reference for the construction of the Leviathan. I would suggest that in Hobbes' system, natural right is, at best, the point of departure for the

establishment of civil society. Once the institutions of government are in place, citizens are required (by their own consent) to waive their natural rights; thereafter, political obligation effectively becomes primary. This is perhaps another consequence of what I have called Hobbes' ontological abstraction.

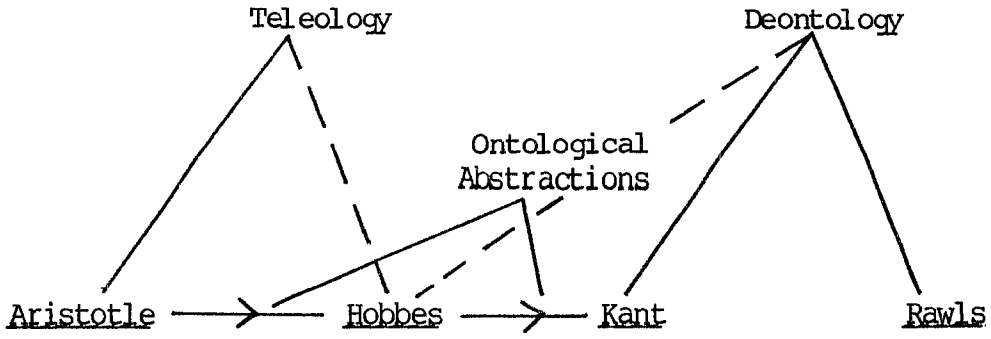
The idea of the primacy of right which we find in the thought of Hobbes becomes the central theme of the tradition of liberal political thought. It is at the very heart of what later emerged as "deontological" liberalism.[5] Natural right theory takes as the most fundamental fact of human existence the right of man to adopt the necessary measures for his own preservation.[6] Since man is the creator of civil society prior to being its subject, he determines his own duties and his own privileges, and therefore, beyond mere self-preservation, he selects his own pleasures. His political obligations are contingent upon his right to enjoy those pleasures.

It is crucial that we recognize the unflattering appeal to nature inherent in the Hobbesian argument. This appeal to nature is based upon Hobbes' notion that the state of nature is rough and tough. The principles of civil society must offer a response to these condition. In Aristotle's thought, conversely, the notion of nature is a more positive one in that the principles of civil society are not seen as

a response to nature; they are instead an expression of the very best and truest aspects of nature. Man is part of that nature and, as such, the polis is a full flowering of that nature, which is intrinsic to man.

ii) The movement towards Deontology: Kant

In order to understand properly the transition from teleology to deontology, it is necessary to locate the difference in origin of the deontological primacy of right from the Hobbesian primacy of right.[7]



Primacy of "nature"	Primacy of "right"	Primacy of "reason"	Primacy of "right"
Man seeks self fulfilment/self-actualization by living in the polis.	Man seeks self-preservation by constructing and living in the Leviathan.	Man seeks peace and order by deriving laws from *a priori* reason.	Man seeks justice by fictionally choosing principles of fairness.
Man is the instrument of nature. Man is the builder - Nature is the architect.	Man is the artificer but he is driven by a fear of death in the state of "nature", a state of war.	Man is the artificer but his construction is the necessary expression of reason.	Man is the artificer but he is limited by the provisional non-existence of his own "person".

Aristotle	Hobbes	Kant	Rawls
Primacy of "nature"	Primacy of "right"	Primacy of "reason"	Primacy of "right"
The polis is a natural response to the condition of man.	The Leviathan is a rational response to the conditions of "nature".	The state is the moral expression of reason.	The state is the amoral expression of human reason guided uncertainty and mistrust.
Man governs himself according to nature.	Man governs himself according to his knowledge of nature.	Man governs himself according to moral principles derived from reason.	Man governs himself according to amoral principles rationally calculated from artificial premises.

I have argued that Hobbes distanced himself considerably from Aristotelian teleology. Nevertheless, I have maintained that Hobbes' philosophy is surreptitiously teleological.

In the above schema, teleological explanation is premised upon a direct appeal to nature, as seen in the works of Aristotle. The ends are inherent in the actor, or the person, from whom actions emanate. There is a second form of teleological explanation, which is premised upon an indirect appeal to nature. This indirect appeal is based upon the actor's knowledge of the conditions of nature, even if that knowledge is incomplete knowledge. This second form of teleological explanation is what I refer to as an "ontological abstraction" or the transference of essence. This ontological abstraction is crucial in understanding the transition from teleology to deontology. It is the critical

first step in the abandonment of teleological explanation which is at the heart of deontological liberalism.

Kant is the critical figure in understanding the revolt against teleology. While Hobbes originated the idea of man as artificer, Immanuel Kant freed the artificer from his illogical appeal to nature.[8] That is to say, he elucidated the problem of the naturalistic fallacy. While appearing to be value-free and scientific, the appeal to nature suggests that propositions concerning how human beings ought to act can be derived solely from factual propositions about man's nature. In fact there is no logical relationship between a statement about the nature of men and a normative response to that statement. Man cannot truly choose rules of conduct himself and live according to the laws of nature at the same time. He cannot logically derive a set of conventional obligations from his knowledge of nature. Kant adopted Hobbes' faith in human responsibility, that is, in man's ability to choose his political principles; but he derived this ability from *a priori* reason rather than from man's desire to escape the harsh conditions of the state of nature.

The ontological abstraction in Kant's philosophy can be understood as the transference of a concern with knowledge of nature to a concern with the explication of human reason. Since knowledge of the noumenal world is impossible, we must

construct our institutions in accordance with the moral principles which are derived from our own reason.[9] Kant gives great importance to the consequentialism of the empirical world but he demarcates such a world from the intelligibility of pure reason.[10] Man is free to choose principles of political life because those principles can be derived from the faculty of reason which resides not in the state of nature but in man himself. The regulative principle of reason can be illustrated by an example of its empirical application, but it cannot be confirmed by such an example.[11] The following passage from Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, conveys most of what is essential to our present concern with the "primacy of reason" position.

> Reason is therefore the constant condition of all free actions by which man takes his place in the phenomenal world. Every one of them is determined beforehand in his empirical character, before it becomes actual. With regard to the intelligible character, however, of which the empirical is only the sensuous schema, there is neither before nor after; and every action, without regard to the temporal relation which connects it with other phenomena, is the immediate effect of the intelligible character of pure reason. That reason therefore acts freely, without being determined dynamically, in the chain of natural causes, by external or internal conditions, anterior in time. That freedom must then not only be regarded negatively, as independence of empirical conditions (for in that case the faculty of reason would cease to be a cause of phenomena), but should be determined positively also, as the faculty of beginning spontaneously a series of events. Hence nothing begins in reason itself, and being itself the unconditioned condition of every free action,

> reason admits of no condition antecedent in time above itself, while nevertheless its effect takes its beginning in the series an absolutely first beginning.[12]

Kant's implicit theory of freedom is at the heart of his deontology. For Kant, the primacy of reason gives rise to the priority of right over ends. It is this conception of the autonomy of reason from ends which permits man to be free to choose his own ends.[13] We can see that this marks a significant break from Hobbes' philosophy. Hobbes says that man may pursue his ends in a variety of ways but he is not actually free to choose them. This is implicit in Hobbes' teleology.[14]

iii) The movement towards Deontology: Rawls' departure from Kant

Kant's reasoning poses certain epistemological problems, the most troublesome of which is the status of the "unconditioned condition". If reason is prior to everything else, if "its effect takes its beginning in the series of phenomena, though it can never constitute in that series an absolute first beginning", what is the origin or reason? I do not propose to investigate this problem for it would require a very elaborate treatise on the "groundwork of the metaphysics of morals" and on what Kant calls "transcendental philosophy";[15] but it is essential that we recognize the ultimate appeal to metaphysical concepts which

is explicit in Kant's argument.

This point, more than any other, distinguishes Kantian liberalism from Rawlsian liberalism. While Kant's doctrine of the "highest moral law" (I should never act in such a way that I could not also will that my maxim should be a universal law")[16] is enthusiastically espoused by Rawls, Kant's reasoning hinges on sheer faith in the existence of an "unconditioned condition". Rawls, however, does not rely on any metaphysical appeal to support his argument. He simply takes for granted the rational character of man and simulates its operation in the context of an engineered original position. This marks the complete abandonment of the teleological system of thought.

Rawls' theoretical contribution to this problem in liberal thought is worth considering here because it is the most recent and powerful expression of the anti-teleological position in the liberal political tradition, and because it marks the logical end of the transition away from teleological thinking via Hobbes and Kant. In A Theory of Justice, John Rawls extends the deontological vision of man and society.[17] He admits that the theory which results from his investigation is "highly Kantian in nature"[18], but it differs from Kant's work in a way that is crucial to the central theme of this study. Rawls shares Kant's moral convictions but he does not make them part of his own theory

of justice. That is, Rawls takes his theory of justice to be consistent with Kantian morality, but he derives, or rather constructs, such a theory quite independently from moral grounds. For Kant, if reason can be practical, then its highest principle must be the highest moral law.[19] Rawls, however, arrives at the principle of "justice as fairness" without relying on moral principles. For Rawls, "right" is primary rather than "reason". Kant, on the other hand, sets out to work through the necessary qualities of reason, and to elucidate the kind of world to which it gives form.

Kant explicitly asserts the necessity of a summum bonum, and he suggests that it determines the ultimate aim of pure reason.[20] It is in the context of that discussion that we find a trace of the teleological form of explanation. While explicitly rejecting "nature" and "experience" as the basis of knowledge of what is right[21], Kant appeals to the metaphysics of morals, to a belief in destiny and to common sense. The following passages from the Critique of Pure Reason tend to support this interpretation.

> I assume that there really exist pure moral laws which entirely a priori (without regard to pure empirical motives, that is, happiness) determine the use of the freedom of any rational being, both with regard to what has to be done and what has not to be done, and that these laws are imperative absolutely (not hypothetically only on the supposition of other empirical ends), and

> therefore in every respect necessary. I feel justified in assuming this, by appealing not only to the arguments of the most enlightened moralists, but also to the moral judgment of every man, if he only tries to conceive such a law clearly.[22]
>
> The true morality of actions (merit or guilt), even that of our own conduct, remains therefore entirely hidden. Our imputations can refer to the empirical character only. How much of that may be the pure effect of freedom, how much should be ascribed to nature only, and to the faults of temperament, for which man is not responsible, or its happy constitution (merito fortunae), no one can discover, and no one can judge with perfect justice.[23]
>
> We shall believe ourselves to be serving Him only by promoting everything that is best in the world, both in ourselves and in others. Moral theology is, therefore, of immanent use only, teaching us to fulfill our destiny here in the world by adapting ourselves to the general system of ends, . . .[24]

The above passages expose the importance of Kant's metaphysical appeal; they represent also, that element of Kantian philosophy that does not sit well with John Rawls. Rawls certainly does not argue for the existence of "pure moral laws which determine the use of freedom". Quite the opposite seems to be the case; Rawls aims to construct principles of fairness which will regulate the use of unequal distribution of resources (e.g., wealth, talent, strength, access to technology . . .).

In Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, Michael Sandel makes this point explicit:

> . . . Rawls is resistant to Kant's solution in so far as it seems to depend on metaphysical

> assumptions he finds objectionable. He is dubious of the idealist metaphysics by which pure reason does its work, and is troubled by what seems to be the arbitrariness of the a priori derivation of the Kantian moral law.[25]

Rawls rejects altogether the notions of "fulfilling our destiny" and adapting to "the general system of ends". He is explicit in this rejection. Man decides his own ends and, moreover, he chooses the principles of organization and conduct which will allow him to reach those ends in an orderly way. But Rawls pays little or no attention to the substance of ends which man might establish for himself unless we mean by "ends" simply the "primary goods". Rawls' conceptions of "goods" or "the good" are reducible to the various commodities of market society. This is very different from Kant's conception of the "summum bonum" which is partially revealed in the above passages from the Critique of Pure Reason. Rawls makes little mention of the areas of substantial departure from the Kantian system, and this is, possibly, the most crucial departure of all.

George Grant also recognizes the fundamental departure in Rawls' work from Kantian thought.

> For all Rawls' appeals to Kant, the central ontological affirmations of Kant are absent from Rawls. Clearly in Rawls' account of philosophy there can be no fact of reason. Justice, therefore, cannot be justified as coming forth from the universal morality given us in reason itself. Rawls cannot make the affirmation that the good will is the only good without restriction, or that the good will is that which wills the universal moral law. His account of

> philosophy does not allow him such statements about the supreme good.[26]

Both Grant and Sandel are quick to expose the emptiness of Rawls' conception of "good" and of his often unwarranted appeal to Kant's philosophy.[27]

Today, it is widely assumed that John Rawls is the most important contemporary theorist in the liberal tradition. However, what is essential to my own investigation is the way in which Rawls explicitly rejects the teleological tradition. Even Kant, who was the first authentic "deontologist", remained attached to metaphysical premises and to a powerful idea of the "summum bonum". While he freed man from Hobbes' and Lockes' direct appeal to the state of nature, Kant replaced it with a moral imperative which had metaphysical roots. It was, therefore, still possible to say that the "freedom to choose" principles of government was restricted by reason. Although Kant argued that moral principles could be derived independently of any consideration of ends, the ends chosen by men would indeed be consistent with the moral principles they held. It could not be otherwise.

The transition from Aristotelian teleology to Rawlsian deontology should be clearer at this stage in the essay. I propose now to examine the character of the deontological argument as it is expressed in A Theory of Justice.

iv) Deontological Liberalism: Politics without Persons

Very early in Rawls' lengthy treatise, the author identifies the character of his form of liberalism as being "deontological". Since Rawls only refers to "deontological" theories on two occasions in a book that is six hundred and seven pages in length, and since I am making so much of "deontological" philosophy in this essay, it is worth considering Rawls' own account of deontology. He asserts that justice as fairness

> . . . is a deontological theory, one that either does not specify the good independently from the right, or does not interpret the right as maximizing the good. (It should be noted that deontological theories are defined as non-teleological ones, not as views that characterize the rightness of institutions and acts independently from their consequences. All ethical doctrines worth our attention take consequences into account in judging rightness. One which did not would simply be irrational, crazy.) Justice as fairness is a deontological theory in a second way. For it is assumed that the persons in the original position would choose a principle of equal liberty and restrict economic and social inequalities to those in everyone's interests, there is no reason to think that just institutions will maximize the good. (Here I suppose with utilitarianism that the good is defined as the satisfaction of rational desire.) Of course, it is not impossible that the most good produced but it would be a coincidence. The question of attaining the greatest net balance of satisfaction never arises in justice as fairness; this maximum principle is not used at all.[28]

In characterizing deontological theories as "non-teleological", Rawls implies the primacy of "right". He states in his introductory remarks: "Justice is the first

virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought".[29]

It is perhaps unimportant, but certainly ironic, that A Theory of Justice should begin by identifying truth as the first virtue of systems of thought, while the system in Rawls' own discourse is premised upon conditions which, to paraphrase a well known Machiavellian expression, "have never in truth been known to exist".[30] Nevertheless, Rawls' introduction of an artificial point of departure, which he calls "the original position", is a brilliantly conceived device that allows him to reconstruct a just society while avoiding any reliance upon the metaphysical aspects of Kant's philosophy of reason and mopality. Rawls would like to appeal to Kant's rejection of the tradition of teleological explanation and to his legalistic orientation, but he also aims to avoid the philosophical difficulties inherent in the postulation of the primacy of reason. Hence, Rawls is determined to establish the primacy of right over all else, This is why George Grant argued that for Rawls "there can be no fact of reason".

The original position was conceived as a device which would allow Rawls to "construct" a desired conception of justice. While this represents the most extreme movement towards the idea of "man as artificer" that has been seen in political philosophy, it becomes apparent that the artificer

is not actually "the citizen as free agent" but Rawls himself. Rather than beginning his enterprise by working through all of the logical and moral implications of a given "truth" or "set of truths" concerning reason, nature, or man, Rawls carefully modifies his "original position" so that it should yield a result of "justice as fairness". Rawls admits as much:

> This original position is not, of course, thought of as an actual historical state of affairs, much less a primitive condition of culture. It is understood as a purely hypothetical situation characterized so as to lead to a certain conception of justice.[31]

In order to arrive at that "certain conception of justice", Rawls is forced to modify the original position by introducing a "veil of ignorance". The reason for such conditions is that individuals would be able to choose principles of justice without regard to their particular circumstances, e.g., wealth, social status, health, even their historical and technological "moment". In this way they would choose fairly, that is, they would choose principles which are good for all, or at least principles which are equally unfavourable for all. Because the particular situation of the "rational calculator"[32] would be unknown to himself, his concern would be to choose principles which would apply regardless of ends. This suggests that ends would be irrelevant to the process of "constructing justice". Because the rational calculator

would not know who he was, he could not possibly know what his goals were. He would think only of choosing principles of justice which would provide everyone with a roughly equal possibility of attaining those goals. The result would be a sort of "rough justice". In this regard it is worth noting that the rational calculator acts not out of any concern for the welfare of other members of society but only out of pure self-interest. His ignorance of his own identity forces him to recognize that his welfare can be protected only through the establishment of rules which protect the welfare of all members of the community.

The establishment of a system of thought which is clearly designed to ignore fundamental questions about human ends is what is problematic in Rawls' work. More importantly, it is the lack of consideration given to human ends which is problematic in modern liberalism and modern liberal-democratic societies. There is no question that Rawls provides an account of justice that is fair to all members of society, but he never considers the possibility that the best human ends might not be achieved if such an account is actualized. Justice as fairness clearly disregards human potentiality and instead concentrates on the abstract priority of the "right to choose" over the "possibility to act". Viewed in this light, it is not encouraging to think that this kind of justice is all that

we are fit for.

In Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, Michael Sandel takes careful aim at the deontological liberalism of Rawls. Sandel is troubled, not only by the priority of right over ends that is assumed in deontological liberalism, but also by the absence of any presupposition of a vision of the good life in the deontological account. He argues that the deontological vision denies the possibility of telos in political life altogether. For while "justice" may be a noble ideal and while it does not exclude the attainment of ends as a secondary ideal, it effectively trivializes such a secondary ideal by disembodying it from the rational actor. This means that the attainment of ends becomes merely a function of that which is primary, namely justice. Ends are not of the first order of consideration. Given this fact, what kinds of ends will we pursue? Sandel recognizes that the emptiness will lie not in the ends themselves, but in the vision of the actors or persons left to pursue the ends. The liberalism of Rawls must admit that justice is what we are fit for; it would otherwise have to acknowledge its own incompleteness. Sandel wants to make the case, in the tradition of teleological philosophy, that we are fit for much more than an existence in which the highest value is political fairness. Therefore, Rawls' liberalism would appear to be indeed incomplete.

In the same way that Charles Taylor exposed the emptiness of the behavioural account of persons, and showed that behind every action lies and end, Sandel exposes the incompleteness of the deontological account of political life. He shows that inside every "rational calculator" there is a person. While Sandel does not extend his book to include an account of that person nor of what politics might be if such a person were to be the political subject, he clearly draws our attention to the inadequacies of the deontological vision of man and society, and he exposes the apolitical character of "community" implied in that vision.

Sandel examines the roots of the deontological argument and considers the intellectual problem that Rawls seeks to resolve. He acknowledges that contemporary liberalism is located in the tradition of Kantian philosophy and that major disputes in liberalism centre around the conflict between utilitarianism and contractarianism. While Kant certainly sides with contractarianism, he broke with the Lockean tradition of founding contract upon natural right. He argued that the rules of civil society could properly be developed by an appeal to the principles of reason, but it would not appeal to empirical considerations as did the "natural right" of Hobbes and Locke.

This purely "intelligible" basis for the primacy of right - as distinct from the "sensible-empirical" basis - is

very problematic for Rawls, because he does not want to found a theory in which rational subjects are the calculators of their own interest(s), and hence, of their own principles of justice, upon an idealist conception of pre-physical or metaphysical phenomena. Sandel explains:

> For Rawls, the Kantian conception suffers from obscurity and arbitrariness, for it is unclear how an abstract, disembodied subject could without arbitrariness produce determinate principles of justice, or how in any case the legislation of such a subject would apply to actual human beings in the phenomenal world.[33]

If the deontological thesis rested, in the final analysis, upon a theory of transcendental logic, then the autonomy of individual choice would be severly undermined. For Rawls, the source of reason is problematic in Kant's philosophy, and consequently the ultimate authority of that reason is very difficult to justify. In fact, Rawls does not attempt to justify it. He merely circumvents it by replacing the primacy of reason with the primacy of right, and he justifies the primacy of right not with any appeal to reason but with an appeal to an *a priori* desired outcome. That outcome is, of course, "justice as fairness". Rawls identifies his task in relation to his difficulty with Kantian metaphysics:

> The theory of justice in turn tries to present a natural procedural rendering of Kant's conception of the kingdom of ends, and of the notions of autonomy and the categorical imperative. In this way the underlying structure of Kant's doctrine is

> detached from its metaphysical surroundings so that it can be seen more clearly and presented relatively free from objection.[34]

It is clear what kind of "objection" Rawls is referring to. He wants to found his own theory of justice on empirical grounds, but such a foundation may at best be coincidental with the product of transcendental logic.

In an article written several years after the publication of A Theory of Justice, Rawls reaffirms his discomfort with Kant's system.

> 'To develop a viable Kantian conception of Justice the force and content of Kant's doctrine must be detached from its background in transcendental idealism' and recast within the 'cannons of a reasonable empiricism'.[35]

Sandel's project is, in part, to demonstrate that Rawls cannot have it both ways. He cannot appeal to a system of thought which derives "justice" independently from "goodness" while at the same time discarding the grounds upon which that system was founded.

> Whether Kant's metaphysics are detachable 'surroundings' or inescapable presuppositions of the moral and political aspirations Kant and Rawls share - in short, whether Rawls can have liberal politics without metaphysical embarrassment - is one of the central issues posed by Rawls' conception. This essay argues that Rawls' attempt does not succeed, and that deontological liberalism cannot be rescued from the difficulties associated with the Kantian subject.[36]

v) Human Agency: Choice and Mechanism - Hobbes revisited[37]

Whether Rawls' attempt to break away from Kantian

metaphysics while remaining truly deontological can succeed, or whether it must stray from his questionable appeal to pure empiricism, the reason for his discomfort with metaphysics is not merely epistemological, it is also strategic. Clearly, at the heart of Rawls' philosophy is an attempt to make personal choice the legitimate source of the principles of justice and of the conceptions of the good. It would be quite impossible to argue that men are free to choose their own principles of justice, while at the same time imposing on those men the constraints of reason. Either men freely choose principles of justice or they accept the necessary derivations from Kant's primacy of reason. Rawls explicitly states that "the principles of justice are not self-evident, but have their justification in the fact that they would be chosen".[38] This conception of choice needs to be elucidated.

My argument here is that liberalism uses the language of choice, but gives no account of the person making choices and doing the bargaining. This is the problem. It resolves itself into an account of a process, but without an account of the person or "agent" involved in the process.

Furthermore, I contend that an adequate notion of choice is incompatible with any mechanistic form of explanation, such as the form of explanation underlying the Rawlsian argument.

Rawls states that the principles of justice will be arrived at through a process of bargaining in the original position. We already know that this bargaining takes place under a veil of ignorance so that the participants in the process do not properly know themselves. There is no possibility for introspection, since either the essence of the person has been provisionally removed or access to any self-recognition has been neurologically or chemically prevented. Of course neither is the case because Rawls admits that his scenario is a historical fiction. The point is that we want to know the identity of the individuals establishing the principles of justice. The identity is simply all of mankind, or more precisely, it is those characteristics that all men share. Indeed, it is quite important that any qualities which are common to all men must not be concealed under the veil of ignorance. But it is crucial that the individual must not be able to distinguish himself or his own interests from those of others while he is choosing principles of justice.

While the problem of choice must be reduced to the question of the identity of those doing the choosing, it is possible for the bargaining process to result in a social contract only, if Rawls is correct that all men are rational. And even if this is the case, Rawls would not be able to explain away the case of the one individual who

might "choose" to act irrationally. Although this is unlikely to occur, it raises the question of the nature and depth of Rawls' "voluntarism". If there is a rational agent who can truly choose the principles that are acceptable to him, why must the bargaining process have a predictable outcome? The answer to this question lies not in the fact that through a process of bargaining - that is, "give and take" - the necessary compromise will be the one which is equally satisfactory to all parties; it lies in the underlying appeal to mechanism in the Rawlsian argument. While Rawls goes no further than saying that the "force of Kant's doctrine must be recast in the canons of empiricism", he is in fact engaged in the enterprise which Charles Taylor so fiercely criticized in The Explanation of Behaviour. By denying the individual any knowledge of his own "person" during the bargaining process, Rawls is not only suggesting that true knowledge of the agent would prevent the establishment, based on consent, of the principle of justice as fairness; he is necessarily making the agent qua "person" irrelevant for the principles he is to choose.

In chapter one I argued that Hobbes tried to present a mechanistic model for the establishment of the Leviathan, by asserting that men would agree to certain pre-conditions so that they might attempt to achieve a state of "felicity". Hobbes believed that his method of analysis or "political

reconstruction was scientific, (or what I have called "consequential"), in that each stage necessarily followed from the previous "motion". While his argument is beautifully structured and systematic, I suggested that Hobbes owed the results of investigation not to any scientific "deductivism", but to the teleological assumptions which were at the heart of his thesis. I would argue, at this stage, that were it not for the teleological appeal in Hobbes' argument, he would have ended up in the dilemma in which we at present find Rawls. For if we examine the point of departure of both Hobbes and Rawls, we find very striking similarities.

> . . . nosce te ipsum . . . [learn to know yourself]. . . that for the similitude of the thoughts and passions of one man, to the thoughts and passions of another, whosoever looketh into himself, and considereth what he doth, when he does think, opine, reason, hope, fear &c. and upon what grounds; he shall thereby read and know, what are the thoughts and passions of all other men upon the like occasions. I say the similitude of passions, which are the same in all men, desire, fear, hope, &c.; not the similitude of the objects of the passions, which are things desired, feared, hoped, &c.: for these the constitution individual, and particular education, do so vary . . .[39]

This passage could well have appeared in the introductory section of A Theory of Justice, for, indeed, these are the conditions of knowledge for the bargainers. Rawls merely ensures that in the original position the bargainers will have no access to any information concerning their "individual constitution and particular education";

this is what is concealed by the veil of ignorance. What is important for Hobbes' system as it is for Rawls' system, is that the contract is a fact at the very outset of life in the real world. Therefore the choice of principles has already been made. Neither Rawls nor Hobbes have much interest in the kinds of "life-plans" or "objects of the passions" which are pursued in the real world. They are concerned only with the principles of justice or government that must be established prior to the free pursuit of such plans or objects. Clearly, the concept of agency is absurd during the pre-contract period - because for Hobbes the pre-contract period (or the extra-contract condition) is at best an historical abstraction and for Rawls it is at best an intellectual device which does not even pretend to be grounded in legitimate political debate among men of conflicting convictions - that is, during the bargaining period, or the period of "introspection" and it is irrelevant in the real world. We would expect that the freedom to choose the "good" once in the real world, would be a crucial sign of the importance of agency. But particularly in the context of Rawls' thought, this cannot be the case. What can be the value of agency, (that is, of the expression of the "self" in choice), when the kinds of choices to which the agent is restricted are strictly determined (or limited) by the principles of justice, the

selection of which was strictly prohibited for the agent qua "person"? Rawls suggests that we are free to choose our ends once we are in the real world, but those ends will necessarily be the reflection of the principles of justice that are chosen when we are not, properly speaking, ourselves, and not a product of out "person(s)".

Just as Hobbes is the "scientist" and the true "artificer" of the Leviathan, Rawls is effectively the author of the two principles of justice[40]. The processes of rationally calculating in an original position and of establishing a covenant at the outset of political existence, are clearly heuristic and 'justificationist'. It is certain that given the pre-conditions of the bargaining or contracting process, there is, in fact, no need for the bargaining or contracting to actually occur. Since both Rawls and Hobbes have "discovered" what is common to all men, there is no need to engage the multitude in any exercise of choosing principles of justice. The results can be known a priori because if the original assumptions about the nature or character of men are correct, then everything else should follow consequentially. The original assumptions are, for Rawls, that man is rational, and for Hobbes, that all men desire "felicity". The most fundamental assumption of both philosophers is that all men are essentially the same. This is also indispensable, for

any mechanistic explanation, that the various differences between the agents under investigation, be quite trivial. We can see that for both Hobbes and Rawls these criteria of "scientific credibility" are met.

Unlike Kant, who explicitly rejected the possibility of "introspection" as a basis for "knowing" oneself[41] - that is, as a way of making oneself intelligible - on the grounds that empirical or sense experience cannot give one knowledge of the noumenal world, Rawls has managed to avoid that qualification because he has explicitly appealed to a doctrine (a "modification"' of Kantianism) which is located in the "canons of empiricism". There are certain contradictions which arise from this selective abandonment of Kantian premises; only one is of crucial importance here: How can Rawls properly argue that his theory is essentially voluntaristic, that it comprises a meaningful theory of human agency, while at the same time insisting on the very absence of the agent from the process of choosing the principles which will inevitably condition the agent's choice of ends in the real world? This contradiction is neither resolved nor even acknowledged in Rawls' book.

Since the veil of ignorance is lifted only once the principles of justice are in place, the most fundamental political "choices" are no longer up for grabs; in fact they never were. The process of deliberation and reflection in

which Rawls would have the agent engage is nothing but the experience of consulting a transparent self with pre-conditioned tastes and preferences.[42] The only questions that might require some minimal form of deliberation would be questions concerning how one would go about satisfying those tastes and preferences, given the various practical and material constraints of one's own situation and of the principles of justice.

Michael Sandel sums this argument up very elegantly:

> If it is clear that Rawls would describe my values and conceptions of the good as the products of choice or decision, it remains to be seen what exactly this choice consists in and how I come to make it. According to Rawls, we 'choose for ourselves in the sense that the choice often rests on our direct self-knowledge' of what we want and how much we want it. But a choice that is a choice 'in the sense that' it 'often rests on' (is determined by?) my existing wants and desires is choice only in a peculiar sense of the word. For assuming with Rawls that the wants and desires on which my choice 'rests' are not themselves chosen but are the product of circumstance, . . . such a choice would involve less a voluntary act than a factual accounting of what these wants and desires really are. And once I succeed in ascertaining, by 'direct self-knowledge', this piece of psychological information, there would seem nothing left for me to choose.[43]

vi) Some Reflections on the Deontological Ethic: Purposiveness or Voluntarism?

Here we come to the important difference between the teleological notion of purposiveness and the deontological notion of voluntarism. It should be clear by now that the

conception of choice which is conveyed to us in the work of Rawls is entirely problematic. This is primarily because on the one hand, Rawls would place it at the very core of his theory of justice, and, on the other hand, it is nowhere to be found. In distinguishing deontological voluntarism from teleological purposiveness, it is necessary to ask the question: 'What is the limit of my ability to choose the kind of world I want to live in?' The question might be put differently: 'Do I determine my life-plan, or do I simply choose between paths that are compatible with the pre-existing standards in my community?' It is evident that the teleological (purposive) response would affirm the responsible, expressive character of the agent. The deontological (voluntarist) response would affirm the relatively passive, repressed character of the agent. But it would be absurd to suggest that one response involves a choice and the other does not. Both positions involve choices; the difference between them is one of the "level of responsibility" and "initiative".

Given the great gulf that separates these two visions of man and society, it is difficult to understand how Rawls' conception of human agency can be taken seriously. Yet it certainly is the dominant position of our day. Can it be that the voluntarist argument has simply been put forward with such elegance and conviction that it seemed

unreasonable to reject it?

In leaving the choice of "life-plans" and "goods" open to the discretion of the agent, deontological voluntarism exposes itself to the charge of moral relativism. Rawls actually states that he is not concerned with the moral values of the individual agents, for morality is a private rather than a public concern.[44] This is, of course, a significant departure from Kant's thought, in which morality is indeed a very public concern. In English-Speaking Justice, George Grant angrily takes aim at the modern liberal tradition, which, in his view, bastardized the Kantian moral ethic. He is thinking of John Rawls in particular:

> There is no clearer example of how the vagaries of intellectual history turn inside out the teachings of a great philosopher than the way Kant's assertion that the morally neutral state is the best state is now generally taken by his liberal successors. For Kant the morally neutral state is advocated on the basis of an egalitarian moral absolutism; today it is often advocated on the basis of moral relativism.[45]

It is of course right to confront Rawls with the problem of "moral relativism", but not as the "Kantian" he wants so much to be. What needs most of all to be recognized is that the moral "freedom" left to us by the deontological project consists not in the possibility of actualizing our individual or collective potentialities as authentic "persons", but rather that it consists in the

unavoidable process of choosing private life-plans which are of no interest and, worse, which are of no consequence, to one's fellow citizens or to the welfare of the community as a whole, except in the negative sense of not harming the general welfare.

Notes and References

[1]Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950), p. 176.

[2]This is mainly a reference to Hobbes' claim that he can only speak of the attributes of man but not of God, since demonstration is impossible in such matters. While Hobbes speaks of the role of God and of religion, he assigns to them a political role rather than a spiritual one.

[3]Leo Strauss, Natural Right and History, pp. 174-77.

[4]This is a primitive form of the famous Grelling Paradox: "The following sentence is true. The previous sentence is false".

See Douglas Hofstadter's clever account of the linguistic adaptation of the Russell Paradox, and the Grelling Paradox, in Godel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), pp. 21-22.

[5]For a critical account of deontological liberalism see Michael J. Sandel's book, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). Deontological liberalism is in effect the tradition of liberalism introduced in the thought of Immanuel Kant, and carried on by John Rawls. Sandel refers to Rawls' brand of liberalism as "revisionist deontology" because of Rawls' significant departure from the moral philosophy of Kant.

[6]Although Hobbes was perhaps the founder of modern natural right theory, Locke raised the importance of natural right considerably to include an ongoing appeal to natural right even in the state. It will be recalled that Hobbes gave recourse to an active appeal to natural right prior to the establishment of civil society, but after the contract has been arrived at, man's appeal to his "natural rights" are waived, (not strictly renounced, but provisionally waived).

See George Grant, English-Speaking Justice (Sackville, N.B.: Mount Allison University 1974), p. 49.

Locke took Hobbes' notion of self-preservation a step further, affirming the right of comfortable self-preservation. This suggests the validity of the right to pursue and enjoy what George Grant calls "the cosy

pleasures".

[7]I have designed this table to help organize the subsequent discussion; it is obviously incomplete, but it serves to point out some of the crucial differences between the thinkers whose thought is relevant to my discussion on the shift away from teleological accounts of social and political life. I have included Aristotle in the table although I do not critically discuss his work in this chapter; however, it is clear that we must take our point of departure from the extreme position which is represented in his philosophy.

[8]Kant argued that empirical experience could not make the world "intelligible". We cannot derive knowledge about how we ought to live from experience of how the world is or appears to be; for experience give us, at best, "phenomenal" knowledge - not real knowledge at all - see his Critique of Pure Reason, 1st ed., translated by F. Max Muller, (New York: Doubleday-Anchor, 1966), pp. 366-379, pp. 510-514.

[9]Ibid., pp. 187-202. There are numerous possible references for the problem; Kant discusses it later in the Critique, there are also extensive references in the Critique of Practical Reason and the Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals.

[10]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, pp. 376-77.

[11]Ibid., pp. 377-78.

[12]Ibid., p. 377.

[13]See Pierre Hassner's account of Kant's notion of "autonomy" in Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey eds. History of Political Philosophy, 2nd ed., (Chicago: Rand McNally Co., 1972), pp. 544-593, (Particularly p. 564). See also George A. Schrader's essay, "Autonomy, heteronomy, and moral imperatives", in Robert Paul Wolff, ed., Kant: Foundation of the Metaphysics of Morals [Text and Critical Essays] (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1969), pp. 117-134.

[14]See my discussion of "Hobbes' surreptitious appeal to teleological explanation" in chapter one of this essay.

[15]See Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, pp. 1-18, for his own introduction to the subject; the rest of the book deals with it in a very complex and comprehensive fashion. See also Sandel's discussion of the transcendental subject, in Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, pp. 7-11.

[16]I include it here as it was articulated by R.P. Wolff in his introduction to the Metaphysics of Morals, p. xvii.

[17]John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press-Belknap Press, 1971).

[18]Ibid., p. viii, (Preface).

[19]R.P. Wolff, Introduction to the Metaphysics of Morals, p. xvii.

[20]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, pp. 515-523. (This is the passage on the "Summum Bonum").

[21]Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, p. 118. Here Sandel is quoting from Kant, On the Common Saying: This may be true in theory, but it does not apply in practice". In Kant's Political Writings, ed. H. Reiss, 1970, pp. 61-92. Cambridge.

[22]Kant,Critique of Pure Reason, p. 516.

[23]Ibid., p. 376n.

[24]Ibid., p. 523.

[25]Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, p. 119.

[26]Grant, English-Speaking Justice, p. 31.

[27]Ibid., pp. 14-50. See also Sandel, pp. 133-183.

[28]Rawls, A Theory of Justice, p. 30.

[29]Ibid., p. 3.

[30]Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince, Translated with an Introduction by George Bull (revised ed.), (Penguin Books, 1975, p. 91). Machiavelli's comment is well known; I have of course taken it out of its context, but one might do well to compare Rawl's enterprise with the object of Machiavelli's scorn. It is reasonable to assume that Machiavelli was writing about Plato's Republic. Here is the passage as it appears in Bull's translation: "Many have dreamed up republics which have never in truth been known to exist. . ."

[31]Rawls, A Theory of Justice, p. 12.

[32]Rawls' most fundamental assumption about human nature, is that man is rational. Rawls essentially understands the "good" to be the rational calculation of man' "life-plan", or of the desired primary goods. The deliberative process is one of "rationality calculating" ends.

[33]Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, p. 13.

[34]Rawls, A Theory of Justice, P. 264.

[35]Rawls as quoted in Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, p. 13. Rawls' comment appeared in his article, "The basic structure as subject", American Philosophical Quarterly 14, 1977 pp. 159-65.

[36]Sandel, p. 14.

[37]So far, I have not used the terms "agent" or "agency". I use it now to refer to the subject of political action, i.e., the actor. The language of "agency" is employed here because this is the language of modern liberal theorists such as Rawls, Nozick, Fishkin...and it is the language used by critics like Sandel. I do not, however, wish to provide an account of the literature on the subject of agency. I simply describe human agency as the expression of the self in choice. This is, in effect, the meaning which is implicit in my discussion of the teleological character of action. My notion of action is very much the same as my conception of agency in this essay. Clearly, however, the notion of agency has a richer, more developed idea of choice than does action. This is because the concepts of "choice" or "freedom" in action, are linked to a set of a priori potentialities. But these potentialities always remain unspecified. It is for this reason that the teleological argument cannot fall prey to the criticism which may be levelled against the mechanistic forms of explanation. This criticism rightly exposes the fact that once consequential relationships are imputed to the actors, (i.e., laws of necessary behaviour), the notion of choice becomes nonsensical. But teleological explanation does not argue for "laws of behaviour", it simply assumes that action originates in the very character of the actor; therefore, it is an expression of the essence of the actor rather than a necessary result of extraneous conditions or events.

[38]Rawls, A Theory of Justice, p. 42.

[39]Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, op. cit.,

[40]Since I have made so much of the process of choosing the principles of Justice without actually stating them, I will do so here. First the original formulations: Principle I...Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others. Principle II...Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all. (Rawls p. 60). The final formulations are as follows: Principle I...Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all. Principle II...Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both: (a) to the greatest benefit to the least advantaged, consistent with the just savings principle, and (b) attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity. (Rawls p. 302). I cannot here go into an account of how Rawls arrived at the original and final formulations of the principles of justice. For an excellent reconstruction and explication of this, see R.P. Wolff, Understanding Rawls., (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1977).

[41]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p. 373-74.

[42]Rawls, A Theory of Justice, pp. 416-424. See also (Sandel pp. 154-165).

[43]Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice, p. 162.

[44]Ibid., p. 165. This is a reference to Rawls' article. "Fairness to Goodness", in Philosophical Review 84, 1975, p. 537.

[45]Grant, English-Speaking Justice, p. 104n.

CHAPTER THREE

MARKET MAN AND THE ABSENCE OF TELEOLOGY: THE LIBERAL ASSESSMENT OF HUMAN NATURE

Up to this point, we have seen that the notion of teleological explanation is a vital element in an appropriate characterization of the nature of action and political action. We have also seen that, beginning with the Hobbesian enterprise, teleological explanation has been disengaged from the attempt to understand and explain political action. We have seen that at the very heart of the liberal tradition is a willingness to accept this disengagement. Indeed, we have seen in the work of John Rawls a logic of argument which asserts that liberalism can be seen as an adequate political theory devoid of the characterization of man in teleological terms. We end up, in liberalism, with politics without persons, behaviour without agency, political action without telos.

This chapter is crucial to the thesis because it presents the market as the very embodiment of anti-teleological politics, as the mechanism which orders social relations and which prevents political action. The purpose of this chapter is to argue that there is a fundamental difficulty with the liberal portrait of human nature. That

is, the characterization of man as a "market" creature is very inadequate, and it serves to perpetuate and to aggravate the very condition from which some liberals would have man escape. Rather than offering man a way of improving his condition and of actualizing unrecognized potentialities, the market qualifies human potentialities by defining the political enterprise. Politics can no longer be a responsible project, for the task is not chosen by those who would carry it out. To "act" in market society is to accept the implications of being "market man". I argue that this implies the acceptance of the impossibility of politics as a teleological enterprise.

I shall develop this argument in three stages. First, I shall argue that the portrait of man as "market creature" finds its original expression in the thought of Thomas Hobbes. I suggest that Hobbes was instrumental in establishing the notion of civil society as a forum for the expression of man's "natural" inclinations, without detriment to the security of all men. The second stage of the argument consists in an examination of the "idealist" response to the Hobbesian portrait of human nature. I suggest that this view is best represented by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. I argue that in spite of Rousseau's disdain for the Hobbesian portrait of man, he is nevertheless a liberal. For he reluctantly accepts and even defends the important

liberal concepts and most fundamentally the market institutions (such as the social contract and private property), and he rejects the teleological conception of politics in the end. The third stage of the argument consists in an explication of the logic of the market and of the nature of "market man".

Since this chapter investigates the character of the market, it would be reasonable to expect careful consideration of Locke's contribution to the subject. I have, however, chosen not to treat Locke here because I argue that what is essential to the concept of a market is implicit and at times explicit already in Hobbes's thought. In this study I consider the implications of some very fundamental and, indeed, primitive tenets of the market, and a treatment of Locke's very elaborate and important contribution to market theory is not essential here. It should be noted also that my concern is primarily with the way in which political philosophy broke from the tradition of teleological thinking and first revealed the basic signs of market logic. Hobbes, whether he is seen as a liberal or a pre-liberal thinker, first represents this monumental development.

Rousseau is examined later in this chapter, not because he makes any significant contribution to market theory - for he does not as such - but because he represents liberal

self-criticism as it pertains to the market portrait of human nature. In Rousseau, liberalism expresses its disgust recognition of its own limits but then fails to present a viable alternative to the market. Liberalism grudgingly accepts the important tenets of the market and rejects the teleological explanation of political action.

C.B. Macpherson's reading of the history of market liberalism, although not uncritically accepted in my own study, nevertheless serves as a useful commentator and guide to the discussion.

i) The conflict between self-actualization and possessive individualism[1]

When we examine the liberal tradition, its major exponents, its critics and commentators, we see that there has emerged a general recognition that there exist a number of strands, or tensions, within that tradition. There is a recognition that liberalism has within it a variegated conception of human nature, a conception which has led to confusion and difficulty.

Perhaps C.B. Macpherson has understood the tension inherent in the liberal tradition. He argues that

> . . . the ontological assumptions of our Western democratic theory have been, for something like a hundred years, internally inconsistent, comprising as they do two concepts of the human essence which are in the circumstances incompatible. One of these is the liberal, individualist concept of man

> as essentially a consumer of utilities, an infinite desirer and infinite appropriator. This concept was fitting, even necessary, for the development of the capitalist market society, from the seventeenth century on: it antedates the introduction of democratic principles and institutions, which did not amount to anything before the nineteenth century. The other is the concept of man as an enjoyer and exerter of his uniquely human attributes or capacities, a view which began to challenge the market view in the mid-nineteenth century and soon became an integral part of the justifying theory of liberal democracy.[2]

In the above passage, Macpherson identifies two currents that run through the liberal tradition: the market conception of man and society, and the idealist "self-actualization" current. Macpherson suggests that these two currents are internally inconsistent because they comprise two concepts of human nature which are incompatible.[3]

Macpherson clearly prefers the concept of "man as exerter of his uniquely human attributes", and he expresses some optimism at the prospect of the actualization of this vision of man.[4] Nevertheless, Macpherson suggests that the predominance of the "market" ideal had a useful and justified place in the development of liberal thought and indeed in the evolution of liberal society.[5] Although he believes that such a vision has outlived its ability to maximize democracy, he is hopeful that it has served to facilitate the emergence of a polity dedicated to the actualization of human potentialities, as distinct from a polity organized expressly around the objectives of

preserving order and facilitating exchange.[6] This development would rest on the capability of man to free himself from the chains of labour by means of his total replacement by technology. The remaining economic problem would no longer be one of production but one of distribution.

The importance which a political tradition gives to the concept of human essence is perhaps more significant than any other facet of that tradition. A political system is invariably justified and legitimized by an appeal to the condition to which men are best suited. From time to time, the system is legitimized *a posteriori*, by a fitting understanding of the essence of man.[7]

1 Portrait of Human Nature

2 Political System

3 Justification of Political system depends upon 1

In the first chapter, I suggested that the most adequate account of political action must be given in terms of teleological explanation. I suggested that if we think of man solely in terms of behaviour, devoid of the purposive, self-developmental quality of action, then

political action could not be attributable to man. It would follow, then, that a political system which is designed to facilitate political action must account for human nature in teleological terms. It would also follow that a political system which denies the purposive, self-developmental character of human action would deny the teleological dimension of action altogether.

Of course, there is a political theory which denies the teleological explanation of human action. In doing so, this tradition gives us an account of man and his behaviour which is devoid of purpose, telos, and self-actualization. The portrait of man that emerges in this political theory, I would argue, is the portrait of man we find in liberalism. Let us explore this problem more fully.

When we examine the liberal tradition, we see that there are, indeed, two portraits of man which co-exist in tension. The first one we may call the Hobbesian portrait, which has become characterized as the possessive-individualistic portrait. The second portrait, best epitomized by Rousseau, and later by J.S. Mill, Hobson and others, we may call the idealist portrait. Again, C.B. Macpherson outlines for us this dualistic portrait:

> From Aristotle until the seventeenth century it was more usual to see the essence of man as purposeful activity, as exercise of one's energies in accordance with some rational purpose, than as the consumption of satisfaction. It was only with

> the emergence of the modern market society, which we may put as early as the seventeenth century in England, that this concept of man was narrowed and turned into almost its opposite. Man was still held to be essentially a purposive, rational creature, but the essence of rational behaviour was increasingly held to lie in unlimited individual appropriation, as a means of satisfying unlimited desire for utilities. Man became an infinite appropriator and an infinite consumer; an infinite appropriator because an infinite desirer. From Locke to James Mill this concept of man became increasingly prevalent. The nineteenth-century reaction against it, radical, moderate, and conservative, was an attempt to reclaim and restate the much older tradition. But the Utilitarian concept was by then too deeply rooted in the market society to be driven out of the liberal tradition, while too clearly inadequate to be allowed any longer to dominate it.[8]

Here, Macpherson identifies the crucial degeneration of the teleological tradition and its subsequent replacement by the mechanism of market society. While he suggests that only in the nineteenth century did liberalism rebel against the market conception of man, I suggest that this occurred much earlier with Rousseau. Chronology, however, is not of the highest importance in this matter, as long as the liberal reaction is understood as a response to a philosophy that was introduced - if only in a primitive and incomplete form - by Hobbes. Macpherson does not employ the language of "behaviourism", but he clearly suggests that the purposive character of man is strictly defined by the objectives of the market. Those objectives he says, are infinite consumption of satisfactions, and unlimited appropriation as a means of satisfying unlimited desire for

utilities. In other words, man's behaviour is no longer seen as being strictly a function of the actualization of his potentialities. Instead, it becomes a response to the built-in objectives of the market. It is, nevertheless, important to note that Macpherson asserts that even in the period of market liberalism (beginning in the seventeenth century), man was still held to be essentially purposive. But that purposiveness became subservient to the logic of the market. This analysis supports my assertion that Hobbes' teleology was a surreptitious and incomplete one. I have argued that this purposiveness has degenerated in two ways. First it has degenerated in that it is rooted in a base appeal to the conditions of the state of nature. This means that because of the ontological abstraction, which I described in Chapter Two, the appeal to nature was based on a response to the conditions of the state of nature rather than on a direct expression of nature. It also means that the conditions of civil society are founded upon an entirely inadequate portrait of human nature.

The purposive character of man has degenerated also in terms of the highest goals liberalism (of the market) sets for man. Instead of making the "good" the highest value, "felicity" is the value which defines the political enterprise.

Hobbes' break from the older Aristotelian tradition is

primarily concerned with the question of the essence of man. Aristotle's conception of nature achieves its highest fulfilment only inside the polis. Man's natural condition is the condition of political life. Man's highest goal is the actualization of his potentialities. This enterprise is qualified by the notion of "goodness" or morality. "Each being is determined by an inherent design to its complete fulfilment. Man for Aristotle is by nature ordered to the complete life of moral virtue",[9] says one commentator. The life of moral virtue is, for Aristotle, the result of the full and proper actualization of natural human potentialities, and it makes the pursuit of goodness the most valuable human enterprise.

Hobbes, on the other hand, did not regard the actualization of human potentialities as the noblest of enterprises. To put is somewhat differently, Hobbes did not conceive of man as naturally political. Therefore, the Leviathan was not intended as a means of facilitating man's personal development. If anything, civil society was a means of guarding against the ill effects of the expression of man's natural inclinations. For Hobbes civil society is necessarily an artificial construct. The Leviathan is merely a response to the conditions of the state of nature. But if it is necessary, as Hobbes argues, to manufacture a safeguard against the consequences of life in the state of

nature, then this implies that there is something clearly undesirable about those consequences. This reveals the root of Hobbes' concept of the essence of man. If the establishment of civil society is primarily a protective measure against the natural inclinations of man, then it is normal to hold that man's natural inclinations are intimidating and unsettling. In the state of nature man is afraid of violent death, he is apprehensive about his self-preservation. He is, therefore, a threat to the welfare of other men. The most basic value is security or self-preservation and nothing is more likely to undermine that security than the competing desires and apprehensions of other men.

In the state of nature the only right is the right to take any measures that will assure self-preservation. For Hobbes, it is simply the most basic fact of human nature. Men have an exclusive right to their property. (In the state of nature this simply means that they have the right to protect their selves (themselves).

We have arrived at the first fact of the Hobbesian system. It is, I believe, the point of reference for what Macpherson has called "possessive individualism". In the state of nature men owe nothing to one another. The concepts of trust, co-operation and agreement are nonsensical in the state of nature, for such a state is a

that Hobbes ascribes to man, and he goes on to remark on the self-regarding character of man's politics:

> Laying the solid foundations for a political philosophy in man's passionate nature, Hobbes not only grounded political philosophy in the new natural philosophy, he adduced a new conception of human nature and law. Hobbes undertook to base politics on man understood as an apolitical being. He concentrated on men in their pre-political condition and their first political acts.[14]

> Both Hobbes and Locke viewed man as by nature his own master and the sole proprietory of himself and of his labor. But this means that by nature man is radically apolitical because he has obligations only to himself. The only way individuals can come together into a political or social whole is through consent - i.e., through the free grant of legislative authority to another. But even here Hobbes and Locke make it clear that in granting such authority the individuals intend to achieve a condition which will redound to their own individual benefit.[15]

Hobbes clearly established the principles of the Leviathan upon the notion of man as selfish, individualistic, competitive, acquisitive, and fearful.[16] Rather than conceive of the political enterprise as a concerted attempt to overcome man's natural tendencies, Hobbes sees it as an effort to accommodate those tendencies while avoiding the extreme consequences they would have in the state of nature. My argument in this chapter is that such an attitude towards the question of the "essence of man" and towards the political enterprise merely encourages the exercise of those tendencies - if they are indeed natural - and in any case man is forced to behave in a

had to be tamed by reason. Hobbes makes them complementary qualities. Man's passion is understood as his restless desire for power; this is expressed in his efforts to achieve a condition of felicity. This, Hobbes says,

> . . . is a continual progress of the desire, from one object to another; the attaining of the former, being still but the way to the latter. The cause whereof is, that the object of man's desire, is not to enjoy once only, and for one instant of time; but to assure for ever, the way of his future desire.[13]

Man is seen, therefore, to be a rational creature. It is this rationality which is at the heart of Hobbes' possessive individualism. The rational quality in man inclines him to seek the means of satisfying his passions. For the ancients, reason would have served to achieve the very opposite result. But Hobbes narrows the scope of the human enterprise by having reason serve the passions. Man's reason becomes the device which allows him to contract with "all of mankind"; not with a view to improving the lot of other man, but simply with the aim of enhancing his own condition.

Understood in this light, self-regarding politics or the politics of self-interest actually creates a condition of "unpolitics". The apolitical character of a purely self-regarding enterprise is the inevitable result of Hobbes' vision of man. In his book, The Tradition of Political Hedonism, Frederick Vaughan identifies the apolitical nature

Aristotelian man aspires. The pursuit of such things requires peace of mind and security; it requires freedom from violent attacks and from the exhaustion of vital resources. It is therefore understandable that Hobbesian man could not aspire to anything greater than the perpetual satisfaction of his desire to preserve himself. At its most basic level, this implies protection from violent death; at its loftiest heights, this consists in the gratification of non-essential, material and physical wants and even in the ability or, as Hobbes argues, "power" to command the use of another's "power".[11]

This represents the trap that is set for those who came after Hobbes. The limits of the political enterprise is established at the outset. Given the natural character of man outside the Leviathan, man cannot aspire to anything unnatural within the Leviathan. He can, at best, express the very same natural passions in a civilized context; but he can never be anything other than the servant of those primitive passions. In this way, Hobbes constructs a polity with apolitical building blocks.[12]

While the ancient Greek philosophers drew a clear line of demarcation between reason and passion - this was particularly true of the Stoics such as Plato and Aristotle - Hobbes brings the two forces into harmony with each other. In the older tradition passion was seen as a quality that

"state of war"[10]. In a state of war one would not conceive of trusting one's enemy with one's well-being.

If Hobbes' account of life in the state of nature is accurate, that is, if it provides a true reflection of human relations outside of civil society, then it should follow that man cannot be political by nature. Politics requires at least some minimal form of co-operation and agreement among men. It requires reflection upon and deliberation over the collectively desired ends. And it requires the ability and willingness of men to consider the undesirable consequences some actions might have on fellow men if those actions are not suppressed. For Hobbes, the notion of civilization would have a meaning that would literally be nonsensical to the likes of Aristotle. For the fact of civilization for Hobbes, is the establishment of an artificial human condition, whereas for Aristotle, the natural condition is one of civilization. Civilization is that state which is unnatural to man for Hobbes. For Aristotle, civilization is simply the inevitable expression of that which is man.

The fact of the state of nature being a condition of perpetual war makes the quest for peace or self-preservation the most fundamental and perhaps the only real purpose for man. Such a condition makes it actually impossible for man to pursue the higher "life of moral virtue" to which

ruthless and competitive manner.

In his discussion of "worth", Hobbes sets out the most basic principle of market value, and in so doing he becomes the first to articulate what is later to be heralded and also criticized as the logic of the market.

> The value, or WORTH of a man, is as of all other things, his price; that is to say, so much as would be given for the use of his power: and therefore is not absolute; but a thing dependant on the need and judgment of another.[17]

The worth of a man is defined by the unstated principle that one can in fact sell oneself. But the price of that sale is determined by the utility which the commodity has for the purchaser. Hobbes might thus be seen as the first theorist of consumer society.

The political tradition of liberalism has often been associated with the notion of the development or discovery of the conception of market man and, concommitantly, market society. Indeed some commentators assert that the genius of liberalism is found exactly in the association of the conception of market man and market society. Remarking that "Hobbes was a little ahead of his time" in establishing the principles of the market, Macpherson outlines the market logic as it is found in Hobbes' system:

> The clearest model of such a society (one in which men are related to each other as possessors of their own capacities) was set up by Hobbes, . . . who saw all human attributes as commodities, to be contracted for and exchanged at values set

> (and rightly set) by the impersonal operation of a market in power, and who reduced justice to the performance of contract.[18]

In the above passage Macpherson is, in part, lamenting the failure of market society to achieve what it appears so well designed to do, namely, to allow for "the freedom to do what one wills with one's own".[19] This is, of course, not the same as self-actualization in the Aristotelian sense. For Macpherson's notion of freedom, extending itself from Hobbes, is tied to the concept of ownership and exchange. It is therefore not a developmental model. Nevertheless, the failure of the market to establish a freedom which could, in practice, be shared equally by all, is clearly a reflection on the assumptions about human nature that such a system must appeal to. This means that the market model does not result from a desire to fulfil man's natural potentialities, but from a need to control his temperament. Frederick Vaughan calls this temperament control a "manifestation of civilized hostility".[20]

> The "civilized" human condition becomes, therefore, the competitive relations of the market economy. Man's natural hostility is not obliterated in civil society; it is moderated and restrained within rules, which he gives himself to his own eventual benefit. The hostile and warlike savage becomes the peaceful possessive individual of the competitive marketplace.[21]

ii) <u>The Idealist response and failure</u>

While the Hobbesian market conception of man

established the framework of liberal society, it is important to recognize that there was, and there remains, a very critical and powerful response to the Hobbesian vision of man. Although Hobbes met with great opposition to his ideas in his own day,[22] perhaps the most influential and interesting critic was Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau is of interest not only because he was critical of Hobbes' conception of human nature, but mainly because he remained fundamentally a liberal, in spite of his attack on Hobbes. In a profound way, Rousseau's argument is inadequate as a criticism of the Hobbesian vision. But even in its inadequacy, Rousseau's argument must not be ignored for it represents the most important direct challenge within liberal political discourse to Hobbes' portrait of human nature.

Approximately one hundred-and-twenty years after the publication of the Leviathan, the most fundamental assumption of that work was challenged by Rousseau. That assumption concerned the very essence of man - i.e., the character of human nature. In a bold attack on Hobbes' portrait of human nature, Rousseau argues for a very different picture of humanity. In his opening sentence of the Preface to the Discourse on The Origin and Foundation of Inequality among Men. Rousseau makes what appears to be a fairly innocuous claim about the state of human

understanding:

> The most useful and least advanced of all human knowledge seems to me to be that of man; and I dare say that the inscription of the temple of Delphi alone contained a precept more important and more difficult than all the thick volumes of the moralists[23]

Rousseau is certainly commenting on the credibility of the Hobbesian enterprise. After all, Hobbes claimed that his Leviathan provided the kind of knowledge which Rousseau suggests was the "least advanced of all human knowledge ... that of man". The essay which follows his comment disputes the knowledge which Hobbes disseminated. Furthermore, Rousseau's reference to the inscription of the temple of Delphi makes his concern with Hobbes' doctrine unmistakable. The inscription reads "gnothi seauton" - "Know Thyself".[24] It is not a coincidence that in the Introduction to his most famous book, Hobbes states that the key to understanding all mankind is, "nosce teipsum" - "Read Thyself".[25] What makes this comparison so significant is that while both philosophers imply that knowledge of man comes from some form of introspection, each one clearly reads something very different in himself. If it is true that both the Hobbesian and the Rousseauian conclusions are products of an essentially introspective enterprise,[26] then the view that the market properly expresses man's natural inclinations in a civilized form must be challenged.

Rousseau articulates the challenge:

> Hobbes claims that man is naturally intrepid and seeks only to attack and fight.[27]

> Above all, let us not conclude with Hobbes that because man has no idea of goodness he is naturally evil; that he is vicious because he does not know virtue; that he always refuses his fellow-men services he does not believe he owes them; nor that, by virtue of the right he reasonably claims to things he needs, he foolishly imagines himself to be the sole proprietor of the whole universe.[28]

That these statements represent a direct assault on the tradition of possessive individualism is not questionable. Yet is it also true that Rousseau shared many of the ideas that Hobbes and later Locke advocated; so much so, that Rousseau is commonly situated within the tradition of liberalism. He was an advocate of the social contract. He believed in a strong sovereign; he saw civil society as a means of escaping the "uncertain and precarious way of living" in the state of nature.[29]

But what distinguishes Rousseau's vision of civil society from Hobbes', is that for Rousseau civil society would not only provide man with a refuge from the "precarious" conditions in the state of nature, it would also allow man to express his natural sociability. Man would be more than a mere machine preoccupied with the perpetual gratification of insatiable passions. He would, in fact, be more interested in the well-being of the community than in his own material welfare. For, given the

security of livelihood, man could afford to be engaged in the political life of the community. But it is not enough that the possibility should exist for man to become involved in the affairs of other men. It is essential that he wants to become so involved. This is perhaps where Rousseau makes his most important contribution to political philosophy. For it is in "knowing himself", in investigating the essence of man, that Rousseau reveals a most fundamental quality in man, quality other than "the fear of death and desire for self-preservation". This is the quality of "compassion" or "pity".

> There is, besides, another principle which Hobbes did not notice, and which - having been given to man in order to soften, under certain circumstances, the ferocity of his vanity or the desire for self-preservation before the birth of vanity - tempers the ardor he has for his own well-being by an innate repugnance to see his fellow-man suffer. I do not believe I have any contradiction to fear in granting man the sole natural virtue that the most excessive detractor of human virtues was forced to recognize. I speak of pity, a disposition that is appropriate to beings as weak as subject to as many ills as we are; a virtue all the more universal and useful to man because it precedes in him the use of all reflection; and so natural that even beasts sometimes give perceptible signs of it.[30]

It is with this notion of pity that Rousseau facilitates a politics which is "other-regarding" rather than "self-regarding". Pity as a fundamental human attribute undermines the politics of possessive individualism. Rousseau is adamant in his opposition to the

primacy of concern with private property, although he never advocates the dismantling of the system of private property. Rousseau sees it as an inevitable social institution, given man's political evolution. Property results from a long chain of developments in the emergence of civil society. The impact of a system of private ownership upon the development of the essence of man is that man's compassionate qualities are repressed altogether. He is conditioned to be vicious and aggressive.

> The first person who, having fenced off a plot of ground, took it into his head to say "this is mine" and found people simple enough to believe him, was the true founder of civil society. What crimes, wars, murders, what miseries and horrors would the human race have been spared by someone who, uprooting the stakes or filling the ditch, had shouted to his fellow-men: Beware of listening to this imposter; you are lost if you forget that the fruits belong to all and the earth to no one![31]

The importance of pity and the criticism of private ownership go hand in hand. Rousseau stresses the notion of community as the highest value of political life. The idea of pity or compassion extends beyond the "innate repugnance to see one's fellow-man suffer". It encompasses the act of expressing a general interest in the welfare of one's neighbour. It implies that one will be inclined to engage oneself in the discussion and resolution of other people's problems and in the celebration of their accomplishments.

The idea of pity is certainly, in part, a product of

the Hobbesian-Rousseauian concept of similitude based on introspection. One is able to identify with the experience of the stranger, for one assumes a general understanding of and familiarity with the soul of all mankind. One can well comprehend the pain and the joy of the stranger's circumstance. But the idea of pity extends beyond identification with others based on similitude. Rousseau speaks of the anguish and helplessness of a prisoner unable to prevent a terrible occurrence outside his cell. He describes this

> . . . pathetic image of an imprisoned man who sees outside a wild beast tearing a child from his mother's breast, breaking his weak limbs in its murderous teeth, and ripping apart with its claws the palpitating entrails of this child. What a horrible agitation must be felt by this witness of an event in which he takes no personal interest! What anguish must he suffer at this sight, unable to bring help to the fainting mother or to the dying child.[32]

This notion of pity is not concerned with self-love but with outwardly directed moral sentiment. This can only be tainted by the introduction of institutions which force men to envy and hate one another. The institution of the market, of property, I suggest, may well serve to achieve this result.

But Rousseau betrays himself. He stands clearly with the market liberals, not against them. This can be argued in a number of ways, but perhaps the most revealing one is

to consider the implication of Rousseau's characterization of freedom in the Social Contract. Freedom implies the "obedience to a law which we prescribe to ourselves".[33] For the market liberals, freedom had traditionally been understood as the absence of coercion.[34] In the Hobbesian system this would imply protection from the brutal conditions of the state of nature, although it would not mean protection from government coercion. To suggest that freedom is the obedience to self-prescribed laws is already to speak about political obligation. If man is to be free he must obey certain laws. This is a statement of obligation. That these laws are self-prescribed rather than being dictated by another is not germain to the question of obligation. In fact the result of an obedience to theoretically self-prescribed laws is just what market liberal social contract is about. In assigning such importance to the fulfilment of political obligation, Rousseau is forced to accept the reality of civil rights and, consequently, of property rights. While he is reluctant to defend the preservation and acquisition of private property, he cannot overlook the ugly reality of his age, as he understood it: Man has, over time, been forced to become a selfish beast in civil society.[35] Rousseau, therefore, justifies the institution of property not in terms of the system of production and market exchange, but

in terms of its compatibility with, indeed its moral necessity for the preservation of civil liberties. Since civil society already deprives man of his natural liberty or the possibility of not being corrupt, it must at least give a guarantee of his civil liberty "and of the proprietorship of all he possess".[36] This enormous compromise, or as some have called it, a Rousseauian Paradox,[37] puts Rousseau in the unenviable position of defending that which he appears to despise - the corrupt institution of private property in civil society. This also severely undermines his concept of freedom, for in reducing it to the notion of civil liberty, and in qualifying that notion by attaching to it the obligation to obey "one's own laws", the self-developmental enterprise evaporates.

Frederick Vaughan exposes the empty quality of this notion of freedom:

> Despite his efforts to re-establish virtue, Rousseau does not say that nature implants a specific human end. Man has no final end or perfection; he is infinitely perfectible, he can become whatever he wishes to become. This flows from his fundamental freedom.[38]

We can see more clearly in the thought of Rousseau, the unsatisfactory character of the liberal obsession with freedom as the highest political virtue. It is ironic that Rousseau should be the one to inadvertently expose the non-teleological character of the liberal enterprise. Why? Because this inability to define the object or quality of

freedom is precisely its defect; it is what makes it explicitly non-teleological. It is the failure to define precisely what we "want to do with our freedom" that makes the liberal concept of a "person" very problematic. We are left with a liberalism which George Grant defines as

> . . . a set of beliefs which proceed from the central assumption that man's essence is his freedom and therefore that what chiefly concerns man in this life is to shape the world as we want it.[39]

In not providing man with a moral summum bonum, liberals - all liberals, including Rousseau are forced to return to the life of the market. The market provides man with a task which will feed his passions and which will occupy him for all his days. It will organize his life and govern his relations with other men. It will provide him with the illusion of a summum bonum; but it will never permit him to act as a citizen. For the chief prerequisite of citizenship is the possibility of political action. Market society, unlike the Aristotelian polis, values its members according to their ability to perform in the market. A man is defined by his "worth" in the market. This is not the case in the Aristotelian conception of citizenship. For Aristotle, the business of citizenship indeed, the "duties" of citizenship were quite separate from the activities of the market-place. Political action, outside of the activities of the market, seems to have no place in market

liberalism.

Rousseau's notion of freedom, based on the political obligation to obey the general will as it is represented in the laws, and the more general liberal conception of freedom - the freedom to do as one wishes - is certainly inadequate as a foundation for political action. If man is to be a responsible maker of his world, he will want to have a sense of the political task before him. This sense should not originate from the impersonal mechanics of the market; it should originate with man himself. The teleological character of political action becomes inescapable and the notion of freedom, to have any meaning, must invariably be tied to some concept of telos. This is exemplified very well in a comment by John Hallowell: "True freedom requires both a knowledge of the good and the will to choose the good when known".[40] Knowledge of the good in this case may be distinct from a knowledge of what one desires or of what one considers to be achievable. It is, therefore, not evident that one would choose the good when known. The end or "telos" is thus not necessarily a function of externally determined conditions, such as those created by the market, or those established through personal selection of rules of conduct; the end of action is a function of the essence of the actor. In the case of Hallowell's statement, the end of action is the "good".

iii) The Logic of the Market Model: The Denial of Change

I have argued, thus far, that the liberal conception of man is inescapably based upon a market notion. Even Rousseau, who attempts to escape from this conception, at the end, finds himself embracing the logic of the market model of man. It is now necessary to elaborate more fully the nature of social relations in the market model of man, and to demonstrate that the very logic of this model prohibits political action.

I believe that it will be useful to make an argument by analogy in order to explicate the logic of the market model. The model is that of a game. Perhaps the game of "Monopoly" best characterizes this model.[41] The object of the game is to control as much of the wealth as possible. In other words, acquisition is the primary goal of the players. All the players begin the game with an equal amount of wealth. There is an important element of chance which influences the development of the game, but there is an equally important element of "skill" involved in making the most of one's position in the game. Normally, any player who loses all his wealth must remove himself from the game; and any player who possesses the most wealth controls the game and generally wins the game when it becomes no longer possible to redistribute or acquire any more wealth.

Given the object of the game, the players are obviously rewarded for being acquisitive, competitive and individualistic. Players who do not possess these qualities or who prefer to be generous and lenient with those who trespass on the properties that they have acquired, will quickly learn the way to their own defeat. The rules of the game certainly favour those who are more cunning and who possess the qualities of acquisitiveness, competitiveness and individualism; and the rules discriminate against those who are less cunning and acquisitive, and against those who, for one reason or another, are not at all attracted by the prospect of winning the game. Therefore, as in any game, the market game has winners and losers. Furthermore, the losers always greatly outnumber the winners.

In the initial stages of the game, few people drop out, and so those who do so will be almost unnoticed. And being in such few numbers, the early losers will not engender sympathy for their plight among the survivors, who will be too busy playing to worry about anything else. But as the number of losers increases and exceeds the number of survivors, the losers will become distracting to the players remaining in the game. They will become impatient, sitting around and waiting for the game to end. They will be upset with their defeats, and they will be eagerly suggesting other games - games which will favour their talents and

dispositions, games at which they will be winners.

Meanwhile, the winner(s) will come to realize that with no opponents remaining in the game, the game must come to an end. But the winner(s) will not want the game to end. For, in order to remain winner(s) the game must continue. The winner(s) will not want to play a different game, one suggested by the losers. The winner(s) will realize that in order to remain victorious, more than wealth is essential. Other players are also essential. The winner(s) will recognize that the effective source of wealth in the game is the participation of the weaker players.

Therefore, in order to remain powerful, the winner(s) will have to devise a way of preventing anyone from losing so badly that he would be forced to drop out of the game altogether. This might be achieved by subsidizing the weaker players in the game sufficiently to keep them interested in playing. It would at least discourage the weaker players from abandoning the game and replacing it with a different one.

I believe that this model crudely characterizes the logic of market liberalism. It characterizes the logic of a society in which the "winners" are faced with periodically having to pay some price (a small price in relation to what is actually at stake) in order to "keep the game going".[42]

In Chapter One I suggested that political action

implies change in two senses. The first sense is change in the general condition of man; that is, in the improvement of that condition. The second sense is change in state; that is, the actualization of potentialities. To say that action implies change is to say that it logically necessitates such change. I contend that the logic of the market (as illustrated by the "market game") makes action-related change impossible. The market is not structured in such a way as to allow for the pursuit of objectives which are either unrelated to, or inconsistent with, its efficient operation. It is not designed to accommodate the resolution of problems which are not definable in market vocabulary. Not only will the market not facilitate the resolution of such problems, but it will prevent the attempted resolution from having any adverse impact upon the vital market functions.

Since the market system is originally premised upon the view that man's natural inclinations would be transposed into civil society and that they would form the principles or rules of the game, any enterprise which could not properly be governed by those principles or rules would simply be subversive, incomprehensible, or irrelevant. Simply stated, the market system defines the nature of social relations and the whole political enterprise. There is not room for an a posteriori establishment of political

objectives which are not in some fashion useful to the systemic objective already in place. In The Great Transformation, Karl Polanyi identifies the domineering character of the market as it organizes society according to its own logic:

> To separate labor from other activities of life and to subject it to the laws of the market was to annihilate all organic forms of existence and to replace them by a different type of organization, an atomistic and individualistic one.
>
> Such a scheme of destruction was best served by the application of the principle of freedom of contract. In practice this meant that the noncontractual organizations of kinship, neighborhood, profession, and creed were to be liquidated since they claimed the allegiance of the individual and thus restrained his freedom. To represent this principle as one of noninterference, as economic liberals were wont to do, was merely the expression of ingrained prejudice in favor of a definite kind of interference, namely, such as would destroy noncontractual relations between individuals and prevent their spontaneous reformation.[43]

The very enterprise of change, understood as the improvement of the general condition of man, has meaning only in terms of the market's capacity to increase the general material welfare (the sum of all individual material welfare), through the process of exchange and competition. There can be no moral connotation given to such an enterprise, since the market understands only the language of exchange, distribution, and competition.

Alternatively, the notion of change, understood as self-actualization, cannot mean anything other than the

achievement of a "felicitous" condition. This is, of course, because the market portrait of human nature does not recognize any telos or summum bonum in man, but only the base qualities which Hobbes attributes to man in the state of nature.

Notes and References

[1]This term was coined by C.B. Macpherson in a 1954 article which appeared in Cambridge Journal, vii. pp. 560-8. It was later made popular in his book, The Political Theory Of Possessive Individualism (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

[2]C.B. Macpherson, Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval (Oxford: University Press, 1962).

[3]In suggesting that the two currents in liberalism have been incompatible for "a hundred" years, Macpherson is referring only to the challenge made by the liberal-democratic tradition emerging with the likes of J.S. Mill. I am, however, suggesting that there has been a fragmenting of liberal thought long before the emergence of this younger tradition. With Rousseau, only one hundred and twenty years after Hobbes, did emerge a challenge to the Hobbesian vision of human nature, in the liberal tradition. Even with Locke's writings (particularly the Second Treatise on Civil Government) there is the well-known contradiction between the "enough and as good" principle, and the right to unlimited acquisition.

[4]Ibid., pp. 38-76. (Essay III). See also, C.B. Macpherson, The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy (Oxford: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 21 and pp. 46-76.

[5]Among those who share this view is Albert O. Hirschman. See his book, The Passions and the Interests (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

[6]Macpherson, Democratic Theory, see Essay III.

[7]While this phenomenon has been an important part of politics throughout the ages, I am concerned in this investigation, with the influence that was brought to bear on the political process by those thinkers who were genuinely concerned with the question of human nature. Note, however, that the use of a posteriori justification is quite common in our own day. (e..g., Milton Freedman, Irving Kristol. They use a particular portrait of man to justify capitalism/market.)

[8]Macpherson, Democratic Theory, see p. 5.

[9]Frederick Vaughan, The Tradition of Political Hedonism: From Hobbes to J.S. Mill (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982), p. 71.

[10]Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan Introduction by R.S. Peters and Edited by Michael Oakeshott, (New York: Collier McMillan, 1962) pp. 98-102. This is the chapter entitled "Of the natural condition of mankind as concerning their felicity and misery", in which Hobbes describes the state of nature as a state of war, a state in which the "life of man (is) solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short".

[11]Ibid., p. 73. See also Macpherson, Democratic Theory, p. 42.

[12]This is simply a reference to the fact that the Leviathan is the great "artificial man". But man is not political by nature in the way that he is for Aristotle. The paradox of the Leviathan is that it is truly an apolitical polity; for it is not essentially the natural or inevitable expression of man' nature.

[13]Hobbes, Leviathan, p. 80.

[14]Vaughan, The Tradition of Political Hedonism, p. 80.

[15]Ibid., p. 83.

[16]Over one-hundred-and twenty years after Hobbes laid the groundwork for the politics of the apolitical - i.e., of the self interested - Adam Smith articulated the position which Vaughan describes:

> It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages.

[Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations, with an Introduction by Max Lerner, and Edited by Edwin Cannan, (New York: The Modern Library, 1937), p. 14.] Perhaps what has made the Hobbesian contribution to political philosophy so influential is its powerful and vivid characterization of human nature. Hobbes is said to have portrayed man as "wicked, ruthless, and untrustworthy". But there is a

different perspective of that characterization. Man was ruthless, wicked, etc. . . , because the conditions of the state of nature forced him to acquire these qualities. In this light, man is seen merely as a self-preserving victim of the conditions of the state of nature. In either case, Smith's portrait of man in market society can certainly be traced back to Hobbes. (Although it can also be said that the above passage is only a partial representation of Smith, and that in his work on Moral Sentiment has much to say about the importance of benevolence in politics.)

[17]Hobbes, Leviathan, p. 73.

[18]Macpherson, Democratic Theory, p. 193.

[19]Ibid., p. 192.

[20]Vaughan, The Tradition of Political Hedonism, p. 81.

[21]Ibid., p. 77.

[22]Perhaps the most celebrated challenge to Hobbes in his own day, came from John Bramhall, bishop of Derry, Ulster. Their disagreement began a discussion about the problem of free will. They had discussed this in Paris in 1654. A chain of replies or rather rebuttals was published between 1654 and 1663, when the bishop died. Even after the bishop's death, Hobbes published a reply to the last attack. The titles of these works are fascinating and provocative: from Bramhall - A Defence of True Liberty from Antecedent and Extrinsical Necessity; Castigations of Hobbes his last Animadversions. from Hobbes - Of Liberty and Necessity: The Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity and Chance.

There were other controversial challenges to Hobbes; one coming from the Oxford geometry professor, John Wallis, and another coming from astronomy professor Seth Ward. See R.S. Peters' essay on Hobbes in The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, (New York: Macmillan & Co., and the Free Press, 1967); Volume 4, p. 32.

I choose to look at Rousseau's challenge to Hobbes, rather than at Hobbes' contemporaries, because I am primarily concerned with the challenge to Hobbes' view of human nature, represented by Rousseau.

[23]Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The First and Second Discourses, edited with an Introduction by Roger Masters, translated by Roger and Judith Masters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), p. 91.

[24] Ibid., p. 232. (Comment by Masters).

[25]Hobbes, Leviathan, p. 20.

[26]It is, however, doubtful that Hobbes' and Rousseau's conclusions are the result of a purely introspective enterprise, since so much of their writing is devoted to describing how other men have conducted their affairs. In other words, Hobbes and Rosseau owe as much to their observation of other men, as they do to their own introspective experiences.

[27]Rousseau, Discourses, p. 107.

[28]Ibid., pp. 1228-29.

[29]Christian Bay, The Structure of Freedom (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), p. 51.

[30]Rousseau, Discourses, p. 107.

[31]Ibid., pp. 140-41.

[32]Ibid., pp. 130-31.

[33]Rousseau as quoted in Bay The Structure of Freedom p. 51. In the Penguin edition of The Social Contract, Translated and Introduced by Maurice Cranston, (Penguin Books, 1968), p. 65); it is translated as: "...obedience to a law one prescribes to oneself is freedom."

[34]Bay, The Structure of Freedom, pp. 40-49.

[35]See Frederick Vaughan, The Tradition of Political Hedonism. pp. 120-21.

[36]See Bay, The Structure of Freedom, p. 51; and see the Penguin edition of Rousseaus' Social Contract, p. 65.

[37]See Masters' Introduction to Rousseau's Discourses.

[38]Vaughan, The Tradition of Political Hedonism, pp. 120-21.

[39]George Grant, Technology and Empire: Perspectives on North America (Toronto: House of Anasi, 1969), p. 114.

[40]John H. Hallowell, "Plato and the moral foundation of democracy", in Thomas Landon Thorson, ed., Plato: Totalitarian or Democrat? (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 132.

[41]This is an obvious reference to the famous Parker Brothers game, which was so successful because it provided people with an opportunity to satisfy their "inclination towards a restless desire of power after power: that "ceaseth" when the game was over rather than "in death".

[42]The history of liberal society is replete with examples of "concessions". I believe that the three most momentous concessions of this nature were: 1-The emergence of trade-unions as legitimate brokers in the "game". 2-The Granting of suffrage (however gradual). 3-The introduction of social welfare (transfer payments). While I take the view that these events were indeed concessions rather than victories for the "losers in the market game", I, of course, do not overlook the importance of the efforts of activists to achieve a progressive response to their demands; but I am obviously suggesting that such responses would not have come were it not for the recognition by the "winners in the market game" that they had to make concessions, for their own reasons.

[43]Karl Polanyi, The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of our Time (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), first pub. 1944, p. 163.

Conclusion

In Chapter One I explained why any behavioural or mechanistic explanation must be non-teleological, and I argued that action can be adequately understood only when it is characterized teleologically. I introduced Hobbes as a pivotal figure in the philosophical transition away from teleological explanation and towards behavioural explanation.

In Chapter Two I attempted to trace the degeneration of the teleological tradition to its complete abandonment by liberal political theory. I introduced the concept of an ontological abstraction in order to explain the process of transformation in both Hobbes' and Kant's thought. John Rawls' deontological argument was examined both in order to expose the apolitical or "depersonalized" character of his philosophy and to identify the behavioural-mechanistic nature of contemporary liberal theory.

In Chapter Three I considered what I take to be the liberal assessment of human nature. I showed that in spite of Rousseau's objections to Hobbes' characterization of man as a market creature, liberal theory cannot, even in its self-criticism, escape the political consequences of the market. I suggested that this is because in denying the teleological account of political action, liberalism removes

political responsibility from man and assigns it to the market. I argued, using a simple game analogy, that the market-model of society logically denies the possibility of morally purposive political action.

This essay does not conclusively resolve any of the major questions of political philosophy but it points the way to a more useful and ordered discussion of the problem of action in liberal society. New problems arise from this treatment of the explanation of action and moral purpose, and although I have not addressed them, some merit mention at this point. For example, if when we discuss the nature of human nature and we suggest that it can be characterized, that it can be described, then is our analysis not reduced to mechanism? This problem stems from the discussion of the portrait of human nature in Chapter Three. Does it not follow that if human nature is empirically discernable, then the notion of morally purposive action collapses?

The underlying argument in this thesis would suggest that the notion of morality itself collapses when the nature of the moral agent becomes empirically intelligible.

But teleological explanation is not subject to this criticism because its most important claim is that it is, itself, a property of morally purposive action. This means that although teleologists such as Taylor or even Aristotle, make certain empirical claims about man as actor, their

central claims about human nature stem from the primary claim that man is by nature a purposive being. The quality and character of that purposiveness becomes a separate consideration from the essential teleological claim. I do not however suggest that the question of purposiveness can in fact be divorced from statements about the quality or character of that purposiveness. This may or may not be the case.

The thesis also poses the problem of the rehabilitation of moral purposiveness in liberal political life. In essence, it questions the very existence of politics in liberalism. If, as C.B. Macpherson has suggested, Hobbes was the first to dispense with assumptions of outside purpose or will[1] - a suggestion which I argue in Chapter One is only partially correct - and if Hobbes is in this sense representative of the liberal tradition which follows him, then the rehabilitation of politics, as I understand it, requires rescuing those assumptions of purpose and will. The rehabilitation of politics requires that man reclaim the "telos" which he relinquished to the market.

The existence of the market may well be the major obstacle to our successful engagement in the enterprise of politics. In order to remove or circumvent that obstacle, it is first necessary that we question whether the market is actually a natural reflection of human nature in civil

society or whether it is in fact the product of an arbitrary portrait of man. But as long as the existence of the market is seen as natural and inevitable, we not only accept the market portrait of man but perhaps also commit ourselves to BEING market creatures.

Man as morally purposive actor does not fit well into the schema of market life. If he exercises his moral purposiveness in liberal society, perhaps it is in spite of the rule of the market. Perhaps liberalism forces man to be moral only in private. I am not suggesting that he is immoral when participating in market life, simply that he has little or no opportunity to exercise his moral purposiveness in that context. Personal action in liberal society therefore, implies a kind of social subversiveness if exercised in the market place, or social irrelevance if exercised in private life.

If this essay makes any firm claim about political action, the most important must be that politics requires man's moral purposiveness to be exercised publicly.

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[1]Macpherson, Possessive Individualism, p. 88.

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