HANNAH ARENDT AND MASS EVIL.

A Critical Examination of Arendt's Concepts of Banality and Ideology.

Michael Hardiman

Supervisor of Research: Prof. Felix Ó Murchadha (NUIG)

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of *Philosophiae Doctor*
Discipline of Philosophy
School of History and Philosophy
College of Arts Social Sciences and Celtic Studies
National University of Ireland, Galway

September 2019

ABSTRACT

This thesis explicates Hannah Arendt's understanding of mass evildoing. Arendt's approach to mass evil is grounded in her analysis of the historical periods of the Third Reich and the Soviet regime under Stalin as well as the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem. Those events gave Arendt the material to hypothesise that a new form of evil had entered the world. This form of evil, she termed 'radical evil' and is distinguished from what can be termed 'normal criminality'. It is a form of evil that is produced by a fusion of widespread banality in a society, and an ideology that legitimises evildoing. This form of evil bypasses or defeats the normal preventative obstacles of individual morality.

The basic concepts developed by Arendt to explain 'radical evil' are presented. In addition, certain elements that constitute banality, as referenced by Arendt in the phrase the 'banality of evil' are identified and examined. As a consequence, the thesis proposes a conceptual triangle inherent in banal evil-doing that comprises three elements: (i) Thoughtlessness (ii) Obedience and (iii) Immersion. These are identified as central aspects that constitute banality as discovered by Arendt in her study of Eichmann. In addition, the form of ideology that leads to radical evil is also discussed. This form of ideology, one that is most germane to the spread of mass evil is identified and titled 'pernicious ideology'. This is explored in some detail, as well as the distinction between this form of ideology and others that are less potentially dangerous. Having disclosed the central conceptual elements in Arendt's understanding of both banality and ideology the thesis provides empirical evidence from the fields of historical analysis, psychology, and sociology to support the validity of these concepts.

The third strand of this thesis proposes that banality is not limited to the historical period assessed by Arendt, but is an intrinsic part of modern advanced societies. In addition the need for ideology is also identified as fundamental to such societies. It is concluded then that the constituents for mass evil-doing remain dormant in all advanced societies and can be awakened when certain political/economic circumstances take hold.

More specifically, it is argued that radical evil, as a product of banality and ideology, results from a widespread failure among substantial numbers in society to develop a firm sense of individuality, a personally well thought out moral code, and the cultivation of moral courage. Certain suggestions as to the forms of interventions whereby such danger can be identified is discussed in terms of providing people with better capabilities to withstand radical evil, by learning to avoid banality, and to recognise and resist ideological conditioning.

Declaration

I, Michael Hardiman certify that this thesis is all my own work and that I have not obtained a degree in this University, or elsewhere, on the basis of this work**.**

Acknowledgements.

Sincere gratitude to my supervisor; Prof. Felix Ó Murchadha. I consider myself fortunate to have had his support, guidance, and especially his erudite and comprehensive advice as this project unfolded and evolved.

To my children, David, Sarah and Rose for continuing to give me hope for the world even in dark times.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 3.

The Banality of Evil

Chapter 4.

Banality and the Masses

Chapter 5.

Human Evil and Pernicious Ideology

Chapter 6

Totalizing Ideologies and Religion

Chapter 7.

INTRODUCTION

Mass evil is a phenomenon which is evident across cultures and historical epochs and thus appears to be part of the human condition and as such it deserves and warrants the attention of philosophy. Certain explanations and curative efforts have featured within the philosophical/theological/political history of Western thinking. However, the deluge of evil that manifested itself in mid-20th century Europe suggests that these proved powerless in the face of the phenomenon. In addition, mass evil did not end with the defeat of Hitler and the death of Stalin. Rather it has taken new forms in new contexts in the decades since these events. There remains therefore a requirement for continued attention to this problem. In doing so the hope is that clearer insight into causative conditions of mass evil will equip those who seek to prevent it or at least to diminish the power of this profoundly destructive element of the human condition.

Hannah Arendt's philosophical and political *oeuvre* stands out with regard to providing a rich and comprehensive contribution to understanding mass evil. This thesis constructs a conceptual framework from her theoretical and historical accounts that provides a novel and explanatory system for how mass evil comes about and functions. At its core the thesis identifies and draws from many strands in her work and weaves these into a conceptual structure for understanding mass evil. More specifically, this thesis draws together the concepts of radical evil, banal evil, and ideology and demonstrates that these can form a tripartite dynamic structure within mass society. That structure lies dormant as a potentiality that with the arrival of certain social/political conditions will render mass evil events probable.

Despite the wreckage of mid-20th century Europe, one outcome can be recognised as being of some value, namely that no other historical period has provided us with the level of information about evil that these events disclosed. And such disclosure allows for a level of proximity and description to create what may be the most accurate and useful comprehension of the phenomenon thus far. The value of Arendt's work in terms of understanding mass evil is particularly irreplaceable. Her actual eye witness connection to the early growth of Nazism, her immersion into the history of totalitarianism, and her exposure to and analysis of Eichmann provide her with a series of different facets that create a rich tapestry from which to frame an explanatory model of mass evil. That is the core task of this thesis. It is pursued in three stages.

The first is to identify the core elements in Arendt's work that relate to the problem of evil. Arendt did not admit to having created a theory of evil, and her work on the subject is somewhat disparate insofar as she takes different aspects of the operation of mass evil and discusses them individually without tying such ideas into a conceptual whole. In one context she will discuss the problem of obedience, in another she describes the role of ideology, and in another the effect of thoughtlessness. All of these and more are central to the conditions that led to the Holocaust and the other mass cruelties that she describes and attempts to understand. The first task of this thesis is to lay out precisely the more important elements in Arendt's understanding of mass evil. Three distinct concepts emerge in Arendt's analysis of mass evil as she investigated its progress through the historical periods under Stalin and the Third Reich. These are Radical Evil, Banal Evil, and Pernicious Ideology. These concepts are identified in the body of the thesis and are described in some detail in terms of their value to understanding mass evildoing. In terms of Arendt's varied works reliance is placed mainly on her Magnum Opus: *Origins of Totalitarianism*, essays on the topics of; moral responsibility, violence, obedience, morality, thinking, and her analysis of Adolf Eichmann and various other essays and correspondence concerned with the above. To a lesser extent her works *The Life of the Mind* and *The Human Condition* are referenced where considered relevant.

The second task of this thesis is to evaluate the validity and the accuracy of Arendt's concepts in terms of their centrality to the problem of mass evil. One of the strengths in Arendt's work is that there is always a sense of the practical in her descriptions. Her presentations of evil are never far away from the actual people who are operating or actualising it. For Arendt, evil is always personal in its effect. She tells the story of evil and evil doers. And in such descriptions she offers some explanations. As such, her concepts invite support from fields outside the more rarefied areas of philosophical debate. Thus, an interdisciplinary approach is considered most appropriate to the central task of this thesis. Taking an interdisciplinary approach to validating Arendt's main arguments gives important support to her claims, and more specifically allows for greater trust in the applicability of the outcome, which is to form a way of understanding mass evil that is of value in seeking its prevention. Her understanding of Radical Evil, Banal Evil and Pernicious Ideology are thus approached not only through her own analysis but also through the lenses of historical data, social psychology and sociology. These provide rich supportive information that solidifies her work as both accurate and relevant to the issue of mass evil.

The third task of this thesis is to form a conceptual or theoretical framework from the relationship between the disparate elements that are at the centre of Arendt's work. This framework describes a particularly toxic relationship between banality and ideology that actualises evil. The evil outcomes that emerge from this dynamic relationship can take the form of any of the elements identified by Arendt as components of Radical evil. It is established therefore that this model or framework holds together all of the significant strands in Arendt's thinking on the subject.

This framework emerges from the analysis of Arendt's work but is not limited to understanding evil as expressed under totalitarian rule. Rather, the conclusion of the thesis explains that this framework can provide some explanatory power in any situation where evil can emerge as a social phenomenon, rather than as an expression of some individualist criminality or immorality. It is argued that the resulting template can be applied retrospectively to other mass evils in history and perhaps more importantly can be used as means of recognising when a society begins its gradual and progressive journey into evil. Certain pedagogical implications are suggested in terms of the capacity for society to develop means by which people can be better prepared to recognise and avoid becoming corrupted as evildoing becomes legislated by government

Literature Review.

Because this thesis takes an interdisciplinary approach it seems appropriate to list the main resources under the headings of the different disciplines

History

Historical data is of critical importance in terms of providing empirical support for Arendt's account of the political and social changes that led to the condition whereby mass evil could flourish. One example is that of her important insight that 'radical evil' can be considered as comprising progressive stages that can be identified within the political/governance structure of a society. According to Arendt, the first stage of 'radical evil' involves dismantling the individual legal rights in what she terms 'killing the judicial person'. This thesis relies on the historical accounts of the various legal/constitutional changes that were in place in different locations that lend support to Arendt's claim. Other historical data is used to support her analysis of the progression of evil as experienced in the lives of both perpetrators and victims. History is also a critical resource in support of how Arendt understands the role of ideology

in mass evil. In terms of the historical analysis of the above, primary sources are those of Snyder, Kershaw, Goldhagen, Browning, Solzhenitsyn, Montefiore and others.

The choice of historical resources is made in part to show that there are differences in interpretations among certain historians as to the particular role certain situations played in the events that Arendt depends on for her analysis. Such differences recognise the complexity of the arguments while also clarifying aspects that remain undeveloped in Arendt's analysis. A prime example here is the Browning /Goldhagen debate which offers important insights into the significant role of ideology on one hand, while also recognising the influence of group dynamics and simple habit on the other. Both aspects of mass evil are referenced by Arendt but the differing historical analysis by these two historians gives both texture and clarity to her position. Browning provides strong evidence for the way that habituation and commitment to 'one's job' were deeply influential in the manner in which ordinary people become murderers. This is a key argument in Arendt's analysis. Goldhagen, on the other hand pushes forcefully against this notion and saw that beneath these 'banal' excuses lay a virulent ideological hatred which underscores that aspect in Arendt's thinking that demands some ideological structure by which the banal can operate. Both scholars use historical data to support their positions. Historical analysis and scholarship will be used throughout this thesis in this manner.

Psychology

The field of psychology is accessed in terms of supporting Arendt's understanding of the psychological changes that occur among both victims and perpetrators. Arendt describes such phenomena as widespread obedience, moral collapse, unthinking compliance and a lot more as she presents the picture of a civilised society sinking into massive depravity. The descriptions can be considered as identifying how the individual subject is responding to the political and social upheaval in which they find themselves. As such, they are descriptions of internal states, or changes that are occurring in response to the environment. These changes are critically important for Arendt, insofar as they are the basis on which she develops her argument with regard to the banality of evil, as well as the issue of personal responsibility. These descriptions are of great value but in terms of this thesis require closer inspection in terms of attempting to get inside the subjective 'states of mind' associated with the conversion of ordinary people into mass evil doers. More specifically the findings from experimental social psychology are of particular value in supporting many of Arendt's

contentions as to the conditions that allow for such conversion. One rather striking example is that of the role of obedience. Obedience is a significant strand in Arendt's understanding of how banal evil was so pervasive and prevalent. As such Arendt goes to some length to analyse the structure of obedience. For the purposes of this thesis her analysis is strongly supported in what is now the iconic experimental study of obedience by psychologist Stanley Milgram. There are other very significant strands in Arendt's work that attempt to show how ordinary people become corrupted and compliant in the face of evil. These strands are examined and some of the most significant support for her thesis is provided by social psychologists. The works of Milgram, (2005) Zimbardo (2007), Festinger,(1959) Baumeister (1997) and others are called into service to support and explicate these areas.

Sociology

Sociology had for Arendt (1994) a dubious pedigree when seeking answers that explain the rise of totalitarianism, and more specifically in understanding the role and power of ideology. This thesis argues that Arendt's concepts benefit from a different reading of sociology which provides a rich source of support for certain aspects of her work. Two elements in Arendt's work seem particularly open to benefit from sociological research. The first is what she called her 'cog theory' whereby banal evil doers avoid responsibility by virtue of defining themselves as a small cog in a big machine. As such, their task can be replaced as easily by somebody else. Arendt sees this defence as a significant element of banality. It is also a direct result of a wider sociological phenomenon whereby all aspects of life become atomised or reduced. Weber's sociological theory of bureaucratisation is considered central to supporting Arendt's analysis as such systems greatly facilitated aspects of banal evil doing. Weber's analysis of the ethic underlying material accumulation within capitalism is also referenced in terms of its effects in modern consumer society and its implications for how individualism is understood. More recently Baumann's (1991) concept of 'moral distance' developed in *Modernity and the Holocaust* proves to be of particular relevance to the topic of banal evil. These sociological analyses are used to give texture to certain aspects of Arendt's thesis.

A second area where sociological analysis provides important insight into Arendt's work is concerned with the role and power of ideology in the spread of evil. This is discussed in detail and the parallels between the functions and roles of ideology and religion are considered central to the argument. The foundational work of Durkheim is referenced in this

effort. The thesis argues, contra Arendt, that the psychological power of ideology to corrupt and control mass individuals, shows clear parallels with that of religion. Arendt refutes the notion that similar processes are at work in the effects of religion and ideology. The thesis argues that sociological analysis supports the notion that these two phenomena are similar in terms of their psychological effects on adherents. It also provides a means to distinguish Arendt's particular concept of ideology from some other understandings of the phenomenon.

Biographical Accounts

Limited use is made of eye witness testimony. This is based on Arendt's own warning that such biographical accounts are of questionable value in helping to understand totalitarianism. For Arendt (1985),

> recollection can no more do this than can the uncommunicative eyewitness report. In both these genres there is an inherent tendency to run away from the experience…they cannot supply anything more than a series of remembered occurrences that must seem just as incredible to those who relate to them as to their audience. (p.441)

There is however some merit to using eye witness accounts in the context of this thesis. This is, in part, in order to shield the work from becoming too much of an abstraction and losing its ability to maintain front and centre the actual existential reality that evil creates in the world. Story telling is one of the most powerful means of making experiences come alive to the one who seeks understanding, which can be considered to be one of the fundamental tasks of philosophy. Arendt herself acknowledges this by saying that "No philosophy, no analysis, no aphorism be it ever so profound, can compare in intensity and richness of meaning with a properly narrated story" (1983 p.22)

The use of biographical accounts is limited to those who have both the experience of the concentration camps or Gulags and the analytical skills to examine some of the meanings in the broader aspects of human functioning. These have used their story to throw some philosophical light onto the problem of evil, other than simply recounting their experiences. First among these is that of Primo Levi, whose account remain iconic in its clarity, and depth. Others worthy of regard are Jean Amery, Victor Frankl and Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Whilst all these areas of scholarship are drawn upon, they are placed into the context of the philosophical arguments concerned with establishing a conceptual whole that presents mass evil as a fusion of banality and pernicious ideology.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1. Philosophical approaches to the problem of Evil: An Historical Overview

The central theme of this thesis is to examine certain aspects of human evil as presented in the work of Hannah Arendt, and to explore the implications of that work in terms of preventative measures that might be considered from within the field of philosophy. In order to give due consideration to Arendt's contribution to the subject of evil, it is considered necessary to set out the philosophical context within which her work finds itself. In other words it is considered important to describe the understandings and approaches to the problem of evil extant at the time of her analysis. This chapter is concerned with that element of the project. In doing so it will set out the parameters under which human evil can be considered, as well as noting that there are certain aspects of the subject matter that are not considered central to the primary intention of the research. The distinction between a Privative and a Dualist understanding of the nature of evil is discussed with special attention to the way that each of these, having historically emerged within theology, provided foundations for the development of secular parallels. Certain limitations and difficulties with the term 'evil' are also examined and argument is made for its retention as a term of considerable conceptual value.

Chapter 2. Radical Evil.

Arendt's quest to understand human evil is initially observed in her study of totalitarianism. From this early work, through to the end of her life, she modified and developed her thinking. One of the most significant shifts in that thinking is her move away from what she termed 'radical evil' as expressed in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1985), to the conceptualisation of the 'banality of evil'. The critical influence in her change of emphasis occurred as a result of her study of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann which she reports in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (2006). It would remiss however to assume that these two understanding of evil, radical and banal are not intimately connected. This chapter presents Arendt's understanding of what she termed 'Radical Evil'. It also recognises that Arendt changed her mind about the use of the term, while maintaining the validity of the phenomenon that this term described. It is also argued in this chapter that there is some legitimacy in retaining the term as a useful conceptual identifier of a certain form of evil progression.

Chapter 3. Banal Evil

This chapter examines one of the more controversial aspects of Arendt's thesis concerning the problem of evil. Arendt was dissatisfied with merely describing the elements of 'radical evil' because it left unanswered the critical question of how this evil could be implemented on such a vast scale. Her turn towards this question led her to what many consider a revolutionary understanding of human evil, namely that it is often banal. This term should not be confused with the idea that evil itself is somehow insignificant, rather the term refers to evil-doing. A more accurate phrase in this regard would be to refer to the banality of evildoing, or the ascription to certain evildoers as banal. This chapter examines in detail the meaning of this concept. In doing so certain elements that constitute banality are identified and explored. The chapter proposes a conceptual triangle inherent in banal evil-doing that comprises three elements: (i) Thoughtlessness (ii) Obedience and (iii) Immersion. These are identified as central aspects that constitute banality as discovered by Arendt in her study of Eichmann. Each is examined individually and support for their validity and value is presented from the fields of psychology and sociology.

Chapter 4. Banality and the Masses

This chapter argues that Arendt's concept of banality which she believes represents a critical element in mass evil doing, is also directly related the concept of 'the masses'. More specifically, it shows that the characteristics of banality are largely produced by membership of the masses. If the "masses" are characterised or constituted by banality then the likelihood is that they will behave as they did under any regime that incorporates evil doing, of which the Nazi regime was a prime example. The 'conceptual triangle' of banality, Thoughtlessness, Obedience, and Immersion are shown to be features of mass society and those features have been recognised in the works of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Ortega and Marcuse. Contemporary forms are also identified in the cultivation and promotion of a form of narcissistic individualism that facilitates the creation of conformist and superficial subjects. Thus, Arendt's insights into the nature of banality are applied to the wider scope of history and contemporary society. By illuminating the relationship between banality and membership of the masses this chapter claims that there are profound implications for the proclivity towards mass evil existent in any society that features the masses as part of its structure.

Chapter 5. Human Evil and Pernicious Ideology

This chapter inspects Arendt's understanding of the relationship between ideology and mass evil. For Arendt, the form of ideology that presents as most attractive and poses greatest danger, is that which flourished under totalitarianism, and can be seen to comprise three elements: (i) A totalising narrative, (ii) a separation from experience, and (iii) a destructive logic. Each of these is examined in turn and reference where considered appropriate to the fields of history, psychology and sociology are made by which to validate Arendt's claims. Important distinctions are also made between Arendt's formulations and other theoretical understandings of ideology, so as to identify the forms that are most dangerous. These are entitled "Pernicious".

Chapter 6. Totalising Ideology and Religion

This chapter proposes that ideology is a crucial feature of modern society and more particularly in terms of the needs it provides for the banal. It also shows that these needs are long standing features of human societies but have heretofore been met largely through religious systems. It is argued that these systems were replaced by secular versions that mimic the structure and function of major religions and thus have powerful influences on people well beyond their political attitudes. Furthermore it addresses Arendt's position that religion and ideology differ in significant ways, and in terms of this thesis, the conclusion is reached that there is a valid case to be made that there are significant structural similarities between older religious orthodoxies and the secular versions of ideologies that drove the mass evils under discussion.

These structural similarities are,

- explanatory power,
- the provision of the sacred, (including the semi deification of leaders, and the provision of rites and rituals that bind people together under the power of the ideology)
- the reliance on faith

It is by harnessing the aspects of human consciousness that needs and yearns for what religion heretofore gave to humanity that new ideologies become so powerful; powerful beyond any rational analysis, and powerful enough to overwhelm all decency and morality

Chapter 7. Ideology and the Susceptibility to Corruption

This chapter focuses on two issues, the powerful attraction to totalising ideology by the masses in virtue of meeting certain fundamental existential needs. In addition, it shows that the power of this form of ideology on human consciousness mirrors that of the power heretofore held by religious belief. This so because, like religion, these provide the critical existential needs for safety, for belonging, and for meaning that seems ubiquitous and fundamental to being human. Secondly, it shows how mass evildoing becomes possible when a totalising ideology becomes pernicious by virtue of holding the persecution or mistreatment of others part of its 'doctrine'. It also makes the large claim that most people's moral reasoning is subservient to ideology and religion, and further that this subservience is a form of moral weakness that makes people vulnerable to becoming evil doers.

One of the important findings in this thesis is that, for most, the condition of banality is not distressing or discomforting. Nor does banality itself automatically lead to evildoing. The banal mass are to some extent lulled into the condition, and it is only when their complacency is challenged through economic or political upheaval that they are awoken. And, in such a state, their proclivity is to find a solution that will assist them to return to their original state. That solution often consists of a turn toward some ideological system that promises them the satisfactions heretofore considered their entitlement, or an even more extensive level of comfort. Thus, the role of ideology takes an important place in creating both a meaning structure and guide for behaviour for the banal. Arendt is particularly adroit in her understanding that a powerful leader can emerge from the crowd if he or she can be seen to incarnate an ideology that makes such a promise. When that ideology also carries evildoing tenets, the road is clear to the creation of widespread mass evildoing. The means by which mass evil evolves as a result of a fusion of banality with pernicious ideology is thus exposed. This is the main conclusion of the thesis.

The thesis concludes with the presentation of certain implications arising out of the analysis in terms of social susceptibility to mass evil. It is argued that radical evil, as a product of banality and ideology, results from a widespread failure among substantial numbers in society to develop a firm sense of individuality, a personally well thought out moral code, and the cultivation of moral courage. Certain suggestions as to the forms of interventions whereby such danger can be identified are discussed. The main focus here is on the question of how people can be provided with better capabilities to withstand radical evil, by learning

to avoid banality, and to recognise and resist ideological conditioning. These are discussed under the headings of individuation, reflective thinking, moral development and ideological awareness.

Chapter 1.

Philosophical Approaches to the Problem of Evil: An Historical Overview

1.1 Introduction

One of the important functions of philosophy is to provide insight into how and why the world is the way it is. Part of that world is the functioning of human beings in a variety of cultural settings. And one aspect of that world is that human beings can be and have been profoundly destructive of each other and the environments in which they live. Accordingly, Jung (1964) tells us that 'one would have to be positively blind not to see the colossal role that evil plays in the world."(p.114). Such destructiveness is a challenge to all the sciences, human and physical. Singer (2004), however, believes that "[C]larifying the concept of evil, defining its nature, is a distinctly philosophical task. (p.185)

The central theme of this thesis is to examine certain aspects of human evil as presented in the work of Hannah Arendt, and to explore the implications of that work in terms of preventative measures that might be considered from within the field of philosophy. In order to give due consideration to Arendt's contribution to the subject of evil, it is considered necessary to set out the context within which her work finds itself. This chapter is concerned with that element of the project. In doing so it will set out the parameters under which human evil can be considered, as well as noting that there are certain aspects of the subject matter that are not considered central to the primary intention of the research.

1.2 The concept of evil.

Arendt (1994) believed that the problem of human evil would become "the fundamental question of post war intellectual life in Europe" (p.134). Written just after WW2 this prediction was somewhat premature as the decades following the war could not be characterised as such. It took until the additional events of China under Mao Zedong, Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, Rwanda, 9/11, Srebrenica, Abu Graib and other human engineered catastrophes for her prediction to take hold. In consequence recent decades have seen a serious upsurge in interest in the problem of evil within the fields of moral, political and legal philosophy. (Baumeister 2012)

The focus within these fields of study is characterised by efforts to understand the nature of human evil-doing. More recently, this focus has taken the concept of evil away from any

metaphysical underpinning and leaves it firmly within the narrative of human functioning. In doing so it took the concept of evil away from what had been its conceptual home for millennia: Theology. Consequently, Neiman (2002) suggests that "if enlightenment is the courage to think for oneself, it's also the courage to assume responsibility for the world into which one is thrown…..Modern conceptions of evil were developed in the attempt to stop blaming God for the state of the world, and to take responsibility for it on our own." (p.4) A brief account of that historical progression in terms of the ways that evil came to be conceptualised is considered important as a context for evaluating Arendt's contribution. Before attending to that issue it is also considered important to justify the retention of the term "evil" itself. Such a justification is required because there is significant scholarship within the fields of philosophy and other humanities that call for a rejection of the term. (Cole 2006)

1.3 The term 'Evil'

Many scholars have called for the rejection of the term 'evil' as part of intellectual dialogue. (see Cole 2010) The grounds for these arguments is based on the historical connection between the term 'evil' and a specifically religious world view. Evil is considered by many to be an archaic and now vestigial organ of the Judeo Christian theological body, with its immediate and inextricable relationship to the concepts of sin, the fall from grace, and the productivity of Satan and the dark forces of his minions. It is further argued that using the term 'evil' to describe human behaviour is vague, confusing and dehumanising. Clendinnen (1999) dismisses its use by suggesting that the conceptual field inhabited by words like evil is "no use whatsoever when it comes to teasing out why people act as they do" (p.90). She claims that it places the source of wrong doing and destructive behaviour in some simplistic aspect of character rather than understanding it as a complex interplay of influences, personal, social and cultural. Matthewes (2000) agrees claiming that "'Evil' seems to be for us solely a term of distanciated, extrinsic judgement and not a useful tool for informing and guiding our lives. It seems a non-operational part of our moral language, lacking fruitful purpose; it is merely a conceptual artefact, a ghostly vestigial presence from previous moral language". (p.376) These objections have merit. In response it should be noted that these objections are largely concerned with the way the term 'evil' is used. Proponents of the rejection of the term are of the opinion that such uses diminish the value of the term to such a degree that it is no longer helpful to any intelligent dialogue to use it. It is considered here that there are equally coherent arguments for the retention of the term.

In the first place, it is a traditional term, and is so central to many different debates that it would prove difficult to neglect its use in the context of this current research. Arendt uses the term consistently throughout her work and appears unconcerned that her audience would not understand what she meant by its usage.

More importantly however, it is considered that the term 'evil' connotes something more meaningful than similar terms and also has discriminatory value. Those who complain that it does not have explanatory power are largely correct. However, the alternatives of 'wrong doing', 'bad', very destructive, malevolent and malicious encounter the same difficulty. Each captures some element of the sense of awfulness of an act yet each also misses out on something. (Garrard 2002) Two events can be designated as 'bad' that are widely different in terms of moral turpitude. Somewhat closer to the term evil are the terms 'malicious' and 'malevolent'. These, however, carry very strong nuances of intentionality and motivation, neither of which are necessarily constituent of evil. This issue will be discussed in detail below. Perhaps the closest alternative term is that chosen by Midgely (1984) in her effort to describe 'evil' behaviour using the term 'wickedness'. The difficulty here is that 'wickedness' can be used in contexts which have no bearing on moral wrongdoing as in the comment that one can have a wicked sense of humour.

'Evil' is a term that appears to be required when none of its alternatives carry sufficient weight. (Singer 2004) In terms of the current thesis Dawes' (2014) recommendation is considered helpful. He writes that "[O]ur moral language is impoverished if it cannot account for those acts that shock our conscience, acts whose enormity cannot be encompassed by the wrong bad, or even wicked. We need to conceptually distinguish such acts both as a matter of respect for the truth value in our emotions and as a matter of respect for the survivors and the dead". (p.35). Bat-Ami (2002) agrees "[W]e are surrounded by atrocities, both old and new, and could make use of robust and potent ethical concepts to think about them. 'Evil' seems uniquely promising in this respect." (p.158)

It is, therefore, considered appropriate to maintain the term here with certain qualifications. It is a term that is meaningful when it describes the most cruel, destructive and malicious forms of human activity. Its use in this thesis does not necessarily refer to any daemonic activity, nor does it require a religious framework. The term itself it can also be considered to have gradations. Thus, it is evil to murder an old lady for her purse, it is profoundly evil to kidnap a child and torture them for days before ending their suffering by strangulation.

It can also be clarified that the relationship between evil and destructiveness is not transitive, therefore, while evil is always destructive in one form or another, destructiveness is not always evil. In the context of this thesis the term evil will be used to describe, rather than explain, acts that are perpetrated resulting in profound harm, loss and suffering to innocent or undeserved victims. This 'definition' focuses primarily on the outcome of actions, and in so doing can be considered consequentialist[1] in nature. It combines two sources, that of philosopher John Kekes (2005) who defines evil as involving "serious harm that causes fatal or lasting injury, as do for instance murder, torture and mutilation. Serious harm need not be physical." (p.1) with Zimbardo's (2007) additional clause of "using one's authority and systemic power to encourage or permit others to do so on your behalf." (p.5).

1.4 Historic developments in the concept of evil.

Berel Lang (1990) proposes the idea that the concept of good as well as the field of ethical ideals, have evolved over time, as a consequence of cultural and intellectual influences. Conversely, he considers that evil or what he terms ideals of wrong doing, "have not been accorded a parallel history' (p.10). He considers this to be the result of the belief or perception that "evil unlike good, is all one" or alternatively that the "mechanisms of evil-doing leave no room for innovation" (p.11). There is a degree of validity in this position. Intellectual inquiry in Western thought concerned with the problem of evil has to a great extent been limited in virtue of its place in the metaphysical universe of Judeo-Christian thought. Even today there are those who believe that the study of evil belongs exclusively within the field of theology. Staten (2005) in his analysis of Kantian 'radical evil' writes, "I want to resituate the question of evil within the intellectual context that is its proper home: Christian theology". (p.15) Theologian Stanley Hauerwas (2003) agrees and suggests that "the proper home for the language of evil is the liturgy: it is God who deals with evil, and it's presumptuous for humans to assume that our task is to do what only God can do" (p.3). Singer (2004) replies that, "it impossible for humans to do what only God can do – but the stipulation that only God can deal with evil is preposterous in its presumption and naivety and – fatalism". (p.187)

[1] There are important limitations to the use of the term 'evil' as it is used here. These are well summarised by Haybron 2002 in his discussion of what he terms the untenable, and implausible, nature of all harm based accounts of evil. Those complaints are valid when one is trying to make a comprehensive account of evil in its many forms and expressions. This is not the intention of the current work and thus a narrower use of the term is considered acceptable

If philosophy is to provide any worthwhile contribution to dealing with the very real presence of evil in the world then it must engage is serious effort to untangle this complex element of human functioning. Neiman (2002) referencing Sartre tells us that "To fight particular evils effectively you need to understand them" (p.294) It can be said that heretofore efforts at such understanding appear to have stalled and remained limited largely to certain theoretical notions, none of which appear to have prepared the developed world for the deluge of evil witnessed during the twentieth century. Such limited approaches to the problem of evil are a result of the conceptual trap caused by the problem of theodicy. A term coined by Leibniz in 1710 to describe efforts to justify the obvious presence of evil in the world created by an all-powerful and omniscient God, theodicy dominated most efforts to understand evil within the confines of a theocentric world for millennia. It was thus impossible to find any way of approaching the problem of evil without entering that debate. The results meant that any understanding of evil was constricted by its need to 'fit' the confining presuppositions of a world that exists as the work of a 'good' Creator God.

These limitations meant that, with the exception of Kant, the fact of evil, and the nature of its expression, remained largely ignored within the formal intellectual fields of study, but found expression in literature. Even today, most theorists interested in the problem of evil find themselves leaving the formal academy and referencing the more creative efforts that give voice to this profound but philosophically neglected aspect of the human condition. Thus, Shakespeare's Iago, Goethe's Mephistopheles, Milton's Paradise Lost, Dostoyevsky's Karamazov, The Marquis De Sade, Conrad, Melville and others gave a far richer and concrete interpretation of the problem of evil than the incessant arguments concerning ways to explain its presence within a theistic universe.

The results of these debates did, however, give birth to two conceptual offspring that remain largely the form which human evildoing has been understood into the twentieth century. These can be entitled the privative theory, and the dualist theory of evil respectively. Arendt makes reference to these two 'theories' of evil and suggests that whilst they dominated the intellectual landscape from the early Greeks to the Enlightenment and beyond, they were inadequate to the task of explaining what happened under the totalitarian regimes of the Hitler and Stalin. By discovering in her work the fault lines in these two theories of evil it is also possible to retrospectively reach a different understanding of other great evils that punctuate human history. Although the remainder of this thesis will consider the significant

results of Arendt's thinking about human destructiveness, here it is considered important to briefly examine these understandings of evil in order to contextualise her contribution.

1.4.i The privative theory of evil.

The privative model of evil can best be summarized in Arendt's (1970) words as "a much older philosophical prejudice: that evil is no more than a *privative modus* of the good, that good can come out of evil; that in short evil is but a temporary manifestation of a still hidden good" (p.56) This understanding of evil has a long history and can be considered to have profound implications for how evil was treated within the human endeavours of education, moral philosophy, moral training and jurisprudence. In the aftermath of Auschwitz, Arendt contends that "such time-honoured opinions have become dangerous" (p. 56)

The great architect of the privation model of evil is Augustine of Hippo. He argues:

> When, however, a thing is corrupted, its corruption is an evil because it is, by just so much, a privation of the good. Where there is no privation of the good, there is no evil. Where there is evil, there is a corresponding diminution of the good. As long, then, as a thing is being corrupted, there is good in it of which it is being deprived; and in this process, if something of its being remains that cannot be further corrupted, this will then be an incorruptible entity (natural incorruptibility), and to this great good it will have come through the process of corruption. (2009 p.19)

The assumptions in this argument are clear, and have great significance in terms of the nature of evil. One key element is the notion that when an evil event occurs, its existence is predicated by the existence of a good that is being corrupted. The good is being corrupted and this corruption is the substance of the evil. In other words there must be a prevailing condition or state of goodness to be corrupted in order for evil to exist.

In addition, it can be gleaned from this argument that there is a sense of progression or movement in the doing of evil. Evil corrupts the good until it reaches that point of the good that it can no longer corrupt. It could be suggested that implicit here is the notion that perhaps evil can have a beneficial function in terms of tearing away aspects of the good that evil can reach, leaving a residual that is impervious to evil and is thus perfect. Evil then can be considered to have a purifying element.

This idea is found in some form, subtle or otherwise in all forms of theodicy and Enlightenment optimism. It may even be interpreted that evil doing has the purpose of

refining the good. This matter will be discussed more fully in a later chapter on the subject of ideology

Augustine continues:

> If, however, the corruption comes to be total and entire, there is no good left either, because it is no longer an entity at all. Wherefore corruption cannot consume the good without also consuming the thing itself. Every actual entity is therefore good; a greater good if it cannot be corrupted, a lesser good if it can be. Yet only the foolish and unknowing can deny that it is still good even when corrupted. (p.19)

Augustine here is following the logic that is inherent in the original presupposition. If evil can only exist or be defined in terms of its corruption of the good, then when the good is finally vanquished, evil too must also no longer exist. He concludes therefore that "[W]henever a thing is consumed by corruption, not even the corruption remains, for it is nothing in itself, having no subsistent being in which to exist". Christian apologist C.S.Lewis (1978) summarises Augustine's analysis thus: "Goodness is so to speak, itself: badness is only spoiled goodness. And there must be something good first before it can be spoiled." (p.46)

It can be said that this conclusion is unwarranted. The tautological nature of the argument means that starting from the premise that evil is only the corruption of the good, then when all good is corrupted there is nothing left. A more philosophically coherent outcome might be that what remains, after a progression of complete corruption, is a perfectly evil entity/state. It is beyond the requirements of the current work to future explicate this aspect of the subject.

This 'theory' of evil posits the notion that the default condition of all substance and all reality is 'the good'. The most common metaphor used to explain this notion is that of the comparison of good and evil with light and dark. From a simple physical point of view it is clear that light has substance. It is the outcome of some kind of work. Sunlight or any form of flame being cases in point. Light from these sources is produced by the transformation of substances being burned. Darkness has no such substance. There is no force called darkness that overcomes light. Rather, darkness is simply the absence of light. Darkness is the description of the absence of light just as evil is the absence of the good. Thus in this formulation, there can be good without evil but there cannot be evil without good.

Augustine needed this model of evil in order to secure two elements of his faith. These were the benevolence of the Creator God, and the existence of a morally free individual subject. It can be said that in Augustine's formulation he likely imported the conceptual frame found in Socrates and converted the Socratic notion of human as the Rational being, into the human as a Moral being. Thus, God's benevolence is protected insofar as he is the source of good, the absence of that good is then the presence of evil. This 'theory of evil' was developed by Augustine in order to provide an alternative to the contrary Manichean notion of evil as a positive existent. Holding that view, in Augustine's opinion, undermined the power of the supreme God. It is not the focus of the current work to discuss in detail the difficulties with a privative view of evil. Russell (1992) summarises Augustine's solution thus "It is an elegant, logically beautiful solution but it does not work. It fails to account for the suffering of countless men women children and animals…real pain is not mere privation." (p.109) Whilst this criticism is valid, it is also the situation that the privative model with its belief in the moral choosing individual, and the basic 'goodness of reality' undergirds almost all explanations of human evil into the Enlightenment, and grew therein into a secular form of the same concept.

The secular formulation of a privative understanding of evil is exemplified best by Rousseau. Accordingly, Michaelson (1998) quips that "Rousseau….compresses a lifetime of complaining into his complaint about what society does to a naturally good animal".(p.15) For Rousseau, the individual human being's proclivity toward evil-doing is seen as simply a reaction to external force rather than having any intrinsic element. Rousseau (1993) uses *Emile* to explain that when things are not interrupted by the corrupting forces of 'society' and rationalism, then the good will flourish.

Rousseau's humanism can be considered emblematic of the Enlightenment approach to human evil. And, notwithstanding the horrors of the twentieth century, it continues to provide the central tenets underlying most of the humanities and social sciences. More specifically it strongly influenced the fields of education and psychology, both fields having enormous influence on the consciousness of western societies. In reaction to the mechanistic determinism of Pavlov and Skinner and the biological psychodynamics of Freud and his followers, Rogers and Maslow led the field of thought that saw the idea of a positive, life enhancing, creative individual self as central to human existence.

Rogers (1969) "On Becoming a Person" provided the foundational text for much of therapeutic psychology on the past four decades, as well as having major influence on the educational programs that continue to elevate the notion of self-esteem as central to all efforts in child development. Maslow's (1970) iconic" hierarchy of needs" presents a teleological approach to human motivation that pronounces self-actualisation as the highest value and end point in human motivation and development. Weintraub (1978) summarises the results of these cultural influences thus "[I]n our age, more than any other we are captivated by an uncanny sense that each of us constitutes an irreplaceable human form and we perceive a noble life task in the cultivation of our individuality our ineffable self."(pp. xii-xiii) These major influences on Western values and consciousness carry the assumption of a privative understanding of evil. The self that is actualised is at no point considered to be anything but a life enhancing, productive and positive human bring. The notion that a self could be actualised into an evil monster is not considered possible. One commentator described the prevalence of this understanding as having led to the "cult of self worship" (Vitz 1977)

On an individual level the secular application of a privative approach to human evil reduces it to an aberration of faulty learning and an outcome of traumatic early experience. Perhaps the most striking example being that of psychoanalyst Alice Miller's (1985) biography of Adolf Hitler expressed in the bestselling *For Your Own Good*. Such was the popularity of this explanation of Hitler's evil that Kershaw (1998), one of the foremost historians of the Third Reich, makes reference to it in his extensive study of Hitler. He disputes Miller's conclusions that suggest Hitler's malevolence was a product of childhood injury and concludes that "attempts to find 'the warped person' within the murderous dictator have remained unpersuasive. If we exclude our knowledge of what was to come, his family circumstances invoke for the most part sympathy for the child exposed to them", (p.xx) and citing Binion (1974) that "no hate was manifest in young Hitler as far as the direct evidence discloses" (p.607) On a societal level, Mill (2016) and the hopeful intellectual elite of his time were convinced that through social engineering that provides people with the basic conditions for their happiness, the problem of evil would be alleviated substantially. Evil grows out of deprivation, and diminishes as economic conditions improve and education and technology lightens the load for the individual. Simply put, if you give people what they need they are less likely to do evil.

The privative theory of evil can also be considered to underlie much of the thought of historical materialism. Although placing very little emphasis of the individual *per se*, evil

was seen to be located in the social structure of the bourgeoisie dominated capitalist economic system. By changing the fundamental structure of society along the lines of Marxist teachings the evils endemic to capitalism could be avoided. Becker (1975) makes a direct connection between Marxist idealism and Rousseau. Accordingly he argues that the

> Marxist tradition seized on Rousseau's work because it was exactly what the Marxists needed: the accusation that the state acted tyrannically to hold men in bondage….and said that once man understood that he had the right to enjoy the fruits of meaningful labour, he would rise up and break the shackles which enslaved him…. But the great disillusionment of our time is that none of this has led to the liberation of man. (p. 39)

Becker concludes "[I]f it is not only power and coercion that enslave man, then there must be something in his nature that contributes to his downfall; since this is so, the state is not man's first and only enemy, but he himself harbours an 'enemy within'". (pp.39-40)

Notwithstanding these observations it seems somewhat puzzling that the privative view of human evil remains dominant at the beginning of the 21st century given the historical evidence of the slaughter more than one hundred million innocents (non-combatants) under a variety of regimes during the twentieth century. The attraction of this approach must be deep indeed. Theologian Rheinhold Niebuhr (1941), writing in the midst of the rise of fascism and the persecution of the Jews, comments "[C]ontemporary history is filled with manifestations of man's hysterias and furies; with evidences of his daemonic capacity and inclination to break the harmonies of nature and defy the prudent canons of rational restraint. Yet no culmination of evidence seems to disturb modern man's good opinion of himself" (p.94).

Dostoyevsky (1992) called this optimistic belief "golden dreams". He asks,

> who was it first proclaimed, that man only does nasty things because he does not know his own interests; and that if he were enlightened, if his eyes were opened to his real normal interests, man would at once cease to do nasty things, would at once become good and noble because being enlightened and understanding his real advantage in the good and nothing less…consequently so to say through necessity, he would begin doing good. (p.14)

He concludes "Oh the babe, Oh the pure innocent child" referring to those who adhere to this belief. (p.14)

1.4.ii Dualism

A different comprehension of the nature of evil is that of dualism, notably finding its roots in Manichaean doctrine which conceived good and evil as two distinct realities. It is here that Satan, the prince of darkness finds his/her fullest expression as both a symbol of evil power and for some an actual agent of evil. Although rejected eventually by Augustine, the conception of an evil force at work in the world remained part of Christian theology, and does so to the present day. Traditional Christianity ultimately privileges the goodness of God as the final victor. There are two facets in this understanding of evil, the existence of the daemonic world which influences human beings and is allegorically expressed in the character of the serpent in the garden of Eden whose function is to tempt human beings into straying from the goodness of God, and thus from goodness itself. A second element is that of what is termed the sinful nature of the human being which, by virtue of the fall, inherits a congenital predisposition toward evil which requires constant vigilance and struggle. Morality and conscience are the faculties by which human consciousness does battle against the vicissitudes of the natural inclinations of 'the flesh'.

The above could accurately be called a 'conflict theory' of human evil. The individual is beset by internal forces that do battle for ultimate control. For even the external daemonic temptation is tempting something within the individual towards evil. Victory of the one leads to the result of an evil doing monster. Successful resistance results in sainthood. A gradual secularisation of this understanding is found in two philosophical movements, Kantian metaphysics and Freudian psychoanalysis. Many tributaries flowed from these two sources into the twentieth century.

The closest secular parallel to this understanding of human evil is Kant's conception of 'radical evil'. Kant (1978) originally embraced a privative understanding of human evil gradually turned to hold a position considered by many to be akin to the doctrine of original sin. So much so that Goethe disparagingly comments that Kant "had criminally smeared his philosopher's cloak with the shameful stain of radical evil, after it had taken a long human life to cleanse it from many a dirty prejudice so that Christians too might yet be enticed to kiss its hem" (Hewitt. 1996 p.80) Goethe's conflation of Kant's radical evil with original sin is however inaccurate.

Original sin was the conceptual instrument whereby Augustine could maintain a privative view of evil in that the sinful (evil-doing) condition of every human person was a state for

which they inherited, and for which they were not responsible nor could they overcome through moral living. Rather, the mechanisms of infant baptism and the sacrament of confession cleansed the soul and brought it back into a state of grace. Kantian understanding of radical evil, while superficially similar contains no such easy solution. For Kant, human nature is marked at its outset by conflicting moral elements. Copjec (1996) summarises eloquently thus:

> What Kant's rigorism forces us to confront is not simply the occasional or partial combination of self-interested and purely moral motives, but the very subordination of moral universal law to the imperative of self–regard. He locates in man a profound malignity that causes him to be bad even when he is good. … Moreover Kant argues this is not simply true of some of us some of the time but is universally true of all of us without exception. (p.xii)

For Kant then the problem of evil is cast as essentially a moral psychological conflict within the individual. What determines whether an act is good or evil is not its outcome but rather the motivation which gave rise to it. (Formosa 1973) All human beings have an inherent disposition to set aside the moral law for their own self-interest. Additionally, every human being faces this challenge in their own subjective way but because the critical element in demarcating the good from the evil remains a matter of motive, it is not possible to identify who belongs in each category. Kant (1960) admits that this remains inscrutable for

> the ultimate subjective basis for the adoption of maxims must have been adopted by the man's free choice, because otherwise he couldn't be subject to praise or blame for it. But the subjective basis or cause of this adoption can't be known (though it's inevitable that we ask about it), because knowing it would involve bringing in another maxim, which would in its turn have a basis and so on backwards to infinity. (p.57.)

Freud (1961) reiterates Kant's thinking on the internal moral battle between good and evil by postulating that human beings carry strong vestigial forces from their animal history with powerful drives towards domination, sexual licence, utter selfishness and narcissistic indulgence. Aggression, for Freud is "an original self-subsisting instinctual disposition in man" (p.69). Freud gives some content to the human selfishness inherent in Kant's view and reaffirms the foundational assumptions presented by Hobbes' (1991) Leviathan that in its natural condition life is "brutal nasty and short". Human motives are in this view largely a result of drives that can be seen to be parallel the animal kingdom. The human individual is afflicted by instinctual destructive drives grounded in their biology. Without political/moral constructed systems of control, these will run amok.

An important contribution to this understanding of human destructiveness as reflecting a parallel with the animal kingdom is found in the work of Konrad Lorenz (1963). Arendt (1970) is sceptical of this approach.

> While I find the work of zoologists fascinating, I fail to see how it can possibly apply to our problem. In order to know that people will fight for their homeland we hardly had to discover instincts of "group territorialism" in ants fish, and apes: and in order to learn that overcrowding results in irritation we hardly need to experiment with rats. One day spent in the slums of any big city should have sufficed. I am surprised and often delighted to see some animals behave like men: I cannot see how this could either justify or condemn human behaviour. (p. 59)

Arendt continues to dispute the value of comparison between human behaviour and that of animals, with specific reference to various forms of drive and instinct theories.

Notwithstanding her scepticism, these theories are a substantial element of secular dualistic thinking with regard to evil doing. Becker (1975) is one of the more eloquent theorists in this regard. Acknowledging the strong influence of Otto Rank (2012) he avers that:

> Going back to Rousseau for a moment we can see how fanciful the idea is that in the 'state of nature' man is free and only becomes enslaved later on. Man was never free and cannot be free from his own nature. He carries within him the bondage that he needs in order to continue to live…there is no going back behind it to the dreams of Rousseau or the utopian revolutionaries. It penetrates to the heart of the human condition and to the principle dynamic of the emergence of historical inequality. (p.43)

Here Becker is summarising the dualism whereby it is part of the human condition that humans' animal nature, which is fundamentally designed to ensure survival, carries intrinsic qualities that lead to destructive, aggressive and often violent behaviour.

Freudian Psychoanalysis had a profound effect in changing consciousness with regard to the roles of aggression and narcissism in human evildoing and led the way for the growth of an evolutionary psychological understanding of human destructiveness within the field of psychology. (Brenner 1971) This may yet displace the power and influence of 'self-psychology' discussed above. Waller (2002) believes that evolutionary psychology is "the territory on which the coming century's debate about human nature will be held" (p.114) It is beyond the scope of the present work to fully examine Freudian theory and the foundation it provides for aggression based understandings of evil.

Dualism presents the notion that human evildoing is an inherent element in the human condition. It is not simply the reaction to bad circumstance, nor is it merely and absence of the good. Nozick (1985) explains: "[T]he view that evil is merely a lack of goodness has never seemed very plausible, especially to those who have undergone or suffered it. If goodness is a score above zero, then evil is not zero, not merely a lack of goodness but a score below zero. It is something positive, that is, negative, in its own right." (p.151) Baumeister (1996) examines the implication of a dualist understanding as a matter of human beings learning to control what is a positive existent, namely the potential to do evil. He believes that:

> When evil increases, it does not necessarily mean that the causes of evil have become more powerful or important. Rather, it may mean that the inner controls have become weaker. Or to put it another way: you do not have to give people reasons to be violent, because they already have plenty of reasons. All you have to do is take away their reasons to restrain themselves. Even a small weakening of self-control might be enough to produce a rise in violence. Evil is always ready and waiting to burst into the world. (p.14)

Both dualist and privative understandings of human evil place great emphasis on the individual's internal moral disposition as the primary source of evil. The former sees the individual as vulnerable to evil doing in virtue of his human nature, either the inherited predilection to evildoing, or his animal aggressiveness. The latter sees him or her as vulnerable to evil doing in virtue of faulty learning as a result of deprivation, either in terms of evil doing that compromises their greater good, or simply unawareness of how to behave otherwise. It can be said that the period of the Enlightenment saw the dominance of this view. Great faith was shown that by virtue of improved social conditions, and the provision of education to the masses, the problem of evil could largely be vanquished. The twentieth and twenty first century have proven otherwise.

1.5 Individual Morality and Evil

As a consequence of these understandings of evil, the primary location for treating the problem of evil lay in the way an individual faced the possibility of evildoing. Whether one tended toward the more pessimistic conflict laden dualism, or the more optimistic somewhat utopian privative theory, the key to defeating evil lay in the moral development of the individual. The faculties given to the person for such a task were considered to be Reason, an ability to know right from wrong, Conscience a faculty that guided choice and gravitated

toward the good, and Will, the capacity to choose. Accordingly Arendt (2003) reminds us that "no precept of either a moral or a religious nature could possibly make sense without the assumption of human freedom." (p.128) These elements provided the scaffolding for the individual's morality. Notwithstanding fractures in the accepted conventions beginning to appear in the work of Nietzsche (1996) it can be stated that this is the structure of morality that Arendt believes failed so dismally when evil doing became legislated under Hitler and Stalin.

Furthermore it is her contention that these beliefs about individual morality led to a great level of self-delusion in terms of how human beings would respond when faced *en masse* with great evil. She remarks that "then it was though morality suddenly stood revealed in the original meaning of the word as a set of mores, customs and manners which could be exchanged for another set with hardly any more trouble than it would take to change the table manners of an individual or a people." (2003 p.50) Arendt traces the first real critique of conventional understanding of morality to Nietzsche, but recognises that his innovations had not informed any serious endeavours to protect the masses from their vulnerability to evildoing. Her praise for his work is striking when she writes that "it is his [Nietzsche's] abiding greatness that he dared to demonstrate how shabby and meaningless morality had become." (2003 p.52)

It is reasonable to suggest that morality, or moral functioning, has historically been accepted as the aspect of human functioning that shields against evildoing. This is the case whether one accepts a privative or dualist understanding of the roots of evil. To realise that the shield of commonly held morality is in fact deeply flawed when faced with legislative evil is one of the clearest insights in Arendt's work. Her analysis of the spread of evil under totalitarianism, showed that none of the conventionally accepted elements of individual morality were sufficient to prevent masses of individuals from engaging in collaborating and actualising large scale evil. In addition, the new information adduced from her study of evil in these circumstances throw serious doubt on the validity of these concepts as a currently useful way of comprehending how human beings deal with the problem of evildoing. She shows how each element in the moral structure failed: reason was suffocated by banality, conscience was corrupted by evil ideology, and will was defeated by surrender/compliance. The remainder of this thesis will examine these issues with a view to clarifying some new understanding of what may be required when evil becomes legitimated in society.

Alongside recognising the need for a new approach to the problem of societal evil, Arendt provides a more cohesive description of evil itself. As mentioned earlier, Lang's (1990) argument is that evil itself has not heretofore had the privilege of proper intellectual attention. Arendt addresses this problem in her comprehensive examination. She presents a detailed description of how evildoing can spread throughout a society, bypassing all the honour bound assumptions of individual morality, because it has no roots in the individual, and "because it has no roots it can go to unthinkable extremes and sweep over the whole world (2003 p.95). In her examination of 'radical evil' she presents a thorough explanation of how evil progresses through a series of stages within a societal context. Accordingly, each stage has its own characteristics, and each leads to deeper and greater levels of horror.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter has argued for the retention of the term 'evil' as a descriptor for intentionally causing severe unwarranted harm to the innocent. Furthermore it introduces two models of evil that have dominated the conceptual horizon of European thought. These understandings share the notion that the human person is equipped with certain faculties, reason, conscience and will. These provide the wherewithal to fight any proclivity for evildoing. It also introduces Arendt's analysis which shows how these faculties failed under totalitarianism, allowing for the introduction of a new and refined form of mass evil. The nature of this new form of evil is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 2.

Radical Evil.

2.1 Introduction

No one theory or approach has adequately explained the phenomenon of human evil, and it now appears that to attempt to reach any one exclusively explanatory position is bound to fail. (Kekes 2005, Baumeister 1997). Human evil has too many facets to be explained in terms of any one cause/characteristic. This multifaceted phenomenon is part of the human condition. It is into the context of this complex and apparently fundamental element of human experience that Arendt illuminates aspects of evil that can be identified through her examination of totalitarianism in general and the Holocaust in particular. In doing so she provides what Balfour (2003) terms "one of the most enduring and influential conceptions of evil that emerged from the study of the Holocaust". (p.143). This chapter will discuss what Arendt understands as radical evil.

Arendt's quest to understand human evil is initially observed in her study of totalitarianism. From this early work, through to the end of her life, she modified and developed her thinking. She is careful, however, to specify that she did not develop a particular 'theory of evil', and Bernstein (2008) cautions that "to think of Arendt as a theorist in this sense—as proposing universally explanatory theories—is to miss what is most distinctive about her thinking" (p.65). One of the most significant shifts in that thinking is her move away from what she termed 'radical evil' as expressed in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, to the conceptualisation of the 'banality of evil'. The critical influence in her change of emphasis occurred as a result of her study of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann which she reports in *Eichmann in Jerusalem.* It would remiss however to assume that these two understanding of evil, radical and banal are not intimately connected. That connection requires some explication.

2.2 Radical Evil

The term "radical" as used by Arendt should be distinguished from Kant's use of the term. For Kant, radical evil referred to the intrapersonal nature of evil. Evil is rooted in the nature of the person by virtue of the structure of human 'being'. More specifically, for Kant, human beings, as moral beings whose consciousness includes the capacity for choice and judgement carry an intrinsic propensity to choose self-interest over the moral law, and in so doing have evil at the root of their being. In his earlier work Kant (1978) expressed a concept of evil as

essentially privative, whereby evil could be understood in terms of the lack of the good. He argues that

> [T]hus the evil in the world can be regarded as the incompleteness in the development of the seed toward good. Evil has no special seed. For it is only a negation, and consists only in a limitation of what is good. It is nothing but the incomplete development of the seed of goodness out of its uncultivated condition. (p.117)

In his later work Kant (1997) moved towards a far more pessimistic approach whereby evil could be understood as existing in its own terms, purposeful and agentic, rather than simply as the absence of the good expressed in his early considerations. In either case however, evil was to be understood as the outcome of the expression of the will, and was unavoidable as it was rooted in human nature.

Arendt makes no such assumption, but as will become apparent, her concept of freedom and responsibility are strongly influenced by Kant. Her use of the phrase "Radical" in her discussion of evil is somewhat of a conundrum, because she clearly knew of Kant's use of the phrase and its meaning in his moral philosophy. Arendt uses the phrase 'radical' as an adjective to describe a particular set of evil actions. Radical evil is defined by these actions and their outcome. This is a very different use of the word. For Kant, radical refers to something about human nature. In Kantian terms, and fundamental to Kant's moral philosophy evil cannot be defined in terms of its outcome. Kant's theory of evil is not bound by or even considers the results of evil doing. His focus is almost entirely on the motivations behind the act. In Kantian terms, one can do something that has all the appearances of the good, and in fact produce very life enhancing outcomes, from evil intentions. The results do not make an act good or evil. One of the most prevalent critiques of Kantian thinking is directly on this point. Kekes (2012), for example, believes that this is a serious flaw in Kantian thinking because it leads to what he terms the 'cult of sincerity'. Sincere motives are the primary measure of the good. He argues that "[T]he decisive objection to this view is that it excludes what is central to responsibility: holding people responsible for the readily foreseeable consequences of their action." (p.215) Arendt's understanding is wholly different from that of Kant and her use of the phrase 'Radical' requires further explication in this regard.

Her use of the term 'radical' was an effort to identify what she saw as a new form of evil, introduced during the totalitarian regimes of Hitler and Stalin. After her study of Eichmann

and the publication of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, and the consequent debate over her conception of the "banality' of evil," Arendt was seen to have changed her mind about the notion of evil as 'radical'. More specifically, responding to the challenge from Gershom Sholem she wrote:

> [I]ndeed my opinion is that evil is never 'radical' that it is only extreme, and that it possesses neither depth nor any demonic dimension. It can overgrow and lay waste the whole world precisely because it spreads like a fungus. It is thought defying as I said because thought tries to reach some depth, to go to the roots, and the moment it concerns itself with evil, it is frustrating because there is nothing. (2003 p.396)

This change of usage from 'Radical' to 'Extreme' however loses much of the power of Arendt's understanding of the kind of evil she is attempting to define. It can be suggested that in her choice of the word 'radical' she was trying to characterise evil in a way that separated from what might be called the ordinary evil that relates to malevolent motives and cruelty. Her central thesis is that the evil witnessed during the Holocaust was of a different nature and thus it is not sufficiently accurate to use the term "extreme".

There is merit in retaining the phrase 'radical evil' because some term needs to identify her definition of that new form of evil. There is particular merit in the term 'radical' if it is interpreted slightly differently from the notion of rootedness in the perpetrator, which is the Kantian understanding. For the purposes of this current discussion the term will be retained precisely because it carries the nuance of rootedness. Instead of using 'radical evil' to refer to rootedness in the perpetrator it can be used to describe the type evil inflicted on the victim. As will be discussed hereunder, the central thesis that Arendt proposes is that radical evil sought to destroy the individuality of the person, in other words it could be considered as attempting to 'root out' all that was personal from the individual. It can also be said that the language of the Holocaust and the repression of the Soviet regime was precisely devoted to the 'eradication' of named groups and classes. The term 'eradication' with its etymological relationship to 'radical' captures much of the systematic approach to the mass murders of that time. Additionally it also remains currently relevant because the character of Arendt's depiction of radical evil, as described in some detail below has continued, to a lesser extent, to appear in other situations more recently. MacCannell (1996) argues that

> while, from a historical perspective the uniqueness of the Holocaust can never be denied…Ethnic cleansing, the demand for racial purification, the Khmer Rouge, the Bosnian war, these indicate not imitative repetitions, but that a new evil has entered the world, which wears the face or mask of a

> certain detachment. While mass killings on a large scale have occurred before in world history, the calculating decision to cleanse, expunge, to obliterate is altogether new. (p.66)

Radical evil is thus more than extreme evil. For Arendt it referred to the form of evil that evolved, or at least appeared, under Hitler and Stalin. Radical evil refers to the treatment of human beings in such a way as to destroy the individual human being by stripping them of everything that can define them as human- that is to turn a person into a set of reactions. To understand her thinking in this matter it seems useful to compare how she saw genocide and mass killing throughout history has being qualitatively different from the genocide of the Holocaust. She believes that genocide, a term introduced by Lemkin (2008) to describe the massacre of the Jews, is not adequate to the task of understanding the massacre of the Holocaust. For her, genocide, when referring to the mass killing of identified groups were the "order of the day throughout antiquity", and accordingly, "centuries of colonisation and imperialism provide plenty of examples of more of less successful examples of that sort." (1985 p.380). Such killings were often in order to claim resources, or to exact revenge. For Arendt, radical evil is not just the destruction people for utilitarian purposes; rather it refers to a particular form of treating people so that they lose all defining characteristics that make them persons before physically killing them.

Historically, even the most depraved regimes allowed its victims to feel themselves as human beings, of maintaining some semblance of connectivity to others, friends, family or companions in their suffering. Taking slavery as an example of an evil institution she avers that

> throughout history slavery has been an institution within a social order, slaves were not like concentration camp inmates withdrawn from sight and hence the protection of their fellow men, as instruments of labour they had a definite price and as property a definite value. The concentration camp inmate has no price, because he can always be replaced, nobody knows to whom he belongs because he is never seen, From the point of view of society he is absolutely superfluous. (p.444)

Radical evil saw the introduction of a form of mistreatment that tore the very humanity from its victims. She believes that the totalitarian rule of both Stalin and Hitler introduced radical of evil into the world and it refers to the way that such evil becomes central to the functioning of a totalitarian regime. Radical evil, emerges 'in a system in which all men have become equally superfluous' (p.457). By this she means that within the totalitarian system, the individual human being has no relevance or significance. She describes the process by which

a totalitarian regime makes person superfluous by stripping the person of their individual human identity, whereby

> each and every person can be reduced to a never changing identity of reactions, so that each of these bundles of reactions can be exchanged at random for any other. The problem is to fabricate something that does not exist, namely a kind of human species resembling animal species whose only 'freedom' would consist in preserving the species (1985 p.438).

Hewitt (1996) expands on this theme in his discussion of radical evil. He explains that one way of understanding this process of dehumanising a human being is to destroy anything that can be considered symbolic by that person. Reducing their function to the simple act of biological survival removes the defining qualities of humanity. This is also referred to by Agamben (1999) as "the bare life". Des Pres (1976) explains further that "[E]vil becomes that which causes real 'loss of the personal core of one's being.' In extremity man is stripped of his expanded spiritual identity. Only concrete forms of existence remain." (p.65)

This form of evil is new. Historically, there is little to discriminate between the types of torture, desecration, and suffering inflicted by humans on each other throughout many and various epochs. The sophistication with which people pursued new forms of affliction is a testimony to the creativity of the human species. Roman executioners learned soon that the ankles feature the highest rate nerve endings relative to the lowest number of blood vessels, thus leading to the maximum levels of pain and longevity of survival for a hapless victims of crucifixion. They also developed the narrow seat (*sedile)* as part of the cross so as to allow the victim longer survival by holding his weight and prevent him from asphyxiating. This ensured the maximum level of suffering with the longest period of survival in order to allow for greater exposure of the victim's suffering to the public. (Zias.1998) In general these methods were used to underline the seriousness of any threat to the empire and were generally limited to slaves, pirates or anyone fostering rebellion. They had a utilitarian purpose. The Spanish inquisitors spent much time devoted to finding more exquisite forms of torture as a means of saving the souls of its victims. The rape and pillaging of Genghis Kahn's Mongol Hordes served as a way to terrorise the villages and cities yet to be conquered. The accounts of the horrors that were about to be inflicted in the face of resistance ensured that surrender was more likely. Surrender saved the community and had the utilitarian purpose of saving the Mongols military resources of manpower and equipment. (Baumeister 2002) These rather iconic episodes of human evildoing all share a common thread, namely that in much of the history of torture there is some meaning/purpose attached.

Arendt's radical evil is not a matter of the sophistication of its torture and the 'quality' of suffering it imposed. Its uniqueness lies in the meaningless of its activity. The radical evil of the Holocaust had no meaning for the victims or the perpetrators. The victims were to die anyway. Their hollowing out beforehand served no purpose. Their use as slave labour was incidental. Some value from their labour accrued but this was not its purpose. Had there been a utilitarian purpose for their use as slaves they would have provided far better resources to the Reich with even a scintilla of better care. In addition, the military needs to protect the Fatherland towards the end of the war were compromised in order to continue with the extermination process. (Florence 2010) One regularly recounted examples of this type of evil was the requirement of groups of concentration camp inmates to carry heavy rocks across a field, drop them and then pick them up and carry them back, often with the one who came last being shot. This exercise in utter futility had no value except perhaps to degrade the victims and perhaps alleviate the boredom of the perpetrators. (Morris 2018) It is the futility and meaninglessness of the torture and degradation that discriminates Arendt's concept of radical evil from other formations.

She analyses how this radical evil evolved under totalitarian rule and describes it in terms of three distinct phases:

(i) killing the juridical person, that is placing the individual outside any access to legal/judicial care or justice.

(ii) killing the moral person usually by forcing him or her into some complicit acts of murder, and

(iii) finally, destroying what she terms the natality of the person: "after the murder of the moral person and the annihilation of the juridical person, the destruction of individuality is almost always successful…for to destroy individuality is to destroy spontaneity, man's power to begin something new out of his own resources, something that cannot be explained on the basis of reactions to environment and events." (1985 p.455)

2.2.i Killing the Juridical Person

A critical element in the process and spread of radical evil involves access to the human beings to be immolated. Just as the iconic perpetrator of evil, that of the torturer murderer, (Stone 2009) must abduct their victim, and have some location available to proceed in the horror of torture with little chance of getting caught, so too must a political regime have

access to its victims. This is achieved by creating a political circumstance whereby large numbers of victims are prevented from access to the protection of normal legislative processes and safeguards. Arendt calls this "killing the juridical person". It is the first stage in what she refers to as 'the historically and politically intelligible preparation of living corpses'. (p.446)

An important theme in Arendt's political philosophy is that of the centrality of citizenship or at least belonging to a political community when it comes to having rights. She believes that the notion of inalienable human rights as vouchsafed by the international Charter of Human Rights is problematic because in her view it tends to overlook the fact that having rights necessitates that the individual belong to some social/political structure that endows them with those rights. (1976) Thus, when a person is removed from the protection of the society to which they belong, and thereby becomes stateless, they lose the rights granted under that membership, and will remain without these 'inalienable rights' unless they are adopted by another community that can restore those or similar rights to them.

Arendt argues that Nazi rulers understood this, and therefore could only fully expedite their extermination program by first removing the rights of citizenship from the Jews. By enacting laws whereby individuals lost the rights inherent in citizenship if they left the jurisdiction they could, by deporting them, leave them stateless and no longer eligible for any protection under the law. Without such protection the progression toward elimination is facilitated. Snyder (2016) gives a specific analysis of this process in the case of Austria. He writes that the "Nazis discovered that the most effective way to separate Jews from the protection of the state was to destroy the state." (p.84) His analysis shows that literally overnight the persecution of Jews in Vienna commenced once Chancellor Karl Schusnigg announced his decision not to defend Austria from Hitler. That first night of lawlessness in Austria was "more dangerous for Jews than the preceding two decades of Austrian statehood. Their world was gone." (p.82)

Snyder's recent (2015) historical analysis gives strong support for Arendt's presentation of the critical function that citizenship brings in terms of protection from annihilation. Accordingly he writes, "the likelihood that Jews would be sent to their deaths depended upon the durability of institutions of state sovereignty and the continuity of pre-war citizenship." (p.249) His comparison of the fate of the Estonian Jews and that of Danish Jews is a good case in point. In Estonia, about 99 percent of the Jews who were present when the Germans

took occupation were murdered. In contrast, over ninety percent of Jews who had Danish citizenship when the Germans arrived survived. Paradoxically, Estonia did not have a strong history of anti-Semitism as part of its society. Rather, Jews partook in all levels of government and general social functioning. In contrast, Denmark did reflect a far greater level of anti-Semitic prejudice. The vast difference in survival rates is explained by Snyder. He refers to the phenomenon of double occupation, whereby Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were granted to the Soviets under the Molotov-Ribbentrop act. Being occupied by the Soviet regime led to the dismantling of the state apparatuses of these countries and the destruction of their identity as separate states. In so doing the citizens lost their citizenship. When the Germans arrived there was no institutional system in place that could provide any protection from the Nazi killing machine.

Conversely, Denmark maintained its sovereignty, and was allowed to do so by the Nazis. When the Final solution extended to include Denmark, a problem arose for the Nazis. The Danish government saw the yielding of Jewish Danish citizens as undermining Danish sovereignty and resisted doing so. As a result, most Danish Jewish citizens survived. Their citizenship saved them. Snyder (2015) emphasises the critical role of citizenship even within the borders of Denmark. He recounts that:

> Jews who were Danish citizens survived, which is not exactly the same thing as Jews in Denmark surviving. Danish authorities did not accept Jewish refugees after 1935, and they deported some of the ones who arrived earlier back to Germany. The Jews who were denied state protection in Denmark shared the fate of Jews who lacked state protection in Estonia or, for that matter, everywhere else: Death. (p.217)

There are perhaps several elements at work that saved so many of the Danish Jews. First, and most relevant here is the loyalty that Danish governance showed to the principle of citizenship, even to Jews who did experience some level of prejudice and yet were offered protection. Secondly, the remaining vestige of positive prejudice among the Hitler regime towards other 'European' states may go some way to explaining why the Danish system of government was allowed to stay in place, in contradistinction to the much more immediate and obvious destruction of the 'Slavic' states to the East. The Jews in France who belonged to a more European state fared no better, however, because there was no resistance from the Vichy government. Lozowick (2002) explains:

> [A]s early as 1942 it had been clear that the French would have to change their position with regard to Jews who were French citizens, since the

> Germans intended to deport all the Jews in the country. Their method was to demand that the French revoke the citizenship of naturalised Jews. This would allow the French to preserve the pretence of sovereignty, and the Germans could continue to deport the Jews who were not (any longer) French citizens. (p.226)

The difference between the Danish Government and that of the French is that the French government accepted the validity of the Hitler regime and thus collaborated fully with its genocidal project.

These historical events give support to Arendt's argument that one of the precursors to potential destruction is statelessness. Becoming so leaves the individual unprotected by the laws that guarantee how a citizen of a state is treated. Additionally, changes in laws that re-categorises groups of people so as to leave them with the benefit of legal due process within the state has the same outcome. This also occurred under Stalin.

With regard to Russia, the further development of the Gulag system under Stalin was predicated by a removal of any rights to proper legal representation by those arrested. The 1st December Law, enacted by Stalin in the aftermath of the assassination of Kirov was "the equivalent of Hitler's Enabling Act because, it laid the foundation for a random terror without even the pretence of the rule of law. Within three years, two million people had been sentenced to death or labour camps in its name.' (Montefiore 2003, p.151)

Stalin's decree legislated that victims were denied a defence counsel, and denied any right to appeal. The system was self-sustaining and in general followed a familiar pattern. Within the ideology of that time to be arrested meant one was guilty. A person who was arrested was assumed to be guilty, otherwise the arrest was a mistake, and mistakes did not happen under the ideological constraints of the time. Solzhenitsyn (2003) directly identifies this by titling one of his works, a novella *We Never Make Mistakes*. Thus the early days of the individual's incarceration were devoted to extracting a confession that would validate the arrest, (evidence had no bearing at this stage) and once the confession was made, then the task of identifying co-conspirators was a logical step. Through torture and terror the hapless victim identified others, who were arrested on their evidence, and thus their crimes no longer required any other form of verification. They in turn were tortured, killed or sent to the Gulags only after they betrayed more of their friends in the exponentially widening circle of terror and oppression. (Kotkin. 2017)

This system, which saw the deaths of millions over a period of thirty seven years, depended on the removal of the individual's right to any form of proper legal representation, no application of civil rights, and no relationship between the perceived crime and the level of punishment. Arendt (1985) notes that one of the key elements in sustaining the Gulag system in Russia was that there needed to be new cohorts of people chosen to fill them. These groups were arbitrarily chosen, usually at the whim of the leader, leading to a complete unpredictability as to who was likely to be torn out of their community and end up there. Gellately (2013) describes the quota system used to allocate total numbers for those to be murdered and those to be sent to the Gulags. In addition he describes the zeal by which some enthusiasts "met their quotas and rushed to seek to raise them". (p.40) Concentration camps and gulags were the end point of millions who were innocent. Thus Arendt (1985) explains "[T]hese groups, innocent in every sense are the most suitable for thorough experimentation in disenfranchisement and destruction of the juridical person, and therefore are both quantitatively and qualitatively the most essential category of the camp population." (p.449)

For Arendt, these historical events are good examples of a first strand in radical evil. It is, however, considered important to clarify that such activities are not unique to the period of the Holocaust, and are not sufficient to constitute radical evil in itself. It can be said, however, that such activities can prepare the ground for the spread of evil, from the milder intensity of unfair incarceration through to mistreatment and torture and onto the most extreme forms of mass murder. In the period after the Holocaust there have been many examples of such government sanctioned behaviours. .

Three different examples can elucidate the progression through the different stages which begin with killing the juridical person. The policy of Internment in Northern Ireland in 1971 is an example of separating a group from their rights under the law and simply incarcerating them, the creation of a prison camp at Guantanama Bay adds the element of mistreatment and torture legitimated by government, The Chilean dirty war adds the third element of killing. These are just a sample of what is a growing trend in extra legal behaviour under governance in developed societies in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Perhaps the most relevant to an Irish context is that of the internment without trial of several hundred young men, 'suspected' IRA members in the North of Ireland in 1971. In that situation U.K. Secretary of State Brian Faulkner explained: '[S]uspects who are arrested under the new law, and who are not charged or released within 48 hours, will be taken to

reception areas where they will be held indefinitely without trial. They will have a right to appeal to an advisory council - which is yet to be set up." Operation Demitritus, as it was known, had disastrous consequences. McCleery (2012) concluded that the policy of internment was to unite northern Catholics as like never before and that the nature of the initial internment operation led to an increase of support for both wings of the IRA, but more especially the PIRA. This increase in support led to a major upsurge in violence. In the two years leading up to internment 66 people were murdered, while in the first 17 months after internment 610 were murdered. (Dixon et al 2011)

Government intervention whereby a set of citizens are denied their rights under the law is perhaps the more benign example of such treatment. A closer parallel to Arendt's concept of radical evil occurs when, in the aftermath of such incarceration, there is some intention to either torture or kill those interned. Although history presents many instances whereby governments have seen fit to act in an extra juridical manner, for the purposes of this discussion two relatively recent cases are well documented, and have received attention by philosophers concerned with the problem of evil. The first, and most widely contested is that of the creation of infamous camp at Guantanamo Bay Cuba for the incarceration and torture of prisoners captured in Afghanistan and elsewhere, the other being the Chilean 'Dirty War' under General Pinochet. Brief examination will elucidate the parallels between these situations and the first stage of radical evil recognised by Arendt as the introductory stage of the Holocaust.

To some it may appear extreme or even inappropriate to draw any parallel between the event of the Holocaust and any other historical happenings whereby great human suffering is initiated by way of political power. It is easy to understand this position. There is a danger that any form of comparison between some event with the Holocaust may be seen as undermining the unique quality of the evil therein. That uniqueness is underscored by Katz (1994) who summarises this position thus "[T]he Holocaust is phenomenologically unique by virtue of the fact that never before has a state set out, as a matter of intentional principle and actualized policy, to annihilate physically every man, woman, and child belonging to a specific group."(p.28.) One of the more comprehensive arguments for the singularity of the Holocaust is presented by Geras (2013) in his hypothesis that:

> In their combination–of total intent; the bureaucratisation and industrialisation of killing; spiritual murder or moral annihilation; and the

> pursuit of the project 'for its own sake'-these features of the Holocaust may have added up to something morally singular, and singularly terrible….this is something I will call an *ongoing, and tendentially permanent, social system for the production of death*…..The production of death as an order of being, an established system of existence. In that, it touched nearer to the final limit of our species-the wilful destruction of humanity itself-than any other event has done so far. But it could happen again. (p.50-51)

It is generally considered that there is now an almost sacred quality to the memory this historical event. There is merit in that position and yet there is also some danger. Bandura (1999) for example suggests that by making any activity or event incomparable with the Nazis, the way becomes open for what he terms 'exonerating comparison'. MacCannell (1996), warns against the danger of viewing the Holocaust solely in terms of its uniqueness and argues the "the uniqueness of the holocaust is being challenged by the horrifying outcomes of countless contemporary ethnic clashes, clashes whose stated goals of clean sweeping, of cleansing, force us to recall the precedent and doubt its status as hapax" (p.47). Novick (2003) is even more trenchant in his argument against the elevation of the Holocaust as a unique and incomparable event. For him, such claims are a way of establishing pre-eminence, and unjustifiable so. He states that "to single out those aspects of the Holocaust that were distinctive (there certainly were such) and to ignore those aspects that it shares with other atrocities, and on the basis of this gerrymandering to declare the Holocaust as unique, is intellectual sleight of hand." (p.28)

This debate remains active in the literature and will remain so for some time. In terms of the current context, however, it is perhaps useful to consider that there are aspects of the Holocaust that do have relevance to understanding certain contemporary situations. Agamben[2] (1999) insists for example, that certain similarities with respect to aspects of governance that occurred under Nazi rule and which led to the consequence that is Auschwitz are currently in play. More specifically he isolates Guantanamo Bay as an example *par excellence* of what he terms 'a state of exception'. He follows Arendt closely in understanding the power and significance of creating a situation or condition whereby a group of identified individuals are placed outside the protection of law. Drawing on the Roman figure of *Homo Sacer* he explains that such individuals were considered by the Roman government as those who could not be sacrificed. They were outside divine law and

[2] Agamben believes that more and more governments are turning to forms of extra juridical tactics in order to cope with growing complex problems of racial identity, religious conflict, and displacement due to political upheaval.

their deaths were of no value to the gods, equally and because they were also outside juridical law, they could be killed with impunity. Anyone could kill such a person and not be considered a murderer

Using this as a symbolic narrative he posits the idea that Guantanamo Bay placed its more than six hundred prisoners into such a space. He specifically draws parallels between the legal status of these prisoners and the prisoners in Auschwitz, their situations are, so he says formally and 'paradigmatically' equivalent. Gregory (2006) reiterates Agamben's belief that these prisoners are not legal subjects but "legally unnameable and unclassifiable beings, the object of a pure *de facto* rule or a raw power whose modalities are removed from the law and from judicial oversight. In the detainee at Guantanamo, he concludes, bare life reaches its maximum indeterminacy." (p.406)

What is most central to Agamben's (2017) argument is that the end point that was Auschwitz (paradigmatic of all other elements of the Holocaust) began as a process whose initial step was what he terms the 'state of exception'. Thus he says that "[W]hat happened in the camps so exceeds (is outside of) the juridical concept of crime that the specific juridico-political structure in which those events took place is often simply omitted from consideration." (p.137) The conditions in the camps were "*conditio inhumana*," and the incarcerated somehow defined outside the boundaries of humanity, under the exception laws of *Schutzhaft*. Where law is based on vague, unspecific concepts such as "race" or "good morals," law and the personal subjectivity of the judicial agent are no longer distinct.

There remains some debate and controversy regarding Agamben's comparison of Guantanamo and Auschwitz. (Lemke 2005) This is perhaps the result of looking at Auschwitz and other similar incarceration facilities in terms of their end purpose, murder. It can be said that in this regard the Nazi concentration camps are not equivalent to Guantanamo. The status of the prisoners (as distinct from their condition) before their deaths in the gas chambers is however quite similar insofar as they are outside the remit of lawful treatment. It is also true that there are some parallels to be made in the form of deportation to such camps. Aspects of the deportation system under the Nazi regime had its function to so distress and confuse the hapless deportees that they would be so completely exhausted and broken on arrival that they would be unable to create any opposition to their selection for immediate death or a slower process of destruction. Gregory (2006) gives the following description of the prisoners taken to Guantanamo.

> [H]ere was sovereign power at its most naked, and when the first prisoners from Afghanistan arrived at Guantanamo Bay in January 2002 it was viscerally clear that they were to be reduced to bare life. All legal protections had been withdrawn from them. Photographs of their transportations and incarceration at once displayed and reinforced their reduction to something less than human. They had been chained, gloved, ear muffed and masked throughout their twenty seven hour flight, and arrived soaked in their own bodily waste….As they slowly shuffled down the ramp in their jumpsuits, one reporter wrote, 'They don't look natural. They look like giant bright orange flies'. Then they were led off to their makeshift steel-mesh cages at camp X-Ray. (p. 414)

In real human terms, there is only a matter of degree of suffering in terms of human mistreatment between these people, and those stuffed into the cattle cars that led to Auschwitz. There is, however, a vast difference between their experiences after their arrival.

The Argentinian Dirty War involved the kidnapping torture and murder of at least fifteen thousand Argentinian civilians by a cohort of approximately 700 officers of the Argentinean Army Navy and Airforce between 1976 and 1983. Many were incarcerated for several months with no access to any legal representation. When torture was complete, many were sedated, taken into an air force transport plane and at an altitude of several miles were dumped alive into the sea. For most, there was no evidence of criminal or subversive action available except that disclosed during torture. (Kekes 2005)

These examples serve to highlight the implicit danger that is inherent in any governmental systems that, at some stage, decides to isolate any group within its society from their legal rights under the law. While killing the juridical person does not automatically lead to the next step in Arendt's formulation of radical evil, it does provide the context in which that next step is most easily facilitated. Arendt is explicit in arguing that killing the juridical person is a preparatory step in the radical evil process leading to mass murder. Accordingly she says:

> [E]ven the Nazis started their extermination of Jews by first depriving them of all legal status (the status of second-class citizenship) and cutting them off from the world of the living by herding them into ghettoes and gas chambers; and before they set the gas chambers into motion they had carefully tested the ground and found out to their satisfaction that no country would claim these people. The point is that a condition of complete rightlessness was created before the right to live was challenged. (2003 p.37)

Another aspect of killing the juridical person is the process by which he/she is removed from the gaze of the populace. Bauman (1991), relying heavily on Levinas, proposes that the

natural inclination of many Germans was revulsion to the torment and mistreatment of the Jews[3], more specifically the Jews that they knew personally. He references one of Himmler's infamous speeches where he opines that of almost 80 million Germans "each one has his good Jew. Of course the others are swine, but this one is a first class Jew". For Baumann (1991) in his interpretation of Levinas, proximity is a critical element in moral responsibility. He argues that the final solution could not have succeeded until "the future object of bureaucratic operations, the Jews, had been removed from the horizon of German daily life, cut off from the network of personal intercourse transformed in practice…into the abstract concept of the metaphysical Jew." (p.189) It is central to Baumann's thesis that personal morality had to be extinguished among a great number of perpetrators for the Holocaust to succeed. For him:

> *the Holocaust could be accomplished only on the condition of neutralizing the impact of primeval moral drives, of isolating the machinery of murder from the sphere where such drives arise and apply, of rendering such drives marginal or altogether irrelevant to the task* (p.188 Italics his).

In the present context, Baumann's argument is supportive of Arendt in terms of both the conceptual (legal) and physical distancing of the victims from the general population. It will be shown in chapter 4. below however that his understanding of the required change in morality to allow great evil to be actualised is open to a different interpretation.

2.2.ii Killing the Moral Person

For Arendt (1985) "[T]otalitarian terror achieved its most terrifying triumph when it succeeded in cutting the moral person off from the individualist escape (*suicide*) and in making decisions of conscience absolutely questionable and equivocal." (p.452) Killing the moral person means treating the individual in such a way that his moral functioning is destroyed. His moral/ethical sentiments or guidelines are dismantled. For most people an important aspect of their sense of humanity is their moral values, and for the most part these are fairly commonly held taboos that people uphold. These include being unwilling to cause suffering to others unnecessarily, to treat loved ones with respect and dignity, to care and comfort children and the vulnerable. These might be termed generally accepted rules of decency.

[3] This view is directly contrary to Goldhagen's thesis that widespread antisemitism was the driving force behind the "success" of the Holocaust. This issue will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

There are many exceptions to living morally but these are distinguished in general society by being labelled as either criminal or immoral. In radical evil, generally accepted mores are systematically broken as part of the larger process of dehumanizing the individual before physically killing him. A poignant example is presented in William Styron's novel *Sophie's Choice*.(1979) As she stands in the selection line with her two children, a young Jewish mother is engaged in a friendly manner by a Nazi officer who concludes the discussion by asking her to choose which of her two children she wishes to save. This type of conundrum, to which there is no solution that does not devastate the person's moral sense, was an everyday occurrence in the camps.

Perhaps the best explication of this phenomenon is presented by Primo Levi (1987) in his paradigmatic essay 'the grey Zone', and his last work before his suicide *The Drowned and the Saved*. Levi describes in detail the terrible choices facing the camp inmates whether or not to accept privileges leading to longer survival by becoming a *Sonnerkommando.* These were the tens of thousands, mainly Jews, who chose to 'help' the functioning of the extermination process by shaving the inmates, extracting teeth, taking the corpses to the incinerators, spreading the tons of ashes, and so on and so forth. Many of these inmates bought a few more months of life before they too were killed.

Fromm (1933) discusses the effects of Stalin's malignant evil in terms of how he broke the morality some of his most loyal followers. He recounts that Stalin had a preference for taking his colleagues nearest and dearest, their children or their spouses and sending to them the gulags while the bereft spouse or parent had to remain working closely alongside him. This type of cruelty had the effect of breaking any will or resistance among those so treated.

Arendt poses the question:

> [W]hen a man is faced with a the alternative of betraying and thus murdering his friends or of sending his wife and children, for whom he is in every sense responsible to their death; when even suicide would mean the immediate murder of his own family – how is he to decide? The alternative is no longer between good and evil, but between murder and murder. (1985 p. 452)

She believes that such dilemmas, an everyday part of the camp system, were purposely engineered to destroy people's moral sense. In addition she suggests that many such collaborators should not be condemned as they were no longer acting as moral beings.

Moral philosopher Martha Nussbaum provides a moving description of how the morality of a good person eventually collapses in the face of interminable suffering. In her work aptly entitled *The Fragility of Goodness* she posits the notion that all human beings have a moral breaking point. She turns to Greek mythology in Euripides 'Hecuba' to explicate her thesis. Euripides' exploration of virtue in the character of Hecuba, also explores its vulnerability as Hecuba's response to the murder of her son is shown to be her breaking point. On returning to Thrace, Hebuca finds that her remaining child has been murdered by her trusted friend Polymestor. Having withstood other enormous tragedies she finally breaks, and deteriorates morally into a dog like state. According to Nussbaum (1987), "[T]he events of this play show us that the annihilation of convention by another's act can destroy the stable character who receives it. It can, quite simply, produce bestiality, the utter loss of human relatedness and human language." (p.417) She further concludes:

> [T]his play shows us that the person of noble character is, if anything, more open to this corrosion than the base person, because it is the noble person, not the base, who has unsuspiciously staked a world on the faith and care of others. It was Hecuba's very strength, in terms of the traditional virtues, that contributed most to unseat her. It was her love for this friend, her faith in promises, her unsuspicious fairness. Now, in the wake of this friend's act, she must have revenge not against some personal or sectarian weakness (as is the case with Nietzsche's Christians), but against human life itself and the very conditions of virtue in the world. (p.418)

Orwell (2008) too provides a more contemporary analysis reaching a similar conclusion. In his dystopian novel *1984*, the corruption of Winston and his betrayal under torture of his beloved Julia, electing her to be tortured instead, leaves him morally broken. As he sits in the 'Chestnut café' and thinks of Julia and the effect of their treatment in the Ministry of Love he recalls her hope "… 'they can't get inside you' she had said. But they could get inside you. 'what happens to you here is forever', O'Brien had said. That was a true word. There were things, your own acts, from which you could not recover. Something was killed in your breast: burnt out, cauterised out." (pp 304-305). These examples from both classical and contemporary literature give texture to the existential experience of what it means to have one's moral functioning destroyed. Arendt understood that the success of totalitarian regimes required just that outcome. What she also understood was that it took very little effort to achieve this among a substantial portion of the populace. The remainder, those who, as in Nussbaum's analysis, tried to remain strong, were also ultimately defeated, to a large degree.

In Chapter 1. it was shown that three elements of human consciousness: knowledge of good and evil, the guidance of conscience, and responsibility through freedom of choice, are the faculties that form personal morality. These were conventionally considered to shield human beings from evildoing and are the central characteristics of the moral person. Arendt shows that the form of treatment of inmates in the camps systematically destroyed each of these faculties, reducing most victims to the level of animality where the 'normal' conventions of moral behaviour were not only irrelevant, they were absurd. Thus the moral person was destroyed. Perhaps the most iconic examples of this phenomenon are being revealed as the details of the enormous human suffering under Stalin continue to emerge. More specifically the instances of people killing and eating their own children as a result of Stalin's engineered famine is perhaps the most dramatic and horrifying example of the death of morality. This phenomenon was clearly known among the authorities at the time, to such an extent that as Vardy et al (2007) in their grim historical account report that "[T]his cannibalism reached a point where the Soviet government-instead of stopping the mad exportation of grain – began to print posters with the following warning: 'To eat your own children is a barbarian act.'" (p.225)

These two strands of radical evil: killing the juridical and moral aspects of a human being, meant that all that was left was the minimal potential for some remaining choices/activity that might in some way provide redemption to that person. This might be loosely terms the 'life force'. A stateless abandoned human with no functioning moral compass could still have the energy to act. Arendt (1970) suggests that this capacity for action is central to being human. She avers that "[N]o other faculty except language, neither reason nor consciousness distinguishes us so radically from all animal species." (p. 82). The sparse remainder in the inmate is their capacity, however feeble or limited, to act. Even within the context of such desecration the possibility for a rare act could serve to remind a person of their humanity. Levi (1987) refers poetically to such events as 'moments of reprieve'. These are brief glimpses or reminders of human dignity or care that can emerge in the darkest of circumstances. Perhaps one of the most harrowing of such events is described in his account of a young girl who is found alive among the corpses being taken from the gas chamber. There is great confusion among the workers as to what to do with her. They treat her with tenderness, clean her up and take care of her. They then send for a SS man who kills her. For that brief interlude before her murder the men taking care of her showed remnants of

compassion and empathy, fragments of their human dignity. These remaining glimpses of dignity and hope are destroyed in the third strand of radical evil: Killing the soul.

2.2.iii Killing the Soul

According to Arendt: "[O]nce the moral person has been killed, the one thing that still prevents men from being made into living corpses is the differentiation of the individual, his unique identity." (1985 p.453) Here Arendt opens a discussion that leads directly to her understanding that there was something very new about the evil under Hitler, namely a purposeful attempt to do something to human beings that was new in history: to keep them biologically alive but no longer definable as human. Furthermore, she believed that this goal required forms of experimentation, trying new ways to prolong suffering but in a random haphazard way that left the person with no possible way to connect their suffering to any element of their lived experience. Thus "the aim of all these methods, in any case, is to manipulate the human body –with its infinite possibilities of suffering–in such a way as to make it destroy the human personas inexorably as do certain mental diseases of organic origins" (p.453). This part of her description, more perhaps than any other, lends support to the notion that evil can be its own end. This process has no purpose other than its own evil end. It was in fact easier for the Nazis to just kill their victims at this stage. Instead they set about killing them while keeping them alive.

I chose the phrase 'killing to soul' here to capture the essence of Arendt's description of how the camp system destroys the individuality of the person. 'Soul' is used here because it has a long history with various interpretations all of which in some way express the way that life is expressed uniquely to each person. It is not meant in the theological form of the aspect that some believe continues after bodily death, but rather is used here as a metaphor for that which carries living personhood.

Arendt uses a variety of phrases to elucidate her meaning. One such phrase is that of the 'natality' of the person. By this she means the individual life possibilities that are given at birth. She also discusses the 'differentiation of the individual, his unique identity'. (p. 453) In another context she explains that killing the spontaneity of the person, destroying his human defining capacity to create something new that is not just simply a reaction to events. (1994 p. 242) Within these descriptions there is a sense that Arendt holds a particularly positive view of the human individual as self- creative, spontaneous and open to possibilities. Thus, for her, "the killing of man's individuality, of the uniqueness shaped in equal parts by

nature, will and destiny, which have become so self-evident a premise for all human relations that even identical twins inspire a certain uneasiness, creates a horror that vastly overshadows the outrage of the juridical-political person, and the despair of the moral person. (1985. p. 454). The writer uses 'killing the soul' to incorporate all these meanings

The purposeful destruction of the soul of the individual was actualised throughout the process from deportation to eventual murder. Arendt relies heavily on Rousset's (1947) description whereby the camp experience turns human beings into mindless automatons. He writes that

> the triumph of the SS demands that the tortured victim allows himself to be led to the noose without protesting, that he renounce and abandon himself to the point of ceasing to affirm his identity…They know that the system that succeeds in destroying its victims before he mounts the scaffold …is incomparably the best for keeping a whole people in slavery. Nothing is more terrible than these processions of human beings going like dummies to their death. (p.525)

Similarly Arendt says, "[N]othing then remains but ghastly marionettes with human faces, which all behave like the dog in Pavlov's experiments, which all react with perfect reliability even when going to their own death, and which do nothing but react." (p.455).

There is a similarity in the language used to describe these destroyed individuals. They are identified by the lack of any differentiation from each other, they no longer have any identity as persons. Levi titles one of his works aptly as *If This is a Man*. He describes in detail the phenomenon of the human being who through intolerable chronic suffering and torment is left without a soul. Initially in Auschwitz, and then throughout the camp system these were referred to as *Muselmann*. Hollowed out by suffering they could be recognised as… "[A]n emaciated man, with head drooped and shoulders curved, on whose face and in whose eyes not a trace of thought is to be seen." Levi recounts that: "[W]hoever does not know how to become an *'Organisator,' 'Kominator,' 'Prominent*,' soon becomes like a *Muselmann*. In life a third way exists, and is in fact the rule; it does not exist in the camps." (1987 p.56)

Frankl (1992) also discusses the phenomenon and describes the recognition among inmates when a person turned the corner and became a *muselmann*. It was considered important to survival by those nearby to avoid them because they were most likely to be taken to the gas chamber during the next selection. To all intents and purposes they were already dead. The *muselmann* were often described as walking corpses.

Levi considers the *muselmann* the true witnesses of the holocaust. He suggests that living witnesses are not the true witnesses because only the drowned have seen

> the Gorgon, have not returned or returned mute…even if they had paper and pen the drowned would not have testified because their death had begun before that of their body. Weeks, months before being snuffed out, they had already lost the ability to observe and express themselves. We speak in their stead, by proxy" (1989. p.84)

Similarly Amery describes the *muselmann* as 'a staggering corpse, a bundle of physical functions in its last convulsions." Although contra Levi, he asserts that they "must be excluded from consideration" as witnesses, for they can no longer speak. (1980 p.9) Agamben (1999) believes that, as the last remnants of biological life in the *muselmann* is "snuffed out", he has become a conundrum. Thus:

> what is called into question is the very humanity of man since man observes the fragmentation of his privileged tie to what constitutes him as human, that is the sacredness of death and life. The *muselmann* is a non-human who obstinately appears as human, he is the human that cannot be told apart from the inhuman (p.82)

Agamben is noticing here that the camps are doing something which is akin to making a human being into a non-human. Thus, "the *muselmann* is not only or not so much a limit between life and death, rather he marks a threshold between the human and the inhuman." (p.58)

Arendt's position is that what is happening in the creation of the *muselmann* is a new form of evil. She calls the camps "holes of oblivion" and shows that even the possibility that death itself as having any form of meaning is also removed. Accordingly, she uses a phrase taken from Heidegger that the camps oversaw the 'fabrication of corpses', and again the 'insane mass production of corpses'. These phrases have significance in terms of Arendt's understanding that the radical evil of the camps was not only about the thoroughgoing removal of any semblance of humanity from the individual on the path to death, but also included the removal of any significance of that death. The victims are not dying, rather corpses are being produced from their bodies.

It seems relevant to note here that there is a consistency here in Nazi ideology, whereby those deported, healthy, alive, frightened but clinging to hope were referred to by Eichmann as 'goods'. Later in the war a trainload of Hungarian Jews is sent to Switzerland as part of a deal

with Kaztner, paying lip service to Himmler's attempts to exchange Jews for trucks. Eichmann refers to it as a 'sample train'. (Florence 2010, p.222) Becher, as part of that negotiation referred to the victims as 'pieces' His deportation notes describe victims as so many 'pieces' being deported. *(ibid* p.247) In conversation with Sassen in Argentina Eichmann explains that some care needed to be taken with certain deportations because "it wasn't in our interest for the material to be used for labour in the concentration camps to arrive completely useless and needing repair." Stagneth (2014 p.264) reports that for Eichmann "he did not send people to the death camp; the camps were fed with material" (*ibid* p.266). Years on from Goebbels's propaganda, depicting Jews as lice and rats, they have even lost the character of organic life. And so, an enormous production system carried on over years saw the forcing of 'pieces'/goods into freight trains to be taken to death factories, whereby many are destroyed on arrival, those remaining are degraded until empty then they are manufactured into corpses. The hair for mattresses, the fat for soap, the skin for lampshades, skulls for ashtrays (specific trophies for some of the more grotesque camp guards) and ashes for fertilizer are all put to use.

It is difficult to argue with Arendt's (1985) belief that this represents a new form of evil, neither is it difficult to assent to her conclusion that:

> [T]here are no parallels to the life in the concentration camps. Its horrors can never be fully embraced by the imagination for the very reason that it stands outside of life and death. It can never be fully reported for the very reason that the survivor returns to the world of the living, which makes it impossible for him to believe fully in his own past experiences. It is as though he has a story to tell from another planet….all parallels create confusion and distract attention from what is essential. Forced labour in prisons and penal colonies, banishment, slavery, all seem for a moment to offer helpful comparisons, but on closer examination lead nowhere. (p.444)

What is difficult to understand is where Arendt takes the idea of coming 'from another planet' as a metaphor for the survivors. Despite the absolute bleak and unrelenting despair that seems to inhere in Arendt's description of radical evil, there is one aspect that points to her optimism about human nature. She avers that the world of the camp was like a different planet and that the normal tools of human understanding can never fully appreciate the meaning of these experiences. Furthermore, despite the widespread, purposeful intention and application to destroying the individual, she believes for those who survived, their individuality was not destroyed, it simply went underground. If the individual survived the camps then on return to the normal world his personality would return. Thus she argues "the

reduction of a man to a bundle of reactions separates him as radically as a mental disease from everything within him that is personality and character. When like Lazarus he rises from the dead, he finds his personality or character unchanged, just as he had left it." (p.441) and in addition "[T]here is no doubt that this part of the human person precisely because it depends so essentially on nature and on forces that cannot be controlled by the will is the hardest to destroy (and when destroyed is most easily repaired)" (p. 453) This optimism seems unjustified on Arendt's part.

It can be suggested that any discussion of human evil benefits from some attempt to understand the effects of profound evil on its victims. All the more so in terms of the consideration, often reported that evil begets evil, and victims are more likely to become perpetrators. Arendt's suggestion that, on surviving, the victim largely returns to normality with his 'personality or character unchanged' flies in the face of most research and personal testimonies from survivors. Levi (1988) for example eloquently explains why suicide was so prevalent among early survivors:

> [C]oming out of the darkness one suffered because of the reacquired consciousness of having been diminished. Not by our will, cowardice or fault, yet we had lived for months and years at an animal level …..Only at rare intervals did we come out of this condition of levelling…but these were painful moments precisely because they gave us the opportunity to measure our diminishment from the outside. I believe that it is precisely due to this turning to look back at the perilous water that so many suicides occurred (sometimes immediately after) the liberation. (pp 56-57).

Amery (1999) discusses the more long term effects thus:

> [A]nyone who has been tortured remains tortured…Anyone who has suffered torture never again will be able to be at ease in the world, the abomination of annihilation is never extinguished. Faith in humanity, already cracked by the first slap in the face, then demolished by torture, is never reacquired again. (p.27)

The post Holocaust years provided medicine and psychiatry with an almost endless supply of examples of how such horrific treatment affects the human mind. Literature suggests that the key injury to an individual's relationship to the world is the destruction of trust. Brisson (2002) tells us that most of us operate our lives with an unconscious trust in the world. We live within our world with an unspoken sense that we are safe. Violation destroys that trust, and makes it forevermore a conscious element of our existence so that even if we rebuild the trust, we can rarely if ever regain the simple and perhaps naïve freedom it gives to those who

retain it. Carruth (1996) asks the question, what is it like for consciousness to survive? She tells us that violation produces a new element within consciousness, a sense of having almost died. We are not just alive we are alive as ones who have almost died.

Heidegger (1962) believed that an important part of living was the aspect of being immersed in one's projects. Authentic life is lived in the experience of unconscious living, interspersed with visitations to self-reflection and evaluation. The traumatised person finds it difficult to live in such a way, for all their projects are refracted through the lens of survival. Letting oneself into the unconscious life requires a trust that is shaken if not destroyed through violation. These studies, and other post-Vietnam studies have given rise now to an all-encompassing vacuous sounding diagnostic "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder". Valent (1998) points out, however, that the commonly accepted description of PTSD does not cover the many and varied responses to traumatising events. He suggests rather that

> [S]uch responses include feelings of abandonment, betrayal, surrender, grief and anguish for not having saved others. Further symptoms may include a great variety of moral judgements such as survivor guilt, shame outrage, shattered values and principles, and disruptions of meaning and purpose. (p.115)

What is central to these descriptions is that they refer to the aftermath of the event, and can continue for a lifetime, even though the original event has passed. Griffen and Tyrell (2004) dramatically describe this thus:

> [A] traumatised creature lives in a private hell: hyper alert, terrorised by an invisible wound, helplessly in thrall to a powerful emotional memory of a life threatening event-or series of events- real or imagined. Horrific, violent events can clearly impact on the mind as well as the body to produce such a state. (p.270).

Contra to Arendt's optimism, this state of reliving the horror was the lot of many survivors. Even sixty years on from the liberation Holocaust survivors were more likely to die by suicide. (Barak. 2005)

Perhaps Arendt means something other than that the person returns unscathed. There is something almost metaphysical in the notion that the human spirit can be separated so radically from the biological condition by virtue of unending suffering. A close parallel here from clinical psychology is that of the phenomenon of dissociation. Another closely related is that of the *fugue* state. While these may have some similar dimensions Arendt appears to be referring to a possibility inherent in human survival whereby an individual is able to so repress or bury everything that defines their humanity until the suffering and trauma stops.

As long as biological survival continues there remains the possibility of some recovery. The person 'returns' to their body. Maybe the survivor is deeply scarred but intact only in the sense that the individual character that defines and distinguishes them from others reappears.

Arendt's claim can perhaps be explained by her commitment to the notion of 'natality'. She references the term natality, strongly influenced by Augustine (Kampowski 2008, Birmingham 2006) to indicate the existential condition of the human being who is born both physically as a human being and born existentially as a person. This latter event or process is considered by her to be the second birth. Her concept of natality encapsulates both. Conceptually, from the viewpoint of this thesis, it could be said that radical evil is a form of evil that inserts itself between the first birth referred to by Arendt as the 'naked fact of physical birth' and that of the second which is the emergence of the individual by way of the development of language action and freedom. These are the qualities that, on appearance, begin the unique individual human person's journey through life. Radical evil seeks to destroy the being that has emerged through the second birth leaving the biological, or what Agamben call 'bare life' as a remainder. It will be seen in later chapters that this element of Arendt's work is an important consideration in preventing mass evildoing. The discussion here is limited to allowing it to help make sense of Arendt's depiction of survival from the third stage of radical evil. Arendt believed that the second birth gives rise to the unique person. Once he or she comes into existence, and is then victimised by radical evil, that unique 'soul' remains in some mysterious alcove of the human psyche to re-emerge with the onset of rescue.

Notwithstanding her positive beliefs on the power of recovery, her first thesis, that the Holocaust, and the Stalin years, brought a new form of evil into the world is both profound and far reaching. Arendt's discussion of radical evil presents what could be termed a 'perfect storm' of human evil. Each element contributes to the evil outcome. Without killing the juridical person, there would be great difficulty in amassing large numbers of people to mistreat or annihilate, as they would have to be offered due process which takes time, energy and more importantly opportunity (for some) to reflect on the justice/injustice being applied.

Without breaking the victims' morality they would not choose to cooperate with the machinery of torture/extermination. The vast bulk of the everyday work of the concentration camp was carried out by inmates. Without that support the system would require huge

resources in manpower from the ranks of the oppressor, and the whole process would slow down and perhaps grind to a halt. Montefiore (2014) references Stalin's success as an outcome of support from thousands of 'mini Stalins'.

Without killing the soul of the individual, they would rebel, making it more difficult to kill them *en masse*. It has been noted how few suicides occurred in the camps. Arendt suggests that this is because suicide is a spontaneous act, a form of assertion, and in its own way a form of rebellion. That so few took this route out of their unending suffering that they knew inevitable would lead to their death is evidence that their spontaneity had already been destroyed.

2.3 Conclusion

Arendt saw the systematic destruction of the individuality of the human being as a new phenomenon in the evolution of evil within the human condition.[4] The Holocaust was the first time that such a process was implemented in a systematic and planned fashion, leading to what Arendt referred to as 'administrative massacre". Thus the camps are meant not only to exterminate people and degrade human beings, but also "serve the ghastly experiment of eliminating under scientifically controlled conditions, spontaneity itself as an expression of human behaviour and of transforming the human personality into a mere thing, into something that even animals are not". (p.438) It has been argued in the earlier part of this chapter that Arendt's change from the phrase 'radical evil' to 'extreme evil' was perhaps ill advised. Understandably, she wished to separate the terminology of evil from the Kantian meaning, thus allowing for greater scope in her pursuit of the concept of 'banal evil'. However, this chapter has shown that Arendt had identified a form of evil-doing that cannot be adequately described as simply 'extreme'. Rather she has explicated a particularly progressive form of mass evil doing, and the retention of the phrase 'radical evil', when used to refer to the impact on its victims remains of considerable value.

[4] There are significant implications for understanding evil in Arendt's notion that evil is that which makes the individual superfluous. Her conclusions are based on the effects of profound violence and humiliation under totalitarianism. If however the notion of destroying the person who emerges through the second birth is considered a mark of evil, then there some grounds to consider that less obviously malign forces are forms of evildoing should they have the result of damaging or preventing human beings from becoming persons

Her second thesis seeks to understand how this condition of unimaginable horror was abetted, supported, encouraged, and tolerated to a greater or lesser extent by millions of ordinary people. What she terms "a vast machine of administrative mass murder in whose service not only thousands of persons, not even scores of thousands of selected murderers but a whole people could be and was employed." (1994. p.125) These people allowed such evil to spread and infect a whole nation in one of the most highly educated and well developed countries in Europe. Her investigation into this problem brought her to understand that two forces fused to create conditions for radical evil to flourish, that of banal evildoing, and a particular form of ideology. Banal evil is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 3

The Banality of Evil

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine one of the more controversial aspects of Arendt's thesis concerning the problem of evil. Her early work concerned itself with what she termed 'radical evil', and has been explored in the previous chapter. Arendt was dissatisfied, however, with merely describing the elements of such evil because it left unanswered the critical question of how such evil could be implemented on such a vast scale. Her turn towards this question led her to what many consider a revolutionary understanding of human evil, namely that is it often banal. This term should not be confused with the idea that evil itself is somehow insignificant, rather the term refers to evil doing. A more accurate phrase in this regard would be to refer to the banality of evildoing, or the ascription to certain evildoers as banal. The remainder of this chapter will explicate the meaning of this concept.

3.2 Banal Evil Doing

For Arendt, the fundamental connection between evil and the destruction of personhood, the core characteristic of radical evil, is also found at the foundation of her understanding of banal evil. In Arendt's narrative the victim of radical evil is emptied of their humanity before their destruction. Additionally many of the perpetrators also exhibit an emptiness of such magnitude as to be considered non-persons. The superfluousness of human beings therefore arises on both sides of the perpetrator/victim relationship. When Arendt discovered Eichmann she saw in him, a mass murderer, the very prototype of the empty shell human, living and functioning as a normal person. Thus, for Arendt, radical evil was not only a product of terror but also found its place in the absence of selfhood, in the banality of the perpetrator. Accordingly, Bernstein (2008) concludes that "the banality of evil is not only compatible with the radical evil of making human beings superfluous, the banality of evil enables us to understand how desk murderers like Eichmann accomplished this with such efficiency" (p.71). Thus the banal evil doer is the purveyor of the radical evil that makes individual human beings superfluous. This connection between the way that banal evildoing

contributes to the radical evil of genocide is a central concern for Arendt who continued to refine this concept throughout her life.

3.3 Constituents of Banality

Arendt's second thesis in relation to evil is that modern western society fosters the conditions whereby a substantial number of citizens become banal in the sense that they develop no coherent moral structure that will support their decisions/behaviour when the moral ethos of government changes. She argues further that the traditional understanding of how individual morality defends against evildoing was revealed to be almost completely impotent in the face of an evil doing regime. Rather, the elevation of an evildoing regime in pre-war Germany resulted in the almost complete moral collapse of what was considered an evolved sophisticated western democracy. Accordingly, Waller (2002) notes that 'Arendt's conception of evil was almost entirely new'.(p.88) Arendt (2003) is careful to clarify the distinction between those who are motivated to evil doing by base or malevolent motives and those who become willing facilitators once an evil doing system is in place. She argues that much of what was happening within the Nazi party in Germany did not pose any great moral confusion for most people. In her view there was a clear understanding among the populace that certain activities were morally wrong. There was recognition that many storm troopers were just thugs in uniform, that Hitler's henchmen were criminals disguised as political leaders. There was also an understanding that fear and self-interest led many people to just stay quiet, or even cooperate to an extent. She explains:

> [T]hus we were outraged, but not morally disturbed, by the bestial behaviour of the storm troopers in the concentration camps and the torture cellars of the secret police, and it would have been strange indeed to grow morally indignant over the speeches of the Nazi bigwigs in power, whose opinions had been common knowledge for years. The new regime posed to us then nothing more than a very complex political problem, one aspect of which was the intrusion of criminality into the public realm. I think we were also prepared for the consequences of ruthless terror and we would gladly have admitted that this kind of fear is likely to make cowards of most men. All this was terrible and dangerous, but it posed no moral problem. (p. 24)

The moral problem emerged when criminality entered the public realm and found no substantial resistance. Arendt (1985) tells us that "nothing proved easier to destroy than the privacy and private morality of people who thought of nothing else but safeguarding their

private lives" (p.338) Evildoing overwhelmed whatever moral structures were in place. The deluded belief that traditional notions of moral decency would in some way prevail were utterly defeated. This led Arendt to compare evil to a fungus, and to refer to its limitless possibilities. Contrary to almost all earlier understandings of evil, this form of evil had no root in the person's moral character or beliefs. Thus the limitless possibilities for the spread of evil is based on the reality that very large numbers of people do not have a moral structure that can withstand living in a society where governance is primarily evil doing. Rather their moral system readjusts itself to the new order. This revelation is at the heart of Arendt's concept of the banality of evil.

Arendt (2003) saw Eichmann, as a prototype of a significant cohort of citizens of modern society and she uses him as a source of evidence to understand just how banality occurs. She says, in this regard, that "Eichmann may very well remain the concrete model of what I have to say" (p.396). Her analysis of Eichmann discloses several aspects of his character that contribute to her description of Eichmann as an example of the banal evil doer. Her analysis was based on documentation available at the time and his presentation before the judges at his trial. Following her death more recent research suggests that in the specific case of Eichmann Arendt was mistaken in her understanding of his character. His behaviour while on trial in Jerusalem was according to Stangeth (2014) "one of the most astonishingly successful acts of suppression in European history" (p.358), and was convincing enough to lead Arendt into what amounts to a mistake in her understanding of the person himself.

Arendt's conclusions with regard to banal evil doing, however, remain valid despite the fact that Eichmann was not an accurate example of the phenomenon. His presentation of himself as a small cog in the Nazis machine carried all the elements that are characteristic of banal evil doing as reflected in the behaviour of millions of passive collaborators. Thus, Bernstein (2008) while acknowledging the questions raised concerning the accuracy of Arendt's portrait concludes that "I don't think that it diminishes her main point: normal people with banal motives and intentions can commit horrendous crimes and evil deeds." (p.73) Browning concurs and explains that Arendt's misunderstanding was itself evidence that supported her conclusions insofar as "Arendt was fooled by Eichmann's strategy of self-presentation in part because there were so many of the kind he was pretending to be." (ibid p.73) With that caveat in mind, the issue of banality remains of critical importance in

Arendt's concept of evil. Much of the literature that focuses on the topic of banality limits itself to the central role of 'thoughtlessness' as referenced by Arendt in her study of Eichmann. Deeper analysis that moves beyond the *Eichmann in Jerusalem* text itself reveals several themes that can be brought back into the Eichmann analysis to reveal a more comprehensive understanding of banality. The remainder of this chapter focuses on explicating a comprehensive explanation of banality extant in Arendt's broader work, as well as supporting evidence particularly from the field of social psychology. In that regard her analysis of Eichmann reveals three specific elements as the essential components of banality, namely: thoughtlessness, obedience, and role immersion.

3.3.i Thoughtlessness.

One of the predominant features noticed by Arendt was the apparent lack of personal reflection by Eichmann. Arendt calls this defect "thoughtlessness". For her, Eichmann was "neither monstrous nor demonic, and the only specific characteristic one could detect in his past as well as in his behaviour during the trial and the preceding police examinations was something entirely negative: it was not stupidity but a curious quite authentic inability to think." (1971. p.417) It is of critical importance to Arendt's thesis to find a connection between Eichmann's evil doing and his thoughtlessness, Thus the 'inability to think' as a constituent of the banality of evil requires further analysis.

Eichmann was one of the most evil human beings in history if we use his involvement in promoting and actualising the suffering and death of millions of innocent people as a measure. Would Eichmann have done things differently if he was not thoughtless? For Arendt the answer to this question is in the affirmative. This is based on her assumption that Eichmann was not a monster, he was not driven by criminal urges, and could not be recognised as any more or less evil that his neighbour before his elevation in the ranks of the SS. Thus, Boym (2008) notes that "Arendt draws our attention to the fact that an individual who authorised the worst crimes against humanity was an ordinary civil servant, neither a glamorous Shakespearean villain, nor the metaphysical embodiment of a Satan on earth." (p.351). Had Eichmann lived in different circumstances he would have most likely lived out a life of relative insignificance. Understanding the process which transforms a rather mediocre unimpressive man into a mass murderer can be seen as the critical element in Arendt's

contribution to understanding evil. Waller (2002) summarises her discovery thus, "[T]he banality of Eichmann's evil leaves us with the real possibility that the potential for committing extraordinary evil exists in each of us. She suggests that the commission of extraordinary evil transcends groups, ideology, psychopathology and personality….ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances can perform extraordinary evil deeds." (p.98)

Arendt reverts to both Kant and Socrates to formulate her position with regard to the role of non-thinking or thoughtlessness in banal evildoing. Her first task is to argue that the faculty of thinking is not what is commonly called intelligence. Thus "inability to think is not stupidity, it can be found in highly intelligent people, and wickedness is hardly its cause, if only because thoughtlessness as well as stupidity are much more frequent phenomena than wickedness". (1971. p.423) To Arendt, Eichmann's inability to think is evidenced by his reliance on stock phrases, clichés, and consistent self-contradiction. His lack of self-reflection is considered by her to be a core element of his non thinking. To further explicate this matter Arendt uses Kant's distinction between thinking and intellect. Using Kant she argues that although thinking can be part of gaining knowledge when it is used for utilitarian purpose, it has a far broader function in human life. For Arendt, following Kant, thinking itself is possible for all human beings and Arendt further believes that it should be 'demanded' of individuals to exercise this faculty in deciding how to behave. Perhaps one of the clearest descriptions of what Arendt meant by thinking is characterised by Ayn Rand (2007) thus;

> to think is an act of choice. The key to human nature ....is the fact that man is a being of volitional consciousness. Reason does not work automatically, thinking is not a mechanical process, the connections of logic are not made by instinct. The function of your stomach, lungs or heart is automatic. The function of your mind is not (p.1013).

Arendt's firm conclusion that thinking is a choice means that wilful neglect or failure to use this faculty in such a way that leads to evil is for Arendt a feature of banal evildoing for which the individual must be held to account. And thus, for her, Eichmann in his failure to think was justifiably held to account for his deeds and executed.

Eichmann was not stupid. He did not lack intellectual capability and proved himself to be an excellent administrator. He used his intelligence to great effect in organising and managing the identification, collection, and deportation of millions to their doom in a number of different countries. His very effectiveness was initially recognised in his 'work' in Vienna

immediately following the Anschluss, whereby he developed a template for both exploiting and robbing the material and financial resources of the Jewish population, developing strategic teamwork with Jewish leaders to ensure accurate and thorough preparation for their deportation and later on their removal to concentration camps. His approach to the 'solution of the Jewish problem' became known as the 'Vienna Model' and led to Heydrich recalling Eichmann to Berlin so as to implement this approach throughout the Reich. (Safrian 2010)

Much of the historical data points to Eichmann being thorough, enthusiastic, effective, disciplined and well organised. Additionally, there is no doubt that he knew what was happening to the Jews he had deported. He played a significant part in the Wannsee conference where the "final solution" namely the physical extermination of the Jews became Nazi policy. Eichmann took a keen interest in Auschwitz from its founding and visited the camp on numerous occasions. He helped Höss select the site for the gas chambers, approved the use of Zyklon-B, and witnessed the extermination process. There is no convincing evidence then to suggest that Eichmann was a mindless bureaucrat just obeying orders. Robinson's (1965) critique of Arendt's depiction of Eichmann is profoundly negative. He concludes from his research that far from being banal, Eichmann was a "man of extraordinary driving power, master in the arts of cunning and deception, intelligent and competent in the field, single minded in his mission to make Europe free of Jews (judenrein) –in short a man uniquely suited to be the overseer of most of the Nazi program to exterminate the Jews". (Ezra 2007 p.157)

What then could Arendt mean by Eichmann's 'thoughtlessness'? Clearly she does not mean the absence of cognition, the use of reason to solve problems. Eichmann was certainly highly functional in that regard. For Arendt, 'thoughtlessness' finds its meaning in the application of reason to the events that go to make up ordinary everyday living. According to Arendt, all events and experiences make some level of claim on our 'thinking attention'. Being immersed in reality and our ongoing engagement with the world can be overwhelming unless we somehow filter experiences. Thus Arendt sees the role of clichés, stock phrases, adherence to conventional standardised codes of expression and conduct as forms of protection from being overloaded by experience. For the most part these 'short cuts' are positive for they allow a person to function in their everyday world without becoming exhausted. It could be said that driving a car might be a useful metaphor here. Once the

individual has mastered the art of driving, the task becomes rather routine. If the act of driving claimed the constant attention required when learning, then it would be highly demanding and stressful. It would not be possible to think about anything else while driving because the thinking capacity would be utilised in the act of driving itself. For Arendt, the use of conventions and standardised forms of acting help us to manage our lives and leave space or energy to think about other things Thus, reality claims our "thinking attention", and we become economic in how much of the energy we can spare by relying on the conventional or the habitual.

The conventional is not, however, the limits of reality. The cultivation of standardised conventional functioning is a way to take care of the mundane, but it is just that, a way of functioning. It is not a replacement for reality or our relationship to it. As humans we maintain the capacity to transcend, or to reflect on these ways of standardised functioning, (thinking) and then at times to change tack, or to make a choice to refuse the conventional. Arendt understood Eichmann as being devoid of any insight, or willingness to develop such insight, into the distinction between his individual being in the world, and his functioning according to some standardised script. She takes his speech from the dock before his execution as an example. After stating that he did not believe in life after death, Eichmann proceeded to say "[A]fter a short while gentlemen we shall all meet again. Such is the fate of all men. Long live Germany, long live Argentina, long live Austria. I shall not forget them". Arendt comments, "in the face of death he had found the cliché used in funeral oratory. Under the gallows his memory played him the last trick: he was elated and he forgot that it was his own funeral" (2006 p.252). Herein then lies a critical element in Arendt's understanding of Eichmann's banality. She believed that Eichmann had no internal resource to prevent him becoming a mass murderer when the convention dictated that mass murder is acceptable. His whole being was defined by the conventional. He was perhaps as adept a rabbit farmer as he was a mass murderer.

This understanding of Eichmann removes much of the power of Arendt's critics who are trenchant in their arguments that Arendt was fooled by his act in Jerusalem. They point to his zealous dedication to the task of exterminating the Jews even to the point of his disobeying a direct order from Himmler to cease the deportation of Hungarian Jews in 1944 as the war drew to a close. This event is cited as one of the clearest examples of where Arendt is

mistaken about Eichmann. (Stagneth 2011) The argument goes that someone who is an unthinking bureaucrat could not act in such a way, and in doing so proved himself to be a motivated evildoer, not a banal functionary (Balfour 2003). It is important to the validity of Arendt's argument to examine this issue more closely.

It can be suggested that there is a misunderstanding of Arendt's notion of thoughtlessness at work among her critics. Arendt's position is that Eichmann was completely enslaved to the conventions of the Nazi regime. Thus he could marshal his undeniable energy and considerable organizational skill to pursue the goals of that regime. The question then must be asked, how could he then have the individuality/independence to disobey an order from his superior. Surely this proves that Arendt is mistaken, and proves, in addition, that Eichmann was not a thoughtless apparatchik. Closer analysis of Eichmann, however, undermines the power of this argument.

It can be suggested that it is a misinterpretation of Arendt's concept of thoughtlessness that leads to that conclusion. The question is raised: Could someone who had no mind of their own choose to disobey an order? During his pre-trial interrogation and during the trial itself Eichmann explained that he understood the difference between obeying an order and obeying the law. He vouched that he sought to live his life according to the Kantian Categorical Imperative. Thus he hoped to live in such a way as his way of life could become the norm or general principles for others. Within the Nazi regime, as with all totalitarian regimes, the law was a direct child of the will of the leader. Eichmann dedicated himself to doing his duty utterly guided by the principle that the will of the Führer is the highest calling. Thus in an inversion of what became the Nuremburg defence ('I was only obeying orders'), Eichmann disobeyed Himmler because Himmler's order to save the Jews was an illegal order. If anything, this evidence supports more fully Arendt's position that Eichmann was utterly bereft of individual thinking.

Another piece of evidence that bolsters this view is the way that Eichmann dealt with the human temptation to yield to personal pressure and save some Jews. Eichmann explained that he tried to help a half-Jewish cousin, and a Jewish couple for whom his uncle had intervened. Under cross examination at his trial Eichmann explained that he understood that in doing so he had breached the Kantian principle and allowed his self-interest (indulging his

feelings of compassion) to overcome the maxim of obeying the law. From then on, based on this realisation, he committed himself to no longer let sentimentality overrule his duty. He also explained that he 'confessed his sins' to his superiors. The fact that Eichmann experienced guilt for 'wrongly' saving three Jews points not so much to his undoubted anti-Semitism, but more to the impoverishment of his mind. It also adds much weight to Arendt's useful insight that guilt feelings "indicate conformity and non-conformity. They don't indicate morality". (2003 p.107)

Thus, a central element of thoughtlessness is a complete submersion into the ideologically determined conventions of one's social context. And Eichmann's thoughtless, unreflective embracing of standardised functioning can be seen as a very clear example of Arendt's original understanding of superfluousness in her earlier concern with radical evil. There could be no better example of the condition whereby "each and every person can be reduced to a never changing identity of reactions, so that each of these bundles of reactions can be exchanged at random for any other".(1985. p.438) This interchangeable functioning requires that the individual human being loses all identifying uniqueness in their way of living. They show a complete loss of individuality, which is, as mentioned earlier, at the core of Arendt's understanding of both totalitarianism, and her understanding of banal evil doing. Thus she writes "the greatest evil perpetuated is the evil committed by nobodies, that is by human beings who refuse to be persons". (2003 p.111) Eichmann was, in this sense a nobody, a non-person.

Delbanco (1995) in his analysis of the modern diminution of the concept of evil provides an eloquent summary of this idea of Eichmann as a non-person. He takes a paragraph from the Israeli secret service surveillance report on Ricardo Klement (Eichmann's alias in Argentina) and makes the following analysis.

> One horror of this passage is the unspoken but obscene disproportion of the pedestrian householder 'Ricardo Klement' and the murderer Eichmann. The still greater horror is that to see him brush the flies away on his porch is to know that the distinction between the two …will become ever more elusive until it disappears altogether. Eichmann-Klement becomes a 'postmodern' figure, a man without a centre, without a self, merely a subject for observation whose identity fluctuates with the perspective of the observer. When the last Nazi hunter is gone, no one will be able to bring Eichmann back into the field of vision. Evil will have become an epistemological problem. This is the vanishing point to which we seem headed. (p.8)

Thus Eichmann as a 'man without a centre' is for Arendt a product of his thoughtlessness -the critical deficiency that results in a human being failing to become a person. She believes this to be the case because in her view the act of thinking is what separates human beings from the animal kingdom. "what we usually call a person or a personality as distinguished from a mere human being or a nobody, actually grows out of this root-striking process of thinking" (2003 p.100). Thinking is thus the faculty responsible for the development of individual personhood. Accordingly, "thought-is indeed an activity—that has certain moral results, namely that he who thinks constitutes himself into somebody, a person, or a personality" (2003 p.105). Arendt's positioning of thinking as central to what defines personhood also provides the ground for morality and judgement. Furthermore, in terms of the connection between thinking and evil Arendt poses the question, "could the activity of thinking as such, the habit of examining and reflecting upon whatever happens to come to pass, regardless of specific content and quite independent of results, could this activity be of such a nature that it 'conditions' men against evil-doing?" (1971. p.418) In order to fully explore this question a closer examination of how Arendt understands 'thinking' is required.

Arendt's analysis of Eichmann provides the template for the kind of thoughtlessness that leads to banal evildoing. It is her belief that thinking can be considered as providing protection against such a condition. In order to further explicate this idea she chooses Socrates as an example. Mindful of the controversies surrounding the historical accuracy of some of the literature credited to Socrates, she justifies using him as a representative model because he was "chosen out of a crowd of living beings because he possessed a representative significance in reality which only needed some purification in order to reveal its full meaning". (1971 p.428)

The most striking characteristic of thinking as reflected by Socrates is that it often lacks results. Arendt (1971) understood Socratic thinking as a process whereby all certainties, codes and creeds become equally challenged. The temptation to replace old codes with new ones is overcome by the relentless destructive effect of thinking. Using the metaphor of the veil of Penelope Arendt tells us that 'thinking has a destructive, undermining effect on all established criteria, values, measurements for good and evil, in short on those customs and rules of conduct we treat of in morals and ethics. (p.434) Penelope, while awaiting the return of Odysseus, promised her suitors her hand on completion of her garment. She then would

sew during the day only to unravel her work during the night thus assuring that the raiment would never be complete. For Arendt, thinking always unravels certainties, leading to new ideas and new challenges: "[T]hinking is equally dangerous to all creeds and by itself, does not bring forth any new creed". (p.435)

A second characteristic of thinking is that it is a form of internal dialogue. Arendt turns to the Socratic proposition where Socrates tells us that

> It would be better for me that my lyre or a chorus should be out of tune and loud with discord, and that multitudes of men should disagree with me rather than that I, *being one* should be out of harmony with myself and contradict *me."* (1971. p.439)

Arendt's analysis of this Socratic proposition suggests that being in harmony with oneself requires an internal resolution of sorts. She reminds us that harmony requires more than one note. For her Socrates has introduced the basis for conscience as a direct consequence of thinking. She explains that in another dialogue (of which it is disputed whether it was written by Plato), Socrates tells Hippias that when he (Socrates) goes home he will be met by someone who "always cross examines him". Hippias it appears is particularly empty headed and Socrates tells him how blissfully fortunate he is not to have to go through such an examination. It could be said then that Hippias reflects the characteristic of non-thinking banality, an earlier version of Eichmann, Socrates on the other hand represents its opposite.

There is an assumption here about evil doing that requires discussion. Arendt's position is that the Socratic approach to thinking as an internal dialogue would have the effect of protecting one from becoming a banal evil-doer. She develops this line of thought in her analysis of those who did not succumb to the pressure to partake in the destruction of the Nazi regime. She believes that many of those who refused to accept the new order had already a well developed sense of scepticism for convention and ideology. Additionally they possessed the faculty of internal dialogue to such an extent that, in Arendt's opinion they would prefer to pay a price even to the point of sacrificing their own lives rather than to live with themselves as one who is guilty of evil doing. Thus she summarises "… they refused to murder, not so much because they still held fast to the command 'thou shalt not kill' but because they were unwilling to live together with a murderer---themselves." (2003. p. 44)

Arendt however does not fully accept the Socratic assumption that evil doing is a matter of ignorance. She does not fully embrace the notion that thinking prevents evil per se. One can suppose then, for Arendt, that had someone made up their mind to do evil, that is to cultivate an evil way of life, they would be an evildoer but they would no longer be a banal evildoer. Rather, Arendt believes that thinking prevents the kind of evil that is caused by people who do so unreflectively. She is fully aware that there are thinking people who do evil but also concludes that: "The sad truth is that most evil is done by people who never made up their minds to be either bad or good". (1971 p.438).

Another aspect of thinking that is significant to Arendt's is its quality of detachment. For Arendt the act of thinking "interrupts all doing". Thinking separates the thinker from their everyday engagement. When we are with someone we are not thinking about them. We must remove ourselves in some way from that interpersonal engagement once we begin to think about that person. Similarly, when we are engaged with a project we are immersed in it, if we face a conundrum or a puzzle about it, we must stop and remove ourselves in order to think. Someone who is thoughtless can more easily be immersed in the activity, doing it by rote. It is easy to surmise that bureaucracy provides a fertile environment for just such activity.

Banal evildoing is a particular form of evil in the human condition. Arendt insists that this concept is "glaringly borne out by the facts" and that "it contradicts our theories concerning evil". (2003. p.18) A central characteristic of this form of evildoing is 'thoughtlessness' an absence of thinking. For her "to think and to be fully alive are the same, and this implies that thinking must always begin afresh: it is an activity that accompanies living and is concerned with such concepts as justice, happiness, virtue, offered us by language itself as expressing the meaning of whatever happens in life and occurs to us while we are alive".(1978 p.178) By juxtaposing Eichmann with Socrates she presents a model of this defect as a failure of the person to reflect on what they are doing, a failure to examine themselves in terms of their behaviour, a readiness to immerse oneself in the accepted convention (in this case an evildoing one) and a failure to detach from the task at hand. This is the first strand in the cable of banality as understood by Arendt. A second is that of obedience.

3.3.ii Obedience

Much of Arendt's analysis of Eichmann focussed on non-thinking as central to his banal evildoing which she saw as his primary flaw. She does however examine the nature of obedience in terms of its contribution to banal evil. In doing so her focus is less on Eichmann but rather is found in other aspects of her historical analysis.

Arendt believes that obedience leads to banality because it allows the individual to avoid taking responsibility for their actions. She counters the objection, often made, that obedience is an essential part of any organisation and that society could not function without it. For her, this is a fallacy because it is a mistaken equation of consent with obedience. Her analysis invokes Madison's thesis that even the most autocratic societies rest on consent. Thus obedience in a well-functioning society is a form of consent and support. When that society functions effectively as an evil regime it is because it has harnessed the consent of a great number who hide that consent under the rubric of obedience.

Here Arendt comes close to Goldhagan's (1996) controversial thesis that the destruction of the European Jews was ably and enthusiastically supported by the mass of German citizens. Goldhagen grounds his thesis that such positive support was a result of rabid and widespread Anti-Semitism, what he terms eliminationist anti-Semitism. Arendt agrees that support for the regime and its destructive ideology was widespread, but she considers it to be less an outcome of Anti-Semitism and more a result of the almost endemic belief that obedience is a virtue. Thus, "Himmler's overall organisation relies not on fanatics, not congenital murderers, nor on sadists: it relies entirely upon the normality of job holders and family men". (1994. p.128)

The acceptance of obedience as a value is for her a potentially deeply destructive aspect of society. Again she reiterates that widespread obedience of the moral ethos leaves the citizen lost when that moral ethos changes. For her, obedience, in and of itself, cannot be justified as a mature form of behaving. Accordingly, "[A]n adult consents where a child obeys; if an adult is said to obey, he actually supports the organisation or the authority or the law that claims 'obedience'". (2003 p.46) For Arendt, obedience is for children. The one exception she makes being in the religious realm where the human adult believer must obey God, because in this context the human adult acts as a child.

Obedience then is a flawed form of responding to the demands of authority. And for her it does not abrogate responsibility nor the need to be held to account. Perhaps the greatest turmoil encountered by Arendt was the reaction to her inference in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, that the Jewish communities contributed to their own downfall precisely in their obedience to the Nazi's pressure to partake in organising deportations. Her suggestion was greeted with outrage, and yet on closer examination it appears to be a reasonable suggestion. (see Dossa 1984) It is reasonable to suggest that there can be no realistic distinction between the nature of the Jewish citizen and those of their fellow Germans in terms of their susceptibility to obedience. The terrible consequences for the Jews however, was that their very obedience facilitated the efficiency of their slaughter. For their fellow citizens obedience simply provided an excuse to avoid facing up to their betrayal.

There is no suggestion in Arendt's work that the Jewish collaboration with the regime was in any way supportive of their determination to liquidate the Jews. This process would have continued apace, and millions would likely have been killed regardless of how resistant or disobedient the Jewish leaders were. Her position is that perhaps fewer would have died had the organisation of the transports been interrupted by even passive resistance. Thus, "if the Jewish people had been unorganised and leaderless, there would have been chaos and plenty of misery, but the total number of victims would hardly have been between four and a half and six million people". (2006. p.125) The controversy continues, but it is alluded to here because it gives support to Arendt's thesis about obedience. It is a value held by both perpetrators and their victims. She believes that obedience as a value can become the handmaiden of political evil doing.

Arendt's analysis of obedience turns the problem back to the issue of thoughtlessness. This is because obedience legitimises authority. Doing something because one is forced to do so under terror or pain of death cannot be understood properly as obedience. This is an important distinction in her thinking on the matter and is one reason why she does not believe that those who collaborated with the Nazis in the death camps should be condemned. Additionally she does not believe that those who carry out actions in response to orders that they agree with are obeying in the strict sense of the word. Arendt's (1993) understanding of obedience is thus quite specific and is best understood as a tacit agreement with the validity of the position of those in authority. Thus "the authoritarian relation between the one who

commands and the one who obeys rests neither on common reason nor on the power of the one who commands: what they have in common is the hierarchy itself, whose rightness and legitimacy both recognise and where both have their predetermined stable place." (p.93) The critical element here it that the individual is responsible for their actions because they were free to assent to the legitimacy of the one in authority. For her obedience is the natural outcome of the nature of the relationship. She summarises this form of obedience thus "[A]uthority implies an obedience in which men retain their freedom (1993 p.106).

Thus, the recognition and acceptance of the legitimacy of a hierarchy as well as submission to its dictates as a result of that acceptance, is a choice. Arendt is strident in her belief that using obedience, in this context, as a form of justification for evil doing lacks any moral merit. She makes the claim that:

> [T]he question addressed to those who participated and obeyed orders should never be, 'Why did you obey?' but 'Why did you support?' This change of words is no semantic irrelevance for those who know the strange and powerful influence mere 'words' have over the minds of men….Much would be gained if we could eliminate the pernicious word obedience from our vocabulary of moral and political thought. (2003 p.48)

Arendt's deep scepticism concerning the value of obedience is clear but it is arguable whether removing the word would do little to improve the situation. Closer analysis of the concept shows it to be deeply engrained and profoundly influential in how people respond to authority. Much evidence has accrued in the field of social psychology to support Arendt's thesis that unthinking obedience is widespread and can be a significant force for evil. The now iconic Milgram study, and its many validating replications being cases in point. Milgram (1970) summarises that.

> I set up a simple experiment at Yale University to test how much pain an ordinary citizen would inflict on another person simply because he was ordered to by an experimental scientist. Stark authority was pitted against the subjects' [participants'] strongest moral imperatives against hurting others, and, with the subjects' [participants'] ears ringing with the screams of the victims, authority won more often than not. The extreme willingness of adults to go to almost any lengths on the command of an authority constitutes the chief finding of the study and the fact most urgently demanding explanation. Ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process. Moreover, even when the destructive effects of their work become patently clear, and they are asked to carry out actions

> incompatible with fundamental standards of morality, relatively few people have the resources needed to resist authority. (cited in Grant 2012 p.44)

There are many aspects to Milgram's work that are beyond the requirements of the current thesis. Here the focus is on the notion that once assent is given to an authority figure, then it is almost guaranteed that obedience will follow. The figure of the scientist in the white coat, speaking in a neutral but firm voice consistently led to obedience overriding the emotional distress that many of the experimental participants were experiencing throughout their compliance.

The results of the Milgram study completely undermined the beliefs expressed by Milgram's own colleagues, students and panels of experts consulted before the experiment was undertaken. The general consensus was that only between 2% and 4% would be willing to inflict very severe shocks to the 'learner'. The general result was that all participants were willing to inflict severe pain up to 300 volts, and 65% were willing to inflict the lethal level of 450 volts. Milgram (1974) himself made reference to the clear support his research provides for Arendt's thesis concerning obedience. He writes:

> [A]fter witnessing hundreds of ordinary people submit to the authority in our own experiments, I must conclude that Arendt's conception of the banality of evil comes closer to the truth than one might dare imagine. The ordinary person who shocked the victim did so out of a sense of obligation, a conception of his duties as a subject, and not from any peculiarly aggressive tendencies. (p.604)

Hitler (2015) himself clearly enunciates the role of widespread consent to a new order as characteristic of society. He makes the distinction between what he terms followers and members. Thus, "the follower of a movement is he who understands and accepts its aims, the member is he who fights for them." (p.518). Furthermore, he elucidates that "to be a follower needs only the passive recognition of the idea….Because of the passive character, the simple effort of believing in a political doctrine is enough for the majority, for the majority of mankind is mentally lazy and timid." (p.519). That Hitler could enunciate such a recognition of banality as a feature of society, to be harnessed in his diabolical plans, predates but fully parallels that of Arendt's and is supportive of her thesis that it played such a central role in the evil of the Third Reich.

The problem of obedience inherent in banal evildoing reflects a broader struggle in the social evolution of humanity. Arendt positions this in terms of the gradual erosion of certainties that seem inherent in human progress. She believes that through political systems such as monarchy/empire, and religion, especially Christianity, the world was given 'a permanence and durability' which human beings need because they are mortal, and in her words 'the most unstable and futile beings we know of' (1993 p.95). The progress of civilisation whereby all the certainties provided by religions and political ideologies of all shapes continue to lose their reassuring power leave many adrift. The temptation in times of such confusion is to attach oneself to any new system that can replace old certainties with new ones. Arendt sees this as a critical element in the rise of totalitarianism during the twentieth century, and her work seems very prescient in terms of the current crisis as Western democracies face the growing threat within and without from radical religious and economic ideologies.

Whilst the danger implicit in obedience is well nuanced in her work, it can be argued that she underestimates the difficulty that this problem poses for any individual who lives within a community. Waller (2002) explains that "to resist the compelling forces that shape our responses to authority requires a rare degree of individual strength –psychological, moral and physical." (p.224) Additionally, Baumann (1991) concludes his analysis of obedience thus:

> moral people can be driven into committing immoral acts even if they know or believe that the acts are immoral-providing that they are convinced that the experts (people who by definition, know something they themselves don't know) have defined their actions as necessary. After all, most actions in our society are not legitimated by the discussion of their objectives, but by advice or instruction offered by people in the know. (p.198)

Obedience, as it refers to banality consists of following rules and commands because they are given by an authority that one has accepted as valid. The greater the ease with which a person reaches that acceptance, mainly as a result of a lack of reflection, and a resistance to questioning its validity, the more prone they become to enact evil on request.

3.3.iii. Role Immersion

Thus far the analysis reveals two elements in the problem of banal evildoing, thoughtlessness and obedience. A third is that of avoiding personal responsibility through being immersed in a specific role that in itself does not directly cause evil. It means defining oneself in terms of

the role given, even when that role contributes indirectly to effective evildoing. Arendt describes this phenomenon in what she calls 'the cog theory'. This can be distinguished from the other two facets of banal evildoing thus. Thoughtlessness is doing what you do without thinking. Obedience means doing what you do because someone, to whom you have elevated or recognise as an authority, told you to do so. Role identification means fitting oneself into the task with no reference to its meaning. It means identifying oneself in terms of the task. There is no individual selfhood at work, the individual's energies are merely keeping the machine running. The cog in the machine metaphor carries the notion of replaceability. Each part of the machine is replaceable. Thus Arendt (2003) tells us that "each cog, that is, each person must be expendable without changing the system , an assumption underlying all bureaucracies, all civil service, and all functions properly speaking." (p.29). The task one does is discrete and the individual is saved from guilt or responsibility by reliance on the fact that the task itself is often not clearly evil, on one hand, and will be done by somebody else in any case on the other.

Although Arendt underestimated Eichmann in terms of the strength of his anti-Semitism, she identified certain characteristics of Eichmann which can easily be generalised to others and although Eichmann was more of a zealot than she believed, his banal characteristics can still be seen to play a significant role in his evil doing. Whitfield (1981) for example recounts that for Arendt, "Eichmann's anti-Semitism cannot adequately account for his criminality, that it was bureaucracy as well as ideology that made him dangerous…neither a dutiful conscience nor official consciousness was an obstacle to mass murder. On the contrary such virtues facilitated genocide making the recognition of evil more problematic than had been previously suspected." (p.475)

An example here might serve to illuminate the point. Currently, in most modern societies there is a proportion of the population in need of social housing. These individuals have their names on a list at local councils, and there is usually some form of prioritisation at work in how houses are allocated when they become available. In addition, it is a function of government administration in this context for these lists to be kept updated. Secretaries and administrators are given the task of compiling and updating the list. During the Holocaust there was a very high level of administrative activity. The list of Jews and others assigned for deportation and murder were assiduously prepared. Such were the accuracy of these lists that

on occasion when influential politicians/leaders asked after certain Jews who had disappeared, the records were available so that those inquiring could be furnished with the dates of deportation, their destination and often the dates of death (often reported as a heart attack). (Lozowick 2002) In an act of appalling cynicism, given the use of body parts for products such as soap and mattresses, another common reply was "their return would present insurmountable problems', because "they were already integrated in German economic life in a manner which made their withdrawal completely impracticable". (Florence 2010 p.229). This, in the context of the millions being deported, is a clear example of a bureaucracy functioning at the highest level. The question then is raised, who kept these records? Clearly thousands of secretaries devoted their working day to preparing these lists of the doomed. In doing so they contributed to the overall functioning of the machine of genocide, and yet most would consider that they were simply doing their job, typing up lists.

Baumann (1990) discusses what he terms 'moral distance' as a feature of modern society that was of particular significance in the effectiveness of the Holocaust in terms of its utilitarian end of mass extermination. He describes the "stretching of the distance between action and its consequence beyond the reach of moral impulse." (p.215) And in consequence, "the actors seldom face the moment of choice and gaze at the consequences of their deeds-more importantly, they hardly ever apprehend what they gaze at as the consequences of their deeds." (p.215)

Thus, in terms of the example discussed above, once the moral element is removed there is no practical difference in the actual task of making a list of those entitled to social housing from those to be deported to be murdered. These examples contain the element of moral distance, insofar as the meaning of the task itself is quite distant from the visceral reality of its end point. Even more indicative of the power of role immersion is found in examples where the activities within the role are clearly and directly connected to the evil outcome.

Browning (1985) considers this in some details in his discussion of the technicians and engineers tasked with the construction of the gas vans used to asphyxiate Jews before the construction of the death camps. It seems unnecessary to repeat in detail the discussions of the engineers in terms of how best these should be constructed so as to minimise the amount of gas needed, and how to best protect the pipe work from the vomit, urine and faeces of the

dead and dying, and to optimally construct them in such a way that cleaning could be done quickly in order to expedite the next group of victims. What is clear is that the individuals concerned were immersed in the technical details, and were easily offended if, for some reason or other, their best efforts failed. They showed a certain pride and dedication. Browning (1985) concluded that "[K]ept fully abreast of the problems arising in the field, they strove for ingenious technical adjustments to make their product more efficient and acceptable to its operators…Their greatest concern seemed to be that they might be deemed inadequate to their assigned tasks". (p. 67) This capacity to ignore the moral implications of ones actions through closing one's consciousness to their meaning is one of the core elements of banality as identified by Arendt.

Eichmann's testimony reveals his identification with his role. He explains he was indignant when Himmler sent a new man to expedite the deportation of Hungarian Jews towards the end of the war. This cohort of Jews was the last remaining significant group to be targeted for extermination. Eichmann explains that his disquiet was based on the fact that he was the expert on 'emigration', and he felt that he could do a better job and thus he "decided that I had to do something to take matters of emigration into my own hands" (2006 p.23). Dossa (1984) concludes that Eichmann's "conscience had fused with the murderous purpose of his job, and it functioned as a conscience only with respect to his occupation and only within the assumed legitimacy of the 'final Solution'". (p.172)

Arendt is consistent in her claim that these aspects of banality should not be used as a means of escaping responsibility, and where appropriate, punishment. With regard to role identification she recommends that the perpetrator be challenges by the question "and why if you please, did you become a cog, or continue to be a cog under such circumstances?" (2003. p.32)

Losing one's identity in the assigned role is the third element of banality unearthed in Arendt's study. Empirical support for her thesis is also found in studies by Zimbardo (1971). The now infamous Stanford Prison experiment is often presented as evidence of the malleability of people when it comes to defining their behaviour by the roles in which they find themselves. There have been criticisms with regard to the generalisation of many of the findings of the research, and some of these have merit. More specifically, the fact that the

research was based on volunteers who choose to partake in a 'prison experiment' may have biased the sample in terms of participants who may have been more authoritarian that the general population. The size of the sample itself and the social demographic of the group may all have had some influence on the outcome. (Carnahan & McFarland 2007) The study itself raised so many questions in terms of the damage it did to the participants that it is not acceptable to try to replicate its findings. Despite these considerations, there is one overall finding that seems to remain valid, namely that the participants' behaviours were deeply influenced by the roles they were given. The participants who were given the roles as guards behaved in ways that reflected those roles to the point that fully one third expressed sadistic and violent behaviour toward the 'prisoners' whereas the prisoners behaved in a passive compliant manner as if they had lost a sense of their own worth and dignity.

Zimbardo's study gives some validity Arendt's thesis that banal evildoing is an expression of some form of weakness of inner identity. It can be argued that such without such weakness the individual would find resources to defy the constraints or expectations presented in a context constructed by Zimbardo, or historically, in the context of the Nazi regime. Browning's (2001) research on police battalion 101, adds historical weight to the power of context in determining evil behaviour. He explains that "by most criteria …By age, geographical and social background, the men of reserve police battalion 101 were least likely to be apt material out of which to mould future mass killers". (p.161) One of his central conclusions was that "brutalization was not the cause but the effect of these men's behaviour" (p.164). Like the 'prison guards' who in virtue of being given the role of treating prisoners with cruelty, some became cruel. Dorris (2010) summarises the power of context in determining cruel and evil behaviour by concluding that "people grossly overestimate the behavioural impact of character and grossly underestimate the behavioural impact of context" (p.i). Dorris may be correct in his conclusion but that conclusion is based on a certain assumption about character. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that 'in general' the role of character is overestimated in determining behaviour. It seems relevant to point out that some 'characters' displayed extraordinary courage in refusing to comply and obey throughout both Hitler and Stalin regimes. Granted they were in the minority, but they did exist.

It could be argued further that it is precisely this assumption of the power of character that requires closer examination in the aftermath of the Holocaust and other more recent example of widespread profound mass evil. Zimbardo, Browning, Baumann and others support Arendt's argument that the morality of the individual is one of the most fragile and susceptible faculties when the moral political context changes. Those who take on roles that require complicity in evil doing will largely comply and in doing so some will, in fact, become evil. In the aftermath, many others will return to ordinary lives that they will live out as 'ordinary decent people'.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined Arendt's work in terms of her understanding banal evildoing. Taking account of her earlier work on what she terms radical evil under totalitarianism and combining it with her analysis of Eichmann, several components of banal evildoing have emerged. Banal evildoing is a condition whereby ordinary, non-criminal, individuals partake in the destruction of innocent others. The banal evil doer is characterised by thoughtlessness, obedience and loss of identity and can be seen to produce a way of behaving that lacks all semblance of self-reflective moral responsibility. Thus, according to Neiman (2002) "[T]o call evil banal is to offer not a definition of it but a theodicy. For it implies the sources of evil are not mysterious or profound but fully within our grasp." (p.303)

It has been shown that the banal evildoer is not the source of their evil, the evil they do is not rooted in their character. They do not create the evil they do; they simply cooperate and facilitate its spread. There is no need to investigate or search for deep psychological roots for this kind of evil because there are none. They are not the source of the evil. Rather that source is found in the leaders or systems that promote evil doing, and to which they have given their allegiance. Arendt is clear, however, in her belief that the participation of the banal in the flourishing of evil by no means detracts from their moral responsibility.

This evil is not a product of banality itself, it is grounded in ideology. For Arendt, the greatest evil, at least in terms of quantity, is thus found in the fusion of evildoing ideology and widespread banality. No useful study of human evil can avoid the analysis of the place of ideologies that channel the energy and resources of the banal into the perpetration of evil. Before attending to the central place that ideology holds in mass evil it is considered useful to

further explore the prevalence of banality as a feature, not just of totalitarian regimes but of modern industrialised society. In doing so the question of the potential for mass evil leaves the realm of totalitarian regimes of the 20th century and opens the possibility for its return in contemporary developed society. This is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 4.

Banality and the Masses.

4.1 Introduction

The central question being addressed in this thesis is to discover the degree to which Arendt's work contributes to understanding mass evildoing. This chapter will argue that Arendt's concept of banality which she believes represents a critical element in mass evil doing, is also directly related the concept of the masses. More specifically, it will be shown here that the characteristics of banality, discussed in Chapter 3. are largely produced by membership of the masses. A sample indication of just how linked these conditions are is found in the almost perfect echo between Arendt's account of Eichmann's unreflective banality which is in part evidenced by "the role of clichés, stock phrases, adherence to conventional standardised codes of expression and conduct" (1978 p.4) with Le Bon's (2003) description of the member of "the crowd" for whom "all words and formulas …become vain sounds whose principle utility is to relieve the person who employs them of the obligation of thinking. Armed with a small stock of formulas and commonplaces …we possess all that is needed to traverse life without the tiring necessity of having to reflect on anything whatever" (p.62).

By explicating the relationship between banality and membership of the masses this chapter will suggest that there are profound implications for the proclivity towards mass evil existent in any society that features the masses as part of its structure. If the "masses" are characterised or constituted by banality then the likelihood is that they will behave as they did under any regime that incorporates evil doing, of which the Nazi regime was a prime example. Thus if a pernicious ideology should take hold within a political sphere where the pervasive banality of the masses exist, then it is only a small step toward a new expression of Arendt's limitless evil that "can overgrow and lay waste the whole world precisely because it spreads like a fungus". (2000 p.396) Before attending to the connection between banality and mass society it is considered important to discuss an issue in Arendt's thinking with regard to the question as to whether banality itself is particularly disposed toward evildoing.

Arendt successfully argues that banality gives an evil doing regime or ideology the resources to flourish. There is, however, in some of her considerations the implication that banality

itself is prone to evil-doing, rather than susceptible to it. This distinction is important because it has implications for interventions that seek to establish the good, rather than merely prevent evil. The key characteristic of widespread banality is its capacity to provide resources that support the ideology under which it exists. And it can equally be suggested that a benign or positive regime can just as easily rely on the resources of the banal as can evil doing ones. It appears from Arendt's arguments that she would not be in agreement with this position, although she has not expressed this directly. Indirectly, however, she reveals something suggestive of a position that banality itself is prone to evildoing. Accordingly, she argues that "[F]or the ruthless machines of domination and extermination, the masses of co-ordinated philistines provided much better material and were capable of even greater crimes than so called professional killers, provided only that these crimes were well organised and assumed the appearance of routine jobs". (1985 p.337)

One of the reasons that the masses "provide much better material" lies in her belief that they are by definition less likely to think. As indicated in the previous chapter, Arendt understands thinking as having a role in preventing evil doing. This is reflected in the form of her question "could the activity of thinking as such, the habit of examining and reflecting upon whatever happens to come to pass, regardless of specific content and quite independent of results, could this activity be among the conditions that make men abstain from evil-doing or even actually 'condition' them against it?" (1978 p.5) If the kind of thinking that Arendt is promoting 'conditions' the person from evil doing, then it would seem to suggest that not thinking makes evil doing more likely. Thus she observes that "[T]otalitarianism in power invariably replaces all first rate talent, regardless of their sympathies, with those crackpots and fools whose lack of intelligence and creativity is still the best guarantee of their loyalty." (1985 p.339) This is a very substantial claim and it could be argued here that Arendt is close to the Kantian notion of radical evil insofar as left to their own devices, without the assistance of contemplation and self-awareness, people are predisposed to evildoing. It is beyond the scope of this work to fully examine this problem as it moves into the more comprehensive question concerning human evil. Broad outlines with regard to this subject have been drawn in Chapter 1.

With regard to the current context it is considered sufficient here to point to this element in Arendt's thinking. The viewpoint of this thesis is not supportive of Arendt in this regard. It

cannot be concluded that banality itself leads to evil doing. Rather, from the considerations thus far with regard to mass evil, and central to Arendt's position, all that can be justifiably claimed is that thinking prevents 'banal' evildoing. This means that the more reflective individual, who engages in evildoing, is purposeful and aware in their evil acts. The belief that a reflective person is less likely to resort to evil, based simply on their reflective habit, is difficult to support, especially when considering Arendt's own evidence from the historical era of Hitler and Stalin. Both these dictators, and certainly thousands of their acolytes, thoughtfully and systematically planned and arranged the mass murders to which they implemented. What is clear here is that widespread banality provided them with the resources to multiply that evil exponentially. From this part of the argument it is sufficient to claim that although banality itself is not intrinsically related to any particular moral behaviour it can be said that it is a resource that can be harnessed to assist and empower evil doing, and importantly, the converse, it can also be harnessed to actualise the good. Thus, in terms of this thesis, banality has a certain neutrality. It will be shown here that it is a feature of all modern mass societies.

4.2 Preliminary Considerations.

It is a general principle that the usefulness of a concept seems to lie in direct proportion to its ability to discriminate. In order to give some attention to the issue of 'the masses' it seems useful to make some commentary with regard to other concepts that also describe the nature of the connections between human beings as they form social and cultural groupings.

The first consideration is that for any society to function there must be a certain level of cooperation between people. And for that to occur there must be some group acceptance of certain ideas. De Tocqueville (2008) expresses this eloquently when he says:

> without such common belief no society can prosper; say rather, no society can exist; for without ideas held in common there is no common action, and without common action there may still be men but no social body. In order that society should exist and a fortiori that a society should prosper, it is necessary that the minds of all citizens should be rallied and held together by certain predominant ideas; and this cannot be the case unless each of them sometimes draws his opinions from the common source and consents to accept certain matters of belief already formed. It would appear incontrovertible that regardless of the nature of political governance there must be some level of shared beliefs among a populace for society to

> function. In addition there must be some element of preparedness among people to forego their own particular agenda in order to cooperate with others. (p.54)

A second phenomenon, also noticed within the field of political philosophy, is that the majority of members of any society appear to be easily led by a minority or elite. David Hume (1987) is eloquent in his contribution when he says

> [N]othing appears more surprising to those, who consider human affairs with a philosophical eye, than the easiness with which the many are governed by the few; and the implicit submission, with which men resign their own sentiments and passions to those of their rulers. When we enquire by what means this wonder is effected, we shall find, that, as force is always on the side of the governed, the governors have nothing to support them but opinion. It is therefore, on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and most military governments, as well as to the most free and most popular. (p.37)

If we take these two observations together as fundamental properties of human societies, namely that most individuals in society must hold certain beliefs in common, and most must consent to be governed/ruled by a minority (or just one individual), then the core conditions of society is established. Fulfilment of these conditions, which appear to be of central importance and historically prevalent are seen to be necessary components of society and yet are not themselves considered to be characterised as 'the masses'. If this is so then there must be additional elements that go to give the concept of the masses some discriminatory value, as a characteristic of certain societies.

The substantial claim in the philosophical literature on this subject asserts that the phenomenon known as 'the masses' is a product of social changes wrought by the growth of industrialisation and the movement of large numbers into urban environments. Heretofore, communities largely composed of individuals who could recognise a clear structure to their lives in terms of the identifying factors of their class, family, extended family and religious tradition and affiliation. These defining qualities would continue to provide most people with a structure that made sense of life, gave them a sense of purpose and a sense of place in the world. Ortega (1961) describes the change, not in terms of increases in population but rather in the way that such populations coalesce. Accordingly,

> [A]gglomeration, fullness, was not frequent before. Why then is it now….the individuals who made up these multitudes existed, but not qua

> multitudes. Scattered about the world in small groups or solitary, they lived a life to all appearances divergent, dissociate, apart. Each individual or small group occupied a place, its own in country village town or quarter of the great city. Now suddenly they appear as an agglomeration and looking in any direction our eyes meet with the multitudes. (p.10).

This 'agglomeration' is referred to as the masses[5].

4.3 The Masses

There is little new in the notion that the field of philosophy has noticed that human societies contain a malleable multitude observed from Roman times on through Machiavelli and Kant. Furthermore, such observations tend to denote these multitudes as fickle and easily manipulated and are well reflected in Juvenal's suggestion that all the "commoners" need are "bread and circuses" to keep them pacified. Sanford's (1951) analysis of Juvenal's dictum confirms that "[F]ood doles and public entertainment were still the chief means of currying favor with the people of imperial Rome." (p.18). Machiavelli (1992) claims that "the masses are always impressed by the superficial appearance of things" (p.69) and Kant's (1996) belief that "...new prejudices will serve as well as old ones to harness the great unthinking masses." (p.18) These and other commentators indicate that from a philosophical viewpoint most human society is characterised by a soft and malleable majority. Brantlinger (1983) refers to this long standing attitude to mass culture as 'negative classicism' which in its various forms carried the "two axioms of Heraclitus' politics; virtue is rare, and the multitude is bestial." In addition he concludes that "contemporary theories of mass culture and society likewise often do little more than echo Heraclitus axioms" (p.57-58). What is missing however in these early discussions of the fickleness of the multitude is the connection between the multitude and the individual subject. Generalised judgement of the group was left standing with little reference of the meaning for the individual person. It awaited the emergence of Kierkegaard to more fully and explicitly explore the phenomenon of the multitude with particular relevance to its implication for the human person as an individual.

According to Tuttle, (2012) "Kierkegaard…was the first theorist of the secular levelling that characterises modern massification: and he was the first to perceive the immense significance

[5] Marx uses the term agglomerate as a verb when he asserts that on the heels of the industrial revolution the bourgeoisie "keeps more and more doing away with the scattered state of the population, of the means of production, and of property. It has agglomerated population, centralised the means of production, and has concentrated property in a few hands. (1998. pp 6-7)

of the event for the individual". (xii) Thereafter, the phenomenon known as 'the masses' became a valid source of inquiry and observation within philosophy. It is beyond the requirements of this thesis to fully explore the detail of that inquiry here. Its relevance to the current context lies in the connection that can be made between the phenomenon of banality, as explicated in the previous chapter, and the social context in which such banality emerges. If banal evil doing can be compared to a fungus, it seems useful to extend the metaphor and suggest that the mass, as a condition of society, is its petri dish. For the purposes of this chapter the salient observations made by those who have taken major interest in the phenomenon termed 'the masses' will be considered in terms of how each contributes to the connection between the two concepts. This analysis will show that the phenomenon of the masses as understood by these theorists will produce the type of human being denoted by Arendt as 'banal'. This is the individual who will contribute to the spread of evil when evildoing becomes a feature of their society. More specifically, the conceptual triangle that constitutes banality: thoughtlessness, obedience, and immersion, will be applied specifically to the analyses of the masses among the main areas of scholarship that have had a say on this subject from Kierkegaard to the present day.

The main contributors who analyse the phenomenon are Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Ortega, as well as those predominantly referred to as the Frankfurt school, more specifically Adorno and Marcuse. Each of these theorists provides unique insights that comprise an important contribution to understanding the existential condition of individuals in modern western societies, and in terms of this thesis, relevant information concerning the evolution of banality as a feature of significant numbers of the populace. A brief summary of the contributions of each is considered sufficient to the requirements of this thesis.

For Kierkegaard (1980) the individual can be described as "surrounded by hordes of people with all sorts of secular matters more and more shrewd about the ways of the world –such a person forgets himself, forgets his name divinely understood does not dare believe in himself for easier and safer to be like others to become a copy, a number, a part of the crowd." (p.32-33) Here it can be seen that Kierkegaard recognises the change to the individual person who is part of what he terms "the crowd", a loss of a sense of individuality and a drift into conformity and anonymity. For Kierkegaard, the substantial quality, or perhaps the defining aspect, of a human being is the capacity to self-create. This is a theme that also pervades

Arendt's understanding of the individual citizen. For Kierkegaard, in virtue of being in the crowd the individual loses or surrenders this capacity for self-creation. A significant phrase here is the notion of becoming 'a copy'. The person turns into a mass man, a being who can be replaced by an identical being, who has lost his identifiable characteristics. This phenomenon can be considered as a linking thread that connects all three characteristics of banality explicated in Chapter 3 above.

(i) Thoughtlessness; an absence of self-reflection that creates something new or at least considered one's relationship to one's surroundings. Living as a Kierkegaardian 'copy' is a form of mimicry, often more easily noted in the phrase, "to copy someone". No original thought is required, one simply looks to the "other" (who is also a copy), by which to form one's opinions and actions.

(ii) Obedience; A human copy surrenders the freedom of action or choice to the prevailing influences by accepting and following uncritically the rules of their social environment.

(iii) Immersion; A human copy pays only attention to the immediate task at hand without any consideration of its meaning. To consider the broader meaning of ones actions requires a willingness to be different, to assert an individuality rather than become the infamous 'cog in the machine'

Kierkegaard's analysis, long predates but precisely describes the banal individual observed in Arendt's study. In doing so he observes and describes the phenomenon rather than explains how it comes to be.

Nietzsche (1997) adds another important dimension to the study of the mass individual. This is the phenomenon of movement. With Kierkegaard there is a sense of the isolated individual hermetically sealed in an existential superficiality. For Nietzsche, similar losses are identified but he adds something more to the picture, this is the idea that although all these individually deficient units are bound together, they are not static but rather are following some form of direction. He uses the term "the herd" to describe this phenomenon. The herd refers to masses of human individuals who have given away or never developed their unique possibility inherent in the phenomenon of Being. They are fully defined by their membership of the herd

in the manner in which the wildebeest is in the great Serengeti migration. For him, human herd animals becomes such for the sake of security and/ or out of laziness.

This metaphor of the herd has much to recommend it. Specifically, a herd has its own function, and by definition it carries the sense of movement. This is of critical importance when considering Arendt's understanding of the way that the individual becomes part of the movement of the whole. The herd gives the individual a sense of direction. The individual no longer needs to question their own position; they can thoughtlessly follow the movement. For Nietzsche (1997) most people fall into the category of the "herd". They do so because the confrontation with mortality and death is too difficult. "In his heart every man knows quite well that being unique he will be in the world only once and that there will be no second chance for his oneness to coalesce from the strangely variegated assortment that he is: he knows it but he hides from it like a bad conscience." (p.113)

This escape from the burden of taking personal responsibility for one's own individual life is at the centre of Nietzsche's thesis of the herd. His notion of the "oneness" that coalesces from the "strangely variegated assortment that he is" can be considered a formula for the notion of self-creation, the central theme also found in Kierkegaard. In order to engage in that process, the individual must seek to reflect on their life, to choose rather than simply obey, and to examine the meaning of one's activities. This process is avoided by the majority, according to Nietzsche (1997), who believes that such avoidance is grounded in two motive forces, fear and laziness. He asks, "Why" and answers,

> From fear of his neighbour, who demands conformity and cloaks himself with it. But what is it that constrains the individual to fear his neighbour, to think and act like a member of the herd, and to have no joy in himself? Modesty, perhaps, in a few rare cases. For the great majority it is indolence, inertia.....men are even lazier than they are timid and fear most of all the inconveniences with which unconditional honesty and nakedness would burden him. (p.127)

(i) Thoughtlessness. The herd animal has no need to consider options or think outside of the functions given by the herd. The human subject, as a member of the mass, only needs to use their thinking capacity within the requirements/functions of the mass. Doing so will guarantee safety security and survival. Heidegger (1968) comments that "with greater clarity than any man before him, Nietzsche saw the necessity of a change in the realm of essential thinking, and with this change the danger that the conventional man will adhere with growing

obstinacy to the trivial surface of his conventional nature, and acknowledge only the flatness of these flatlands as his proper habitation on earth." (p. 57)

(ii) Obedience. The herd animal obeys the laws of nature instinctually given to the herd. He follows its movement. Heidegger's term 'flatlands' seemed deeply appropriate in terms of the metaphor of the herd. Herds are primarily creatures of the flatlands. Large groups congregate and provide security for each other. Each obeys/conforms with the movements that seems sometimes mysterious, but is imprinted instinctually. No one animal is responsible, and there is no individuality being expressed. Many humans do likewise, in Nietzsche's formulation. The human subject obeys the rules of the mass and is rewarded with complacency and self-satisfied indolence.

(iii) Immersion. The herd animal has no capacity to extend outside their instinctual programming. It is limited to very specific actions and individual identity. In truth any major differentiating characteristic is potentially dangerous. The human subject who immerses himself in the mass limits their perception and agency to a very specific role and thus avoids any discomfort in terms of its place in a wider context of meaning. The mechanic who oils the wheels of the trains heading for Auschwitz is merely a wheel technician.

For both Nietzsche and Kierkegaard there seems to be no redeeming value for the individual in terms of his membership of the masses. They appear to assume that the majority of people are by definition consigned to becoming mass men/women, and therefore banal, in virtue of being in modern society itself. Heidegger offers something of a balance in distinguishing the social character of human being with the proviso that becoming a mass person always presents the risk of getting "lost in the They". For Heidegger, being human necessitates a social self (*mitsein*). It becomes problematic however when social "everydayness" leads to the disappearance of the individual. Thus he explains that "[I]n utilizing public means of transport and in making use of information services such as the newspaper, every other is like the next". Here Heidegger (1962) is describing the notion of the person becoming a Kierkegarrdian "copy". He continues, "This being-with-one-another dissolves one's own Dasein completely into the kind of being of "the other" in such a way, indeed that the others, as distinguishable and explicit, vanish more and more" (p.164-165) Here is what could be considered an explication of the Nietzschean herd animal, an individual who has disappeared

into the mass, and yet exists, but only as a unit of the overall herd identity. "In this inconspicuousness and unacertainability, the real (*eigentliche*) dictatorship of the anyone self is unfolded". (p.165) The person has become subject to the dictatorship of "the anyone". No longer thinking for himself or herself, the individual surrenders to the dictates of the mass, and becomes imbedded in the everyday concerns nominated by the "the anybody". Heidegger (1962) elaborates that:

> We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as the anyone self (man) takes pleasure; we read, see, and judge about literature and art as the anyone self sees and judges; likewise we shrink back from the great mass as the anyone self shrinks back; we find "shocking " what the anyone self finds shocking. The anyone self, which is nothing definite, and which all are, though not as the sum, prescribes the kind of being of everydayness. (p.165)

The Heideggerian 'anyone self' mirrors precisely the Arendtian banal individual: Unreflective, unaware, conforming, and immersed. He/she could be anyone or everyone. The notion that "the one is shocked, as all are shocked" contains it inverse, namely that, one is not shocked as all are not shocked, and this seems particularly germane in consideration of the context of evil wherein Arendt based her analysis of banality.

Heiddegger's analysis can be used to further support the phenomenon of banality as it is being conceptualised here.

(i) Thoughtlessness. As the 'anyone self' all thought is merely mimicry and echo.

(ii) Obedience. Dasein follows the dictates of the mass and gains relief from the anxiety of self-confrontation

(iii) Immersion. With regard to the discussion thus far, the notion of immersion refers to the banal subject closing off their perception so as to remain fully contained within the bounds of a set of activities. Heidegger's contribution is more comprehensive insofar as the individual gets completely lost in the 'they self'.

Thus far, the contributions of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger have shown that the Arendtian understanding of banality as it emerged through her study of Eichmann and undergirds her thesis regarding its relationship to evil, is actually a feature of mass society in general. These theorists agree in principle with the overall description of banality as explicated here by way of the exegesis of Arendt's study of Eichmann. Accordingly, modern

industrialised society is characterised by large scale banality. This banality prefigured the rise of Nazism. Nazi Germany was the first society to fully show the devastation that occurs when an evil ideology harnesses the resources of the banal. Banality itself is not the cause of the great evils, it is the delivery method by which such evil can flourish and, in Arendt's phrase "take over the whole world" That such a potentially devastating element is characteristic of modern society and lies dormant, only to await the rise of a pernicious ideology is something that Arendt was keenly aware of when she says that

> the danger of the corpse factories and holes of oblivion is that today, with homelessness everywhere on the increase, masses of people are continually rendered superfluous if we continue to think of our world in utilitarian terms. Political, social, and economic events everywhere are in silent conspiracy with totalitarian instruments devised for making men superfluous….Totalitarian solutions may well survive the fall of totalitarian regimes in the form of strong temptations which will come up whenever it seems impossible to alleviate, political, social or economic misery in a manner worth of man. (1985 p.459)

It can now be asserted that according to Arendt, and a host of others, that banality is a feature of the masses. It is also considered that describing banality, and recognising its inherence in modern society is an important step in understanding mass evildoing. More specifically it is also asserted that banality is a highly efficient contributor to mass evil. Thus it behoves any attempt to resist mass evil to undermine the prevalence of banality among the masses. It is also a central theme of this thesis that totalitarian solutions require large scale banality to succeed. To address the problem of widespread banality requires identifying the conditions that give rise to it. Explaining how it becomes such an intrinsic part of society is also of equal importance.

Arendt's description of the masses is important in terms of her understanding of how ideologies take hold. This will be discussed in detail in the chapter following. Here however some reference is required in terms of contextualising its relationship to banality. She claims that a central part of the corruption of the masses came as a result of the breakdown of class structure, and the economic chaos that occurred in both the Soviet Union and in Germany after the Great War. These conditions are not abstract notions but rather existentially refer to widespread hunger, loss, lack of medical treatment, fear and other varieties of suffering. In terms of the current thesis this understanding of the reaction of the masses by embracing evil ideologies is considered to have merit. It does not however explain the evolution of the

masses themselves, rather it explains what happens to the mass when they are thrown into economic chaos. Therefore, it seems that an important element in understanding mass evil requires some inquiry into how banality develops.

4.4 The Causes of Banality

Thus far banality has been described as deficiencies in the faculties of thinking, of self-reflection, of personal responsibility, of individual self-awareness. These deficiencies are then reflected in the manner in which the majority of people behave within society as members of the masses. There is implicit in these critiques of the masses, or the 'mass person' that some vital, or essential quality of personhood has been lost, given away, or never developed". Kant's (1996) essay *What is Enlightenment* proposes that this is a form of juvenile or immature formation. Others discussed above perceive it in more intentional terms as a deliberate turning away from becoming reflective and responsible individuals mainly out of some form of fear.

One contributor that adds both depth and texture to the phenomenon of the 'mass person' is Ortega y Gassett. His study attempts to explain, rather than simply describe the causal condition whereby 'mass' people evolve. Accordingly, he believes that two social forces combine during the 18th century and give rise to the phenomenon: these are, liberal democracy, and technicism, which working together produced the "mass man" in both the quantitative sense (great population growth) and in the qualitative sense. It is the latter here that is most relevant to this discussion. For the purposes of this thesis some significant reliance will be placed on Ortega's analysis because, more than others, it provides a fruitful exploration of how banality emerged as a major feature of modern society.

A mass differs from the multitude. Ortega (1961) explains: "what was a mere quantity-the multitude-is converted into a qualitative determination: it becomes the common social quality, man as undifferentiated from other men, but as repeating in himself a generic type". (p.11) The latter sentence carries that critical element in that the mass itself has an identity, what might even be termed the less of the sum of its parts and the individual member is what might be termed 'invaded' by the identity of the mass. He explains further:

> [S]trictly speaking the mass as a psychological fact, can be defined without waiting for individuals to appear in mass formation. In the presence of one

> individual we can decide whether he is mass or not. The mass is all that which sets no value on itself –good or ill-based on specific grounds, but which feels itself 'just like everybody' and nevertheless is not concerned about it; is in fact quite happy to feel itself as one with everybody else.(p.12)

This notion that the individual becomes the 'mass person' is key to differentiating the masses from the multitude. This means that for a mass to evolve does not mean that the individuals themselves who make up that mass need to communicate with each other. This is also observed by Le Bon (2003) in his foundational work on mass movements which he refers to as "the Crowd". Thus:

> [T]he disappearance of conscious personality and the turning of feelings and thoughts in a definite direction, which are the primary characteristics of a crowd about to become organised do not always involve the simultaneous presence of a number of individuals on one spot. Thousands of isolated individuals may acquire at certain moments and under influence of certain violent emotions –such for example, as a great national event the characteristics of a psychological crowd. (p.2)

It would appear then that being part of the mass, is not akin to being part of a club or social society, rather it refers to some change in the individual personality so as to reduce the individual in some form and thereby separate him or her from their own uniqueness or self. Ortega also insists that such a person is not confined to any particular class in society "mass…is not to be specifically understood as the workers; it does not indicate a social class, but a kind of man to be found today in all social classes, who consequently represent our age, in which he is the predominant ruling power." (p. 83)

It is a truism that the cataclysms that led to the rise of fascism in the twentieth century are almost always attributed to the rebellion of the masses against the existing status quo. What is often less considered is the conditions that are required for masses of people to 'believe' that they had some right to revolt, and thus to seek better conditions for their myriad existences. Ortega's analysis adds something novel to understanding the raw facts of the origins of fascism by proposing that the seeds for such revolutions, as well as the seeds for totalitarianism, were created when a significant proportion of society began to experience better living conditions and embraced the idea of having rights. He saw that the evolution of Western society in the 18th and especially the 19th century led to conditions whereby "the sovereignty of the unqualified individual, of the human being as such, generally has now

passed from being a juridical idea or ideal to be a psychological state inherent in the average man". (p.18) His analysis proceeds in terms of the psychological condition of the individual within the mass. Thus, "we live at a time when man believes himself fabulously capable of creation, but he does not know what to create. Hence the strange combination of a sense of power and a sense of insecurity which has taken up its abode in the soul of modern man". (p. 44)

The idea that changes within political and economic spheres that led to advances in the treatment of ordinary people would create expectations and changes in the self-definition of people so treated is a key insight into Ortega's understanding of the masses, and in terms of this thesis is the foundation of the creation of widespread banality. This is so because an immediate effect, according to Ortega, (1961) is that the individual treated as one who has rights, and provided with comforts that were heretofore only the purview of the aristocracy, creates a particular impression of reality. That impression then dominates the expectations and reaction of the masses when things go wrong. The capacity to endure is lessened and the tendency to revolt is exacerbated. This is because, according to Ortega, the mass man has no understanding of the process by which his new satisfactions have been created. He argues that:

> [E]veryday added a new luxury…What before would have been considered one of fortune's gifts inspiring humble gratitude towards destiny was converted into a right not to be grateful for but to be insisted on….For in fact the common man finding himself in a world so excellent technically and socially believes that it has been produced by nature, and never thinks of the personal efforts of highly evolved individuals which the creation of this new world presupposed. (p.44)

These changes to the conditions of the individual in society are summarised by Ortega thus: "[T]wo fundamental traits of the mass man, The free expansion of his vital desires, and therefore of his personality; and a radical ingratitude toward all that has made possible the ease of his existence. These traits together make up the well- known psychology of the spoilt child. (p.45) Ortega's understanding of the masses is thus underpinned by a psychological approach to the formative influences on the individual as a result of economic and social changes. In this he is presenting something original that moves the emphasis away from the more negatively toned pronouncements of earlier theorists who tend toward an emphasis on alienation and the loss of self. Rather his focus suggests that there is almost too much self-

importance being encouraged in these cultures which paradoxically goes to create people who are self- indulgent and entitled on one hand, are unrealistic in terms of their expectations, and are unwilling to take difficult choices, on the other. The person who emerges as the 'mass man' for Ortega is not the homeless atomised individual of Arendt's depiction, rather they are complacent and comfortable banal creatures for whom the discomfort of truly reflecting on life is easily avoided. He avers that

> "the average man finds himself with ideas in his head but he lacks the faculty of ideation. He has no conception even of the rare atmosphere in which ideas live. He wishes to have opinions but is unwilling to accept the conditions and presuppositions that underlie all opinion. Hence his ideas are in effect nothing more than appetites in words." (p.56)

Arendt too makes a distinction between the alienated individual who suffers the pain of poverty and loss of identity from the more complacent self-satisfied individual. For her both sets of people are representative of the mass. In the first instance there is the mass person who seeks to find the economic security of secure employment and pension. These are one cohort who by way of their distress became easy fodder for the task of evil doing, thus "each time society through unemployment, frustrates the small man in his normal functioning and self-respect, it trains him for that last stage in which he will willingly undertake any function, even that of hangman." (2003. p.129) To further strengthen her argument Arendt refers to an postwar incident thus: " [A] Jew released from Buchenwald once discovered among the SS men who gave him the certificates of release a former schoolmate, whom he did not address but yet stared at. Spontaneously the man stared at remarked: You must understand, I have five years of unemployment behind me. They can do anything they want with me". (p. 129)

And then there are those who already have their security and identity attached to their roles. Arendt argues that many of the former were rewarded by their loyalty to the regime insofar as the economic improvements under Hitler gave many of the suffering masses new opportunities and some financial security. She recounts that in return their loyalty to their own private interests far outweighed other considerations when the evil of the Reich began to take hold. She noticed that

> the average German, for the sake of his pension, his life insurance, the security of his wife and children…was ready to sacrifice his beliefs, his honor, and his human dignity. And that the average German whom the Nazis notwithstanding years of the most furious propaganda could not

> induce to kill a Jew on his own account (not even when they made it quite clear that such a murder would go unpunished) now serves the machine of destruction without opposition …Himmler's overall organisation relies entirely upon the normality of job holders and family men. (2003. p.130)

The significance of Arendt's and Ortega's insights is that the mass person's potential involvement in evil is not limited to the killing machine of Nazi Germany. For Arendt (2003) the modern man of the masses is an 'international phenomenon', and she writes that "the transformation of the family man from a responsible member of society interested in all public affairs, to a 'bourgeois' concerned only with his private existence and knowing no civic virtue is an international modern phenomenon." (p.129) Furthermore, this process by which the individual loses, or never develops a sense of connection to their place or role in the structure/direction or functioning of the society to which they belongs leaves that society bereft of the influences that could prevent it from sliding into an abyss of hatred and destruction. She argues that:

> What we have called the 'bourgeois' is the modern man of the masses, not in his exalted moments of collective excitement, but in the security (today one should say the insecurity) of his own private domain. He has driven the dichotomy of private and public functions, of family and occupation so far that he no longer finds in his own person any connection between the two. When his occupation forces him to murder people he does not regard himself as a murderer because he has not done it out of inclination but in his professional capacity. Out of sheer passion he would never do harm to a fly. (p.130)

Like Ortega, Arendt refers to this type of banal individual as reflecting a new occupational class, a product of both industrialisation and bureaucratisation. She believes that "it is true that the development of this modern type of man, who is the exact opposite of the 'citoyen' and whom for lack of better name we have called the bourgeois, enjoyed particular favourable conditions in Germany" (p.130). She further explains that should this person be confronted with the actual meaning of their behaviour, and should there be negative consequences for them, "he will feel nothing except that he has been betrayed." (p.130) Some note should be made with regard to the parallel development within the Soviet Union under Stalin. It cannot be easily argued that banality could be attributed to the bourgeois of that society. What is however of value is to consider that within the machinery of the Soviet State a whole class of individuals, came to be known as the prototype of banality, and gave the term 'apparatchik' to the vernacular as its representative form. In this instance there was a

requirement for the state to create a specific class of unthinking bureaucrats so as to implement the various economic and political strategies, and in doing so stay blind to the horrors that these plans produced. The '*apparatchiks*', who did enjoy the financial privileges (comparatively meagre though they were) of government employment were the underlings of the more senior *Nomenclatura*, who were political appointees, given leadership in arenas of work for which they had no qualifications. (Gellately 2013)

The element of banality as a feature of mass society that is most clearly explained by the theorists discussed thus far is that of conformity/obedience. Reference has been made to the driving influences of laziness, fear and anxiety in the work of Kant, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and others, the rewards of privacy, security and complacency are more apparent in the contribution of Arendt and Ortega. The two other elements of banality, thoughtlessness and immersion require some further attention in terms of what conditions are in play in societies where they are both encouraged to flourish.

This discussion can be introduced in terms of the question: what are the characteristics of societies that most likely create widespread thoughtlessness and immersion among its members. Ortega's contribution can be seen to have most significance to the nature of specialisation and Marcuse's (1968) social critique carries great insight into the effects of modern advanced society in promoting a particular form of thoughtlessness.

4.4.i Ortegian Specialisation

The earlier discussion of banality set out a description how a banal individual allows their perception to be compressed into a narrow focus concerned with the activities of their assigned role. This feature of banality is central to the work of several additional social theorists along with Ortega. Of particular significance in this regard are Max Weber and Franz Kafka. It is beyond the scope of the current work to fully explore their insights, and thus only limited commentary is required as validating that of Ortega on this topic Ortega (1961) refers to "the barbarism of specialization" (p.82). More specifically he argues that part of the requirements for the functioning of mass society is that individuals are assigned roles and tasks that represented only a very small part of any overall field of knowledge. Here he is echoing Marx's notion of the alienation of the worker from the product of his work in virtue of the breaking down of the production process into discrete units. Ortega however

does not attribute negative experience of alienation as part of this process. Neither does he limit the problem to those of the working class. Rather, he takes science as an example *par excellence*. He writes "[A]nd now it turns out that the actual scientific man is the prototype of the mass man. Not by chance, not through individual failings of each particular man of science, but because science itself –the root of our civilisation-automatically converts him into mass man, makes of him a primitive modern barbarian." (p.83)

Contra to the Marxist notion of alienation, and consistent with his 'spoilt child' analogy referenced above, Ortega believes that specialisation creates a particular type of distortion in the individual. The fact that they are an expert in some limited area has the effect of creating a certain arrogance in terms of belief about just how knowledgeable they actually are. And he concludes that such a condition leads to a level of "stupidity of thought judgement and action in politics, art religion and the general problems of life and the world." (p.86) The specialist becomes part of the mass, and people become familiar with the habit of limiting their attention to the specialised task and ignoring the wider implications. He explains:

> [T]he work is done under one of these methods as with a machine, and in order to obtain quite abundant results it is not even necessary to have rigorous notions of their meaning and foundations. In this way the majority of scientists help the general advance of science while shut up in the narrow cell of their laboratory, like the bee in the cell of its hive, or the turnspit in its wheel. (p.85)

For Ortega the advent of technicism was the child of the growth of science, not just in the 'hard' physical sciences but also in the fields of art, politics and education. The outcome of that development saw the creation of a group of people who, in virtue of specialisation, developed a dangerous condition whereby their arrogance with regard to their small area of knowledge left them unaware of their ignorance towards the broader implications of their cultural and political condition. Four decades later, in his study of American education, philosopher Allan Bloom (1988), echoes Ortega thus;

> [A] highly trained computer specialist need not have any more learning about morals, politics or religion than the most ignorant of persons. All to the contrary, with the prejudices and pride accompanying it, and its literature which comes to be and passes away in a day and uncritically accepts the premises of current wisdom can cut him off from the liberal learning that simple folk use to absorb from a variety of traditional sources. (p.59)

Ortega's analysis of the specialist can be considered to show great similarity with Arendt's 'thoughtless' individual. He describes a society influenced by such people who are intelligent, in terms of the capacity so solve technical/scientific problems but highly ignorant in terms of using their minds to other purposes. He explains that the scientist, as a specialist is

> an extraordinarily strange type of man. The investigator who has discovered a new fact of nature must necessarily experience a feeling of power and self-assurance. With a certain apparent justice he will look upon himself as 'a man who knows'. …The specialist 'knows' very well his own tiny corner of the universe; he is radically ignorant of all the rest…We shall have to say that he is a learned ignoramus which is a very serious matter, as it implies that he is a person who is ignorant, not in the fashion of the ignorant man, but with all the petulance of one who is learned in his own special line. (p.85)

An important insight here is that Ortega brings two aspects of banality together, thoughtlessness and immersion and shows that they are related to each other under the influence of specialisation. The scientist 'knows', which is a cognitive act, but such knowing is a very narrow form of instrumental thinking. He solves the problem using his capacity to think while at the same time limiting that capacity to the technicalities of the problem in play. Almost a decade after Ortega penned this description, German engineers tasked with developing efficient systems of murder through the production of specialised vans for use in mass murder clearly exemplify it. Their 'work' and their communication with each other around that work shows how specialisation operated in the murder machine that was Nazi Germany. (see Browning 1985) What is critical here is the realisation that their specialisation was a mirror of the kind of specialisation that is characterised in mass society in general. And it features in banal evildoing when that society turns to evil doing.

Ortega's picture is bleak. Written at the time of the rise of Fascism, he is very prescient in terms of how the general populace, including the educated middle classes who were exhibiting the characteristics of banality on a wide scale would become prone to ideology. He concludes that while such banality is relatively comfortable and complacent, he recognises that one cost of such a condition is a loss of a sense of purpose or meaning within the masses. And this loss creates a circumstance whereby certain forms of ideology become very tempting. Thus: "[I]n these years we a witnessing the gigantic spectacle of innumerable

human beings wandering about in their own labyrinths through not having anything to which to give themselves." (p.108)

It will be shown in the next chapter that Ortega's concern that the banal would be attracted to systems that could provide meaning is validated in that certain ideologies that were particularly dangerous and malevolent were embraced by hosts of banal citizens. However, Ortega also adds what can now be seen as an exceptionally valuable insight into how the banal 'mass' person could solve the "problem of wandering around in their own labyrinths". After the cataclysms of Hitler and Stalin, the attraction to utopian ideologies lost some of its immediacy but created a path for Ortega's insight to be confirmed. He suggests that the labyrinth itself could become a destination characterised by an overweening concentration and concern with itself.

> "Given over to itself every life has been left empty, with nothing to do. And as it has to be filled with something, it invents frivolities for itself, gives itself to false occupations which impose nothing intimate, sincere. Today it is one thing, tomorrow another, opposite to the first. Life is lost at finding itself all alone. Mere egoism is a labyrinth". (p.108)

This insight is borne out by way of the more current phenomenon when the masses embrace an ideology that, contra to any great utopian dream of reshaping society, is one which focusses almost exclusively on individual self-satisfactions. In doing so Ortega could be considered prophetic in terms of the new forms of banality that have emerged in Europe and the United States after the Second World War. This feature is central to Marcuse's critique.

4.4.ii Marcusian Thoughtlessness

One of the most vociferous critics of the effects of modern advanced society on the consciousness of individuals is Herbert Marcuse. Writing during the sixties his work reflected the *zeitgeist* of that time and its importance can be dismissed as a form of manifesto to that time. His strong Marxist orientation and his rather romantic opinion of goodness of human nature can be seen to lessen the import of his insight to current social needs. Close analysis of his work, however, shows important parallels with the warnings enunciated by Arendt with regard to different forms of totalitarianism. Marcuse warns of a more subtle form of totalitarianism, not emboldened by terror, but rather by persuasion and obfuscation.

For Marcuse, one of the strongest features of modern technological society is the creation of human beings who become thoughtless. His understanding of such thoughtlessness is an echo of that which Arendt describes of Eichmann and typical of those she describes of banal. Before attending to his thesis as to how such thoughtlessness is produced it seems useful to present his idea of what kind of society would occur in the absence of such a condition. There is much value in understanding the nature of a condition by discussing its opposite or absence. Thus he argues that:

> Self- determination will be real to the extent to which the masses have been dissolved into individuals liberated from all propaganda, indoctrination, and manipulation capable of knowing and comprehending the facts and of evaluating alternatives. In other words society would be rational and free to the extent to which it is organised sustained and reproduced by an essentially new historical subject. (1968 p.252)

The above can be considered somewhat idealistic, and perhaps the mood of modern times is such that no hope remains for the emergence of such a subject. And yet, what is the value of philosophy if it cannot at least present something to society to give it pause in terms of the direction it takes? Arendt (2003) is adamant that a certain form of thinking is that which liberates the individual from the clutches of banality. Thus, "[I]f thinking, the two in one of the soundless dialogue, actualizes the differences within our identity as given in consciousness and thereby results in conscience as its by product, then, the liberating effect of thinking, makes it manifest in the world of appearances". (p.189) Here Arendt is stating the case that a certain form of thinking, that which can liberate, is characteristic of the human being. Accordingly "we are what men have always been…thinking beings. By this I mean no more than that men have an inclination, perhaps a need to think beyond the limitation of knowledge, to do more with this ability than use it as an instrument for knowing and doing." (1978. pp.11-12). It is precisely Arendt's distinction between using the mind for knowing and doing, and using it to go beyond such limitations that Marcuse takes up in his discourse, where his central argument that modern advanced society strongly conditions and influences people to remain stuck in the limited form, and avoidant of any of the liberating, and for him, subversive aspect of thinking 'beyond', or as Arendt calls it, "thinking without bannisters". (Hill 1979 p. 336) The former he calls instrumental thinking, the latter conceptual reasoning.

For Marcuse the totalitarian element of modern society lies in its ability to prevent people from 'knowing' what is happening to them. Accordingly he states that "the slaves of developmental industrial civilisation are sublimated slaves, but they are slaves, for slavery is determined neither by obedience not by hardness of labour but by the status of being a mere instrument, and its reduction of man to the state of a mere thing". (1968. P.33) Here Marcuse could be mirroring Arendt's conviction that one consideration of the problem of evil is understood as the creation of circumstances whereby human beings are treated as things. Marcuse suggests that the key to creating such slaves is to make it comfortable to be so.

> There is no reason to insist on self-determination if the administered life is the comfortable and even the good life…And if the individuals are pre-conditioned so that the satisfying goods also include thoughts, feelings, aspirations, why should they wish to think feel imagine for themselves? True the material and mental consolations offered may be bad, wasteful rubbish but Geist and knowledge are no telling arguments against satisfactions of needs. (p.50)

Willing participation in one's own enslavement is therefore a key theme in Marcuse's critique of modern society. Thus,

> goods and services which satisfy the individual while rendering him incapable of achieving an existence of his own, unable to grasp the possibilities which are repelled by his satisfactions. Comfort, business and job security in a society which prepares itself for and against nuclear war may serve as a universal example of enslaving contentment. (p. 243)

Here the focus is on the production of banality as a form of such enslavement. And thoughtlessness is a key factor. Marcuse understood that, on one hand, cognitive capacity of people needed to be harnessed in order to continue with the progress of society, while at the same time, prevention of critical/reflective thinking was also required. His analysis suggests that this is achieved by collapsing two dimensions of human society into one, creating what he terms "one dimensional man" The implications of such a process are profound because of their effects on human consciousness. For Marcuse, (very similar to Durkheim's notion of the sacred and the profane which will be discussed in chapter 6) human functioning is characterised by two levels of existence, what he terms "higher culture" and "social reality". To the former belong, literature, the arts, religion, to the latter belong the day to day practical matters of work and making a living for the vast majority. He argues that there is a

dialectical tension between these two dimensions which heretofore has led to forms of progress that ensure some existential enrichment in the human experience of living.

The centrality of these two opposing dimensions has been a defining feature of all cultures and societies until the advent of mass industrialisation. Thus, "the two antagonistic spheres have always coexisted; the higher culture has always been accommodating, while the reality was rarely disturbed by its ideals and its truth. " (p. 56). Marcuse argues that "[T]oday's novel feature is the flattening out of the antagonism between culture and social reality through the obliteration of the oppositional, alien and transcendent elements in the higher culture by which it constituted another dimension of reality". (p.57) What is of central importance here in terms of the problem of banality is that the new shape of mass society is not that these transcendent elements disappear for the individual. This would lead to despair and distress. Marcuse's deep insight is that rather than denuding the human being's need for the transcendent it is retranslated into the practical dimension and becomes part of the masses everyday life, but in a corrupted form. He explains:

> [I]f mass communication blend together harmoniously, and often unnoticeably, art politics, religion and philosophy, with commercials, they bring these realms of culture to their common denominator – the commodity form. The music of the soul is also the music of salesmanship. Exchange value, not truth value counts. On it centres the rationality of the status quo, and all alien rationality is bent to it…..Higher culture becomes part of the material culture. In this transformation, it loses the greater part of its truth. (p.58)

In order for a person to settle well into a world whereby the transcendent is collapsed into the practical there needs to be an equivalent change in the manner in which that individual thinks. For Marcuse, such thinking must lose its subversive element, echoing Arendt's description of thinking, as that which questions and unravels given experience. Marcuse explains that "thought is on the level of reality when it is cured from transgression beyond a conceptual framework which is either purely axiomatic (logic, mathematics,) or co extensive with the established universe of discourse and behaviour. (p.170) The notion that the person can think about the nature of reality, and thus to some extent transcend its determinative boundary, is a step too far for the mass subject. Marcuse explains that:

> all established reality… favours the modes of thought which sustains the established forms of life and the modes of behaviour which reproduce and

> improve them. The given reality has its own logic and its own truth; the effort to comprehend them as such and to transcend them presupposes a different logic, a contradicting truth. (p.142)

Thinking then is, for most, limited to an unquestioning acceptance of a given reality, as well as a commitment via logic to continue to act in such as ways as to sustain their condition. The capacity to reflect or think beyond the existing condition requires, for Marcuse a different mode of thought, He concludes that these modes of thought are "non-operational in their very structure: they are alien to scientific as well as common sense operationalism; ….Thus these modes of thought appear to be a relic of the past". (pp.142-143)

Much attention has been given here to Marcuse's analysis of advanced societies in terms of his carrying Arendt's concept of 'thoughtlessness' directly into their core. These societies are not marked out as subject to totalitarian domination through terror, rather they are totalitarian in a more benign form insofar as the individual is invaded through various influences in how to think and how to be. Marcuse's analysis confirms that the form of thinking that is limited to operational logic is the central element in human mental functioning in mass society. This instrumental thinking, is 'thoughtlessness', as understood in the Arendtian schema, it is institutionalised and, as an important element in banality, is encouraged and supported.

The question can be raised as to the relevance of these observations to current 21st century western societies. After all, these theorists, while providing strong conceptual grounding for Arendt's thesis regarding banality, largely precede her analysis. Marcuse's commentary belongs in the era of the rebellious 60's in the United States. Half a century on, can it claimed that banality, as it is described here, continues its prevalence into modern society, and if so what form does it take?

4.5 Banality and Contemporary Society.

Perhaps a more recent event serves to suggest that Arendt's insight remain valid. Her description of the capacity for banal individuals to radically separate their duties of employment, from any worthwhile moral code is exemplified in the following recent event. Early in 2018 in the Southern border of the United States a political decision was made to implement a separation policy among refugees and migrant families showing up at the border. (see The Guardian. June 2018) Consequently, a group of government employees left

their homes, some kissed their spouses, and others maybe prayed over their breakfasts and tousled the hair of their children. Bidding farewell they went to work. At work they commenced separating hundreds of children from their families and took them forcefully to holding centres, where other government employees drove the buses that transported them to internment camps set up for the purpose. On arrival there, other employees, social workers, 'care' workers and medics planned how to distribute these children into the 'care' of strangers who would also be paid by the state to take care of these children. The functionaries in this process numbered in their hundreds, ranging from simple, less educated workers, bus drivers, security workers etc. to professionally trained graduates, nurses, doctors and social workers. As such they represent a cross section of society. Plans continue afoot to carry out this separation project with tens of thousands of children, leaving them traumatised and many of them with lifelong emotional scars. Colleen Craft, (President, American Academy of Paediatrics), who toured a shelter in a border town in Texas, described children in distress.

> Separating children from their parents contradicts everything we stand for as paediatricians – protecting and promoting children's health," she wrote after her visit. 'In fact, highly stressful experiences, like family separation, can cause irreparable harm, disrupting a child's brain architecture and affecting his or her short and long-term health'. (Craft 2018)

In terms of the definition of evil as causing grave harm and suffering to the innocent, these were evil acts. In the context of Arendt's thesis the perpetrators are not, for the most part, evil people, rather they are banal evil doers.

Although this event provides evidence that the type of banal evildoing so well referenced by Arendt can be seen to remain into the current era, it remains important to discuss the problem conceptually in terms of whether or not current societies are just as prone to its existence as those which led to the deluge of evil during the 20th century. To what extent is thoughtlessness, obedience and immersion still encouraged and cultivated in the modern world?

Mention has been made of Heidegger's concern with the rise of technology as a critical feature in the shaping of human consciousness. His primary concern being that technology would further reify the individual into the instrumental function required by the task undertaken and further remove them from so much of what, for Heidegger, were aspects of

Being. What even he could not have predicted is the radical advance in artificial intelligence and the sublimation of so much human attention and perception to the impact of information technology. One of the most eloquent contributors to this phenomenon is Harari (2016) who suggests that modern information technology is converting human beings into data, to be interpreted and influenced through the development of computer algorithms. He writes:

> [I]n this, humans are similar to other domesticated animals. We have bred docile cows that produce enormous amounts of milk, but are otherwise far inferior to their wild ancestors. They are less agile, less curious and resourceful. We are now creating tame humans that produce enormous amounts of data and function as very efficient chips in a huge data-processing mechanism, but these data cows hardly maximise the human potential. Indeed we have no idea what the full potential is….If we are not careful, we will end up with downgraded humans misusing upgraded computers to wreak havoc on themselves and the world. (p 71)

Harari sees these downgraded humans as living, or more accurately existing in a narrow world where their thinking and feelings are more and more informed by an algorithmic mothership, of which the individual is completely unaware.

If Ortega's picture of bland and contented members of the mass is bleak, this current one is even more tragic. Arendt's concept of the atomised and homeless individual could not have foreseen the power of personal computing, now carried around in what is inaccurately referred to as a 'phone' as a means of further isolating and influencing the masses.

4.6. Banality and Individuality

One would assume that a great counterpoint to banality and membership of the masses would be the cultivation of individuality. This is certainly implicit in the critique of the 'mass person' among the theorists discussed in this chapter, who largely see massification as a failure to develop a strong sense of individuality. Thus one would expect that any society that privileges and encourages individuality would be less prone to the vicissitudes of large scale banality. If that is the case then one can argue that societies that privilege individualism will be least likely to be afflicted with a large cohort of banal people at its core.

There is a grand paradox in the notion that the most individualistic oriented societies, in their social, education and economic structure, turn out to be ones whereby the 'mass person' is emblematic, and whose 'individualism' is, in itself, a chimera, or a delusion. This is because

the form of individualism that is promoted and valued is a far cry from that which Arendt, and the other theorists discussed, foresee as an antidote to banality. For Arendt, the type individualism that counters banality is a self-reflective, questioning and courageous person, who also carries a sense of belonging to a community to which they maintain some sense of loyalty. The form of individualism created and sponsored in modern society is of a different form altogether. This individual is marked out by their devotion to what might be termed narcissistic needs, such as appearance, status, material wealth, and so on and so forth. This form of individualism is a construction of a persona and is just as much a defective form as any of those characterised earlier by Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger. Hawkes (2007) describes this concept of the individual thus:

> [H]e or she may well construct his or her personality out of an amalgam of consumer goods, fashion statements, lifestyle choices, identification with real or functional celebrities—in other words, objective phenomenon which are administered to them by the 'culture industry'. And yet this utter loss of subjectivity is combined in our society with a resounding emphasis on the individual in the uniqueness of each and every person. (p.174)

This description can be seen as an extension of Ortega's thought, in terms of the sense of arrogance and entitlement that forgets the sources of its satisfactions, and fails to see a bigger picture outside its own small world. The current era, according to Hawkes is marked out by a much more subtle from of banality, that is one disguised as a form of individualism but one which is in fact a constructed thing that in no way protects the person from the afflictions of banality discussed heretofore. Hawkes (1996) analysis is a summary of that of Adorno's critique, who saw this development in Western culture as an ideological ruse and who believed that "to a great extent the subject came to be an ideology, a screen for society's objective functional context and a palliative for the subject's suffering under society" (pp.66-67)

Modern western society is thus characterised by a strong emphasis on individualism. Such individualism is an inherent part of the capitalist economic model which is grounded on the notion of private ownership, and constant consumption. (Monbiot 2016) There is a whole media culture dedicated to selling individualism as a virtue. Twenge and Campbell (2009) in their extensive review of this phenomenon examine the social trends from the early 60s to the present in terms of the cultural influences that promoted and established a certain form of

individualism. In addition to economic influences they are particularly focused on the influence of modern psychology and its various areas of specialisation--consumer psychology that markets products based on the generic 'you are worth it' message, educational psychology which promotes the elevation of self-esteem over learning achievement, parenting guidance that consistently encourage the idea that every child is special (rather than just being special to the parents and family), forensic psychology that, until recently, saw much criminality as a distorted expression personal vulnerability and lack of self -love. All of these forces, combined with promotion of accumulation and material gain created a path that they characterise as showing "signs of greed, self-centeredness shallow relationships, vanity, social isolation, phony economics, bailouts and blame." (p.xii) Such powerful social forces create a form of individuality that rather than diminishing banality actually encourage it.

The role of religious observation and the stated goal of religious teaching, which in principle at least has the function of assisting people to reach beyond themselves, to take care of the needy, to examine their consciences, and to take responsibility for oneself, have been infected with the same form of commodification. Ehrenreich's (2010) analysis is particularly germane:

> [I]n line with consumer demands, today's mega churches are multi service centres offering school programs, sports, teen activities, recovery programs, employment help, health fairs, support groups for battered women and people going through divorce even aerobics classes and weight lifting regimes…American churches—mega and not so mega have filled in with all kinds of services that might in more generous nations be provided by the secular welfare state….and this may be an important part of mega churches appeal: they are simulacra of the corporate workplace offering all the visual signs of corporate power and efficiency only without the cruelty and fear (139-144).

Furthermore, she examines the phenomenon of what is termed the 'prosperity gospel', which is a distortion of traditional Christian teaching in that it promotes the idea that God is strongly in favour of people becoming materially wealthy. Accordingly, God approves of selfishness and self-indulgence. Displays of such wealth are considered appropriate. Church leaders can thus become enormously wealthy through donations from the poor in their congregation, who are following the hope that God will reward them for their sacrifice by providing them too with material wealth. They are encouraged to continue with their donations, out of their own

meagre resources with the promise that they too may be blessed with the good fortune they see displayed by their richer spiritual superiors.

This phenomenon is of a very different strain from Weber's (1976) earlier notion that, for many influenced by Calvinist doctrine, being wealthy was a sign of being one of God's elect. Weber's earlier analysis grounds the virtues of discipline and hard work leading to material success as based on the fear that one has not been included in God's elected few. These virtues were integrated with others such as compassion, humility and self-denial. He explains thus: "We cannot well maintain that the pursuit of worldly goods conceived as an end in itself, was to any of them of positive ethical value….the salvation of their souls and that alone was the centre of their life and work". (p.90). In contrast, the proponents of the prosperity gospel foster and support the accumulation of wealth and largesse as an expression of God's love and will for that person. In other words, the accumulation of wealth is in itself a positive ethical value. God wants people to be rich. That is the central tenet of the modern version of certain popular forms of Christian teaching.

The construction of a self, made from the brands, identifications and pleasures offered in society is not the ground for the kind of individuality that saves one from Arendtian banality. Rather it can be considered another expression of it. Roderick (1993) although not referencing Arendt, coined the phrase "Banalisation" to give a title to a process whereby the goal of much social and economic activity has the goal of creating banal people. He argues that television and film play a significant role in championing banality insofar as it creates programs that reflect back to the audience content that legitimises and normalises the banality of their own lives. The programs themselves include situation comedies, soap operas, reality shows, and the like, reflect the activities and events of banal lives, but sanitises and excises any of the despair, boredom and anguish from them, feeding back to the audience these sanitised forms. In doing so the existential challenges with regard to meaning, to values and to community are largely ignored and the individual is exposed to constant stimuli that serve to reduce their capacity to consider these as important aspects of being a person.

Chomsky (2003) echoes these sentiments in his critique of the impact of mainstream media on consciousness. He writes:

> [C]ase by case we find that conformity is the easy way, and the path to privilege and prestige…the very structure of media is designed to induce conformity to established doctrines. In a three minute stretch between commercials, or in seven hundred words, it is impossible to present unfamiliar thoughts or surprising conclusions with the argument and evidence required to afford them some credibility. Regurgitation of welcome pieties faces no such problems (p.10)

Here Chomsky is referring to program content rather than commercials whose function is, *de facto,* to create imagery and desire among its audience. Such images and desires are designed to promise the recipient the elusive goals of personal peace, pleasure, success and affluence in whatever heady mix is desired. None of these programs are intent on creating the kind of dissonance that is required to encourage people to think.

These theorists present an extension of Marcuse's thinking in terms of the effect of the mass media and the 'culture industry' up to the turn of the century. They are not referencing the dramatic and powerful new influences of the digital revolution as reflected in the development of social media platforms. These developments have an even more significant effect in the promotion of thoughtlessness as a cultural phenomenon. One of the more extensive examinations in this regard is found in the work of media theorist Rushkoff (2011, 2018). He explains that the main difference between the analogue generation, (consumption of film and TV) and the digital generation (interactive engagement with screen technology) is the exposure to media systems that have as their primary task the conversion of human attention into a commodity. It is beyond the scope of the thesis to give a thorough analysis here. Rather the discussion is limited to the relationship between the new exposure to digital technology and banality. This can be formed in terms of the question: how does digital technology affect the general consumer's capacity to develop the type of thinking that Arendt sees as countering the reduction of the person into the banal?

Rushkoff's (2011) analysis clearly confirms that modern social media platforms are diminishing people's capacity for reflective thinking. He is particularly concerned about the growth of the science of Captology, a specific discipline/subject developed at Stanford University devoted to more and more sophisticated methods of keeping the individual's attention on screen and accessible to very subtle stimulus response events. These events are constructed based on the learning theory model pioneered by B.F. Skinner (1965) and utilised to great effect in the development of the casino slot machine systems. Rushkoff's text

Program or be Programmed summarises the gradual immersion of the individual into the powerful influences that seek to shape both attitudes and behaviours desired by the owners of the platforms and the organisations to which they sell their data and access. These can range from simply marketing of products and services to efforts to influence political and social attitudes. In either case the one engaging with the technology is no longer using it, it is using them. That is the core of Rushkoff's thesis. The individual is immersed in an online engagement where many aspects of their reactions are being recorded and responded to in order to fulfil the agenda of some anonymous and unrevealed presence. This is a condition that prevents the kind of reflective, detached, and questioning consciousness referenced by Arendt and that is for her the antithesis of banality

4.7. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the hypothesis that banality as explicated by Arendt in her study of Eichmann and as a key contributor to mass evil-doing, is a feature of modern developed society. What can be considered the 'conceptual triangle' of banality, Thoughtlessness, Obedience, and Immersion have been examined separately and their identification in mass society is recognised in the works of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Ortega and Marcuse. Contemporary forms have been identified in the cultivation and promotion of a form of narcissistic individualism that facilitates the creation of conformist and superficial subjects. In addition the influence and effects of new forms of digital interactive technology have also been referenced. This analysis is not exhaustive and there remain other significant contributors who have not been mentioned. To do so would require a broader study of the totality of the question of banality as it relates to modern society. That project is beyond the scope of the present work. Here this limitation is considered acceptable as the subject of banality while a significant strand in the current work is not its total focus.

One of the important findings from this analysis is that, for most, the condition of banality is not distressing or discomforting. Nor does banality itself automatically lead to evildoing. The banal mass are to some extent lulled into the condition, and it is only when their complacency is challenged through economic or political upheaval that they are awoken. And, in such a state, their proclivity is to find a solution that will assist them to return to their original state. That solution often consists of a turn toward some ideological system that promises them the

satisfactions heretofore considered their entitlement, or an even more extensive level of comfort. Thus, the role of ideology takes an important place in creating both a meaning structure and guide for behaviour for the banal. Arendt is particularly adroit in her understanding that a powerful leader can emerge from the crowd if he or she can be seen to incarnate an ideology that makes such a promise. When that ideology also carries evildoing tenets, the road is clear to the creation of widespread mass evildoing. The role of ideology in turning banality into evildoing is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 5.

Human evil and Pernicious Ideology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine Arendt's understanding of the relationship between ideology and mass evil. The discussion is limited somewhat insofar as its purpose is not to write a comprehensive examination of the wide ranging topic of ideology, but rather to isolate those aspects where it is specifically relevant to the problem of mass evil. Arendt was initially dissatisfied with her conclusion to the first edition of *Origins of Totalitarianism* and added an additional chapter " in order to replace what she referred to as "the inconclusive remarks" that had before functioned as a conclusion. This new chapter, entitled "Ideology and Terror," tends to resolve the difficulties Arendt had previously confronted". (Lefort 2002 p.448) This is not to suggest that the role of ideology is understated in the body of the work, rather it continues as a background to a great deal of her discussion of totalitarianism. The focus here will be to firstly explain that Arendt holds a particular view of the meaning of ideology, and in addition it will show that the form of ideology that she describes performs an essential functional role in turning people into evil doers.

The subject matter of ideology is an enormous field of consideration. Freeden (2003) comments that the concept of ideology has emerged as one of the most complex and debatable ideas in the latter half of the twentieth century. He notices that "political theorists, historians, philosophers, linguists, cultural anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists have all grappled with the notion of ideology." (p.13) In the context of the present thesis the main focus will be to examine Arendt's understanding of the concept and how it relates to evildoing. It is perhaps useful here to make some distinction between ideology as understood by her, and other formulations which see ideology as a necessary and often positive aspect of human social functioning. Freeden (2003) for example sees ideology as "a permanent and ubiquitous phenomenon, the end of ideology would signal the end of society, a world in which strong and cohesive political beliefs would neither be held or acted upon" (p.150) For Freeden then, ideology is an important part of social functioning. Alvarez (2010) continuing the theme of a benign understanding thinks that ideology can best 'be understood in terms of a systems of shared ideas values and symbols that help people make sense of the world around them' (p.56). Ricoeur (1998) argues for a non-pejorative understanding ideology which he also considers critically important in the functioning of societies. He turns to

development psychologist Erik Erikson for an insight into the role of ideology in the formation of identity. Referring to Erikson's belief that ideology is the guardian of identity and that:

> [M]ore generally, an ideological system is a coherent body of shared images, ideas, and ideals which (whether based on a highly structured world image, a political creed, or a "way of life") provides for the participants a coherent, if systematically simplified, over-all orientation in space and time, in means and ends. (1994. p.139)

Ricoeur (1998) emphasises that, contra the Marxist understanding of ideology as false or distorted consciousness, ideology can have a powerful integrative function. Thus, "the integrative function of ideology prevents us from pushing its polemical element to its destructive point---the point of civil war. The point then is really to integrate and not to suppress or destroy one's enemy". (p.263) Ideology then has both negative and positive functions, the positive being the preservation of identity, the negative element occurring when, according to Ricoeur "the integrative function becomes frozen, when it becomes rhetorical in the bad sense, when schematization and rationalisation prevail". (p.266)

In contrast to some of the above Arendt's (1985) understanding of ideology reveals it as a deeply destructive and negative phenomenon, or at least ideology as it operates under totalitarianism. Firstly, she argues that "what totalitarian ideologies therefore aim at is not the transformation of the outside world or the revolutionizing of society, but the transformation of human nature itself". (p.458) This purpose alone sets Arendt's concept of ideology apart from almost all political ideologies that merely serve to recommend or guide different forms of social organisation. A second function of ideology under totalitarianism is described thus: "Totalitarianism is never content to rule by external means, namely, through the state and a machinery of violence; thanks to its peculiar ideology and the role assigned to it in this apparatus of coercion, totalitarianism has discovered a means of dominating and terrorizing human beings from within". (p.325) In addition to the changing and domination of its subjects, totalitarian rule has the end point of "preparation to fit each of them equally well for the role of executioner and the role of the victim. This two sided preparation, the substitute for a principle of action, is the ideology." (p.486) In summary, Arendt is setting out a form of ideology that seeks to change the very nature of the person, that dominates them from within, in other words it is incorporated into their identity, and sets them up to be willing to perpetrate evil or become its victim. She formulates a particular type of ideology that can have these results.

5.2 The role of ideology

For Arendt (1985) the context of totalitarian rule reveals the character of ideology because it is under totalitarian power that an ideology can have full expression. Thus she avers that

> [I]deologies are harmless uncritical and arbitrary opinions only as long as they are not believed in seriously. Once their claim to total validity is taken literally they become the nuclei of logical systems in which as in the system of paranoiac, everything follows comprehensively and even compulsorily once the first step is accepted. (p.458)

Taking an ideology seriously, on an individual level can lead to some limited harm, when that individual zealously actualises some destructive precept built into it. It becomes a much more devastating phenomenon if an ideology is harnessed to a totalitarian regime, because such a regime is able to enforce its precepts through its use of terror. Thus, for Arendt, the fusion of terror and ideology are critical elements in totalitarianism. Neither, in themselves, is unique to totalitarian rule but both play a different role in a totalitarian context than in other forms of government. For Arendt, the driving force of evil within totalitarianism is a function of these two distinct but related activities, terror, and ideology.

For Arendt, ideology appears embedded within the overall structure of totalitarian rule. That rule is characterised by radical evil which has been described as the process by which human beings are degraded to a point whereby they are stripped of the aspects of their personhood that defines them as unique individuals. Arendt's thesis moves from describing the degradation within the camp system discussed in chapter 2. to the shaping and reshaping of the individual in totalitarian society so that they too have become superfluous. In such society any human activity, including thinking, that expresses individuality are an enemy of the progress of the totalitarian movement and therefore must be eliminated. Her examination of totalitarianism devotes significant effort to explicating how the individual is ultimately converted into a non-person, or in her words, atomised into the mass man. Thus "those who aspire to total domination must liquidate all spontaneity such as the mere existence of individuality will always engender and track it down in its most private forms regardless of how unpolitical and harmless these may seem." (p.456) All men are converted into one man, and the goal of totalitarianism is 'the transformation of human nature itself' (p.458) Arendt believes that this process requires a significant ideological strand.

Historically, the greatest mass evils have been the outcome of the relationship between certain ideologies that justify evildoing, their adherents/believers, and a cohort of obedient

functionaries who implement that evil. The latter being critically important to the spread of evil and are the constituents of banal evil doing described in Chapter 3. The presence of an ideology that gives legitimacy for evil doing is however a critical element without which that spread of evil doing would be limited to the more simple self-interest of certain individuals. Without a widely accepted ideology, evil doing would not have the characteristic of the limitless, fungus like rootlessness that Arendt came to believe was a feature of mass government sponsored/supported evil. Furthermore she expresses the view that even authoritarian systems are unlikely to prevail without ideology. She avers that "only ideology, not rank and quality, can hold a group together." (1983. p.162)

Much historical evidence exists to support this thesis. Loomis, (1964) for example, in his analysis of Robespierre and his role in the Terror concludes that "[T]here is no crime, no murder, no massacre that cannot be justified, provided it be committed in the name of an ideal" (p.82) and similarly, Solzhenitsyn (1986) adds:

> Ideology—that is what gives evildoing its long-sought justification and gives the evildoer the necessary steadfastness and determination. That is the social theory which helps to make his acts seem good instead of bad in his own and others' eyes, so that he won't hear reproaches and curses but will receive praise and honours. That was how the agents of the Inquisition fortified their wills: by invoking Christianity; the conquerors of foreign lands, by extolling the grandeur of their Motherland; the colonizers, by civilization; the Nazis, by race; and the Jacobins (early and late), by equality, brotherhood, and the happiness of future generations." (p.77)

Fundamental to understanding how ideology relates to evildoing is to discover how the elevation of the ideals corrupts the holders of those ideas, so that they can live more easily with causing extreme harm to others. When such people gain power they create the circumstances whereby the banal can implement the destructive policies that are considered stepping stones to whatever variety of utopia they imagine. The critical progression is for such ideologues to gain political power. In this regard, Kekes (2002) notes that "Lenin in Zurich and Hitler in the immediate aftermath of the war were just nuisances. Lenin in Kerensky's Russia and Hitler in Weimar Germany used the opportunity to transform themselves from nuisances into evildoers." (p.45). The scale of their evil doing is in direct proportion to the access to the resources of the banal followers who through thoughtlessness, obedience and conformity to their roles made the torment and slaughter of tens of millions of innocents possible. To understand Arendt's proposal that ideology becomes the bedrock of such mass evil requires some analysis of what she considers its basic structure.

5.3 Arendt's conception of ideology

One of the critical distinctions that require consideration in Arendt's work is that between totalitarianism, as a form of rule, and ideology which gives substance to the shape that rule takes. Totalitarianism itself is not an ideology but it relies heavily on ideology to give itself legitimacy, at least in its early stages of formation. Its reliance on ideology wanes as it grows into complete control of the populace. Once that is in place, the particular ideology that underwrote its climb to power can be changed and replaced with a new ideology. Thus Arendt, while insisting that there is always some ideological strand at play, does not limit any totalitarian movement to only one such ideological doctrine. Thus she claims that under totalitarian leadership "ideological clichés are mere devices to organise the masses, and they feel no compunction about changing them according to the needs of circumstances if only the organising principle is kept intact". (p.385) To more clearly understand Arendt's position it is first important to discuss her thesis that totalitarianism itself is a new form of political system. If banal evildoing is a new form of evil in the world so too is the structure of totalitarian rule under which banal evil doing flourishes.

For Arendt, totalitarianism is a form of rule that is new and not merely a version of other types of political power writ large. She argues that the types of political rule are historically few. Accordingly she notes that "the forms of government under which men live have been very few, they were discovered early, classified by the Greeks and have proved extraordinarily long lived" (p.461). Her claim that totalitarian rule is not a variation of these traditional varieties is grounded in the relationship that she sees between totalitarian rule and law. Her analysis discriminates various forms of political rule in terms of the degree to which they reflect lawful and legitimate governance, examples being democratic, monarchist, republican rule on one hand and arbitrary lawless governance, as reflected by tyranny, despotism and dictatorship on the other. Until the twentieth century, with the rise of Hitler's regime alongside that of Stalin's, all forms of government could be understood as some varied combination of these elements. Totalitarianism, for Arendt cannot be accurately understood within this frame. Rather as a form of rule it " exploded the very alternative on which all definitions of the essence of governments have been based in political philosophy, that is the alternative between lawful and lawless government, between arbitrary and legitimate power...totalitarian rule confronts us with a totally different kind of government." (1985. p.461)

The essential element that distinguishes totalitarian government from all others is its dedication to a form of higher law that, on one hand, gives legitimacy to all positive laws, and on the other takes no account of the individual human being within the totalitarian state. This dedication to the higher law she refers to "is the source of authority from which all positive laws received their ultimate legitimation"(p.461). The regimes of the Hitler and the Stalin are cases in point. For Arendt these regimes are movements that execute the law of Nature in the case of Nazi racist ideology, and the law of History as expressed under Stalin. Thus,

> totalitarian lawfulness, defying legality and pretending to establish the direct reign of justice on earth, executes the law of History or of Nature without translating it into standards of right and wrong for individual behaviour. It applies the law directly to mankind without bothering with the behaviour of men. (p.462)

Here then is the critical condition whereby, under totalitarianism, individual personal experience is sacrificed to the ideology that gives the substance to any particular rule. The concept of movement here is critical to Arendt's thinking. The ideology sweeps through all the structures of the state. Everybody, including the leader, and everything is ultimately superfluous because the movement is not evolved from the ground up, bounded by the thoughts, plans hopes, feelings of the populace. Rather, some grand design has taken hold, and all offices of the state must feed its demands. No laws exist or operate outside of their function to spread the influence and control of the ideological map. Total domination of all is the ultimate destination, and all morality and legality is simply relative to the demands of the ideological structure. If utter hypocrisy is required to further its aims, then so be it. If genocidal acts are required then that too is allowed. There is no morality outside the claims of the ideology, what is good for the pursuance of the ideological aim, is the ultimate good.[6]Arendt observes that both Hitler and Stalin emphasised that the State itself is only a vehicle for the actualisation of the ideology. Hitler (2015) thus avers that

> [I]t is not the state as such that brings about a certain definite advance in cultural progress. The state can only protect the race that is the cause of such progress….The state is only a means to an end. Its end and its purpose is to promote a community of human beings who are physically as well as spiritually kindred. (pp.356-357).

Stalin notes "we are in favour of the State dying out and at the same time we stand for the strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat…..The highest possible development of the

[6] There could be some relevance here to the emergence of what appears to be devastating effects of laissez faire capitalism as an economic model that appears to foster complete insouciance with regard to the destruction of the planet as well as justifying the spread of poverty and deprivation among large cohorts of citizens of first world countries. (see Hedges. 2018)

power of the state with the object of preparing the conditions for the dying out of the State; that is the Marxist formula." (Boggs. 1995 p.83) These examples show that totalitarianism is a vehicle for the implementation of ideology through the state. Totalitarianism does not create ideology, rather it reveals/actualises its power. For Arendt, (1985) "[T]he organisation of the entire texture of life according to an ideology can be fully carried out only under a totalitarian regime" (p.363) and she notes that first great exemplars of the phenomenon is found in the Nazi and Bolshevik projects. Accordingly, she notes that "not before Hitler and Stalin were the great political potentialities of ideologies discovered." (1985 p.468) Totalitarian rule harnesses a set of ideological beliefs and enforces them with total domination. Totalitarianism follows what she termed the "the recipes of ideologies".

This notion of the 'recipes of ideologies' is novel in Arendt's work. She explains that the critical factor in the way that both the Nazi and Stalinist projects functioned was that they simply used a mix of pre-existing ideologies, and combined them into a better package that made them more attractive to the masses. She argues that "what distinguishes the totalitarian leaders and dictators is rather the simple-minded single-minded purposefulness with which they choose those elements from existing ideologies which are best fitted to become the fundamentals of another entirely fictitious world" (p.362) Among illustrative examples she shows how the ideological tenets of the fictitious 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion' ironically provide much of the content of Nazi master race ideology. Within the Protocols are found the ideas of one world government, "the delusion of an already existing Jewish world domination formed the basis for the illusion of future German world domination" (p.360).

The distinction between the content of an ideology, and its enforcement onto the masses, is a critical factor in Arendt's understanding of how ideology fits with mass evil doing. A comparison with religious fundamentalism may assist in this clarification. Religious belief can be considered a good example of ideological thinking. Fundamentalism is a particular way of framing the dogmas of religious belief and of enforcing them on devotees. Fundamentalism, like totalitarianism is not limited to any particular set of dogmas. Rather it refers to the way in which the individual is treated with respect to those dogmas. Thus, Christian fundamentalists can justify killing doctors that work at abortion clinics, Islamic fundamentalists can justify killing women who have sex outside marriage. The ideological precepts are different, the justifications for evil doing are the same. Arendt's analysis of totalitarianism likewise articulates the distinction between totalitarianism: the total domination of the individual and the particular ideology that informs that domination. As

with different religious systems, different totalitarian regimes enforce different ideological doctrines.

It is implicit in Arendt's account that ideology is potentially a force for great evil doing, insofar as it allows those in power to discount the actual experience of human subjects and sacrifice them to the dictates of that ideology. Consistent with her belief that radical evil is the destruction of the individual qua individual, totalitarianism destroys the unique identity of the person by forcing their existence into a frame determined by some ideology. While totalitarianism can do so on a grand scale, however, according to Arendt, the destructive element is implicit in all ideology. She notes that "all ideologies contain certain totalitarian elements but those are fully developed only in totalitarian movements, and thus creates the deceptive impression that only racism and communism are totalitarian in character". (p.470)

Her account presents a clear warning that in the aftermath of the Nazi regime and the more recent collapse of the Bolshevik project there remains a very real threat to communities from totalising ideologies. Accordingly, she argues that

> The insanity of such systems lies not only in their first premise but in the very logicality with which they are constructed. The curious logicality of all isms, their simple trust in the salvation value of stubborn devotion without regard for specific varying factors already harbours the first germs of totalitarian contempt for reality and factuality….It is chiefly for the sake of this supersense, for the sake of complete consistency that it is necessary to destroy every trace of what we commonly call human dignity (1985 p.458)

Arendt is presenting here a particular understanding of ideology that denotes it as negative, destructive and profoundly dangerous.

Arendt's thesis can be seen to be of particular relevance in the present-day period of social and political upheaval. The current global crisis of mass migration can easily create the circumstance whereby Arendt's warnings are particularly relevant. It could be argued that Western society is now experiencing the resurgence of a far right ideological shift (with both its racist and xenophobic undertones), alongside a rise in the attraction to radicalised Islamic fundamentalism. In addition, many, following the paths of Adorno and Horkheimer, as explored in the previous chapter, would argue that current Western society is ensnared in a consciousness debilitating capitalist ideology. These examples are referenced here as support for Arendt's position that the social and political condition of a society at any given time makes certain forms of ideology more attractive. Thus she comments that

> The Nazis and the Bolsheviks can be sure that their factories of annihilation which demonstrate the swiftest solution to the problem of overpopulation, of economic superfluous and socially rootless human masses are as much of an attraction as a warning. Totalitarian solutions may well survive the fall of totalitarian regimes in the form of strong temptations which will come up whenever it seems impossible to alleviate political or economic misery in a manner worthy of man (1985 p. 459)

The critical element then, in the rise of any particular ideology, appears to be that of its attraction to the masses. In terms of the current relevance to modern European society Allenby (2006) takes the example of the current challenge of multiculturalism and argues that

> the challenge of internalizing a multiculturalism that rejects the absolutes of specific religious and belief traditions is proving a bridge too far for many, and as even a cursory glance at news headlines demonstrates, conflict, not agreement on foundational truths, is the immediate result. Under conditions of systems and ontological complexity which push people beyond their adaptive capacity, retreat to fundamentalism -- religious, environmental, scientific, philosophical, ideological -- is a common response. (p.1)

It is in the existential vacuum that appears with the destruction of one's belief system that provokes people to seek some new version, and often one that can be even more destructive. Nietzsche (2001) could be considered prophetic in this regard, understanding that with the death of God something else, perhaps more destructive would replace it. In his allegory, the madman's appeal to the crowd in the market place asks

> How shall we console ourselves, the most murderous of all murderers? The holiest and the mightiest that the world has hitherto possessed, has bled to death under our knife: who will wipe this blood from us? With what water could we clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what holy games will we have to invent for ourselves? Is the magnitude of the deed not too great for us? Do we not ourselves have to become gods to appear worthy of it? (p.120)

Before the rise of the mass ideological and ultimately human catastrophes of Hitler and Stalin Nietzsche could see that a human crisis was on the horizon. Arendt (1985) writing in its aftermath, but before the articulation of the "postmodern condition" (see Lyotard 2004) also understood that without some ideological frame, the masses would yearn for some principle or belief system that would give them a focus that made sense of their condition. The Nazi conversion of Anti-Semitism into what she called a 'principle of self-definition' is a good case in point. She describes the attraction of this and other ideological tenets because they

> gave the masses of atomised, undefinable, unstable and futile individuals a means of self-definition and identification which not only restored some of the self-respect they had formerly derived from their functioning in society, but also created a kind of spurious stability which made them better candidates for an organisation. (p. 356)

Her warnings are clear. For Arendt, the form of ideology that presents as most attractive and poses greatest danger, is that which flourished under totalitarianism. This form of ideology will be titled 'Totalising' in order to set it apart from some other forms discussed briefly earlier in the chapter. The term 'pernicious' will be added to those totalising forms that contain an element that legitimises and recommends the identification of certain groups of human beings for mistreatment and harm. The etymology of the word is a direct link to the Latin: "(see per) + necis "violent death, murder," related to necare "to kill," nocere "to hurt, injure, harm," noxa "harm, injury" (Source. Online Etymological Dictionary). Pernicious ideologies are totalising ideologies that recommend or pursue the strands of radical evil described by Arendt and discussed in Chapter 2. Furthermore, Arendt describes these ideologies as comprising three elements: A totalising narrative, a separation from experience, and an internally destructive logic.

5.3.i A Totalising Narrative

The central component of a pernicious ideology is always characterised by some form of total explanation for the way things are. For Arendt (1985)

> [I]n their claim to total explanation, ideologies have a tendency to explain not what is but what becomes, what is born and passes away …The claim to total explanation promises to explain all historical happenings, the total explanation of the past, the total knowledge of the present and the reliable prediction of the future. (p. 470)

These totalising ideologies 'are never interested in the miracle of being' (p.469) In this sense there is a very strong element of historical explanation inherent in the idea. Thus, "ideologies are always oriented towards history". (OT 471)

Although Arendt presents the notion that all ideologies are totalizing, this claim should be tempered by recognizing that theorists of ideologies do distinguish what are termed macro-ideologies from those that have a much more limited scope. (Freeden 1996) It is thus more accurate to say that some ideologies are totalizing and that these are forms that, for Arendt, carry inherently the greatest danger. This does not however invalidate her position for it is

precisely that kind of ideology that may prove more attractive when the complexities of society threaten to overwhelm the individuals within it. In this regard she clarifies that it was the particular political and economic conditions of both Russia and Germany that provided the impetus to Marxism and Nazism as the chosen ideological content of the respective totalitarian regimes. Different political circumstances could have witnessed different ideological forms. Arendt provides some indications as to why certain ideological forms are so attractive.

Her assertion that 'over and above the senselessness of totalitarian rule of society is enthroned the ridiculous supersense of its ideological superstition" (p.457). These two elements of pernicious ideology, a 'ridiculous supersense' which is based on 'superstition' provide the masses with what they most want. It would appear that Arendt's understanding here is heavily influenced by Kant. Both terms 'supersense' and 'superstition' are found in Kant as he discusses the dilemma posed by the distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal. The noumenal is unreachable and is yet powerfully attractive to the human consciousness. This yearning towards it and the attempt to bridge the chasm between these two worlds is a central theme in his *Critique of Judgement*. There he explains that "an immense gulf is fixed between the domain of the concept of nature, the sensible, and the domain of the concept of freedom, the supersensible, so that no transition from the sensible to the supersensible (and hence by means of the theoretical use of reason) is possible, just as if they were two different worlds." (Kant 1987 pp. 175-6)

Arendt believes the part that totalizing ideology plays is precisely an attempt to bridge that gap within individual consciousness. Thus,

> ideological thinking becomes emancipated from the reality we perceive with our five sense and insists on a "truer" reality concealed behind all perceptible things, dominating them from this place of concealment and requiring a sixth sense that enables us to become aware of it. The sixth sense is precisely the ideology, that particular ideological indoctrination which is taught by the educational institutions, established exclusively for this purpose, to train the "political soldiers" in the *Ordensburgen* of the Nazis or the Comintern and the Cominform. (p.470-471)

Arendt is arguing here that certain types of exposure captures the individual's consciousness and shapes it into compliance with the ideology of choice. It is almost like becoming privy to a secret. There is a reality behind ordinary reality. Only the ideological believer can access this new truth. Ordinary experience can never give access to it.

Those ideologies that offer the comfort and consolation of some utopian dream are most attractive to those whose ordinary lives are unsatisfying or distressed. More recent understandings of ideology suggest it has a far more comprehensive and pervasive role in most societies. Notably Althusser's(1984) contribution sees ideological training as intrinsic elements of capitalist societies whereby the citizen is indoctrinated from cradle to grave. For him, consciousness is shaped through two different force fields, repression and terror on one hand and Ideological State Apparatuses on the other. He views the latter as more effective over time. These ISA's include the institutions of church, legal system, family, schooling, and communication systems and are engaged in the comprehensive moulding of the person's consciousness. This understanding of how the various arms of the political rulers transform the individual into a subject is in close harmony with Arendt's understanding of the individual's loss of personal identity under totalitarian rule. Althusser reports that "I shall then suggest that ideology acts or functions in such a way that it recruits subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all) or transforms the individual into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very operation which I have called interpellation or hailing." (p. 48) Mannheim (1997) is equally convinced that ideological conditioning is impossible to avoid, and that it is greatly impervious to critique or dismantling from within. His major work sought to find a way for society to discover a focal point from which to examine its own ideology. Ricoeur (1986) acknowledges being impressed with his efforts to do so but concludes that ultimately it was a task that could not succeed because "the critique of ideology always presupposes a reflective act that is itself not a part of the ideological process" or more succinctly "no point of view exists outside the game". (p.172)

Whilst these theorists are not discussing evil they are explaining how all prevailing ideological conditioning can become. Arendt makes the linkage between ideology and evildoing by stressing the way that certain ideologies promise the masses a form of imaginary world that justifies both suffering, and causing suffering. This world is understood by the 'supersense' because it is 'the truer reality' Once that ideology is accepted it automatically leads to the distortion of perceived reality. Before moving to that discussion it is germane also to note that Kant's position on superstition also features in Arendt's thinking concerning the attractiveness of totalizing ideologies.

This connection between Kant and Arendt's understanding of the attraction of the masses to ideology relates to the issue of superstition. This aspect resonates with a theme central to all

Arendt's work, referenced in some detail in the previous chapter, namely the propensity for many, if not the majority of people to avoid thinking. Arendt's connection between failing to think, and the attraction to ideology has strong Kantian influence.

In his efforts to clarify how consciousness deals with the problem of the noumenal Kant (1987) distinguishes between what he calls superstition and enlightenment. For him superstition is the passive acceptance of some ideological precepts usually at provided through the influence of others. Thus he states,

> liberation from superstition is called enlightenment: for although liberation from prejudices generally may be called enlightenment, still superstition deserves to be called prejudice pre-eminently, since the blindness that superstition creates in a person, which indeed it seems to demand as an obligation, reveals especially well the person's need to be guided by others and hence his state of passive reason. (p.174)

Kant's perspective is that 'passive reason' is a feature of the masses. Arendt's position is similar but she goes further by specifically drawing the link between passive reason, which she refers to as 'thoughtlessness' and accepting and reliance on ideologies that it serves to provide the individual who is either unwilling or unable to actively think for him/herself with some kind of usually utopian fantasy with which to explain all that is. This has the effect of blinding the person to reality. For her, thoughtlessness is not only a feature of banality, but can also be a constituent of ideology. She argues that

> the danger in exchanging the necessary insecurity of philosophical thought for the total explanation of an ideology and its *weltanschaung* is not even so much the risk of falling for some vulgar, always uncritical assumption as of exchanging the freedom inherent in man's capacity to think for the straitjacket of logic with which man can force himself almost as violently as he is forced by some outside power (1985 p. 470).

The cumulative effect of both an emotional attraction to an all explaining ideology with the laziness of mind that is a feature of mass society leads directly to the second strand of totalising ideologies namely: Separation from reality.

5.3.ii Separation from Reality

For Arendt (1985), modern society presents a reality that is too painful for the masses to bear. She believes that the masses are 'obsessed with a desire to escape reality' because "in their

essential homelessness they can no longer bear its accidental incomprehensible aspects" (p.352). Her bleak conclusion is articulated thus:

> Before the alternative of facing the anarchic growth and total arbitrariness of decay or bowing down before the most rigid, fantastically fictitious consistency of an ideology, the masses probably always choose the latter, and be ready to pay for it with individual sacrifices-and this not because they are stupid or wicked, but because in the general disaster this escape grants them a minimum of self-respect. (p. 352)

Arendt argues further that "ideological thinking becomes independent of all experience from which it cannot learn anything new even if it is a question of something that has just come to pass" (p. 471) This is what Arendt refers to as the 'emancipation from reality'.

The acceptance of, and surrender to, an ideology that promises a utopian future is followed closely by the second step which requires a reinterpretation of all experiences that contradict or undermine the ideological promise. Reality now becomes reframed into a series of explanations or justifications to account for any actual experiences that diminish or make a lie of the ideological tenets. All experience is now subsumed and reinterpreted, and all acts and behaviour are contextualised as preparatory for the coming utopia. This has the effect providing justification for any events currently in play in terms of the wider goal of actualising a new reality contained in the first step. For Arendt this means that all experiences lose their ability to inform or change, they are no longer recognised for what they are, namely; current reality, and thus they are impotent in terms of providing guidance for how to behave.

Under such a totalising ideology the die is cast when such a process is in an advanced stage because the individual now becomes a prisoner of the ideological frame. The social critic Berman (1990) captures this condition in his remark that "an idea is something you have; an ideology is something that has you".(p.312) If, within that ideology, one's moral values are compromised or destroyed, then a new morality (or immorality) is developed. In the previous chapter it was noted that Arendt makes clear reference to the speed at which great numbers of the educated and privileged surrendered their moral principles. German citizenship moved from accepting the moral precept of 'thou shalt not kill', to the one of 'thou shalt kill'. They were not assisted by the voice of conscience because conscience itself was perverted by ideology.

Her understanding of the role of ideology helps to explain the process by which this occurs. Accordingly, "once the movements have come to power they proceed to change reality in accordance with their ideological claims" (1985 p.471) She takes the example of friendship for example and explains that "the concept of enmity is replaced with that of conspiracy, and this produces a mentality in which reality—real enmity or real friendship–is no longer experienced in its own terms but is automatically assumed to signify something else." (p.471). The history of totalitarian governance is replete with examples of how ideological influences reframe for individuals their beliefs and in doing so often provide them with justification for evildoing. A good case in point is found in how the attachment bonds within the family unit under Stalin were dismembered.

Perhaps one of the most enduring moral values in the majority of societies is that of loyalty and devotion to one's immediate family. Kinship bonds are considered perhaps one of the most unassailable domains in attempting to change human beings. Singer (1994) confirms that "[O]bligations to ones kin, especially of parents to their children are…endorsed in every known society; kinship and reciprocity are the two strongest, and perhaps only, claimants to the title of universally accepted moral principle". (p.150) The Bolshevik project understood this to be the case and thus saw the family unit as a threat. Figes (2008) explains: "[I]n the 1920's they took it as an article of faith that the bourgeois family was socially harmful….The Bolsheviks expected that the family would disappear as Soviet Russia developed into a fully socialist system, in which the state took responsibility for all the basic household functions." (p.8) This progression did not evolve as expected despite the ongoing efforts on the part of the establishment to break families apart, especially under the protocols whereby families were separated and sent individually to different gulags, and younger children were sent to state orphanages. The need to break kinship bonds took a different path when children began to be indoctrinated into the role of denouncing their elders. The story of Pavlik Morozo was used to set this process in motion. (see Figes 2008 pp 316-378)

In brief, Pavlik Morozov was a teenage boy of a peasant family living in a remote village Gerasimovka who denounced his father (who was later shot). In doing so, Pavlik gained a certain notoriety and on the strength of that went on to denounce many others in his village. These were also arrested and many were killed. Soon after, Pavlik was murdered. The ensuing investigation led to the arrest of many of his family most of who were executed (although there is no evidence that any of his family were involved in his murder). These

occurrences were seized upon and politicized in order to further the ideological requirement to dismantle the family.

In the years following his murder, Russian youth were presented with Pavlik Morozov as a glorious martyr who had been murdered by reactionaries. Statues of him were built, and numerous schools and youth groups were named in his honour. An opera and numerous songs were written about him. The school which Morozov attended in Gerasomovka became a shrine and children from all over the Soviet Union went on school excursions to visit it. It seems germane to note here Kant's (2009) awareness that there is close proximity between fetishising an idea and the creation of symbols to further encourage and consolidate that process. He notes that both Jewish law and Islam prohibited the creation of graven images precisely because the effect they could have on consciousness. (see Shell 2009) The creation of statues gives people a concrete focus point by which to close their minds to contradictory aspects of current experience. Kant (1987) was alert to the political implications of statue building long before the pageantry of the Nazis and Stalinist regimes took hold of people's consciousness. With regard to religion he comments

> governments have gladly permitted religion to be amply furnished with such accessories: they were trying to relieve every subject of the trouble, yet also to the ability, to expand his soul's forces beyond the barriers that one can set for him so as to reduce him to mere passivity and make him more pliable. (p.135)

The construction of icons to Morozov and his elevation into a symbolic hero of childhood betrayal had a profound effect on Soviet society. According to Figes "the popularity of Pavlik's story especially among the young, reinforced a profound cultural and generation gap-between the old world of the patriarchal village and the new urban world of the Soviet regime which divided many families." (p.126) It became morally acceptable and even virtuous to denounce family members, often leading to their deaths, and thus entered a long period under Stalin whereby parents were afraid of their children.

This example is useful as a way of understanding the actual process whereby ideology can convert reality, in this case, the experience of emotional attachments and loyalty within families into something it is not. Arendt speaks of 'emancipation from reality'. The reality being that, in most cases, bonds between parents and children are a source of great stability and security and serve as a protection against isolation which Arendt saw as an important element in the functioning of totalitarian rule. Within a number of years that reality, which

should have been sufficient to protect people from invasion by government was perverted. Thus, what might be considered one of the strongest human protections, failed under ideological assault. She notes that "totalitarian government …destroys private life as well. It bases itself on loneliness on the experience of not belonging to the world at all, which is among the most radical and desperate experiences of man" (1985 p. 475). The human susceptibility to ideology allowed that perversion to occur.

In this context Arendt identifies the shift from adherence to the moral principle that 'thou shalt not bear false witness' to accepting that it is good to denounce your neighbour or friend. Although denunciation among families destroyed the trust and loyalty that had inhered in family life, it also had a devastating effect on the society generally because of its effect in breaking ties of friendship and creating a state full of isolated and frightened citizens, who were then all the more susceptible to the ideology of the state. Accordingly she summarises "[I]n the last analysis, it has been through this device (informing/betrayal) to its farthest and most fantastic extremes that Bolshevik rulers have succeeded in creating an atomised and individualised society the like of which we have never seen before and which events or catastrophes alone would have hardly brought about." (p.323)

The actual reality that exists in a society provides the only valid basis for change. Under certain ideological conditions this principle no longer prevails. Rather, all types of privations, contradictory happenings and inconsistencies are explained away as temporary fillips on the onward march towards the utopian dream. The ironies produced here are addressed by Arendt who shows that the very core of the ideologies of Bolshevism and Nazism concerned the rights of workers in the former and the superiority of Germany in the latter. Under Stalin, Soviet workers lost even those rights they enjoyed under the Czar, and under Hitler the German society was destroyed. The losses in each case were gradual, and yet always accepted within the ideological frame as gradually leading to the Promised Land. Gellateley (2013) summarises the Stalinist project thus.

> It turned out that the "final end" of socialism was always over the horizon, in a remote time and space. Still what made it attractive to the true believer was that it was part of a "super guaranteed future". Stalin was a powerful figure who identified with, symbolized, and fuelled those aspirations. He and an army of Soviet standard bearers led their people on, and then other nations, down the road to monumental failure, a man made catastrophe that many refused to see until it imploded. (p.17)

Arendt's concept of 'emancipation from reality' is primarily concerned with the way individuals under ideological sway interpret their experience of external reality. There are, however, good grounds to consider that her thesis also can be applied to the individual's internal experience. It can be suggested that ideology facilitates a split or a distancing from the internal experiences that should, or would in other circumstance inform the individual as to the meaning of their activity. Human consciousness by its nature contains the possibility to evaluate one's own internal experiences. Thus for example an array of human emotions can be experienced alongside a reflection on the meaning of such emotions. That reflection is a cognitive act that is informed by what one believes. Ideological precepts also give a guide or prism through which one's own internal reality can be interpreted. More specifically one part of the power of ideology is its capacity to facilitate a split in moral consciousness whereby evil can be perpetrated from an ideological standpoint by an individual who retains many other moral principles that forbid certain other behaviours.

The history of the Holocaust provides perhaps the most comprehensive account of this phenomenon. The vast array of moral inconsistencies that justified profound evil on one hand and idealistic moralizing on the other is exemplified by Himmler's explanation of the morality involved in robbing and murdering Jews while forbidding anyone enriching themselves from their mistreatment. Himmler infamously explains:

> The wealth they possessed we took from them. I gave a strict order, which has been carried out by SS *Obergruppenfuehrer* Pohl, that this wealth will of course be turned over to the Reich in its entirety. We have taken none of it for ourselves. Individuals who have erred will be punished in accordance with the order given by me at the start, threatening that anyone who takes as much as a single Mark of this money is a dead man. A number of SS men – they are not very many – committed this offense, and they shall die. There will be no mercy. We had the moral right, we had the duty towards our people, to destroy this people that wanted to destroy us. But we do not have the right to enrich ourselves by so much as a fur, as a watch, by one Mark or a cigarette or anything else…. All in all, however, we can say that we have carried out this most difficult of tasks in a spirit of love for our people. And we have suffered no harm to our inner being, our soul, our character.... (cited in Stone 2004 p.84)

Eichmann tried to emulate Himmler's 'conscientiousness' in his 'work'. He compared the integrity of his approach to others less burdened with conscience, and who often stole from their victims. "While we were working with the Jews to solve the Jewish question, the others used the Jews as a means to an end, to milk them for their own ends". (Stagneth p.264). He occasionally complained that the methods of deportation were needlessly harsh and wished

for more humane treatment for those on their way to the death camps. He completes this discussion with expressing his relief that "Thank God I did not become a swine". (Stangteth p.264). While it is difficult to grasp the breath-taking arrogance and self-delusion of this last comment it does indicate the power of ideology in its capacity to blind a human being to the reality of their behaviour

This profound inconsistency in moral functioning witnessed among perpetrators of the Holocaust has been found to exist among perpetrators in all major ethnic conflicts (Alveraz 2010). Raul Hilberg's (1985) iconic work on the Holocaust finds much to support the veracity that normal people (those who have no diagnosable psychiatric disorder) have a tremendous capacity to act in morally virtuous and life enhancing ways in one context and, contemporaneously, with appalling savagery and cruelty in another. Understanding evil requires some explanation of this phenomenon. Arendt's explication of the aspect of ideology that splits or separates the individual from reality could provide a useful addition to an understanding of this phenomenon. Before that analysis it is important to examine one explanatory concept that has been widely accepted, namely: Lifton's (2000) concept of 'doubling'.

The explanation that has received credible support is that of the concept of 'doubling' developed by psychiatrist Robert J. Lifton. He describes his study of Nazis doctors as an effort to find the 'psychological conditions conducive to evil." His research findings led him to believe that human beings can create two 'consciences', and he defines this as "doubling" which is

> the psychological means by which one evokes the evil potential of the self. Furthermore, that evil is neither inherent in the self nor foreign to it. To live out the doubling and call forth the evil is a moral choice for which one is responsible, whatever the level of consciousness involved. By means of doubling, Nazi doctors made a Faustian choice for evil. (2000. pp.423-424)

Lifton's 'doubling' is a psychological theory asserting that a person's consciousness can be split into two 'selves' which, contra to the psychiatric condition of multiple personality disorder, can dialogue with each other. In the psychiatric condition of multiple personality disorder the individual in the functioning of one personality is totally unaware that there is another, or several other personalities in existence, and thus will not recall any activities carried out while functioning under the influence of any one personality. (DSM 5. 2013) In Lifton's doubling, the individual remains fully aware that they will take on a personality on

entering the camp and leave it behind on leaving. Thus the Nazi doctor's had what Lifton calls an 'Auschwitz self', which operated on entry to the camp, and a 'normal' self which become active while home on leave and engaging with family and loved ones.

It can be argued that Lifton's idea is attractive in that it can retain a more optimistic notion of fundamental human goodness. It does so by implicitly crediting the development of the Auschwitz self as a state bound condition that fades when the situation changes. In doing so, it privileges the 'good self', and perceives this as more normative. Critiques of Lifton's theory point also to the notion that doubling may be a consequence of evil doing, rather than a cause, and thus, is a self-serving way to avoid guilt. Doubling does not then explain why the Nazi doctors pursued their evil tasks; rather it explains how they coped with doing so. (Waller 2002) In this regard it does not really further an understanding of evil doing. Rather it furthers an understanding of how evil doing can become incorporated after the fact. Goldhagan (1983) is particularly critical when he writes that:

> Lifton's theory of doubling, although it does seem plausible when applied to the Nazi doctors, is, I believe, wrong. The theory is wholly dependent on the assumption that the doctors understood that what they were doing was evil, an assumption Lifton not only fails to justify, but one which he also undercuts. As his analysis of the Nazi biomedical vision and of Nazi anti-Semitism makes clear, the Nazis understood the extermination of the Jews to be necessary, just, and good. Since the Nazi doctors failed to conceive of their deeds as fundamentally evil, why would they need to double? (p.2)

Here then, in Goldhagan's critique, the role of ideology is presented in terms of its capacity to provide the justification that could turn healers into killers. Lifton's doubling can best be understood as a description of the psychological coping mechanism that develops once a doctor surrendered to the dictates of the murderous ideology. What is missing in Goldhagen's account is the problem of how individuals, even when embracing a destructive ideology, were able to overcome their scruples in order to activate evildoing. His position, that rabid anti-Semitism alone could account for the doctor's, and other perpetrators', awful behaviour is inadequate. The evidence from most research whereby mass killings have taken place suggest that there is an initial struggle among most perpetrators whereby they struggle to shut down or ignore their almost instinctive abhorrence to killing innocent people, particularly children. (Browning 2001) Granted there are exceptions, insofar as that there are some, but relatively few human beings, who relish and enjoy inflicting pain and suffering on others. Much of the evidence suggests that to a large extent the perpetrators of the Holocaust were

not exceptional in this regard. Thus it is critical in understanding this element of evil doing to further explore how ideology empowers people to do evil.

Clearly, ideology provides the "social theory" as referenced by Solzhenitsyn (1986) that justifies the evil behaviour. Van Dijk (2000) succinctly concludes that "legitimation is one of the main social functions of ideologies" (p.255). That may be the case at an abstract level but it does not adequately explain the emotional states that are required in order to implement such behaviour. The individual must go through some psychological process between accepting the idea, not only as an idea but one to which he or she can incorporate into their own belief system, and carrying out the evil act. This is achieved by convincing the person that there is a higher law that supersedes the feedback from the five senses that ordinarily would prohibit evil behaviour. This higher law is working to achieve the utopian state that is on the way. The fact that one must engage in a sometimes difficult process that otherwise would be considered evil is a price that must be paid for the success of the higher law.

Perhaps the most striking example of this in action is given in Himmler's infamous speech to the Einzatsgruppen at Posen. This speech came about as a direct result of Himmler's witnessing an 'Action' put on in honour of his visit to Minsk. (see Metzner 2016) He found the experience quite distressing as it was his first real experience of the actual visual and sensual reality of the 'final solution'. Himmler became visibly distressed when some brain matter splashed on his greatcoat during the slaughter. This event resulted in his developing empathy for the soldiers who were murdering the Jews, and, as a consequence he became more motivated to find a way to alleviate their distress. Grotesque and all as it is, these events present a challenge in terms of understanding evil doing that can best be parsed as the question, how two utterly contradictory moral positions could coexist, empathy for his soldiers distress and utter callous disregard for the horror and final terror of the innocents being slaughtered within a sane and ordinary human being. It will be argued hereunder that two important strands emerge that can add to an understanding of this phenomenon. These are sacrifice and desensitization.

5.3.ii.a Sacrifice

The starting point here is the generally accepted position that most of the perpetrators of evil in the Holocaust were not particularly evil people. For them to become evil doers therefore required personal change in their habitual behaviour, most of which, before finding

themselves in the context of murdering people was of living out ordinary lives. The transition from such ordinariness into regularly killing innocent people is a central theme of this thesis. Understanding the elements of that transition is critical to understanding this form of human evil.

It is germane here to highlight that, contra Goldhagen's thesis, the soldiers involved in this 'work' did find it taxing. Even those especially chosen to be members of the Einzatsgruppen showed signs of distress and difficulty. Zapotoczny (2017) recounts that:

> Many unit leaders dispensed extra rations of alcohol as an incentive or reward. In comparison to other SS and *Wehrmacht* divisions, the *einsatzgruppen* recorded much higher rates of alcoholism, desertion and suicide. Yet despite this moral uncertainty and internal unrest, the *einsatzgruppen* was able to continue its deadly campaign. It would last until the summer of 1943, by which time transportation to the death camps became the preferred method of mass killing. (p.79)

Among the Order Police who were also sent to assist the *Einzatsgruppen* even greater levels of distress where expressed. Those who seemed to enjoy the task of killing were usually transferred to other duties. They were also judged negatively by their comrades, who were particularly critical of the infamous 'Jew hunts' carried out with enthusiasm by a minority of the order police. Within the ideological frame of the final solution, exterminating the Jews was a form of sacred task and not something to be 'enjoyed' or reduced to the base formula of sating the impulses of psychopaths and criminals. Eichmann himself referred to the 'sanctity of his struggle'. This is most clearly put by Himmler when he says about exterminating the Jews: "We had the moral right, we had the duty towards our people, to destroy this people that wanted to destroy us…To have gone through this, and at the same time, apart from exceptions caused by human weaknesses, to have remained decent". (Stone 2004. p.84) His focus on the struggle that many killers encountered in effectively and consistently murdering people was at the core of his speech at Posen. The killers were actualising the awful task of killing a whole people out of a motivation depicted by him as moral goodness and duty and remaining decent.

Paradoxically, it is perhaps the very fact that the task of killing innocents was difficult that made it more likely to continue. A scenario whereby large numbers of the soldiers enthusiastically embraced the murderous activity would most likely not have required the sense of fellow feeling and camaraderie whereby soldiers supported each other in doing what most recognised as a horrible task. This mutual support was essential in prolonging the

activity. Browning's study supports this thesis whereby there was to large degree a stoic acceptance among most of the killers that it was a horrible task that had to be done for the greater good, and in virtue of that task the soldiers supported each other, drank a lot of alcohol, and hoped for better times when they would no longer have to do so. He reports that the first evening after the murder of the Josefow Jews, Battalion 101 returned to barracks "depressed, angered, embittered and shaken". He continues "Major Trapp made the rounds trying to console and reassure them, and again placing responsibility on higher authorities. But neither drink nor Trapp's consolation could wash away the sense of shame and horror that pervaded the barracks." (2001 p.69)

Harari (2016) casts some light on the possibility that experiencing suffering as a price for evil doing is an important aspect of making it legitimate. If the act requires some pain then it is easier to assimilate it into the self. He sees this process as a form of meaning giving. To give meaning to an event is considered by many philosophers to be a sustaining quality in integrating that event into one's life. Nietzsche (1996) for example considers the experience of human suffering in this context. For him what is unbearable for human beings is not suffering itself but rather suffering that has no meaning. Frankl (1992) developed the field of Logotherapy as a specific therapeutic system devoted to help people come to terms with the contingencies of life, what he terms the tragic triad of living, -guilt, death and suffering. It can be extrapolated from this that evil doing will sustain if it is considered to have meaning for the perpetrator.

Sacrifice can be considered an important element in providing that meaning. Thus, the sacrifice made in virtue of the personal difficulties experienced in the killing of innocents was a powerful sustaining force. Harari takes the novella 'A Problem' by Jorges Luis Borges (1999) to elucidate this point. The central character is a deluded elderly country gentleman who fantasises that he is Don Quixote who slays giants in order to win the hand of a fair maiden. Borges asks what would happen if out of his belief in his fantasies Don Quixote actually kills a real human being. He concludes that:

> As long as he fought imaginary giants, Don Quixote was just playacting, but once he actually kills somebody, he will cling to his fantasies for all he is worth, because they are the only thing giving meaning to his terrible crime. Paradoxically, the more sacrifices we make for an imaginary story, the stronger the story becomes, because we desperately want to give meaning to these sacrifices and to the suffering we have caused. (p.300)

It is difficult to ascertain whether or not Himmler understood the power of sacrifice in maintaining ideological commitment. However, his emphasis on sacrifice is likely to have had that effect on some of the perpetrators. His were not simply weasel words but were giving a sense of meaning to activities that under any normal circumstances would be viewed with horror. These men were murdering the innocent on a daily basis. Tenenbaum's (1955) profiling of the leaders of the *Einsatzgruppen* attest to the many members of the death squads who were above average in intelligence and education. This is all the more reason for them to have to make some sense of their actions. The notion of sacrifice does that. Sacrifice is considered in the context of this thesis to be an important element in sustaining evil doing as part of an ideological belief system. Furthermore it can be suggested that it has not received its due regard in the literature on human evil.

It would appear then that the power of an ideology that promises long term general good at the price of causing short term individual suffering can only be successful if perpetrators provide mutual support that validates the moral justification of the act. The very fact that it is not a 'natural act' for them paradoxically allows the individual to maintain some semblance of moral integrity for himself. They don't *want* to do the evil act. They can thus retain an aspect of moral identity beneath their murderous activity. The part of them that did not want to do the act remains intact, its presence in consciousness provides solace and reassurance and allowed them to return to normal respectable living at the end of the conflict.

Stangneth (2014) suggests that the "reversal of perpetrator and victim is a psychodynamic shift that does more than just ease the perpetrators burdensome memory of what he has done, it is more than an act of retrospective repression. It is the suppression of the very consciousness that allowed these perpetrators to commit their deeds in the first place." (p.281) This suppression of the aspect of consciousness that would prevail in terms of refusing to murder was not an easy passage for most. It is a testimony to the power of ideology that it succeeded so often and prevailed for so long.

There were of course a minority who while not 'enjoying' the task of killing, did not struggle with the decision to murder. Their challenge was to murder with greater efficiency. They did not object to the task of killing but, as in any major undertaking, needed to harness and direct their resources with discipline, planning and hard work. Lozowich (2002) refers to those who were at the very top of the genocidal project as 'alpinists of evil'. This phrase evolves from his discussion of the level of commitment and dedication it took for those at the head of

the ‘final solution’ to ensure the success of their murderous task of cleansing the world from the *Untermenschen*. He is particularly critical of the notion of “the slippery slope” metaphor being used to describe a gravitational slide into greater evil doing that can easily become a form of ameliorating justification. In consequence he writes poetically that:

> the decision to become murderers was not a one time matter, as has been assumed by historians who search for a date on which the decision was made by Hitler or his officials. It was a long steep climb, lined with red lights and black flags. Just as a man does not reach the peak of Mount Everest by accident so Eichmann and his ilk did not come to murder Jews by accident, or in a fit of absent mindedness, not blindly obeying orders or by being small cogs in a big machine. They worked hard, thought hard and took the lead, over many years. They were the alpinists of evil. (p. 279)

In terms of this thesis the argument proposed is that by the very nature of having to make some sacrifice for the sake of the ideological promise of a greater good, many perpetrators were psychologically corrupted by way of being able to hold on to some semblance of belief that they remained moral beings, while regularly murdering innocent people. Their dedication to a destructive ideology sees the emergence of a new ‘ideologically based moral code’. This new moral system is called upon when enforcement of ideological precepts were required. Accordingly, Chomsky (1989) comments that: “it is probable that the most inhuman monsters, even the Himmlers and the Mengeles, convinced themselves that they are engaged in noble and courageous acts. (p.19) The idea of a new moral code is articulated by Arendt and appears to be the logical conclusion of her work on this topic. This second morality coexists with the person’s original own moral beliefs which fade to the background only to be resurrected when the political structure changes. These original moral guides remain in place but are only implemented when moral decisions have no ideological relevance.

Evidence for this position can be evinced from the manner in which so many perpetrators were able to resume normal lives at the end of the war. Many commentators, including Arendt, note how quickly perpetrators were able to pick up their lives where they left off, with seemingly no real long term scars. It seems important to note here however that the end of the war, to a large extent, also saw the end of the ideology that was coterminous with the conflict. What is often understated is that it is not perhaps the end of the war that allowed many perpetrators to recover their ordinary lives, but rather the end of the ideology to which they had submitted/accepted. There were of course some who continued a fervent belief in its validity. For many, however, it was a matter of changing positions back to the moral code

they had abandoned, or repressed a decade earlier. Those who abandoned the ideology that saw them become murderers in order to take their place again in normal society could easily be swayed again under a different ideological flag should the occasion arise. Arendt (2003) is clear in her understanding that such malleability seems inherent in the masses. She references this by commenting that "hence we must say that we witnessed the total collapse of the 'moral' order not once but twice, and this sudden return to 'normality' contrary to what is often complacently assumed, can only reinforce our doubts" (p.54)

This understanding carries some similarity with Lifton's (2000) doubling but does not require any complex psychological restructuring of the self. Rather, it highlights the aspect of personal sacrifice, surrendering oneself to what the individual believes is a higher ideological cause. The perpetrator sacrifices his comfort, his moral integrity, and emotional happiness to the demands of the ideological condition. Such a sacrifice means that the individual is temporarily 'giving up' his moral code. In doing so, he, in a way, retains it, but does not let it inform his actions within the ideological context he finds himself. If the individual found no struggle to give up his moral principles in order to murder people, then he would simply be a criminal or a sadist, one of the minority of people in any society. Sacrifice then can be seen to play an important part in sustaining the murderous activity.[7] It is unlikely however that such sacrifice alone could sustain months and years of murdering the innocent. There is strong evidence to suggest that although the ideological sacrifice initially enables the individual to begin the killing process, that activity itself caused a change within the individual that allowed it to continue indefinitely. This is the process of desensitization. Once engaged in the regular act of horrible evil the process of desensitization further deteriorates any possibility for change.

[7] Other contributors have examined the role of sacrifice within Fascism, and although have not applied it to the specific acts of killing as a sacred act, as denoted by Himmler. Rather they suggest that there is something about self sacrifice that is in itself attractive. MacCannell (1996) suggests that sacrifice is an important concept in understanding fascist ideology. For her "Fascism always demands excessive sacrifices from its adherents" p.49. Zizek (1989,1997) explains that sacrifice in the context of fascism provides a subtle form of enjoyment. He argues that Fascism is based on a formal imperative: "Obey because you must! In other words, renounce enjoyment, sacrifice yourself and do not ask about the meaning of it-the value of the sacrifice lies in its very meaninglessness, true sacrifice is for its own end; you must find positive fulfilment in the sacrifice itself, not in its instrumental value, it is this renunciation, this giving up of enjoyment itself which produces a certain surplus enjoyment." (p.82) This view is closely related to Nietzsche's notion that fervent religious belief, expressed by many ascetics and zealots contains what he terms self splitting. Safranski (2003) summarises Nietzsche thus "Religious self-splitting can take the radical form of self-sacrifice when man 'loves some aspect of himself , a thought, a desire, a creation more than some aspect of himself, causing him to split his being and sacrifice one part of himself to the other" (p.135). Perhaps, some of those who renounced their sense of mercy, empathy and ordinary decency in order to take part in mass killings felt some spiritual uplift.

5.3.ii.b Desensitization

It is clear from the discussion so far that submission to an ideology has the power to convert most human beings into doing evil acts that they would not heretofore even consider. It provides an intellectual or cognitive framework whereby the evil act has some meaning and some justification. On its own it can facilitate a great number of people to support a murderous and evil process as long as they do not have to face the actual visceral reality of the evil doing itself. Any distance from the act of murder itself can ensure compliance with the killing process with minimal distress. These perpetrators are the banal evildoers discussed in the previous chapter. The transition into performing the act itself, however, requires additional influences for most perpetrators. The few zealots referenced by Lozowich (2002) were utterly dazzled by their ideology and could murder without compunction, they however are in the minority. The concept of sacrifice has been called upon here to give an additional element to understanding how large numbers of ordinary people could become murderers. With that sacrifice made, and in the context of others who also made that sacrifice, a cohort of mutually supportive comrades went about their 'sacred' task as best they could. Much peer pressure, emotional support, and the mixture of obedience, fear and conformity described in some detail in the previous chapter must be brought to bear to transform ordinary people into effective and consistent evil doing murderers. It is unlikely however, that if these evil acts continued to fray at the edges of the perpetrators morality, the ongoing direct murdering would sustain for a long period. For that to occur it is argued here that a second process occurs in addition to that of ideological sacrifice. This is the well-recognised process of desensitization.

Almost all of the research on evildoing suggests that human beings can acclimatise themselves to many situations that would be initially very taxing or difficult. Perhaps the clearest example of this process is provided by those who studied the training of Greek torturers who were operating under the auspices of the military dictatorship in Greece between 1964 and 1973. Haritos-Fatouros (1988) shows that by gradually introducing the recruit to torture in stages one could effectively train almost any young man to become a torturer. This was achieved by introducing him to the task in stages, and by getting used to one stage he would become ready for the next. Sitting outside the cell when a prisoner is tortured gave him time to adjust to the screams of agony. Then, he is required to attend inside the cell and thus could observe the suffering as well as hear it. By preparing the

implements of torture and handing them to the torturer he become complicit in the actual act and is sensually engaged in virtue of handling the tools. In time he becomes ready to do the act itself. Each stage required, for most, a gradual numbing or desensitising himself from moral and emotional distress caused by witnessing and doing torture.

There is little difference between the process by which a person overcomes a terrifying phobia by way of gradually breaking the fear through exposure to the feared object, and the gradual taming of initial visceral reactions to killing a child. For 'normal' people engaged in such activity the primary initial reactions are a mix of guilt, revulsion, and sadness. In time the intensity of these reactions recede into a colder mechanistic process. This type of adaptation appears to be a natural defence mechanism for the mind to reduce distress and anxiety. Browning (2001) describes that with some changes in the routine, Battalion 101, those appalled and sickened by their first 'action' were able to continue their horrible tasks. "When the time came to kill again, the policemen did not 'go crazy'. Instead they became increasingly efficient and callous executioners." (p.77) Lifton (2000) describes this process as the 'socialization to evil' which he "discovered is all too easy to accomplish." After killing ten children the negative emotional consequence for the perpetrator is significantly less than that from the first one.

The power of certain ideologies to take consciousness and immunise it from the reality of an event, allied with the human capacity for adaptation to the most appalling evil doing, combine to fulfil Arendt's description of radical evil's 'limitless possibility'. The third strand of her analysis of the connection between evil and ideology is the component of destructive logic.

5.3.iii A Destructive Logic

The third strand of her analysis focuses on how the cognitive element of ideology functions in terms of a stage by stage evolution of the beliefs that has its end point in accepting the moral validity of evil acts. She finds this strand in the in the etymology of the word itself. She argues that "…ideological thinking orders facts into an absolutely logical procedure which starts from an axiomatically accepted premise, deducing everything else from it: that is it proceeds with a consistency that exists nowhere else in reality". (1985. p.471). Here Arendt focuses on the problem for most people who appear to have an in built need to remain consistent in their beliefs. Arendt proposes the notion that the initial idea in the ideologies

she discusses have sufficient credibility to be accepted by significant numbers in a society. Once that idea is accepted then there are a series of intellectually congruent steps each requiring more and more distance from reality that justify greater levels of evil doing. In virtue of accepting and submitting to ideological premises, the capacity to think is replaced by the trap of logic. Here again Arendt reflects the Kantian distinction between reasoning and intellect. For Kant, Reasoning (thinking) is the faculty that allows detachment from all ideology, intellect however can stay within the boundaries of the ideology and use cognition to follow the logic of the idea, which is Arendt's (1985) precise definition as she states: "[A]n ideology is quite literally what its name indicates, it is the logic of an idea". (p.468) According to Arendt, an ideology begins its journey through consciousness when an idea is turned into a premise that is accepted as axiomatic. Once that is accepted then logic is brought to bear on it leading to certain actions. A good case in point is that of the massacre of the mentally ill and physically disabled under Nazi rule. The Nazi 'idea' that there can be 'a life unworthy of life' became axiomatic through propaganda, and led directly to the development of a wholesale extermination program termed The Euthanasia Program. The killings were a direct result of the inherent logic that flows from acceptance of the initial premise.

The ultimate failure of the euthanasia program was due to the inability of the propaganda machine to fully disrupt the existing ideology concerning the sanctity of life that was the province of the widely held religious belief at that time. Not enough people let go that article of faith, and as a result public protests occurred leading the Nazis to back down. The fate of the Jews was sealed, however, when that very same propaganda machine was able to convince the populace that the Jews were fundamentally different and inferior to the Aryan German. It then became acceptable to treat them differently, initially with prejudice, separation, and mistreatment. All this allowed the space for the removal of Jews to the East, away from the visibility of the populace where they could then be murdered.

According to Arendt, '[I]deologies always assume that one idea is sufficient to explain everything in the development from the premise and that no experience can teach anything because everything is comprehended in this consistent process of logical deduction'. (1985. p.470) She strongly emphasises the psychological entrapment that faces an individual once the initial premise of an ideology has been fully accepted. She understands this as a powerful influential force described thus: 'Here the coercive force of logicality seems to have its

source; it springs from the fear of contradicting oneself'. (p. 473) This notion of "being afraid to contradict oneself" appears rather benign when placed in the context of people collaborating with mass murder. Vellemann (2000) explains: "Consistency isn't desired for its own sake it's desired as the form of the predictable and the intelligible, by a creature who must feel that he lives in a stable and intelligible environment. Inconsistency isn't intrinsically disturbing; it's disturbing because it stymies comprehension and in a world which is incomprehensible, no one can feel secure". (p.354) This predilection toward consistency at whatever cost supports Arendt's strongly held belief that the masses retreat from conditions of insecurity and unpredictability and seek safe haven in ideology that provides certitude and consistency regardless of its validity. Thus: "human beings need the constant transformations of chaotic and accidental conditions into a man-made pattern of relative consistency." (1985 p.352) The latter conceptualisation of the drive to consistency and active efforts to cognitively resolve conflicting beliefs came to be known as 'dissonance theory'.

Evidence from social psychology adds great weight to the power that "being afraid to contradict oneself" can hold. Evidence from Aronson's (1969) research and many in the field of social psychology show that people in general are strongly motivated to appear self-consistent with themselves and others. Velleman (2000) presents a thorough analysis of dissonance theory, and alternatives including 'self-perception theory' and 'self-enhancement theory'. These latter, compete in terms of providing alternative explanations for the extensive empirical evidence showing that humans are powerfully driven to maintain consistency, between their beliefs and their actions. It is beyond the scope of the current work to discuss in any detail the different nuances between these explanations, they all however, support Arendt's view that within an ideological structure people will use their capacity for logic to justify and legitimate behaviour in terms of making such behaviours fit to whatever ideological tenet, however evil, that they have accepted.

Thus, once the initial precept of an ideology has been accepted the individual tries to harmonise his action to that presupposition. When a discord arises between these the individual resorts to a series of psychological strategies to explain or reduce that dissonance. When some obligation arises from the ideology, such as informing on a friend or colleague, and doing so causes a discord with one's self perception, namely, 'I am loyal to my friends', then the individual will need to cognitively resolve this, which they can do in this instance by

concluding that it is true he is not a betrayer. He cannot betray his country, and thus must inform on his friend. Reinterpreting reality in such a way as to hold on to the primary idea is a key feature supported in Aronson's work. More specifically, and of particular relevance, is that the greater the cost of the initial action/or belief the stronger will be the resistance to changing it. If you betray your lifelong friend and they are murdered, then you better have had a very good reason for doing so, and any condition that suggests it was a mistaken course of action will be strongly resisted. This issue has been discussed earlier in more detail in the context of the role of sacrifice in maintaining ideological fervour.

Arendt explains that "the tyranny of logicality begins with the mind's submission to logic as a never ending process on which man relies in order to engender his thoughts. By this submission he surrenders his inner freedom…"(p.471). The individual who has accepted the initial ideological premise is forced by the power of their own logic to accept the consequences of this initial premise. Thus, says Arendt. 'an argument of which Hitler, like Stalin was very fond is: You can't say A without B and C and so on down to the end of the murderous alphabet'. (1985 p. 472) As an example of how this destructive logicality, inherent in ideology operates, she refers to the show trials under Stalin. She reflects that

> to the extent that the Bolshevik purge succeeds in making its victims confess to crimes they never committed it relies on this basic fear (of self-contradiction) and argues as follows: We are all agreed on the premise that history is a struggle of classes and on the role of the party in its conduct …At this historical moment, that is in the accordance with the law of history, certain crimes are due to be committed…You therefore either have committed the crimes or you have been called by the Party to play the role of the criminal….if you don't confess you cease to help History through the party, and have become a real enemy. (p. 472)

The unfortunate victim is trapped. If they confess to the crime they are punished. If they fail to confess they are betraying the State and thus are guilty, and justifiably punished. At least by confessing they can retain a faith in the system to which they have been devoted. A great number of the victims politically purged under Stalin had spent almost all their resources devoted to the Party. Once again, it can be seen here, in this particular historical context that the intensity to which a belief will be held contra the evidence, is determined by the level of cost or sacrifice the individual made in his original commitment to that belief.

Again and again key members of the Soviet leadership, facing trial as enemies of the state, accepted their fate because they associated themselves with Stalin and with the ideology of

utter loyalty to the cause of communism. Having witnessed so many of their colleagues being murdered, they remained steadfast in the belief that those colleagues must have been guilty. Otherwise the State would have been wrong or unjust, which is impossible given the acceptance of the first premise. When their turn came, and they too were found guilty as enemies of the state, it was because unbeknownst to them they were guilty and they must bear the consequences. The key resolution to the dissonance is found in their acceptance that they were enemies of the state but did not know it, and furthermore in such a strange and paradoxical way they can now further uphold the superiority of the State, because it was able to identify their own treason even though they themselves were unaware of it. Solzhenitsyn (1986) recounts that the last words on the lips of great number of those purged were 'Long Live Stalin'. The notion that they were in thrall to a power hungry paranoid psychopath, a fanatic with delusions of grandeur, would have been utterly incomprehensible to them. Bukarin, one of the most loyal friends, and long standing member of the Politburo appealed to Stalin before his execution thus. "I know all too well that great plans, great ideas, and great interests take precedence over everything and I know that it would be petty of me to place the question of my own person on par with the universal-historical tasks resting first and foremost on your shoulders." (Boobbyer. 2000. p.69)

Solzhenitsyn (1986) also recounts one of the more sinister effects of the trap of logicality with regard to the infamous state prosecutor Andrei Vyshinsky. Its relevance here is as evidence that not only victims but perpetrators were ensnared in a form of cognitive trap. According to Solzhenitsyn "the brilliant teaching of Vishinsky came into its own in 1937 and was widely applied to interrogators and prosecutors. Accordingly,

> availing of the most flexible dialectics…he pointed out in a report that 'it is never possible for mortal men to establish absolute truth, but relative truth only'….He then proceeded to a further step, which jurists of the last two thousand years had not been willing to take, that the truth established by interrogation and trial could not be absolute, but only, so to speak, relative. (p.42)

Using this as his premise the conclusion doomed millions. Solzhenitsyn (1986) explains:

> Therefore when we sign a sentence ordering someone to be shot we can never be *absolutely* certain, but only approximately in view of certain hypotheses, and in a certain sense that we are punishing *a guilty person.* Thence arose the most practical conclusion: that it is useless to seek absolute evidence –for evidence is always relative, or unchallengeable witnesses-for they can say different things at different times. The proofs of guilt were relative, approximate, and the interrogator could find them, even when there was no evidence and no witness,

> without leaving his office, "basing his conclusion not only on his own intellect but also on his Party sensitivity, his *moral forces*…and on his *character".* (p.43).

Historian Andrei Vaksberg (1990) similarly concludes "all the court's attention was concentrated not on analysing the evidence, which simply did not exist, but on securing from the accused confirmation of their confessions of guilt that were contained in the records of the preliminary investigation." (p.14)[8] Solzhenitsyn (1986) concludes, "[I]n only one respect did Vyshinsky fail to be consistent and retreat from dialectical logic: for some reason, the executioner's *bullet* which he allowed was not relative but *absolute*." (p.43) Here then is clear support for Arendt's argument. The destructive logic inherent in the ideology was not just a matter of abstract consideration, it led directly to slaughter of millions. The role of ideology in promoting radical evil cannot be underestimated in mass evil doing. It provides the cognitive frame that traps individuals both in terms of providing meaning for evil doing behaviour, permitting them to sacrifice their existing moral ideas by promoting a new morality, and leading them inexorably into greater and greater levels of destruction through a process of gradual logical steps into destructiveness. Baumann succinctly summarises thus: "At no point of its long torturous execution did the Holocaust come into conflict with the principles of rationality." (p.17)

It should perhaps be noted that all such discussion of the power of ideology does not provide any moral justification for evil doing. Kekes is succinct and direct when he says that:

> The assumption underlying this defence (referring to the idea that one cannot be considered an evil doer if one believes one is behaving rightly) is that people should not be held responsible for evil actions if they sincerely believe that their actions are not evil. This assumption is false. …If the assumption were true then it would have the absurd consequence of exempting from responsibility SS concentration guards, if they were sincere Nazis, KGB torturers provided they were committed Communists, Islamic terrorists if they were truly fanatical: Rapists if they really believed that women liked it. Responsibility for such evil actions is not weakened but strengthened by the reprehensible beliefs of the evil doers. One wants to say about them that they ought not hold beliefs –sincerely or otherwise- from which evil actions follow."(p.43)

[8] Sociologist Aron (1957) suggests a strong parallel notion of 'chain of identification' as an explanation for how mass killings were justified under Stalin. He describes how any thought or act, intentional or otherwise could be tied to another perhaps slightly more oppositional idea and then by a process of linking ideas lead always to the outcome deserving of execution. He gives the example of Bukarin who "by opposing the collectivisation of agriculture, provided arguments for the peasants who refused to enter the Kolklozes, helped those who were sabotaging the Government's program, and in fact associated himself with the external enemies who were endeavouring to weaken the Fatherland of the revolution….He acted as if he had gone over to the counter revolutionary camp." (p.124)

Arendt believed that the concentration camps under the Third Reich were 'experiments' in radical evil. It is unlikely that she considered this phrase in terms of its usage as referring to scientific method whereby some better knowledge is a goal (with the exception of medical experimentation most commonly attributed to Mengele). Rather, it is more likely that it refers to the way that many perpetrators sought new and 'creative' ways to inflict pain and suffering on their victims. One could compare here to the idea of the cat 'experimenting' with a mouse. Certainly, there were examples of effective pursuit, refinement and actualisation of radical evil as defined by her. The primary goal there was to follow an ideology of purification that required exterminating all those considered sub human, with particular reference to the Jews. Had the war been won, plans were afoot to exterminate tens of millions of Slavs, all the mentally and physically disabled and anyone who would be adjudged inferior. Similarly, under Stalin the task was to identify new groups considered as enemies of the state. Arendt (1985) provides details of the various new categories of humans to be liquidated. (p.424) Undoubtedly, over time new categories of victims would be elected in the never ending movement of these insane ideologies through human society.

This murderous process and the whole social and bureaucratic systems that facilitated this evil, from the postman delivering the deportation notice, to the police organising the round ups, to the railway staff, to the mechanics, the secretaries and others provide enormous evidence for how evil functions at the level of the individual citizen in a modern state that has descended into an ideologically driven evil system. It further points to Arendt's conclusion that radical evil has limitless possibilities.

Arendt's analysis of both the Holocaust and the Gulag system presents a coherent explanation of how state sponsored evil infects and utilises the resources of its citizenship. This process has several strands and succeeds because it is the nature of modern society to create circumstances whereby subjects are easily corrupted. Baumann (1991) agrees and argues that

> ideational processes that by their inner logic may lead to genocidal projects and the technical resources that permit implementation of such projects not only have proved fully compatible with modern civilization but have been conditioned , created and supplied by it. Without modern civilization and its most central essential achievements there would be no Holocaust. (p.78)

Baumann here recognises that the technical efficiencies required for mass evil doing made the Holocaust as it occurred feasible. It is questionable however to conclude that without such efficiencies that a Holocaust would be avoided. Stalin managed to kill far more people

than the Nazis by simply allowing nature to do his bidding and leaving millions to starve. Snyder (2017) is keen to remind those interested that an over-emphasis on the industrialised machinery of the Holocaust is sometimes emphasised at the cost of recognising that more people were murdered by shooting in the death pits of the East than in the gas chambers. Yes technical advances made for more efficient killing systems, but even without them, the masses were able to collaborate, cooperate and engage in a vast flourishing of evil.

5.4 Conclusion

Arendt's interpretation of Eichmann, and her understanding of banal evildoing, combined with her thesis on ideology provide the central elements of the analysis thus far. From that analysis and with supporting evidence from the fields of social psychology and political philosophy the scaffolding for understanding the forces that convert ordinary citizens into collaborators and evil doers has emerged. This corruption comprises a plethora of disparate elements which fuse under totalitarianism and give it a particularly clear window into human evildoing. Other regimes may facilitate more limited forms of evildoing both in terms of the range of its victims, and the length of time it survives. The question that is raised as a result of this analysis is the degree to which the elements required for mass social evil remain dormant in modern societies. It has been shown that the condition of banality remains widespread. The chapter following will show that the susceptibility to destructive ideology is also significantly active because there remains among human society a fundamental need and attraction to ideology. As a result it will be shown that there are implications for the individual citizen of any state in terms of their susceptibility to accept an ideology that requires them become collaborators when that state promotes or pursues an evil doing policy.

Chapter 6

Totalising Ideology and Religion

6.1 Introduction

Thus far, this thesis has found support for Arendt's account of mass radical evil as a product of two forces, the dictates of a particular form of legitimising ideology, which for the sake of clarity will be termed 'totalising ideology', as well as the impact of widespread banality among the populace. The type of ideology, identified in Arendt's formulation, is one which provides an overarching explanation for all that exists, with a promise of some form of perfected social condition combined with a code of behaviour that justifies causing great undeserved loss and harm to identified groups of people in order to fulfil the promise of that condition.

Although identified by her in the historical occurrences of the Third Reich, and the regimes of Lenin and Stalin, her formulation can also be applied to many historical outbreaks of mass evil, some of whom were based in forms of religious crusades. Her formulation can also be applied to current situations in the making. One can imagine, for example, if the growth of ISIS in the Middle East, with its promise of a worldwide Islamic Caliphate, prevailed. An ideology that would see the purification of the world by way of exterminating the infidel and establishing the rule of Allah, would appear to be no less catastrophic than that of the Jewish Holocaust. The destruction of Armenian populace in the Turkish genocide, the slaughter of Cambodians under the Khmer Rouge, the Rwandan massacres, the Serbian ethnic cleansing, and currently the persecution of the Rohinga Muslim population in Myanmar, are all cases in point where a government harnesses the power of significant proportions of its populace to persecute and murder another set of citizens under the precepts of a pernicious ideology

Arendt's understanding of the power of ideology can also be applied to many contemporary examples of smaller group evil. Particularly germane is that of the evil encountered among certain religious cults that lead to mass murder and suicide. The 'Manson Family' and those devotees who wished to provoke a race war by murdering the innocent, although tiny in comparison with genocide, still carried the same destructive elements adumbrated by Arendt. Ressler and Shacktman (1993) report on their interview with two of the Manson family after years of incarceration thus:

> In prison, the "girls" who were now women in their thirties –kept the faith. One day they believed Charlie would emerge from prison and restart the movement that would be the only hope for earth's future, and they would join him in the endeavour. They told me that even if I had brought with me presidential commutations for them both, they would not leave prison until Manson had also been released. (p.69)

Similarly the 900 deaths in the Jonestown People's Temple cult is another good case in point. The mothers who murdered their children in Jonestown before poisoning themselves could not be considered to be fundamentally different from many of their idealistic peers who did not travel to Guyana. They were held in thrall by Jim Jones their cult leader and his suicidal 'end times' narrative. (Reiterman 1983)

All of these examples point to the capacity for human destructiveness implicit in a particular type of ideological conditioning. Furthermore these instances suggest the critical importance of discovering the conditions by which people as well as surrendering to banal existence become susceptible to such ideology. This chapter will argue that Arendt's formulation of ideology, which has been shown to be particularly dangerous in its potential to convert people into evildoers has a long history, much of which has been seen under the rubric of religion.

In order to examine the role of ideology in creating the conditions that facilitate and encourage people to collaborate with and to a greater or lesser extent engage in evil it is necessary to show that Arendt's formulation of ideology is not unique to a totalitarian state. Two challenges emerge in extracting Arendt's formulation of ideology from the context of totalitarianism. First is the more abstract task of showing that the conceptual structure proposed by Arendt is also found within major religious movements. This could be termed the structural parallels between religion and Arendtian ideology. The second task requires evidence showing that Arendtian ideology carries the power to personally influence the subjective state of the individual that also exists in religious belief. And in so doing facilitates forms of evildoing historically associated with religious inspired destruction. The remainder of this chapter will pursue the first of these tasks.

6.2 Totalising Ideology and Religion

It is proposed here that the connection between human consciousness and totalising ideologies, most clearly seen since the turn of the 20th century, is a mirror of the relationship between human consciousness and religion. The concept of ideology, initiated by deStutt de

Tracy from his prison during the Terror, was merely a way of formalising what already existed in society at large. The impetus for his endeavours came most likely from the erosion of the monopoly on truth held by Church and State, and the advent of new and different systems of beliefs emerging as children of the Enlightenment. The invention of the term 'Ideologues' by Napoleon, served to label, and caricature those who held the notion that sets of beliefs could be identified and discussed in terms of their character and validity. Napoleon's dismissive reaction sought to counter the relativism implicit in the notion of examining beliefs, and the subversive tone that such relativism brought to bear on his authoritarian rule. (Eagleton 1994)

In chapter 1. above reference was made to the concept of "theodicy", a term created by Leibniz to describe a theological discourse that had already been in place for millennia, but now could be identified by way of a particular concept. Similarly, until deStutt de Tracy, pre Enlightenment historical literature shows little discussion of the power of 'mass ideology' because the great overpowering ideology was not referred to as such. It was called religion, and had been a feature of human societies from their earliest time. Although Arendt (1985) argues cogently that totalitarianism is new, it is argued here that totalising ideologies are not.

The discussion here will argue that Arendt's formulation of totalising ideology shares equivalence with certain forms of religious belief, and like major religious movements can become a central element in human social functioning, including the political infrastructure. Psychoanalyst Otto Rank (2012) avers that "the need for a truly religious ideology is inherent in human nature and its fulfilment is basic to any kind of social life. (p.194) His assertion could almost be considered an echo of Rousseau who two centuries early attested that "As soon as men live in society, they need a religion that holds them together. There has never been and never will be a people without a religion. If no one provided a people with religion, then they would provide on for themselves with one or be very soon annihilated." (O'Hagan 2003. p.222) In this context it will be suggested that the totalising ideologies that marked out the periods of investigation by Arendt, were secular alternatives that took hold in the vacuum left by the decline of strong adherence to more traditional Judeo Christian religious beliefs.

Erfourth (2014) suggests that this proposition is now beyond dispute. He notes that "it is hard nowadays even to count the number of books and essays that observe of fascism communism, and other secular salvationist doctrines that, whatever their claim to be scientific, they adopt the logical syntax of religious faith." (p.1) While recognising its now

popular acceptance he credits Voegilen for the early recognition of this phenomenon. Evans (2007) agrees and states that Voegelin was one of the earliest observers

> who saw in the entire practice of Nazism a form of political religion, where banners, rituals, ceremonies, the adoration of the Leader, the cult of sacrifice and much more, inspired the unthinking fanatical devotion of millions by providing for their deepest emotional needs in an age rendered spiritually prosaic and meaningless by the decline Christian Churches and the inexorable processes. (p.5).

This argument is important because it suggests that the unsurpassed mass evil witnessed in 20th century Europe is not best understood only as a consequence social/political conditions of the time, nor can it be explained in terms of the alienation of the individual within the industrial/bureaucratic complex. Both these positions are certainly contributory factors, and are discussed at length in the academic literature. They are not sufficient however explain the power required for the sustained, consistent, and seemingly unstoppable malevolence of the societies under Hitler and Stalin. Military defeat and the death of Stalin were required before there was any let up in the monstrous cruelty of those regimes.

If a totalising ideology as understood by Arendt offers some equivalence to that given by religion, then an additional element can be added to understanding the nature of mass evil carried out under its influence. The populace, being already susceptible to collaborating with evil as a result of banality, are now further corrupted, not just by some political ideas about governance, but by something far more malignant. History shows that the phenomenon of religion, the power that is religion in its prime, is almost beyond defeat, and when it moves into the realm of evil, does so with greater intensity. In this context it seems germane to refer to Baumeister's (1997) recognition that "holy wars are often dirtier, more brutal and fuller of cruelty and atrocity than ordinary wars. The usual effect of religiosity is to make war more brutal not less". (p.174) Kekes (2005) examines the slaughter of the Cathars in response to Pope Innocent's dictate identifying them as heretics is a good case in point. The wholesale slaughter of that community, including anyone related or connected to its members shows the additional vehemence that inheres in the cruelty and destruction that is a manifestation of a religious crusade. He asks "If all these people had to be murdered, there was no need to do it with as great cruelty as it was done. Burning people alive is an extremely painful way of killing them, and many were also tortured and mutilated before they were murdered. (p.18) The above is a brief indication that evil carried out within a religious context can involve greater levels of cruelty than those carried out under mere needs for territorial expansion and

subjugation. If it can be shown that influences at work in certain types of ideologies are parallel to those intrinsic to religious belief then some progress can be made in more fully understanding the form of evil doing under discussion here.

The relationship between human consciousness and religion appears far earlier in the evolution of *Homo sapiens* than any particular types of rulership or political system. As such its roots lie deep in the core of human 'nature' with all the mysterious and libidinal forces that go with that territory. When a political ideology harnesses those human needs for the sake of an evil project, it takes that project beyond the realm of sociological or political analysis (although such analyses are also important). Rather, it belongs in the realm of the daemonic. This phrase is not used in the traditional Judeo Christian fashion as referring to the existence of a separate evil entity, traditionally referred to as Satan. It is used in the Jungian (1964) sense to refer to the collective elemental subterranean arena of human terror, creativity destructiveness, and imagination. These are aspects of human consciousness that are influential in the redemptive, sacrificial and ritualistic elements of all religions. It has been shown in the previous chapter that it is precisely these elements that gave the Nazis and the Bolsheviks the conditions under which to perpetrate their horrors. Redemption is nuanced in the pure race ideology within the Nazi regime, and in the onward march toward the glorious classless society under Stalin. Sacrifice under both these ideologies has been discussed earlier. Ritual, most clearly expressed in the pageantry and militarism of the regimes, is also clearly referenced in the fetishizing of Mao's 'little red book'., which was carried like an amulet by millions of Chinese.

The discussion here is limited to identifying the parallels between religion and the formulation of ideology referenced by Arendt in terms of their connection to mass evil. It is beyond the scope to provide a thorough analysis of religious history, the varieties and complex developments and its evolution. In addition it is also beyond the scope to analyse the complex history of the relationship between religion and politics. This is well elucidated by Gentile (1996) in his study of the distinction between the historical politicisation of religion and the more recent sacralisation of politics.

The central focus here is to show that totalising ideologies, as understood and described by Arendt, can justifiably be seen to fulfil many of the functions that religion does in human experience. In doing so they gain a level of power and influence in consciousness that is far greater in terms of shaping and underpinning action than simple political belief. They also

offer human consciousness the satisfactions that heretofore have been the purview of religions of all sorts. And in terms of evil doing, they also can exact a far higher price than can other forms of political allegiance.

This argument is not new insofar as the conceptualism of Nazism and Communism as secular religions has been long made. In terms of the current thesis its importance lies in the explanatory power it gives to making sense of how large numbers of people can be corrupted and prevailed upon to collaborate, and engage to greater and lesser extents in evildoing. Thus this effect on consciousness is being presented as a form of entrapment.

An early exponent of the connection between religion and ideology is found in the work of Carl Schmitt. His main contributions, made as early as 1930 were largely neglected as a consequence of his collaboration with the Nazis (Hoeveler 1982) now provide the basis for what is a growing field of study, namely that of political theology. The main thrust of Schmitt's work is the contention that political regimes are always informed and underwritten by religion. He opens his seminal essay on political theology thus:

> All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularised theological concepts not only because of their historical context –in which they were transferred from theology to the theory of the state, whereby, for example the omnipotent God became the omnipotent lawgiver but also because of their systematic structure, the recognition of which is necessary for a sociological consideration of these concepts. (2005. p. 36)

This position is somewhat abstract insofar as it is comparing the structural similarities between religion and ideology, rather than the experiential aspects, which are more significant to the purposes of this thesis. That connection is made most clearly by Voegelin and Monnerot (1956)

Given the centrality of Arendt's work to the purposes of this thesis, it is important to note that Arendt does not accept the argument being made here and she is trenchant in her rejection of the conflation of religion with ideology. In consequence it is important to address her arguments in this matter. Her dismissal of the proposition is noted in her claim that "to say ideologies are religions does not define either of them, but on the contrary destroys even the amount of vaguely felt distinctiveness which is inherent in our everyday language and which scientific inquiries are supposed to sharpen and enlighten". (1994 p.383) The backbone of her argument against this consideration is that ideologies lack a critical element that is required if they are to be seen as a form of religion. That element is that of the transcendent

characterised ubiquitously among the major religions in the form of God or deities. She believes that changes in understandings and attitudes towards religion extirpated the transcendent and redefined it as a wholly human made phenomenon. She considers Marx to be the central figure responsible for this development.[9] Thus she recounts that it was Marx who "first systematically explained all religions as ideological superstructures concealing the interests of the ruling classes. He could do this because he viewed religion as an exclusively social phenomenon in whose function he was interested but whose substantial content he consistently neglected". (1994 p.366). There is little doubt that Marx's adage that 'religion is the opiate of the people' marks out a significant move away from any valid truth claims made by religion and reduces it to a social construction

These and other influences resulted eventually in a rejection within the social sciences of the 'truth' value in religion. Arendt summarises the result whereby the social sciences have "dissolved all material, intellectual and spiritual factors in human life into social functions and relationships."(1994 p.366) She is aware that once this initial position is accepted then the step to recognising no substantial difference between religion and ideology is a logical one. Thus she concludes that "seen in this social context alone, ideology and religion are the same, they seem to fulfil the same social function". (p. 366)

Arendt disputes the validity of the presuppositions that lead to this conclusion. For her, the initial presupposition, namely that religion is man-made, confuses the essence of religion with its social function. Furthermore she believes that this error is pervasive in the work of the key apologists of this position. She summarises that "their underlying assumption can be summed up in one sentence: every matter has a function and its essence is the same as the functional role it happens to play." (1994 p. 386). She is particularly critical of Monnerot and her repudiation of his thesis reflects her general dismissal of the: function = essence assumption which justifies the conclusion of ideology as religion. She writes,"Today in some circles this assumption has achieved the doubtful dignity of a commonplace and some sociologists, like M. Monnerot simply cannot trust their eyes or ears if they meet someone who does not share it" She proceeds then to dismantle the central assumption that leads to the ideology equals religion conclusion. "I, of course do not think that every matter has a function, nor that function and essence are the same, nor that two altogether different things –

[9] Freud (1962) could also be considered to have important influence by way of his interpretation of religion as a human response to fear of death, and the symbolic outworking of subterranean subconscious conflicts that are generally held in the human psyche. Any text concerned with religion titled *The Future of an Illusion* leaves little doubt concerning any ontological/metaphysical validity that such religion might hold

as for instance the belief in a law of history and the belief in God –fulfils the same function" (1994 p. 386)

Here she is challenging the assumptions that religion and ideology actually are functionally similar. In this she is undermining Schmitt's thesis as well. However, she does admit that there may be some cases where this conflation is justified. And in such a case she says that "even if under certain queer circumstances, it should occur that two different things play the same "functional role", I would no more think them identical than I would think the heel of my shoe is a hammer when I use it to drive a nail into the wall. (1994. p.386).

Arendt is less vociferous, but equally firm, in her challenge to Voegelin (2000) who, probably more than anyone has promoted the view that the major ideologies of the 20th centuries were secular replacements for orthodox religion. It is very likely that her different attitude to his work is grounded in the fact that Voegelin was a religious man, and believed that the replacement of the orthodox with the secular was a form of corruption, with vast negative implications for society. In this he was very much allied to Arendt's deep hostility to the secular ideologies and shared with her the view that the loss of orthodoxy, and more specifically the loss of the transcendent, was a major factor in the destruction that followed. In a letter to Arendt he writes;

> the liberal clergyman who disputes original sin, the secular intellectual who maintains that man is good, the philosopher who justifies utilitarian ethics, the legal positivist who disputes natural law, the psychologist who interprets the phenomenon of the mind in terms of the life of the instincts – they, none of them, commit crimes like an SS murderer in a concentration camp—but they are his spiritual fathers, his immediate historical cause. (Voegelin 2012 p.373)

It would be difficult to find a more trenchant view of the connection between the rise of mass evil and the influence of secular underpinning of the ideologies of that time. In her reply Arendt assures him that "I believe I hate ideologies as much as you do". The shared understanding of the diminishment of religion as part of the growth of totalitarianism is also clear in Arendt's response to Hans Jonas where she avers "I am perfectly sure that the whole totalitarian catastrophe would not have happened if people had still believed in God—or hell rather—that is, if there were still any ultimates." (cited in Moyn 2008 p.74) She did however dispute the thesis that this social change in itself meant that totalitarianism was a replacement or had equivalence with religion.

From the viewpoint of the present work, the question is raised: Can the relationship between religion and ideology retain some explanatory value with regard to mass evil, even in the context of Arendt's rejection of the thesis. To answer in the affirmative requires a further step in the analysis. A closer examination of Arendt's understanding of the distinction between religion and ideology will show that, while there remains some grounds to hold such distinctions on a theological level, the existential and practical effects on individuals' consciousness between their religious beliefs/experience and their embrace of totalising ideology are negligible. To all intents and purposes, the spiritual, emotional and moral outcomes on an individual level are equivalent.

It seems germane here to support this contention by reference to a signature event that occurred in the final days of World War Two. Magda Goebbels, an intelligent, sophisticated and worldly woman, married to the minister for propaganda murdered her six children. She murdered them because she could not envisage them growing up in any world other than the Third Reich. Propaganda aside, the video material and photographic evidence suggests that Magda Goebbels was a devoted mother and cared for and loved her children. It has also been referenced above that kinship bonds are a powerful preventative of cruelty towards one's family. (Singer 1993) So much so that even Browning's 'Ordinary men' were unable to separate young children from their mothers before killing them. The magnitude of Magda Goebbels crime can best be understood in the context of a form of devotion most often found heretofore in zealous religious belief. Killing her children was an act that for Magda Goebbels was deeply traumatic and one which she tried to avoid. She pleaded with Hitler on the evening of his suicide not to take his life. She did so not only out of devotion to him, but also in the knowledge that in her mind, his doing so was going to bring about the end of National Socialism. So intense was her devotion to that ideology that she herself explained that she could not envisage her children growing up in such a world. (Klabunde 2003)

It may not be surprising to find that her husband was clear from the outset that he considered National Socialism a form of religion. He writes in an early diary (1928) that:

> What does Christianity mean today? National Socialism is a religion. All we lack is a religious genius capable of uprooting outmoded religious practices and putting new ones in their place. We lack traditions and ritual. One day soon National Socialism will be the religion of all Germans. My Party is my church, and I believe I serve the Lord best if I do his will, and liberate my oppressed people from the fetters of slavery. That is my gospel. (Roland 2018 p.160)

Goebbels accepted National Socialism as a religion and pursued its flourishing with great zeal and intensity. He knew that if he could present National Socialism within the form of religion to the masses it would take on a level of power that would be unstoppable. And, it is very possible that had Germany succeeded militarily, he just might have succeeded. The murder of his children, an act of grotesque evil, was acceptable to him, and gives support to his level of success in surrendering himself wholly to the bondage of his ideology. It is beyond comprehension that he and his wife would have done so merely out of political allegiance.

A very similar evocation of the connection between a different political ideology and religion is echoed by Gramsci who insists that

> Socialism is precisely the religion that has to overwhelm Christianity. It is a religion that is also a faith with its own mysteries and practices, and because in our consciences it has replaced the transcendental God of Catholicism with faith in Man and his best energies as the only spiritual reality. (Zubok 2017 p.88)

Arendt disputes the notion that there is a common thread between religion and totalising ideology in terms of what she calls the "essence of both phenomena". She allows that there are some similarities of function but therein lies the limit of the comparison. Her metaphor comparing her shoe to a hammer as reflecting the similarities between certain functional aspects of both serves to undermine very real structural similarities between them. In the context of this thesis simply relying on obvious functional similarities might be considered adequate in terms of explaining the power of ideology to convert ordinary people into mass collaborators but at the cost of limiting the explanation to one of mere conformity. In other words, the social functions of religion and ideology would be accepted as the determinative forces in the influences suffice in mass evil. This is considered inadequate because the functions of religion and ideology cannot be separated from their structure. And the structure of both phenomena will be shown to be of central importance in terms of explaining their role in evil doing. And furthermore it is considered important to identify those structural similarities, because in so doing, a deeper understanding of their power on human consciousness is identified. It could also be said that the stakes are too high to accept the more superficial functional similarities when it comes to mass evil without attending to the shared structural similarities of both. In this endeavour there is no need to focus on particular tenets of either religion or ideology, rather the challenge is to identify if there are broad shared structural similarities.

The need for religion in human culture remains and much evidence exists to suggest that when one religious system of belief is destroyed, it is replaced by another. Peterson (2012) addresses the issue of the powerful requirement for religion in the human condition thus:

> The great forces of empiricism and rationality, and the great technique of experiment have killed myth and it cannot be resurrected---or so it seems. We still act out the precepts of our forebears, nonetheless, although we can no longer justify our actions. Our behaviour is still shaped (at least in the ideal) by the same mythic rules—thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not covet, that guided our ancestors for the thousands of years they lived without the benefit of formal empirical thought." (p.7)

Not only do human beings continue to act out from the moral guidance implicit heretofore in religion, they also find secular versions for what appear to be intrinsic aspects of consciousness. Thus he insists that "This means that those rules are so powerful ---so necessary at least—that they maintain their existence (and expand their domain) even in the presence of explicit theories that undermine their validity. That is a mystery." (p.7) Analysis of the core elements of religion reveal areas common with the forms of ideology noted by Arendt which at both a structural and functional level provides human beings with what appears to be fundamental needs that have traversed both history and culture.

6.3 Structural Parallels between Totalising Ideologies and Religion

The core structural elements of religion consist:

- An explanatory power,
- The elevation of person/substance/idea to the sacred,
- the requirement of faith.

Each of these core elements of religion will be examined, and it will be shown that the type of ideologies identified by Arendt, which contributed greatly to mass evil under totalitarianism, carries within them a secular equivalent. Thus the equivalence in structure lays the foundation for the functional equivalence, meaning that the personal existential effect on the one who embraces a totalising ideology will be as powerfully affected as if they were in the grip of a religion.

6.3.i Explanatory Power

Religion throughout the ages has offered devotees some form of explanation for the way things are. Human beings require answers for the fundamental questions of life and death.

From the simple but devastating effects of crop failure to the miracles of birth and the cycles of the seasons, religion has always provided some way for human consciousness to make sense of what was otherwise unknowable. The explanatory powers of the major religions that held sway for millennia began to shrink in influence with the onward march towards industrialisation, and the rise of new man-made answers based in the scientific method. From the 17th century on new explanations were found that no longer required intervention of the deity. Referencing the seminal work of Max Weber, Swatos and Christiano (1999) note that

> His studies convinced him that from the sixteenth century a process had been occurring in Western civilization as a result of which one after another sphere of life had become subject to the belief that explanations for events could be found within this-worldly experience and the application human reason… The consequence of this worldview was that explanations referring to forces outside of this world were constantly being laid aside. (p.212)

Many conditions remained, however, as part of the personal experiences of people that saw a continued reliance on religious beliefs in spite of a growing scepticism with regard to its rational coherence. For Arendt, the effects of the Great War created circumstances where even that reliance began to weaken and new explanations where required. This was, according to Arendt a function of the changes in the social conditions of both Russia and Europe at that time.

Arendt believes that existing religious explanations were inadequate to deal with the social crises created by the collapse of the economies in both Germany and Russia. It is worth noting in this context that it is often at times of great adversity that people and whole societies turn to their religious structures to offer solace and guidance. Arendt's analysis however shows this not to be the case and that the failure of existing orthodox religions to provide for the needs of the citizenship can be considered critical in creating a vacuum opened up for new versions to take hold.

More specifically, Arendt argues that a significant effect of the inter war societies in both Russia and Germany was the destruction of the class system, which, despite its flaws gave individuals as sense of identity and place. She explains: "The truth is that the masses grew out of a highly atomised society whose competitive structure and concomitant loneliness of the individual had been held in check only through membership of a class".(1985 p.317) With the breakdown of the class structure as a result of the economic collapse as well as the mass levels of trauma endured as a result of the war itself, came a new phenomenon described by Arendt (1985) thus "the masses are obsessed by a desire to escape reality because in their

essential homelessness they can no longer bear its accidental, incomprehensible aspects, it is also true that their longing for fiction has some connection with those capacities of the human mind whose structural consistency is superior to mere occurrence".(p. 352)

Here, Arendt is bringing to bear the argument that something in human consciousness yearns for consistency and explanation, even if such explanations are fiction. They are "predisposed to all ideologies because they explain facts as mere examples of laws and eliminate coincidences by inventing an all embracing omnipotence which is supposed to be at the root of every accident. (1985 p.352) These needs had heretofore been met within the orthodoxy of the various major religions of that time. She explains further the implications of her observations thus: The masses' "escape from reality is a verdict against the world in which they are forced to live and in which they cannot exist, since coincidence has become the supreme master and human beings need the constant transformations of chaotic and accidental conditions into a man-made pattern of relative consistency." (p. 352)

The vulnerability of people implicit here in Arendt's analysis sets the background for the rise of an ideology which promises to alleviate the isolation and chaos facing the masses during that time. It could be asked why the existing major religions could not have fulfilled this role, rather than the totalising ideologies to which people turned *en masse*. The most obvious answer to this question is that these religions were strongly connected to the regimes that both oversaw, and implemented the conflicts that destroyed the economies and the social structures resulting in enormous personal loss for millions. That alone could account for a turning away and a search for new explanations. In addition, however, there was the growing intellectual revolt against the tenets of organised religion on the heels of the enlightenment. Ricoeur (2008) discusses what he terms "the masters of suspicion" whom he identifies as Marx, Freud and Nietzsche as having a profound impact in undermining the trust in the truth of Christianity. (pp.32-34) Roderick (1993) summarises that for Riceour "A Marxist critique of ideology, a Nietzschean critique of *ressentiment* and a Freudian critique of infantile distress, are hereafter the views through which any kind of mediation of faith must pass". Developments in science, particularly the broad acceptance of Darwin's theories provided scientific explanations for what had heretofore been considered the realm of the sacred. These developments had been gradually infiltrating the consciousness of people whose faith in the rational and natural was gradually eroding belief in the sacred and the mysterious. Accordingly Swatos and Christiano (2000) tell us that

> The flip side of rationalization Weber termed *Entzauberung* - a word usually translated disenchantment, though perhaps more accurately rendered de-magi-fication or de-myster-ization. Disenchantment did not simply mean that people did not believe in the old mysteries of religion, but rather that the concept of mystery or "the mysterious" itself was devalued. Mystery was seen not as something to be entered into but something to be conquered by human reason, ingenuity, and the products of technology. Weber gave the name secularization to this double-sided rationalization-disenchantment process in religion. Secularization was both the process and the result of the process. (p.4)

The core of the argument here is that by attacking traditional religion, in terms of the activities of God, the power of the clergy, and the validity of its dogmas, a way was opened for new religions, which brought with them new rituals and new doctrines. The conclusion is that destroying the truth value of traditional religious beliefs, does not undermine, or destroy the human attraction and need for religion. Human beings are notably adaptable and history shows new forms develop in all aspects of the human condition from architecture to music, and agriculture to space travel. No surprise then to realise that if humans need religion, when old ones become obsolete new forms will emerge. What is consistent throughout human history is that human consciousness seems to require religion and the rise of Fascism and Communism provided alternatives. In Arendt's (1985) analysis, these new belief systems chased the utopias of the pure race and victory of the proletariat leading to the classless society. These new beliefs "conjured up a lying world of consistency which is more adequate to the needs of the human mind than reality itself; in which through sheer imagination, uprooted masses can feel at home and are spared the never ending shocks which real life and real experiences deal to human beings and their expectations". (p.353)

These new beliefs showed a world that required the purging of all those who stood in their way of these leading to the slaughter of millions. Nietzsche (1974) was particularly prescient in this regard. His now famous 'death of god' paragraph is worth consideration here, not for its dramatic impact, but rather for the insight that the death of orthodox religion would present societies with a new challenge, namely finding a replacement. The madman asks "What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we need to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we not ourselves become gods simply to be worthy of it? There has never been a greater deed; and whosoever shall be born after us - for the sake of this deed he shall be part of a higher history than all history hitherto". (p.181) It would be difficult to find in literature a more accurate representation of the promise inherent under Stalin and Hitler than that one would be part of a "higher history than all history hitherto"

If one of the defining characteristics of Homo Sapiens is the power to think, then by definition existence must pose some form of a puzzle. It is difficult to imagine a situation whereby a thinking creature, regardless of any level of sophistication, would not be confronted by the puzzle of cause and effect. If that is the case, then even at the most primitive and simple level, human beings need to find an answer to make some kind of sense of the world. Religion has heretofore been the repository for those answers. In the absence of an acceptable religiously framed explanation, then some other version will be sought. That was one of the powerful aspects of the ideologies that took hold in 20th Century Europe.

Eagleton (1994) provides a useful metaphor to clarify the explanatory power of ideology. He summarises that "many theories of ideology regard it as a kind of screen between us and the real world. If only we could nip around this screen, we would see reality aright. But there is, of course, no way of viewing reality except from a particular perspective, within the frame of specific interests or assumptions which is one reason why some people have considered that all our thought and perception is in fact ideological." (p.11)

Eagleton's metaphor of the screen can be of use here. While Eagleton suggests that ideology is often likened to a screen, as a filter through which reality is viewed, Arendt's formulation precisely suggests that it is the ability to 'nip around the screen' that is given to those who hold the totalising set of beliefs in totalising ideologies. They believe that their ideology is not one among many. They believe that they have already 'nipped behind the screen' so to speak, and have transcended any ideological influence which means that they have reached the promised land of the absolute truth.

This is perhaps the key to understanding the power of totalising ideology itself, namely that those who embrace its tenets believe that they have nipped around the screen, or more accurately, for them there is no screen! All others, those who do not accept the ideology, are considered to be under some form of delusion, are prey to some other mistaken ideology or are plainly ignorant. It is this conviction that lies at the heart of the two next steps of Arendt's formulation, namely that, to a very large extent, no experience can change the adherent's belief, and coercion and oppression of those who do not accept these precepts is justified for the greater good.

Such ideological convictions are not integrative but are deeply divisive because they carry, as a matter of their structure, the condition that alienates followers and adherents radically from those who dissent on one hand, and often marginalise certain groups as scapegoats to be

persecuted on the other. It should also be noted that ideological convictions of this nature are not merely a matter of perception. That condition could be considered somewhat benign if all it comprised of was a set of rigidly held beliefs. Arendt shows however that not only does the adherent hold such beliefs but actively engages in ensuring, not only that such beliefs accepted by others, but will engage in actively destroying any evidence that is seen to bring the ideology into disrepute or doubt. In this way such ideologies are self-fulfilling. She considers that the task of ensuring the fulfilment of ideological 'truth' is particularly given to ideological elites.' She writes that:

> In distinction to the mass membership which for instance, needs some demonstration of the inferiority of the Jewish race before it can safely be asked to kill Jews, the elite formations understand that the statement, all Jews are inferior means that, all Jews should be killed; they know that when they are told that only Moscow has a subway, the real meaning of the statement is that all subways should be destroyed, and are not unduly surprised to find a subway in Paris (1985 p.387).

Arendt concludes this aspect of her argument with regard to the active twisting and manipulation of reality to 'fit' ideology by saying "In a totally fictitious world….Factuality itself depends for its continued existence upon the existence of a non-totalitarian world. (1985 p.388)

It would appear that the distinguishing mark that identifies the evil aspect in Arendt's formulation is found in this willingness to destroy any evidence or part of reality (including unbelievers) that do not fit with the ideological explanation. The extent to which this process occurs is perhaps the extent to which an ideology can be considered pernicious. In Arendt's study, she shows that under Communism and Nazism the ideological systems required mass murder in order to fulfil their utopian promise. The question arises however whether these clearly destructive ideologies are representative of all totalizing ideologies in terms of propensity toward evil. It is conceivable that an ideological system could fulfil the first two elements of Arendt's typology without necessarily becoming evil. These two aspects of: a totalising narrative and imperviousness to experience could perhaps exist without destructive consequences. It appears that if such a case can be found it would require that the people who do not accept the ideology are considered wrong, or misled, but that they are not persecuted as a result.

It is difficult to find strong historical evidence to support the situation where a totalizing ideology was in place that did not lead to repression and persecution of those who resisted its

control. Even Rousseau, credited often with great optimism regarding the essential goodness of the individual (Becker 1975), resorts to suggesting that anyone who does not embrace the tenets of the 'general will' should be killed. His "Social Contract' provided a template for a new secular religion that exudes tolerance and equality as central precepts but was unable to stretch to embrace those who would not bow to its demands. Thus "While the sovereign can compel no one to believe them it can banish from the state whoever does not believe them—it can banish him, not for impiety but as an anti-social being incapable of truly loving the laws and justice and of sacrificing at need, his life to his duty." (2008. p.135)

Here Rousseau is laying out the principle found later under totalitarianism that opposition to the ideological tenets of governance is never to be considered a valuable commentary on what may perhaps be its defects, but rather a symptom of some form of moral or intellectual flaw or defect on the part of the individual. Rousseau's imagery fulfils the Arendtian formulation of the overarching ideological structure that bears no dispute. His concept of the General Will parallels the later qualities of the master race, and the law of history that gave Nazism and Stalinism their central ideological cores. It carries the nuance of super sense that Arendt sees as critical to the ideology that leads to mass evil. Nisbet (1943) predates Arendt in recognising the centrality of such an element at the very beginning of the totalitarianisms of the twentieth century. He finds in Rousseau the formula that Arendt later explicated in more detail. His analysis of Rousseau's General Will concludes that "In its supra-human reality it is always right, and while the *Volonte de tous* may be often misled, the General Will never deviates from the strictest rectitude. The General Will is indivisible, inalienable, and illimitable. (p.101) Rousseau (1983) concludes "if any one after publicly recognising these dogmas, behaves as if he does not believe them: let him be punished by death: he has committed the worst of all crimes, that of lying before the law. (p.135)

Totalising ideologies and many religious movements are similar insofar as they provide a total explanation for the conditions of life and the nature of the world. For Arendt, such ideology will lead to mass evil if it contains an axiom that sets out to make certain human beings superfluous. By this she means that any ideology that contains within it an element that discards any group of people of their human dignity as persons. The power of the destructive logic inherent in the ideology will ultimately lead to mass evil if it gains power. Surrendering the value of a human being to the requirements of the ideological condition begins what she terms "the long murderous journey".

6.3.ii. Elevation of the Sacred

Durkheim (1976) believes that all religious systems reflect certain core characteristics. He argues that "At the foundation of all system of beliefs and of all cults there ought necessarily to be a certain number of fundamental representations or conceptions and of ritual attitudes which, in spite of the diversity of forms which they have taken, have the same objective significance and fulfil the same functions everywhere". (p.17) Durkheim's emphasis has been on the social necessity of religion as a binding force that provides cohesion for human beings as they exist in different social and cultural settings.

A connection can be made between Arendt's formulation and that of Durkheim's understanding of religion, more specifically the distinction he makes between the sacred and the profane. Central to Durkheim's understanding of religion is the division of the world into these two categories. Every tribe, society and or culture is characterised by this dualism. Although writing at a time whereby almost all religions required devotion to God or gods of some kind other, Durkheim opens that idea that 'religion' can also function within an atheistic context. His examination of Buddhism is particularly germane because as a philosophical system, Buddhism is one of the great religious movements that is fundamentally atheistic. Most relevant here, in terms of totalising ideology is his notion of religion as requiring 'systems of representation'. He concludes that although atheistic in nature, Buddhism is a religion because "in default of gods, it admits the existence of sacred things namely the four whole truths, and the practices derived from them' (p.53)

Here Durkheim references a central element of religion, namely the granting of something, a person, a teaching, an idea, a text, a stone or otherwise, with a sacred quality. For as Durkheim indicates 'there is nothing in the constitution of things that corresponds to sacredness". (p.386) This takes the account back to Kant's insight that an important process in religious belief is the role of fetishizing some element by giving it a supernatural significance, and then surrendering to its influence. It matters not what the particulars are, from totem poles to statues of the virgin, human groups always engage in elevating some part of their world into the sacred. These items or activities are considered to carry some special, often unknowable, mysterious qualities. They are granted respect and awe, and are protected by the collective. As has been indicated earlier, when the sacred elements of a community have lost their sacred quality, they are replaced by new ones.

For Durkheim, the defining element of the sacred is that whatever gains that condition is considered worthy of great awe and respect and is also considered to have mysterious and often some form of superhuman power. In addition, as Durham (2001) explains, there is some degree of arbitrariness as to what is chosen for the sacred in society at any one time. Accordingly he tells us that Durkheim's "demonstration that the sacred is ultimately the expression of social forces acting on the individual, means that these forces are not intrinsic to the objects or other realities to which they are assigned. The assignment is merely arbitrary and the forces are in fact mobile, capable of spreading from one kind of thing to another". (p.1)

Hitler, Stalin, and Mao reached godlike status in the minds of many who adored them, and were prepared to sacrifice their lives for them. They were considered the incarnation of the ideologies they espoused. Soviet historian Medvedev eloquently described how this process occurred with regard to Stalin thus:

> The deification of Stalin left the party unable to control his actions and justified in advance everything that was done in his name. The embodiment of all the achievements of socialism in his person tended to paralyse the political activism of the other leaders and of the party membership as a whole…leading them to a blind faith in Stalin. The cult of Stalin, following the logic of any cult tended to transform the Communist Party into an ecclesiastical organisation, producing a sharp distinction between ordinary people and leader –priests headed by their infallible pope….The business of state in the Kremlin became as remote and incomprehensible for the unconsecrated as the affairs of the gods on Olympus. (Gentile 2006. p.42)

National Socialism, and Stalin and Mao's communism promised a new world order, the task in implementing these were sacred tasks, often requiring great sacrifice. (the topic of sacrifice has been discussed in detail in the previous chapter). Thus, the totalising ideologies described in Arendt's presentation contain the structural element of the sacred, and this is evidenced by the status given to these leaders, and to their teachings. The messianic attribution to the leaders, the inspirational characterisation of their teachings, the presence of special elites such as the Red Guard, the SS, the Party (devotees with special access/understanding of the ideology) can be justifiably considered to share equivalence with similar structural features of institutional religion.

One of the ways that people strengthen their attachment to the sacred, as well as binding together as a communal or collective is by engaging in rites and rituals specific to their religious beliefs. Rites and rituals are part and parcel of human relationship to the sacred.

They are communal practices designed to cement the community together before the sacred, while at the same time strengthening bonds between the individuals and the sacred. One of the central elements of such rites and rituals involves representations of the sacred. Relics, tokens, statues, medals, flags and a whole lot more are part and parcel of religious devotion.

It appears then that there is a significant role for rites and rituals in all major religious systems. In addition, these sacred objects, symbols or spirits are often tended to by some caste, a special group who have privileged access, and often serve as intermediaries for the remainder. So too is there can be an elevation of one particular individual who is seen to be especially privileged in either becoming sacred themselves or having special powers as a result of their connection to the sacred. In the event of an individual becoming sacred either by direct elevation, or by virtue of connection to the sacred they become deified, or godlike. The relationship between the believers and the sacred is carried out via certain rituals, often accompanied by symbols, music and dance.

It would be pedantic to list how these attributes are clearly part of recognised religions of all shapes and sizes. Suffice it to accept Girard's (1988) observation that "the resemblances among the rites practiced in disparate cultures are striking, and the variations from one culture to another are never sufficient to disguise the basic similarities." (p.102) Thus, we can conclude here that it is uncontroversial to state that most major religious movements include rites and rituals for their devotees, as well as often providing the mediation of special people who are seen to have some special access to the sacred.

In the context of the central argument of this chapter it can be said that the ideologies described by Arendt (1985) also reinforce their secular versions of the sacred by way of rites and rituals. Arendt acknowledges these aspects as part of the outworkings of Nazism and Stalinism. She writes "The marches around the red square in Moscow are in this respect no less characteristic than the pompous formalities of the Nuremberg party days. In the centre of the Nazi ritual was the so called "blood banner", and in the centre of the Bolshevik ritual stands the mummified corpse of Lenin, both of which introduce a strong element of idolatry into the ceremony". (p.377) However in order to remain consistent in her resistance to the ideology = religion equivalence, she prefers to see these rituals as part of the cult nature of secret societies. She argues that "such idolatry hardly is proof –as is sometimes asserted-of pseudo religious or heretical tendencies. The idols are mere organisational devices, familiar from the ritual of secret societies, which also used to frighten their members into

secretiveness by means of frightful awe inspiring symbols" (p. 377) Her argument here seems weak. The use of 'awe inspiring symbols' does far more than frighten those who attend at such performances. They, by definition, inspire awe, and in doing so fulfil the central task of reinforcing in consciousness the sacredness of that which is the central character of the movement, its ideology, its leader and its meaning. It would be difficult to reduce the Nazi rallies, perhaps the most iconic being those held in the Munich's' Cathedral of Light', (a clear reference to its 'religious' roots) with Speer's creation of columns of light reaching into the beyond, as mere organisational devices. To be a party to that phenomenon with all its pageantry would, for most, be an overwhelmingly "spiritual event" reminiscent perhaps of the glory days of papal elections and religious pilgrimages. Aron (1957) refers specifically to this phenomenon in his argument that "[T]he Catholic Church's fantastic and grandiose ceremonies and mysterious rituals in a strange language are masterpieces of their genre and fascists and communists copied these models when they appealed to the irrational instinct of the crowd in mass demonstrations". (p.50) Thus important roles of rites and rituals underpin the parallel between these ideologies and religious practice

6.3.iii Requires Faith

One of the striking characteristic of religious belief is the resistance to evidence that shows such beliefs to be suspect. It is beyond the scope of this work to argue the virtues of certain belief structures over others. The validity of a person's belief in the virgin birth, the resurrection from the dead, or everlasting life is not under consideration here. Rather, the element of faith in holding such beliefs is being considered. Clearly, if one relies simply on reasoning as the primary way of accessing truth it becomes quite difficult to justify these many religious beliefs. Almost all religions have some elements that are not reducible to reason. At the end of reason comes faith. Thus we can see two aspects of religion here, a limited role for reason as the gateway to truth, and a cognitive action, namely: choosing to believe sometimes even in spite of the voice of reason. This might be best described with the notion that there is a higher truth which is not accessed by reason, and which is sometimes, or often opposed to what reason dictates. Kant (2002) perhaps more than any philosopher grappled with this conundrum. He explains:

> I cannot even make the assumption—as the practical interests of morality require—of God, Freedom, and Immortality if I do not deprive speculative reason of its pretensions to transcendent insight. For to arrive at these it must use principles which in fact extend only to the objects of possible experience, which

> cannot be applied to objects beyond the sphere without converting them into appearances and rendering the practical extension of pure reason impossible. I must therefore abolish knowledge to make room for faith. (p. 21)

Mackay (1977) argues that only a selective reading of Kant can avoid "the depth of the wedge which he drives between knowledge and faith" (p.24) He explains further that

> The real reason why Kant refuses to countenance any knowledge of God (as he understands knowledge), and relegates all religious topics to the realm of faith (as he understands faith), must be gleaned from the entire argument of the Critique of Pure Reason. It is because true knowledge must be confined strictly to objects that appear precisely under the forms of space and time that no knowledge of things not temporal or spatial can be admitted. A fortiori, then, nothing as unlikely as a proof of God's existence can for a moment be entertained. This is the understanding of true knowledge, with concomitant implications for the status of religious belief, which have been all too typical of the scientific age. (p.24)

It is beyond the scope here to fully examine the relationship between faith and knowledge in the work of Kant. However, it can be said that after Kant, belief in God, or some form of the Supernatural is no longer a function of reason and thus requires what is called faith. (Masterson 1973)

Kierkegaard (2006) can also be considered one of the most respected exponents of the relationship between reason and faith in terms of philosophical analysis. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to fully explore his in-depth analysis which is both complex and paradoxical. For the purposes of this thesis it remains to point to his creation of the 'knight of faith' as the vehicle for his conclusion that faith carries within the characteristic of believing what to the outside observer appears absurd. The knight of faith "acknowledges the impossibility and at the same moment believes the absurd, for if he imagines himself to have faith without acknowledging the impossibility with all the passion of his soul and with his whole heart he deceives himself….(p.40). Accordingly Evans and Walsh (2006) submit that for Johannes "faith requires a belief that makes no sense from the point of worldly wisdom a belief that contradicts what appears to be the case. (p.xxiii)

These philosophers show that the tension between reason and faith is a central structural component of religion. It will be shown here that a similar structural component exists in Arendt's depiction of ideology. In other words, the ideologies described by Arendt require faith.

For the purposes of this thesis the Pauline version of faith will be used here given its centrality to Christianity, and its significant place in history of European Christianity. In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul defines faith as: Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1 (ESV) This definition has been the predominant understanding of faith among Christians for millennia, and as such would have created the conditions of consciousness among the faithful in Germany and Russia in the early twentieth century. Two constituents combine in this definition, an orientation of positive expectation that the promises made under the religious/ideological regime will be actualised, and a belief in some reality/phenomenon without empirical evidence. The latter part is best explicated by Jesus in his admonition to Thomas, who needed to place his hand in Christ's wound before he could accept the resurrection. Jesus reproves him thus "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:19). Faith then has the potential to greatly prolong a person's commitment to whatever is held to be true, in spite of either the absence of evidence that would be required to sustain it, or the presence of evidence that could contradict it.

In advance of this part of the argument it seems worthwhile to repeat a point made earlier in this thesis. This concerns the balance between abstract discussion of the problem of evil on one hand, and recognition of the actual phenomenology of suffering that such discussion must include, on the other. The driving ethic in such consideration is to show respect to the millions lost, without allowing a discussion of their suffering to be reduced to mere voyeurism. The discussion of faith below therefore includes examples of the human expressions of these conceptual constituents of faith. In doing so it is hoped to underline the conditions and potential for the flourishing of evil that is implicit in this part of human functioning.

Arendt shows that her formulation of ideology clearly includes the role of faith when she explains that no evidence can undermine the constituents of the ideology, nor undo the faith in the leader. This latter element is also of critical importance because faith in the leader is also a feature of many religions. This feature connects back to the realm of the sacred. In many religions the leader takes on certain qualities that could be considered godlike. The normal vicissitudes of the human condition no longer apply. The infallibility of the Pope (under certain conditions) is perhaps the most obvious examples. Arendt however explains that the both Hitler and Stalin were also granted these kinds of virtues by believers. Accordingly she explains,

> The machine that generates, organises and spreads the monstrous falsehoods of totalitarian movements depends again upon the position of the Leader. To the propaganda assertion that all happenings are scientifically predictable according to the laws of nature or economics, totalitarian organization adds the position of one man who has monopolized and whose principle is that he "was always right and will always be right. (1985 p. 383)

She explains further that this infallibility of the leader is not undermined even in the face of mounting evidence that all the original promises that were part of the original devotion to the ideology are failing. This is so because built into the ideology is the notion that the great laws that are being enacted in the utopian progress are not bound to be achieved in a particular time period. The seduction here is brought about by the element of hope. Arendt explains that "the leader is always right in his actions and since these are planned for centuries to come, the ultimate test of what he does has been removed beyond the experience of his contemporaries" (p.383) Fulfilment of the dream/promise is thus 'just around the corner'. And the waiting is sustained by hope

With regard to hope, it seems worthwhile here to revert to Leibniz's theodicy to help clarify how an initial premise within an ideological frame can become immune to experience. The explanation for the presence of great suffering, both man-made and natural, in a world created by a benevolent and omnipotent God has been discussed earlier as one of the great challenges to believers throughout the ages. Leibniz (1996) provided a solution, (ridiculed by Voltaire in his novella *Candide* by way of the character Dr.Pangloss), by arguing that the world that is, is the best one possible, under the stewardship of an omnipotent and benevolent God. O'Murchadha (2016) explains that

> In such a view, all violence and all breaks in the rational order are redeemed rationally, serve a greater end. Here we find the roots of the notion of a 'hidden hand of history'. As Leibniz puts it: 'God wills order and good; but it happens sometimes that what is disorder in the part is order in the whole' (Leibniz, 1985, p. 201). The point here is that all the apparent evils in the world do not amount to faults in the whole. Rather, seen in terms of the world as a whole they can be understood to serve a greater good. We do not see this or we see it only imperfectly because we do not see the world as such. Our view on the world is always partial, always perspectival. (pp. 245-262)

This understanding allows an opening for any individual to continue to hold an ideological premise, such as the world is under the care of a benevolent creator even if that individual's own experience seems to contradict the belief. To some extent this poses an incorrigible problem for an individual if the ideology they embrace runs counter to their experience.

Murray (2008) “On Leibniz's view, our inability to know how changing certain events in the world (such as preventing a particular evil event) “would affect other events and our inability to know how such changes would affect the overall goodness of the world make it impossible to defend the claim that the manifest evils in the world constitute evidence that this is not the best possible world” (p.2) Arendt (1985) presents a similar argument as she refers to the Hegelian dialectic whereby if we assume that the progress of history is a matter of the dialectical movement of thesis and antithesis leading to the new outcome, yet unseen, then the antithetical condition, even if exemplified by terrible conditions can be seen as a necessary part of the ultimate production of the new world. She explains that

> the only possible movement in the realm of logic is the process of deduction from a premise. Dialectical logic, with its process from thesis through antithesis to synthesis which in turn becomes the new thesis of the next ideological movement…the first thesis become the premise and its advantage for ideological explanation is that this dialectical device can explain away factual contradictions as stages of one identical consistent movement” (p.469)

If we cannot see the new world, or we cannot prove that the current one is not the best, then we are left with a condition of choosing what to believe about its condition. That choice is profoundly influenced by the acceptance of an initial premise, and this applies whether it is in a religious context as with Leibniz theodicy or within a totalising secular ideology as identified by Arendt. Thus in both the realms of totalising ideologies, or religious aspirations, suffering and evil can be tolerated if person’s beliefs about the world remain intact. For this to occur they must choose to believe that such evil and suffering means something that is not yet clear to their understanding. Leibniz theodicy would perhaps not convince most non-believers but what it could achieve is to give the believer an explanation that could allow them to retain their faith, even in the condition of great suffering and loss. Adherents to Nazism and Communism were given the same reassurance. (Outlined in more detail in Chapter 5) And their faith ensured their continued collaboration with great evil.

The hope element in faith also played a significant part not only in the lives of collaborators and perpetrators. It also played a role in how their victims responded. The Nazis especially seemed to understand how to manipulate hope. Two examples are particularly poignant. The instructions to the ill-fated deportees, to pack suitcases for their final journey, with the insistence that they label them properly, was an act of profound cynicism, but of great utility. This was done in the full knowledge that these belongings would never be used, even for

those incarcerated rather than immediately murdered. The Nazis made sure that their victims were always provided with some slim thread of hope by which they could be led against all the growing evidence to their deaths. As they journeyed often for days packed tight in the cattle cars with the moaning of the dying, the sick, the exhausted and broken, they still held on to that suitcase, that slim thread of hope symbolising life and the possibility of return. On arriving, the soap, haircuts and hooks for their clothing outside the entrance to the gas chambers, with instructions that they remember their hook number for afterwards, continued to offer the possibility of denial up to the last moments when the doors closed behind the doomed.

A second example was the setting up of the Jewish councils in the Ghettoes. Lang (1990) writes that

> There was almost certainly no Council, no individual member of a council, and even few Jews under the jurisdiction of the councils, who did not at some point believe that the councils work might not ameliorate the conditions in the ghettos, that the councils might buy time for the members of the community, and that this time –any time-could turn to life. And although such beliefs were sometimes skewed by self-interested motives, at other times by what may now seem to have been confused or wistful (sic) thinking, the alternative to the existence of the councils hardly promised anything more likely or more effective. (p.68)

In setting up the councils the Nazis were able to harness the leaderships of the communities, the very ones who could have mobilised resistance and they used hope as their incentive. The other element of faith, the absence of evidence continued. By the time the councils realised that there was going to be no release for anyone, most of the damage was done, and it was their own time for the cattle cars.[10]

Hope sustains both the perpetrator and the victim. The perpetrator sinks deeper and deeper into corruption and must clings more tightly to the ever reducing belief that somehow things will all turn out for the good. The victim clings ever more tightly to hope because the alternative is not failure or guilt, it is extinction. One of the most dramatic and poignant examples of the desperation that can underlie hope is given by existential psychotherapist

[10] Controversy remains in the literature with regard to Arendt's (2006) depiction of the role played by the Jewish councils during the Holocaust. Much has been made from her comment that "if the Jewish people had been unorganised and leaderless, there would have been plenty of chaos and plenty of misery, but the total number would hardly have been between four and a half and six million people" (p.122) She has been accused of blaming Jewish leaders of collaborating with the Nazis. This debate remains ongoing today. (see Nagorski. 2016)

Viktor Frankl. He describes being part of a shipment from Auschwitz to another camp. Frankl (1992) recounts that

> We became more and more tense as we approached a certain bridge over the Danube which the train would have to cross to reach Mauthausen (a death camp) …Those who have never seen anything similar cannot possibly imagine the dance of joy performed in the carriage by the prisoners when they saw that our transport was not crossing the bridge and was instead heading "only" for Dachau (p.71).

Frankl goes on to describe their arrival after two days and three nights, crammed together to discover that the arrival camp had no chimney or gas chamber.

He explains further that :

> That meant that a person who had become a "Moslem" (no longer fit for work) could not be taken straight to the gas chamber, but would have to wait until a so – called "sick convoy" had been arranged to return to Auschwitz. This joyful surprise put us all in a good mood. The wish of the senior warden of our hut in Auschwitz had come true, we had come as quickly as possible to a camp which did not have a "chimney" unlike Auschwitz. We laughed and cracked jokes in spite of, and during, all we had to go through in the next few hours. (pp 71-72).

This example tells something about the nature of hope. It appears that as less and less evidence emerges in terms of the larger expected outcome, the person focuses more and more on the immediate, closer to hand, outcome. Very few of the camp inmates believed they would survive in the long term. Their hope diminished in terms of the big picture and was reduced to hope for an extra day of life. The joy of these inmates was the realisation that they would live a little longer. They would not die that day, or maybe even that week. "The assurance of things hoped" for them became narrowed to survival for a few days. At the beginning it was to be resettled, to be at work and eventually to be reunited with family. Now it was reduced to a few more days of survival and the possibility of an accidental extra ration of slop.

Totalising ideologies rely on people's willingness to believe that the evidence before their eyes is deceptive and that there is a realm whereby the opposite of what they know from their experience is actually the truth. Nietzsche (2007) excoriates this element of faith when he predicts that

> It will call all those means good with which mental discipline, lucidity and severity in intellectual matters nobility and freedom of the intellect may be poisoned, calumniated and *decried*. Faith as an imperative is a veto against science-in praxi it means lies at any price. (p. 140)

One of the critical elements of this aspect of faith is concerned with temporality. In relation to the promises set out in the regime by the all-powerful leader, Arendt (1985) says "that the ultimate test of what he does has been removed beyond the experience of his contemporaries" (p.383) This understanding can be applied not just to the intentions/promises of the leader but also to all other aspects of the new world order being practiced. The belief that the evidence will eventually become apparent, allows the believer to reinterpret their experience in the world being merely preparatory for a new world, that will come, but maybe perhaps beyond their lifetime. This topic has been explored in an earlier chapter in terms of cognitive dissonance which plays a significant role in the power of faith to override the evidence that is accumulating that contradicts the promises of an ideology. Despite all their compromises, banal perpetrators remain true to their faith that the great leader knows what he is doing. If their suffering is required to advance the great forward movement, then they are willing to endure. This type of faith is a feature of both religious and the secular belief systems described by Arendt.

6.4. Conclusion

The discussion thus far has addressed Arendt's complaint that it is invalid to conflate certain ideologies with religion. The basis for her complaint is that it is only by reducing religion to its social functions that such a comparison can be justified. For her, the essential structure of religion differs from ideology in certain aspects regardless of any similarities in function. Arendt's resistance can be understood in the context of her strong belief that totalitarianism is a new and original form of 'governance' that cannot be explained in terms of other historically recognised versions. To suggest that the ideologies that underlay these new and original forms of governance are replications of older religion based ideologies may serve to weaken her thesis in this regard. It has been shown above, however, that the central plank of her argument, namely that there are significant structural differences between religion and pernicious ideology is open to question, and in terms of this thesis, the conclusion is reached that there is a valid case to be made that there are significant structural similarities between older religious orthodoxies and the secular versions of ideologies that drove the mass evils under discussion.

These structural similarities, namely,

- explanatory power,

- the provision of the sacred, (including the elevation of leaders to semi deity and the provision of rites and rituals that bind people together),
- the reliance on faith

are critical elements without which the functions of ideology would not be able to work so effectively in the production of evil. It may be asked at this juncture why this analysis and its conclusion are so important to the main theme of this thesis. The answer lies in the relationship between human consciousness and religion firstly, and a similar relationship with the totalising ideologies that began to replace them as religion began to lose its grip in the self-definition of individuals. It is by harnessing the aspects of human consciousness reflected in the needs and yearning for what religion heretofore gave to humanity, that new ideologies become so powerful, powerful beyond any reasonable analysis, and powerful enough to overwhelm all decency and morality. Powerful enough to open the flood gates for mass evil doing. The explanatory power of this argument is substantial. However it remains to be clarified how the ideologies under discussion become so powerful in the consciousness of the individual. This is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 7.

Ideology and Susceptibility to Corruption.

7.1. Introduction

Thus far it has been argued that totalising ideologies and religion share a structural equivalence. It now remains to show how these structural aspects convert into powerful influences on those who embrace them. In addition it will be shown that these ideologies are prone to become pernicious if they feature the destructive logic aspect discussed earlier and thus make way for mass evil to flourish. Whether such conditioning results in evil depends on the precepts of the ideology. And it appears that, based on the research thus far, very few individuals can escape its grip when they become enmeshed. The individual becomes susceptible to corruption once the ideology becomes pernicious. It is of significant value therefore, to examine what drives human beings into the arms of this type of ideology.

7.2. Shared Functions in Religion and Ideology

The functional aspects of both religion and totalising ideology concerns the way in which adherence to either affects the individual in the matter of their personal individual adjustment to and behaviour in the world. Scholars attending to this issue recognise that the individual by virtue of being human, is aware of their surroundings and their finitude, and must confront the exigencies of living in the world into which, according to Heidegger, they are 'thrown.' Accordingly, it is the human condition that makes people attracted to systems, both religious and secular, that provide ways of both understanding and coping with the challenges inherent in being human. It is also the contention of this thesis that it also makes people susceptible to the destructive elements of any pernicious ideology that they embrace. Primary among the functional elements of both religion and totalising ideology are: alleviating existential anxiety, providing a meaning structure, providing a moral code/system, and in some cases legitimising evil.. Each of these will be examined in turn. As each is examined it will be shown how the functions under discussion relate to the potential for evil.

7.3 Alleviating Existential Anxiety

Chapter 3. above sought to identify the central elements of banality as described by Arendt. The results of that analysis identified three main constituents, namely, thoughtlessness, obedience, and role identification. Here it is argued that the functional aspects of both

religion and ideology can facilitate a widespread growth of that phenomenon. The clearest exposition of this is identified by Kant, and explicated in his essay *What is Enlightenment*. He referred there to the phenomenon of 'laziness'. Close analysis suggest that he is referring to a particular form of laziness, namely indolence towards developing any personal individually thought out world view/ideology/religion, and unthinkingly surrendering to the dictates of the pervading ideology of that time, which was orthodox Christianity. His description of Laziness is almost identical to what Arendt refers to as banality. Its importance here is that in this essay Kant is identifying this phenomenon, long before the savagery of the twentieth century. Thus, banality, one of the important factors identified by Arendt as central to the genocides of the Nazi/Stalinist eras, predates them and is also apparent in earlier forms of mass evil.

It can be assumed that devotion to a totalizing ideology almost always includes accepting a particular belief about the nature of reality, as well as an acceptance of a set of ideological precepts that guide behaviour. Kant believed that it is the condition of most human beings to become attracted to such ideology. Additionally, he believed that, at root, such attraction is grounded in the avoidance of facing the challenge to think out one's own position about the nature of one's life and attitude to it. He sets out his argument thus:

> Laziness and cowardice are the reasons why such a large part of mankind gladly remain minors all their lives, long after nature has freed them from external guidance…if I have a book that thinks for me, a pastor who acts as my conscience, a physician who prescribes my diet, and so on—then I have no reason to exert myself. I have no need to think, if only I can pay; others will take care of that disagreeable business for me. …dogmas and formulas…are the fetters of an everlasting nonage. The man who casts them off would make an uncertain leap over the narrowest ditch because he is not used to free movement. That is why there are only a few men who walk firmly, and who have emerged from nonage by cultivating their own minds (p.16)

Kant believed the natural bent of human beings is to remain philosophically and spiritually immature. His term for this is that of 'self imposed nonage' which he defines as the 'inability to use one's own understanding without another's guidance'. His pessimistic outlook provides a clear instance of two elements already named above in the idea of the fusion of banality and ideology. One of the key elements of banality is that of thoughtlessness, and one of the key effects of totalising ideology is that of becoming a slave to some all encompassing narrative. The thoughtless individual must have some way of 'doing' life. This is what

makes them so susceptible. They can simply take whatever formula or recipe that is available and use it as their guidance for living. If they live in a society that promotes general welfare, they are unlikely to run aground and engage in serious evil doing. Arendt's account however, shows how quickly this can change once the accepted ideological frame changes into one that promotes evil.

Laziness, by definition, includes the capacity or ability to act but failing to do so out of a form of indolence. It is therefore a choice. Human beings have the ability to think and question but many fail to do so because they are lazy. Kant's notion of laziness assumes that it is within the remit of people to choose to ignore their own responsibility to grow up into adults who at least reflect on their beliefs. This is the Kantian judgement that explains the engagement of at least some, with ideologies that become vehicles for justifying mass evil. Kant does not explicitly make this conclusion but it is implicit in his argument. Accordingly Hawkes (2003) avers that "Kant takes it upon himself the task of establishing beyond all doubt the existence of a transcendent human subject for whom the ability to conceptualise is an innate property of human understanding." (p.68). Arendt (2003) carries this assumption into her own consideration of the problem of banality. In order to understand the connection between thinking and the problem of evil she states that "if such a connection exists at all, then the faculty of thinking, as distinct from the thirst for knowledge, must be ascribed to everybody; it cannot be the privilege of the few. (p.166)

If we grant every person the ability to conceptualise (with the exception perhaps of the minority who are cognitively impaired through some form of malady) then they, by definition, have the ability to comprehend the content of their beliefs. If their beliefs lead to collaborating with mass murder then they are responsible for having held these beliefs. The implication of the above argument confers validity to Kekes' (2005) notion summarised earlier that human beings are responsible for what they believe. This can be considered a rather subversive notion in terms of the very strong adherence in the human sciences to a more deterministic outlook on human development. For the most part, great store is given there to the corrupting influences of social and familial influences in determining human destructiveness. It can, however, be suggested that these two positions are not mutually exclusive. Certainly the conditions by which human beings arrive into the world and the social familial context in which they find themselves are powerfully influential in what they grow to believe. However, the notion that all beliefs are thus fully determined is

unsustainable because it is clear that all rebellion against authority is in effect a statement of the capacity to question and reject certain ideas.

What is under discussion here, in terms of Kantian laziness and Arendt's banality, however, is not the choice one makes to accept a particular ideological stance, but rather the failure to make any at all. If, for example one is born into a social milieu where theft is an accepted form of behaviour, then one may choose to make theft a regular part of ones behaviour. For Kant and Arendt, this is not in question when it comes to laziness. It does become relevant when discussing other driving or motivating forces (such as envy, selfishness, greed etc) which will be discussed hereunder. The thief, if apprehended, may give reasons for their behaviour that imply that they have considered theft as a valid and or acceptable option. Examples of such reasons would be: 'everybody is doing it, or 'why should others have more than me', and so on and so forth. In this situation they are not guilty of laziness in terms of indolently accepting an ideological position. Rather they may choose to accept that theft is acceptable behaviour, not because it happens to be the general attitude of their social peer group, but because it suits their particular ends. Whether one agrees or not with their conclusion, and whether or not this behaviour brings sanctions from law enforcement are secondary to the self-justification that occurs when the individual examines their beliefs and decides that theft is acceptable and then acts on that belief. They may be guilty of other moral failures but laziness in this case, is not one of them. This form of laziness can be considered a close match with Arendt's thoughtlessness.

Kant, thus, identifies one of the strands of ideological influence by suggesting that a certain cohort of individuals, for him the majority, are too lazy to examine their beliefs and just accept the particular ideology in which they find themselves. This understanding appears to have become thematic for some of the iconic philosophers who follow Kant. Kierkegaard (1983) writes:

> man...his self or he himself is a something with 'the other' in the compass of the temporal and the worldly....Thus the self coheres immediately with 'the other' wishing, desiring, enjoying, etc but passively... he manages to imitate the other men, noting how they manage to live, and so he too lives after a sort. In Christendom he too is a Christian, goes to church every Sunday, hears and understands the Parson, yea they understand each other; he dies and the parson introduces him into eternity for the price of $10—but a self he was not, and a self he did not become ...for the immediate man does not recognise his self.. He recognises himself only by his dress...he recognises that he has a self only by externals (pp.52-53)

Similarly Nietzsche tells us that "[T]he believer does not belong to himself, he can only be a means, he must be used up, he is in need of someone who uses him up. His instinct accords the highest honour to a morality of self-abnegation…every sort of belief is itself an expression of self-denial, of self-estrangement". (pp.149-150) While holding different attitudes to the value/validity of religion, each of these philosophers recognise the susceptibility of a significant number of people to avoid the task of developing a considered belief system and instead simply dress themselves in the cloak provided by the ruling religious ideology of their time.

Arendt (1985) believes that she identified a parallel cohort in the political realm. These are the most malleable because they simply go along with whatever ideological movement is current. For her it is these 'unthinking masses' that pose greatest danger to the social fabric. She argues that the success of totalitarian movements demonstrated two fault lines in the assumptions underlying democratic rule. The first assumption being that most people in a democracy have some allegiance to a particular party. She contends that "on the contrary, the movements showed that the politically neutral and indifferent masses could easily be the majority in a democratically ruled country, that therefore a democracy could function according to rules which are actively recognised by only a minority". (p.312) The implication here is clear, in that a mass of people within a democratic system have no developed political ideology. She quotes Maxim Gorky in his description of the "great flaccid body destitute of political education, almost inaccessible to ideas capable of ennobling action". (p.313). In addition she suggests that this mass of unthinking individuals or what she terms 'indifferent masses' were considered irrelevant to those in power until it was too late. The totalitarian movement showed "what no other organ of public opinion had ever been able to show, namely, that democratic government had rested as much on the silent approbation and tolerance of the indifferent and inarticulate sections of the people" (p. 312).

The implications of this position are far ranging in terms of the susceptibility to mass evil. If many are too lazy to think for themselves, and examine their ideological beliefs, then by implication they will hardly resist changes in a political climate that edges a group toward evil outcome. The challenge to address this element will be addressed below. A second strand identified in Kant's thinking is the role of fear.

The connection between fear and ideological commitment is complex. Returning to the notion of fusion between banality and ideology, fear plays a central role. As discussed

earlier, one of the elements of banality was that of obedience. This element combines with ideology in a particular way. An example here may clarify. After the passing of the Nuremberg Laws many German citizens refused to enter Jewish business premises. Many acted thus, not because they believed that Jews were inferior, but because they were afraid of being beaten up by SA thugs. They were supporting an ideological precept without believing in its validity. Here the fear is for one's safety before a very real threat of physical violence and has no bearing on ideology as such. Of course the widespread obedience out of fear created the conditions whereby the pernicious ideologies under Hitler and Stalin could flourish.

The fear under discussion here is of a different order. It is the fear that leads one to actually embrace the ideology, rather than simply obey its tenets under duress. Kant refers to mass cowardice as a reason for accepting a given set of beliefs. Cowardice by definition includes the notion of fear. One cannot be cowardly without fear. It is a way of coping with fear through avoidance of the feared object. It is important, therefore, to explicate what Kant understood as the threat that is being avoided by embracing certain religious beliefs. It should be noted here that although Kant's insights occur in his discussion of religion, they are considered equally relevant to ideology, as explained earlier.

The individual is cowardly because they refuse to face the fear inherent in taking responsibility for what they believe. The form of commitment to religion that is under scrutiny and to which Kant calls cowardly, is the *blind* acceptance of religious beliefs that keep the individual in a state of perpetual immaturity.

For Kant, the fear that predominates such blind acceptance is the fear of freedom. By this he means the fear of the "freedom to make use of one's reason in all matters' (p.16). One might ask of this contention, what is there to be afraid of in this matter? Most likely it is the risk that if one is free to use their reason then they not only become responsible for the outcome, but must also confront major questions about one's being in the world. These questions open up mysterious and often frightening vistas. Kant delivers the judgement that there is great resistance in the human condition to doing so. In this he also echoes the Socratic concept of the unexamined life. Arendt's formulation of banality which includes thoughtlessness is again seen to be the connecting point to ideology when it comes to the matter of fear. In this context, the ideology is attractive, not because the individual is lazy, but because they are afraid of the challenge that comes with being responsible for what one believes. Kant, gives

some hint as to why this is so. He suggests that the individual is afraid because he is taught to be afraid by those who are empowered within the nobility or within the church. He states "Thus it is very difficult for the individual to work himself out of the nonage which has become almost second nature to him.[11] He has even grown to like it, and it is at first really incapable of using his own understanding because he has never been permitted to try it (p.16).

Perhaps the greatest elucidation of this phenomenon is presented in Dostoevsky's (2007) exegesis of the temptation of Christ in the 'Karamazov Brothers'. The grand inquisitor challenges Christ, who has reappeared in a small village in 15th century Spain. The 90 year old cardinal inquisitor has him arrested after he had performed some miracles, including raising a child from the dead. Christ's behaviour in the village is a continuation of the kinds of activities for which he was adored during his earthly tenure. The central assertion of the cardinal however is that Christ is now obsolete, because the total power of the church provide a better system for the happiness of mankind, rather poetically referred to as the 'harmonious anthill'. That project says the Inquisitor 'has long to wait completion and the earth has much yet to suffer, but we shall triumph and shall be Caesars, and then we shall plan the universal happiness of man. (p.282) The Inquisitor then explains, in his account of the temptation in the desert, that Christ was mistaken in his response to the great Spirit. He did not understand his flock. Accordingly he tells the prisoner, 'I swear, man is weaker and baser by nature than thou has believed him!...By showing him so much respect, Thou didst, as it were cease to feel for him, for thou didst ask far too much from him." (p.280) Among other challenges facing mankind, freedom was one that proved too much. He explains

> And all again in the name of freedom! I tell Thee that man is tormented by no greater anxiety than to find someone quickly to hand over that gift of freedom with which the ill fated creature is born…..Didst thou forget that man prefers peace, and even death, to freedom of choice in the Knowledge of good and evil? Nothing is more seductive for man than his freedom of conscience, but nothing is a greater cause of suffering (pp. 278-279).

Dostoevsky's work echoes that of Kant, and concludes that the Church relieves the individual from the painful challenge of his freedom. There are echoes here too of Plato, when he considers the masses as being blind in their illusions, watching shadows that they think are

[11] Kant's use of the phrase 'second nature' can be considered to reflect the Aristotelean meaning whereby through habits and training to submit to authority, the tenets of religion, and in the current context that of ideology are felt as natural and true.

real. Like the grand Inquisitor, the role of leader is to maintain them in their more infantile state by taking upon themselves the authority to reveal 'truth' to the submissive masses. It may be suggested that Kant is being rather harsh in accusing a person of cowardice for not using his reason to work things out, which he considers this to be his "duty to think for himself" if that individual is incapable of doing so. He clarifies however by suggesting that even if an individual feels incapable of such a task, he will discover, once he takes the choice to do so that his reason will accommodate him in overcoming his fear. Totalising ideologies offer sanctuary to the individual in terms of a way to avoid the great discomfort and perhaps overwhelming burden that arises when faced with responsibility to make sense of the big questions of living in the world.

Nietzsche (2007) too examines the role of fear, which he believes is considerably important in human beings relationships with systems of belief. His thesis concerns what he terms 'the error of imaginary causes'. (p.32) Human beings in general are driven to avoid experiences that cause pain. That can be considered axiomatic, with the exception of circumstances where pain is accepted as a necessary cost for a higher goal. Nietzsche understood that to take responsibility for ones beliefs requires some element of confronting what is unfamiliar. And this unfamiliar involves danger, anxiety and care. He insists that for people 'the fundamental instinct is to get rid of these painful circumstances'(p.33) This is achieved by finding an explanation for one's circumstances. .

Totalising ideologies, as has been indicated above, provide such explanations and therefore alleviate anxiety. Nietzsche explains that process by which this occurs. He believes that a first step of explanation involves the concept of causality. For an individual to find a cause, brings immediate relief. In its initial stage, according to him, the anxiety and discomfort is so intense that almost any cause will do. But he favours the notion that that which offers greatest satisfaction is 'a -comforting liberating and reassuring kind of cause. (p.33) Most attractive are those which 'dissipate most rapidly the sensations of strangeness, novelty and unfamiliarity'. He completes the logical outcome of this need for explanation to alleviate anxiety by showing that eventually this chosen explanation reifies into a system of belief that is impervious to disproof. Accordingly, he asserts that ' the result is that a certain manner of postulating causes tends to predominate ever more and more, becomes concentrated into a system, and finally reigns supreme, to the complete exclusion of other causes and explanations '. (p. 33) Here he encompasses two of the features identified by Arendt, the

belief structure that 'reigns supreme', and the explanations that are 'emancipated from reality'.

Erich Fromm (1969) argues that fear of freedom is a central part of the rise of 'perilous ideology', more specifically fascism. Writing in the early part of World War Two he suggests that the security provided by the medieval period was eclipsed by the enlightenment period, leaving human beings without the all-embracing security of the religious traditions. Here he is prescient with regard to Arendt's later analysis where she reaches the same conclusion. Without the comfort of the all-embracing totalising narrative of religion, human beings sought to find comfort in new ideologies. He writes that "modern man still is anxious and tempted to surrender his freedom to dictators of all kinds, or to lose it by transforming himself into a small cog in the machine, well fed, and well clothed, yet not a free man but an automaton. (xiv). Arendt (1970) agrees. She notes that "if we would trust our own experience in these matters we should know that the instinct of submission, an ardent desire to obey and be ruled by some strong man, is at least as prominent in human psychology as the will to power, and, politically perhaps more relevant. (p.39). Arendt, Kant, Nietzsche, Dostoyevsky, and Fromm among others offer an explanation that the fear implicit in human individuals facing the task of growing into maturity, and accepting responsibility for finding some explanation for the condition of existence, leads many toward to ideological explanatory systems that help them avoid these challenges. In this way such totalizing ideologies alleviate existential anxiety but do so at the cost of producing banality.

What remains here is to show how the totalizing ideologies under discussion facilitate the evasion of responsibility. What did these ideologies offer the individual who did not want to take responsibility for their beliefs? Arendt (1985) tells us that

> before they seize power and establish a world according to their doctrines, totalitarian movements conjure up a lying world of consistence which is more adequate to the needs of the human mind than reality itself, in which through sheer imagination, uprooted masses can feel at home and are spared the never ending shocks which real life and real experiences deal to human beings and their expectations. (p.353)

Totalitarian regimes provide ideologies that convince people that the world is different than it is, but also that it is one that suits their need for delusion and comfort. Kant's recognition that widespread immaturity and evasion of responsibility are features inherent in religious belief that lead people to accept blindly whatever they are being told. Arendt recognises that they are also features of totalising ideologies leading many to believe whatever they are being

told. Goebbels infamously understood this clearly when he writes 'It would not be impossible to prove with sufficient repetition and a psychological understanding of the people concerned that a square is in fact a circle. They are mere words, and words can be molded until they clothe ideas and disguise." (cited in Jowett and O'Donnell. 2007 p.230)

Comforting beliefs that help individuals avoid the existential anxiety inherent in facing up to one's existence are thus a functional element shared by both totalising ideology and religion. A related function is the function that these share in providing people with a means of coping with their mortality.

There is little mystery in the notion that early human religious practices featured various forms of ancestor worship. And even less so in the fact that religious beliefs continue to provide great solace and comfort for perhaps the majority of humans. It is not necessary to explore this subject in any great depth except to show how a secular ideology could also command the same function. The critical element by which religion offers comfort and solace to both the bereaved, as well as those confronting their own mortality is to tell them that death itself is an illusion. There is an afterlife which means one does not really die insofar as ones soul/consciousness survives death. This formulation has been the most prevalent in Western versions. More eastern variations give comfort in terms of the possibility of returning to life in another form, and other more esoteric formulations which seek to guarantee some element of immortality. Secular ideologies cannot offer these comforts. And, equally, those who no longer believe in the traditional variations of immortality are also bereft of such comfort. Secular ideologies of the type under discussion here however do offer a version of immortality to their adherents.

Arendt (1996) postulates a distinction between the immortal and the eternal. She believes that the human need for immortality was generally accepted and led people to engage with life in a way that would leave some form of lasting footprint (however modest) behind when they died. Referring to the Greek understanding of the immortal, as distinct from the eternal she avers that

> Men are…the only mortal things in existence, because unlike animals they do not exist only as members of a species whose immortal life is guaranteed through procreation. The mortality of men lies in the fact that individual life, with a recognisable life story arises out of biological life….By their capacity for the immortal deed by their ability to leave non-perishable traces behind, men, their individual mortality notwithstanding, attain an immortality of their own and prove themselves to be of "divine" nature. (p. 19)

Arendt claims that this understanding gave both motive and solace to the multitude in the absence of any other belief system. The rise of Christianity however presented a far more powerful solution to the problem of mortality. Accordingly she argues that "the rise of the Christian gospel of an everlasting individual life to its position as the exclusive religion of Western Mankind….made any striving for an earthly immortality futile and unnecessary. (p. 21)

Arendt recognises that this replacement of the immortal with the eternal has now been reversed with the rise of the secular. She is of the view however that this reversal cannot "save from oblivion the striving for immortality". (p.21) This is a large claim, and although not elucidated in her argument with regard to the difference between religion and ideology discussed above, is perhaps one worthy of consideration. Religion can offer eternal life, secular ideology can only offer immortality. The question does remain that: if in the pre Christian era, human beings tried to assure immortality for themselves, and as Arendt explains

> the task and potential of greatness of mortals lie in their ability to produce things—works deeds and words—which would deserve to be, and at least to a degree, are at home in everlastingness, so that through them mortals could find their place in a cosmos where everything is immortal except themselves. (p.19)

why can this not pertain now under the conditions characterised by a world whereby "man is the measure of all things"? It seems equally germane to note that the desire for immortality remains even if the promise of everlasting life has lost its credibility for many. That need remains a powerful hook for any ideology that can promise comfort in the face of mortality. Gentile (1996) in his study of the sacralisation of politics under Italian fascism comments that fascism uses death to exalt the communal feeling that integrates individuals into the group through the idea that those who die gain immortality by entering the 'mystical world' of collective memory. In comparison to eternal life this type of immortality may come up short, but as a secular alternative it remains a significant prize.

Neocleous (2015) in his study of the role of death in fascist ideology aims to tease out the inherent identification of fascism and death. Not 'real' or 'everyday' death and its "mundane but individually tragic banality, but death in its most political and aestheticized form"(p.37) . He argues that fascist ideology clearly promoted the notion of a continuum between life and death. In its songs, tributes and funerary rites the notion of resurrection is a consistent theme. He notes for example that the Nazis attacked the cult of the Unknown Soldier –on the

grounds that "the fallen were not dead but alive and because the dead had been reunited with the living through their shared faith in Nazi Germany" (p.43) He acknowledges that "Of course, the difficulty with suggesting that the dead are not dead is that they are clearly, on one level, really dead. The ideological solution to this is to present them as either living in the sense that they are immortal or as in the process of being resurrected as part of the greater future" (p.43)

This analysis supports the argument here in this this thesis, that one of the important functions of religion, namely, providing solace and comfort in the face of death can be seen to also be available within totalising ideologies. Another function is that of providing people with a meaning structure

7.4 Provides Meaning

John Gray (2002) puts the problem of meaning bluntly: "Other animals do not need a purpose in life. A contradiction to itself, the human animal cannot do without one (p.199). It is difficult to ascertain to what degree the people of pre-Enlightenment Europe struggled with the problem of meaning. Fromm (1969) suggests that: "In having a distinct, unchangeable, and unquestionable place in the social world from the moment of birth, man was rooted in a structuralised whole, and thus life had a meaning which left no place, and no need for doubt. (p.41) It seems fair however to suggest that given the human condition the search for meaning is probably ubiquitious over time and space. Fromm (1969) believes that one of the most powerful influences of Christianity was its ability to provide meaning for people's lives. He says that

> While the Church fostered a sense of guilt it also assured the individual of her unconditional love to all her children and offered a way to acquire the conviction of being forgiven and loved by God…Just as a peasant and a town dweller rarely went beyond the limits of the small geographical area which was theirs, so the universe was limited and simple to understand. The earth and man were its center, heaven or hell was a future place of life, and all actions from birth to death were transparent to their causal interrelation. (pp.41-42)

That said it can also be suggested that when facing a break in some of the more all-encompassing explanations provided by religion, a crisis of meaning can emerge. Psychiatrist Victor Frankl grounded a new form of psychotherapy in just that issue based on his experience in Auschwitz. He developed 'Logotherapy' (he terms the 'third Viennese school of psychiatry) as a result of his belief that one of the strongest aspects of human well-

being, and resilience in the face of enormous suffering, is to have a strong sense of meaning in life. The goal of Logotherapy is to help people who are in an existential crisis with regard to the meaning and purpose of their lives. This form of spiritual malaise, in Frankl's view, is widespread in modern society, and underlies a lot of misdiagnosed mental health problems. (Frankl 1985).

Most western societies have seen a marked decline in dedication to formal theistic religion. Notwithstanding recent trends towards secularism in Europe, it can be said that the continued worldwide prevalence of religion, and its revival in the former Eastern bloc countries supports the contention that human beings need some form of religious system within their social environment. In the context of modern culture, Harari's (2015) insights are useful when he notes that:

> religion is created by humans rather than by gods, and it is defined by its social functions rather than the existence of deities. Religion is anything that confers superhuman legitimacy on human social structures. It legitimises human norms and values by arguing that they reflect superhuman laws…… Every society tells its members that they must obey some superhuman moral law, and that breaking this law will result in catastrophe (pp. 182-183).

It can be said that an existential vacuum appears when prevailing systems of meaning dissipate and in this condition people to seek some new version, and often one that can be destructive. Before the rise of the mass ideological and ultimately human catastrophes of Hitler and Stalin, Nietzsche could see that a human crisis of meaning was on the horizon. The madman asks:

> What were we doing when we unchained the earth from the sun? Whither are we moving now….Are we not plunging continually…Do we not feel the breath of empty space. Has it not become colder. Is not night continually closing in? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? …Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? …Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it? … (p.17)

Here Nietzsche captures the sense of isolation, and evokes an atmosphere of cold vacancy that must be countered by way of new festivals and new forms of the sacred. Arendt (1985), decades later, agrees. She also understood that without some ideological frame, the masses would yearn for something that would give them a focus that made sense of their condition, and provide them with some form of meaning and purpose. The Nazi conversion of Anti-Semitism into what she called a 'principle of self-definition' is a good case in point. She describes the attraction of this and other ideological tenets because they

> gave the masses of atomised, undefinable, unstable and futile individuals a means of self-definition and identification which not only restored some of the self-respect they had formerly derived from their functioning in society, but also created a kind of spurious stability which made them better candidates for an organisation. (p. 356)

This function, which parallels that of the earlier role of religion does not come without great risk. Thus she concludes,

> The Nazis and the Bolsheviks can be sure that their factories of annihilation which demonstrate the swiftest solution to the problem of overpopulation, of economic superfluous and socially rootless human masses are as much of an attraction as a warning. Totalitarian solutions may well survive the fall of totalitarian regimes in the form of strong temptations which will come up whenever it seems impossible to alleviate political or economic misery in a manner worthy of man. (p. 459)

The need for meaning is addressed by totalising ideology insofar as it converts the individual into an agent who can see herself as part of a bigger picture. He or she is engaging in a great purpose. They are no longer the abandoned and superfluous, rather their actions and productivity however modest, are contributing to some new future for those that will follow on. The connection to both immortality and present day meaning is thus assured.

7.5 Moral Guidance

The discussion on the problem of mass evil has, thus far, had little to say about morality. This may seem somewhat curious given that it is traditionally considered that morality is considered to be the aspect of human functioning most concerned with the issues of good and evil. There is however a firm reason for the delay in bringing morality to the fore in the context of explaining mass evil doing. Rather than being the first port of call in dealing with the issue of mass evil, it is perhaps the last. This is so because for most adults, their morality is an outcome of ideology and or religious beliefs. Arendt shows this to be the case in the main focus of her work on the problem of evil. She shows clearly that when ideology changed under fascism and communism, morality changed also. This has been discussed in some detail in the earlier part of this thesis. Here, the focus is on the parallel between ideology and religion in the roles they play in providing moral guidance to its adherents. Once again it is considered important to clarity that, as in many other instances, the degree to which a religion/ideology impacts on any individual's consciousness varies. For the banal follower, the moral precepts are accepted without much consideration. For the more zealous devotee, the moral guidance is integrated in a more sophisticated fashion. In either case, once

the moral guide within the overall ideological/religious structure permits, or encourages evil doing then the die is cast for the actualisation of that evil.

The relationship between mass evil and morality opens up an important area for examination, namely the assumptions often made in the literature that the sacred and the more elevated elements of human consciousness are somehow impervious to such evil. Zizek (2012) is strong in his critique of this assumption, but goes further and suggests that it is these very elements that in fact give the flourishing of evil its necessary strength. He is provocative in his annunciation that

> There is no ethnic cleansing without poetry-Why? Because we live in an era that perceives itself as post ideological. Since the great public causes no longer have the force to mobilise people to mass violence a larger Sacred cause is needed, a cause which makes petty individual concerns about killing seem trivial. Religion or ethnic belonging fit this role perfectly (p. xxvi)

In keeping with the central argument here in this thesis, Zizek (2017) explains that it takes some higher purpose to get ordinary people to partake in murdering others. He claims that:

> Religious ideologists usually claim that, true or not, religion makes some otherwise bad people do good things; from today's experience, one should rather stick to Steve Weinbergs claim that, while with or without religion, good people can do good things and bad people do bad things, only religion can make good people do bad things. (p.116)

The thrust of this part of the thesis is to show that the same principal applies to the kinds of ideologies that mimic religion, those described by Arendt. The slaughter of millions during the 20th century as an outcome was ably abetted by otherwise "good people doing bad things".

Of perhaps some significance to this debate is Zizek's analysis how one particular religion/ideology that, at its core, appears to support peace, namely Zen Buddhism was part and parcel of vast evildoing on the part of the Japanese military. His discussion of how Zen Master Suzuki's teachings were used to support the Imperial Japanese mass cruelty shows that even an ideology that has asserts peace making and enlightenment at its very core can be twisted to suit a political agenda that promulgates massacre. He claims that ideology helps to elevate evil into a sacred task. Koivulahti (2017) summarises Zizek's argument that in Zen Buddhism

> one's ''total immersion to the self-less 'now' of instant enlightenment'' loses the ''reflexive distance'' one normally has and works as legitimization of aims of the

> nationalistic military. To put it differently, when one loses the ability to reflect on the present, opting for an ecstatic state of mind, one also loses one's normal moral resistance to the commands of the military. According to Zizek's reading of Zen, it legitimizes war as a necessity, because perpetual peace is empirically impossible. (p.42)

Zizek acknowledges that there is a certain heroism in sacrificing your life for your country. However, he goes a step further and explains that there is an even greater heroism in sacrificing your soul for your country. In other words, by becoming an evil doer, the individual is acknowledging the evil, and understands its nature as evil, and yet does so for purposes that have been elevated into the good

This discussion does not promote the notion that religion de facto is an evil entity. It does promote the notion that any religious or ideological system that contains a doctrine that justifies evil doing can lead to mass evildoing. Furthermore in virtue of such a doctrine belonging to the religious/ideological functioning of human consciousness it will be profoundly effective and resistant to change. This is because it harnesses the particular constellation of needs and motives, discussed above, that are all part of the role of religion in human consciousness. Of particular significance here in their role in promoting evil is the manner in which these ideologies both undermine the individuals current moral condition, and provide new moral guides that allow for, and sometimes promote evil. It is important thus to examine how this functional aspect of ideology facilitates evildoing.

7.6 Legitimises Evil

In order to discuss the aspects of certain ideologies and religions that justify evil, it is considered useful to set out again what is being referred to here as evil. In chapter 1. "evil" is defined as the intentionally causing extreme undeserved harm loss and or suffering, or enabling others to do so. The most extreme form being 'radical evil' as described by Arendt and explored in detail earlier in the work. This is a working definition of evil and as there is no comprehensive definition that can cover all and every outcome, it serves well to sufficiently cover the main interest of this thesis, namely exploring why large numbers of seemingly rational and 'moral' people would collude and engage in mass persecution and murder.

Several core principles can be identifies in ideologies that legitimise evildoing. The following are the most common.

- Denying that the act is evil
- Using the "lesser of two evils" justification
- The justification of self defense
- The belief that the end justifies the means

Each of these topics are large subjects in themselves and cannot receive the level of attention that would explicate them in detail within the confines of this thesis. Here they will be discussed in brief as the purpose is simply to indicate the presence of these within the types of ideology under discussion.

7.6.i.Denying that the act is Evil

This occurs when an ideology contains a tenet that undermines the moral (immoral) nature of a particular act, e.g. Killing a Jew. For this to succeed the ideology must convince the individual that their moral beliefs, that in normal circumstances, prevent evildoing need not be applied to the murderous or persecutory act. The main method here is to convert the victim into someone who is not deserving of the moral treatment that would normally apply. The perpetrator feels little moral compunction, because what they are doing is not evil. Propaganda plays a significant role in converting people away from giving victims due respect as fellow human beings. There is also a twist here whereby the way the victims are treated often means that the caricatures become actual reality, and it becomes logical to kill them. Arendt (1985) explains this phenomenon thus:

> Yet within the framework of the totalitarian ideology, nothing could be more sensible and logical; if the inmates are vermin, it is logical that they should be killed by poison gas; if they are degenerate they should not be allowed to contaminate the population; if they have "slave like souls" (Himmler) no one should waste time trying to re-educate them. Seen through the eyes of ideology, the trouble with the camps is almost that they make too much sense, that the execution of the doctrine is too consistent. (p. 457)

Dawes (2013) presents a thorough analysis of how this dehumanising of the other makes their mistreatment/murder far more palatable. His analysis of the atrocities carried out by the Japanese military in the Sino Japanese War makes the point that "the racism, the military training, the commitment to total obedience, the release into stressful combat conditions was not enough to make them into murderers" (p.65). His findings show that in order for the men he interviewed to kill the innocent with ease, one other factor had to come into play, namely that the victim no longer seemed worthy of dignity or respect as a human being. This was

achieved through mistreatment which he argues is part of the training program to turn ordinary men into murderers. Thus he concludes that "A person who has been shamed starved hurt, beaten or humiliated begins to seem pitiful, begins to seem like she deserves to be shamed starved beaten, or humiliated. It makes it easier to kill her. (p.67)

Slavery as featured in the United States is well documented and narrated often in terms of ongoing horror of mistreatment, torment, rape and murder. The justification for the institution of slavery itself is grounded in the religious teaching that black people are a sub human species. The religious base of Old Testament teaching that black people were from a different genetic strain and were inferior sub humans was according to Goldenberg (2003) "the single greatest justification for black slavery for more than a thousand years" (p.1) Arendt (1985) notes that

> Slavery's crime against humanity did not begin when one people defeated and enslaved its enemies (though this of course was bad enough), but when slavery became an institution in which some men were 'born free' and others slave, when it was forgotton that it was man who had deprived his fellow-men of freedom, and when the sanction for the crime was attributed to nature. (p.297)

The re-categorisation of some people as of inferior or subhuman is thus one of the great justifications for their mistreatment and persecution. There is a certain irony that a Judaic teaching that underscored the persecution of black slaves in the U.S. was mirrored in the later application of the same justifying dogma that led to the destruction of the European Jews by the Nazis. When an ideology convinces a perpetrator that their victim is not human, then the appropriation of 'evil' to the act of persecution is severely undermined

7.6.ii The principle of the lesser of two evils

Bentham's (1988) utilitarian principle seems a good place to begin in explaining this position. The utilitarian basis for morality could be summarised as recommending that our actions should be guided by the principle that makes for the least harm and the greatest good. If this principle is used as an ideological guide, it would appear difficult on the surface to be to imagine how the horrors of 20th century genocide could have been justified. The twist occurs however when a pernicious ideology defines 'the good', and convinces the actors that the greater good will be in the future, not yet seen. Utilitarianism in this context can be used to justify any form of horror.

Perhaps a useful example is found in one of the most contentious events where this justification is made, namely the use of atomic bombs to kill hundreds of thousands of Japanese citizens in Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the Second World War. This act was justified in terms of the cost that would accrue to American soldiers should they attempt to invade the Japanese mainland. Lackey (2003) disputes the moral validity of this computation thus: "Intentionally killing soldiers is morally permissible in pursuit of victory in a just war; intentionally killing civilians is plainly murderous as the Allies insisted whenever the Nazis did it." (p.130)

In terms of the definition of evil underpinning this thesis, the annihilation of these cities was an evil act. As such, it is pertinent to cite Arendt's (2003) reminder to those who use the "lesser of two evils" justification, that the lesser of the two evil acts is still evil.

7.6.iii Self-defence

Because self-defence is considered a just cause for harming others, it is not surprising to find its use in murderous ideologies. The self defence argument played a critical role in the ideologies of Nazism and Communism. It is also found in the ideological structures that underpinned many other atrocities including Srebrenica, Rwanda, and the Armenian genocide in Turkey. In general, this justification is found where the ideology identifies, often spuriously, a threat either from within the ranks of the populace, or a specific identifiable sub group. Within the Stalinist regime, both groupings were targeted. The mass killings of citizenry were justified because they fell into the nebulous categories of 'enemy of the state', a euphemism that merely gave some semblance of validity to mass murder. The identification of the Kulaks, as a particular class/group of enemies placed them in the same jeopardy as that of the Jews under Hitler leading to their annihilation. (Naimark. 2011)

What is significant here is that by identifying the victims of persecution as having represented a danger to the perpetrators survival or way of life, the adherents to the ideology are relieved from their moral discomfort in the face of causing suffering to others. Mann's (2005) analysis of ethnic cleansing suggest that while such justification may not bear close examination, all it has to do is offer the participant/onlooker with a plausible reason for the persecution. Accordingly he argues that "people are not cultured dopes, they accept ideologies that make some plausible sense of their world." (p.30) It can be said here that one of the elements of banality is precisely the lack of willingness to give close examination to such justifications.

Because, as shown above, certain ideologies provide comprehensive meanings and satisfactions to their adherents, it is quite understandable that they wish to hold on to them. Emotional attachment leads to changes in how a person evaluates information. Research in the field of cognitive psychology identifies a phenomenon that provides some explanation here. Identified as 'motivated reasoning' Westen et al. (2006) conclude that "motivated reasoning is qualitatively distinct from reasoning when people do not have a strong emotional stake in the conclusions reached." (p.1947) Thus, rather weak or in some cases more dramatic descriptions of the enemies of the people, make it plausible to consider persecuting them as being a matter of self-defence. The depiction of the slimy, cunning Jew having sex with the pure Aryan woman is a case in point. Most non Jewish Germans had no evidence to support these depictions, and yet were inclined to begin to see Jews as a group as a threat, even though the Jews they knew personally did not fit this description. Their reasoning was corrupted by way of propaganda to see Jews as forming some kind of nebulous threat, over and against how many actually experienced their actual relationship with the Jewish people around them. Thus their moral resistance against the mistreatment of Jews weakened initially and eventually collapsed as the movement toward mass expulsion and eventual extermination began.

7.6.iv Means justify the end.

Perhaps the most powerful and insidious justifications of mass evil is that the evil enacted was justified in terms of the end being pursued. An ideology that uses a means/end justification makes evil relative to the end to which it aspires. Spectacular ends justify spectacular means. If the means include evil doing then the great end will justify great evil. Means/ends justification can build some of the other justifications discussed here into the ideology. If the means, for example, includes lying to people then it is often a consequence that the self-defence justification can be created. Telling people lies about the activities or nature of the potential victims creates the idea that they pose a threat, and that their persecution is self-defence. If the means include depicting the victims as sub human then the moral permission to persecute them is validated. Similarly, if the victims are in the way of the achievement of the higher goal, then the lesser of two evils justification can be called upon, because to fail to reach the end goal is considered a greater evil than the sacrifice of the innocent who are in the way.

Means /end justification is therefore an overarching justification than can subsume the others. It does however have a distinctive feature insofar as the goal itself can be used to justify almost anything. This is particularly true of ideologies that have a utopian end along with a persecutory element as a means. It is rational to accept the notion that attaining perfection as an end will always justify imperfections on the way. Arendt (1998) recognises the fundamental element of a means end justification as a flawed methodology in moral reasoning. For her "The issue at stake is of course not instrumentality, the use of means to achieve and end, as such, but rather the generalisation of the fabrication experience in which usefulness and utility are established as the ultimate standards for life and the world of men. (p.157) In such a world the production of evil is justifiable if it can be shown to be useful to any prescribed goal.

Means/End justification is a good example of the 'destructive logic' referenced by Arendt (1985) and discussed earlier in this thesis. Once an ideology holds out the promise that it can create some form of perfect state then the way is set for justified evildoing if it can be shown that such evil is necessary to establishing that outcome. Logic can thus be effectively applied once the initial premises are accepted. This holds true of both individual and social conditions. It was an implicit part of the Spanish inquisition that the burning of the heretic was for their own good. His everlasting soul was being saved through the *auto da fe*. Stalin's starvation of the Kulaks can again be referenced as a good case in point. The success of the five year plan, and more specifically the importance of holding fast, despite the evidence, the ideological value of collectivisation were the ends that justified that genocide. (Naimark. 2011).

7.7. Conclusion

This chapter presents the thesis that mass evildoing is inextricably linked to a certain form of ideology: a totalising ideology that has become pernicious by virtue of holding the persecution or mistreatment of others part of its 'doctrine'. In addition, it shows that the power of this form of ideology on human consciousness mirrors that of the power heretofore held by religious belief. This so because, like religion, these provide the critical existential needs for safety, for belonging, and for meaning that seems ubiquitous and fundamental to being human. It also holds the large claim that most people's moral reasoning is subservient to ideology and religion, and further that this subservience is a form of moral weakness that makes people vulnerable to becoming evil doers.

Petersen (1999) summarises the relationship between traditional religion and the secular ideologies thus, "The ideological structures that dominated social relations in the twentieth century appear no less absurd, on the face of it, than the older belief systems that they replaced….the fundamental propositions of fascism and communism were rational, logical stable, comprehensible and terribly wrong." (p.11) Considering this comparison, Petersen then continues to suggest that currently there is always the possibility for the emergence of some new form of pernicious ideology, and in doing so echoes Arendt's warning. He notes that "it is difficult to believe that we have outgrown our gullibility. The rise of the new Age movement in the West as compensation for the decline of traditional spirituality provides sufficient evidence for our continued ability to swallow a camel while straining a gnat. (p 11)

If mass evil is profoundly underpinned by totalising ideology, and such ideologies, in one shape or another, religious and secular, have been a feature of social functioning throughout history, then it would appear that mass evil is inevitable unless some influence is brought to bear on how such ideologies emerge and take hold. In addition, it can be said that what appears to be, on the outside, simple moral weakness on the part of the individuals who partook in the genocides of the twentieth century is far more complex on deeper analysis.

The moral conversion whereby ordinary people collaborate with, and to a greater or lesser extent, engage in evil doing is only one element in the total 'capturing' of consciousness by ideology. In other words, without the ideological conversion, the people would not have allowed such mass persecutions and murders to happen. This does not excuse them. Rather is sets out a paradigm whereby the individual's moral failure is one step back from the act/engagement with evil doing. The moral failure is found in the acceptance of an ideology that recommends evil doing within its structure. Zizek (2009) gives a very useful analysis to this point. He takes an example whereby an individual tries to convince a zealous Nazi that his attitude to the Jews is not acceptable by trying to show that many Jews do not reflect the awful descriptions made about them. Zizek argues that by virtue of taking that approach the individual, despite his good intentions, has already "sold his soul to the devil". They have already attributed some value to the ideology, and are merely disputing some details. The moral response is not about contradicting the details, it is about challenging the acceptance of such ideology in the first place. Thus, accepting any ideology that justifies evil is itself a collaboration with evil. Thus, Zizek (2017) reaches a conclusion which, on its face appears deeply troubling, "The starving Somali farmer who submits his daughter to cliterodectomy is no less responsible than a wealthy Western sadist who rapes sexual slaves." (p.114) The

conclusion inherent in this statement is that moral responsibility should not be seen as a function of ideology, rather the choice to accept and act out of ideological belief is a moral choice. And the consequences of that choice, which in the case of a pernicious ideology, will almost certainly lead to evil, are the responsibility of the individual who chose this belief in the first place.

This chapter examined the power that both religion and ideology carry in terms of creating the conditions whereby human beings can be converted into evil doers who willingly partake in the persecution and destruction of others. It also provides some explanation for the different levels of commitment to such ideologies and the concomitant levels of engagement in evil doing, ranging from the zealous active engagement in directly murdering the innocent, to the more distant collaboration within the machinery of the evil doing system. Snyder (2017) captures the range of ideological corruption thus: "If lawyers had followed the norms of no execution without trial, if doctors had accepted the rule of no surgery without consent, if businessmen had endorsed the prohibition on slavery, if bureaucrats had refused to handle paperwork involving murder, then the Nazi regime would have been much harder pressed to carry out the atrocities by which we remember it". (p.40) The occupations under discussion by Snyder here represent the more highly skilled and educated elite of society. There is in addition however the mass of banal conformists without whom the Holocaust and other mass travesties would have been far more difficult to accomplish. This latter engagement is what makes vast levels of evil possible. Widespread banality as described in the earlier chapter, provides the greatest number of passive adherents to ideology, and in consequence, the human resources for the production of mass evil.

The implications here are profound. This is so because all of the above suggests that human beings cannot live without some form of ideological structure with which to help make sense of their lives. Hawkes (2003) agrees thus: "[I]deology is not a historical phenomenon, but is rather an inherent tendency within the human mind which is seems, cannot bear very much reality." (p.123) The needs provided by both totalizing ideology and religion, described in this chapter in terms of alleviating existential anxiety, providing a meaning structure, including a way of dealing with death, and providing moral guidance for how to live can be considered central to what it means to be a human being. This strongly suggests that it would be futile to seek a solution to mass evil doing by trying to do away with either religion or ideology. Rather, human beings need to be able to identify and resist those ideologies that

contain evil doing precepts. Some considerations that might be of value in this endeavour are presented in the conclusion below.

Conclusion

Marcuse (1964) explains that "The philosopher is not a physician; his job is not to cure individuals but to comprehend the world in which they live—to understand it in terms of what has been done to man and what it can do to man". (p.183) Whilst there is much of value in this understanding of the role of the philosopher, it is my view that the problem of evil requires more than attempts to explain its character. Ricoeur's (1967) insight is particularly relevant in this regard when he avers that "[W]hile speculative thought asks: where does evil come from? Action strives to reply to this sole question: what is there to do against evil. (p.475). All kinds of analyses of the problem of evil whilst worthy in terms of understanding the phenomenon would appear to have limited value if such understanding does nothing to promote ways to ameliorate it.

Kappeller (1995) argues that current interventions that seek to approach the subject of mass evil, specifically its germination stage in racial violence, remains almost wholly concerned with the social circumstance that are considered to be at the root of such developments. She believes that the attraction to framing the genesis of mass evil in terms of an expression of social deprivation and discontent has a certain advantage to those in power. She suggests that: "[E]xplaining people's violent behaviour by their circumstances also has the advantage of implying that the solution lies in the change of circumstances". (p.4) She also concludes that such an interpretation "[N]ot only legitimates violence (by explaining it) but constitutes an incentive to violence, confirming that social problems will be taken seriously when and where 'they' attract attention by means of violence" (p.4)[12] Kappeller believes that the motivation to try to approach this kind of event in terms of changing social circumstances is attractive because allows the avoidance of the problem of requiring people to change.

Thus she avers that

> Even if changing the circumstances – combatting poverty, unemployment, injustice etc. may not be easy, it nevertheless remains within 'our scope', at least theoretically and by means of state power. Changing people on the other hand is neither within our power, nor it seems ultimately in our interest; we prefer to keep certain people under control putting limits on their violent behaviour, but we

[12] She refers specifically to the rise of Neo Nazi youth groups and explains that "If German Neo Nazi youths and youth groups since their murderous assaults on refugees and migrants in Hoysrswerda, Rostock, Dresden etc are treated to special youth projects and social care measures (to the tune of DM 20 million per year), including educative trips to orocco and Israel this is an unmistakeable signal to society that racist violence does indeed pay off." (p.4) Her example here is particularly germane to the major topic of this thesis as it refers to the kind of violence and persecution that inheres in the beginning stages of mass evil.

> apparently have no interest in a politics that presupposes people's ability to change. (p.4-5)

This here can be considered the nub of the issue with regard to intervention and prevention of mass evil. Arendt's contribution enunciates a different view. For her, confronting the issue of mass evil requires confronting the people who engage in it, and embracing a politics or governance that clearly has that in view, rather than seeking social change in the hope that these changes in themselves will be effective.

The main conclusion of this research project shows that attempting to prevent mass evil by addressing social circumstances is invalid because it does not address the central elements that give rise to the problem in the first place, namely widespread banality, and pernicious ideology. The thesis comes to the conclusion that social/economic conditions *reveal* the weaknesses of the mass person, as well as their proclivity to evil ideology, they do not cause it. This is the central conclusion extracted from Arendt's *oeuvre* in this thesis. And, insofar as that is the case then any interventions or attempts at prevention are grounded in that conclusion.

For Arendt, the solution to the problem of mass evil is always related to the human person who has lost their way in the mass, and who has surrendered to an ideology. These phenomena are deeply personal, insofar as they are characteristics of the individual person. The atomised and often 'comfortable' individual who embraces an ideological belief that encourages rejection and persecution of identified others is at the centre of the problem. Any effective intervention into this phenomenon needs to address the problems of banality and ideology, neither which can be reduced to social conditions. That is the main conclusion of this research project. If changing social circumstance does not attack the causal factors that undergird mass evil then what kind of intervention could be effective? It is beyond the scope of this thesis to fully elaborate any comprehensive responses to this question, as its primary task was to identify those factors. Rather as a conclusion to the work several avenues can be suggested. These will require further expansion and research elsewhere.

The result of the investigation thus far presents a paradigm whereby mass evildoing is best understood as a fusion of banality and pernicious ideology. Intervention in this context would therefore seem to mean engaging individuals in terms of both their condition of banality as well as their susceptibility to ideologies that promote/justify evil. An individual who is living a banal existence is easily swayed in their ideological position. And it is the

issue of their banality that makes them likely to corruption. Thus, combatting banality would seem to be a logical first stage of intervention.

Combatting Banality

The importance of individual selfhood runs throughout all of Arendt's work, but finds particular focus in her investigations into human evil. Just as banality can be comprehended as comprising three distinct but overlapping elements, the task of combatting banality can be seen in terms of addressing each of these elements with its opposite. Thus, a recommendation that arises from the body of this thesis in terms of confronting the problem of mass evil is a tripartite schema that can be seen as an effective counter to banality. This schema comprises: (i) reflective thinking as a counter to thoughtlessness, (ii) advanced moral development as a counter to obedience and conformity, and (iii) individuation as a counter to immersion.

Reflective/Critical Thinking

Perhaps the greatest challenge that can be made to contemporary culture is the challenge to assist people to become reflective thinkers. More and more scholarship is emerging to show that grave weaknesses are appearing in the quality of individual cognition, largely as a result of the explosion of exposure to media influence. (Rushkoff 2018) It could be said that in this context, Plato's cave is no longer an allegory. Most people now carry around a screen by way of their mobile phone through which reality is filtered and the puppet masters actually exist in the form of those highly trained software engineers, who continue to create more and more sophisticated algorithms dedicated to capture the attention of the individual, and to ensure their compliance with whatever is being sold, either in terms of materials or ideas.

To counter such influences is a difficult task for it necessitates a rebellion against those invested in maintaining the passive unthinking conformism often required to control and harness the resources of the masses politically and economically. In addition, as has been explored in some detail earlier, the practice of reflective thinking brings with it much discomfort to those who wish to live relatively uncomplicated lives. Arendt's metaphor of the veil of Penelope referenced earlier, is indeed appropriate as it confers on the individual the task of consistently unravelling the certainties of beliefs leaving the individual without the comfort and security of their varied, and often badly thought out positions.

It is difficult to imagine how this problem can be addressed. Philosophy remains the arena where reflective thinking continues to be prized. Its position, however, remains tied into an academic environment, largely confined to the university system rather than being a core element of education generally[13]. There is much to commend the notion that critical thinking should become part of ordinary education. More specifically, the period of adolescence is that period of formation where identity is most susceptible to influence (Erikson 1964) and therefore perhaps the most fertile time for the introduction of education that challenges a person to think. This does not mean the rote learning that sucks up most of the time in school for young people. Nor would it mean teaching philosophy as an academic subject for as Heidegger (1968) noted "even if we have devoted many years to the intensive study of the treatises and writings of the great thinkers, that fact is still no guarantee that we ourselves are thinking or even are ready to learn thinking." (p.5)[14]

Much could be achieved in the endeavour to teach thinking in terms of producing a generation who at least had the opportunity to embrace a richer and explorative form of intelligence, rather than the instrumental and one dimensional use of intellect that seems the goal of much of today's education, and which as Arendt shows is profoundly dangerous when evil-doing systems take over. Nugent's (1990) summary of such benefits is worth repeating

> Critical thinking is not passive; students cannot be thinking critically if someone else is evaluating varying perspectives for them. …Siegel's concept of critical spirit suggests that critical thinking is a way of life, an approach to all intellectual activity….. Critical thinking, then, is both the ability to use skills and the spirit to do so….by integrating the concepts of critical principles and critical spirit with critical thinking skills, we will need to be involved continually in understanding experience, assumptions, knowledge, and values other than our own" (pp 85-96).

There has been much debate among educators with regard to how best to approach the issue of teaching people to think. (Halpern 2013) Much of that debate presents the task in terms of how to help people express their intelligence in more creative ways, often allied to the argument that the modern developments in technology and in artificial intelligence will require more creative thinking on the part of those remaining in employment. It is rare, however, to find in any such debates the idea that by helping large numbers of people in a

[13] Significant advances have been achieved under the auspices of the Philosophy for Children movement since the early 1970's, with particular reference to the work of Lipmann and the Institute for Advancement of Philosophy for Children. Much of their resources are of value if they can be integrated more centrally into the everyday curriculum on a widespread basis.

[14] There is a certain irony here in Heidegger's proclamation. His embrace of Nazi ideology remains an indelible stain on his standing within the world of philosophy and continues to be seen by many as discrediting his contribution to the field of human understanding

society to think, they would be less likely to engage in banal evil. One of the outcomes of this thesis is that the link between these phenomenon in Arendt's work is supported, and as such needs to be emphasised as one of a series of differing approaches in the struggle to minimise or deplete the tendency to mass evil-doing that has been shown to be latent in modern mass society.

(ii) Moral development.

For Arendt, one important aspect in the prevention of banal evildoing lies in the development of a strong individually crafted moral sense, one that not only includes a moral code, but also a courageous commitment of the self to that code. This might well be described as developing 'moral selfhood'. I chose this phrase to indicate the personal subjective nature of the individual's morality. It is not the mere acceptance of the current moral convention, which Arendt vociferously identifies as hugely destructive in terms of its corruptibility, but rather a personally well-grounded code which guides and determines behaviour. For Arendt this distinction (discussed earlier) is embedded in her differentiation between obedience and consent. Obedience is a form of moral immaturity as the individual evades responsibility by accepting the moral virtue of obedience rather than questioning the moral/immoral nature of the outcome of such obedience. Consent requires the recognition that in 'obeying' one is tacitly giving moral acceptance to the outcome, and one is thus responsible.

Moral maturity that includes a strong personally developed/crafted moral code would protect against banal responses when the morality of government or social context changes toward evil. This formation, by definition, proposes the opposite to the elements of banality, and is characterised by moral self-awareness, independence and individual responsibility. Although Arendt does not reference the work of Kohlberg in her writing, her description of the morally mature or responsible adult is very closely paralleled by his description of stages 5 and 6 in his moral development theory. (Kohlberg 1981) These stages are characterised as principled conscience where the moral thinking is based on social contract and universal ethics. Stages 3 and 4 morality are characterised essentially by conformity and social convention, and are more typical of the what Arendt describes as banal. The link between banality and moral development, and the work of Kohlberg, is thus an area worth of serious consideration in terms of its relevance to the problem of evil.

(iii) Individuation

First enunciated by Jung (1964) as a term to describe the process by which human beings become individual persons, this process is wholly in keeping with Arendt's claim that we are all born human, but we 'become' persons. This concept adds a counterpoint to the immersion element of banality. For Jung such immersion means that in mass society

> Instead of moral and mental differentiation of the individual, you have public welfare and the raising of living standard. The goal and meaning of individual life (which is the only *real* life) no longer lie in individual development but in the policy of the state…The individual is increasingly deprived of the moral decision of how he should live his own life. (p.252)

Individuation means developing a commitment to resisting such immersion. Furthermore Jung saw religious experience as one means of such differentiation when he writes "each of us must ask: have I any religious experience and immediate relationship to God, and hence that certainty which will keep me, as an individual from dissolving in the crowd. (p.292) Such individuation or "becoming a person", whether supported through some religious or spiritual experience or not, is a central concern for the philosophers discussed in chapter 6. Tuttle (2012) summarises their work with the notion of 'self-creation' as a central element for human beings in the writings of those concerned with those lost in the mass. He writes

> the idea of a self-creating mission is alienating to the mass man—mass can enjoy no authentic destiny or vital project in life and attempts at self-fabrication will be minimal. While the select person will always seek a vocation in concrete life the mass man possesses no effective 'I' but his or her life consists of repeating the normative assumptions of the group" (p. 150)[15]

If Tuttle is correct, and there is much evidence to suggest this to be the case, then Arendt's identification of immersion as a feature of banality remains prevalent in the modern world. The antidote to such diminishment is found in the notion of self-creation, and self-fabrication enunciated by Tuttle as the common thread that connects the philosophical critiques of mass society. It can be said that the post-modern critique has perhaps distracted or maybe even weakened the great dominant enlightenment idea of a human person being an indivisible creature, whose life project is best understood as a process of self-creation, of individuation,

[15] Furthermore, Tuttle believes that "humanity on the whole is still rushing blindly into Ortega's technicism; into Heidegger's enframed *Gestell* such that technology is deciding our destiny and exploiting us for stockpiling and the destruction of the earth's resources; into Nietzsche's herd or slave morality, with emphasising raising standards of living without demands for leadership or setting higher goals, and into Kierkegaard's levelling, where equality is dictated, not earned, where the media are king and the vast majority are caught in confusion, alienation, isolation and despair." (p.163)

rather than sameness and conformity. A renewed emphasis or perhaps a retrieval of this dominant idea may be the best philosophy can offer for now.

Opposing Pernicious Ideology

The other main feature of mass evil is the devotion/surrender of the masses to pernicious ideology. Ideologies that facilitate evil have been identified as those that, as part of their structure, contain some form or forms of persecutory element. The specific expression of that evil is found within the third strand of Arendt's formulation of pernicious ideology. The other two strands namely: a totalising narrative and a separation from reality, are also important as they provide the umbrella under which the particular expression of evil occurs in the application of the destructive logic. The elements within the ideology that define how such evil is produced can be usefully described in terms of the Arendtian threefold structure of radical evil adumbrated in Chapter 2. above. These elements of evil, identified by Arendt, could be considered to form a calculus by which to examine any ideological system in terms of its potential for facilitating evil in its adherents. In the first instance it can take the form of identifying a particular group that will be treated outside the judicial principles that are held in general. This leads to what she terms 'killing the juridical person'. The second strand is found in those ideologies that recommend or justify causing levels of suffering that lead to individuals become morally crippled. Arendt calls this "killing the moral person". Ideologies that represent potential victims as sub human or inferior and that recommends torture/treatment in such a way that their individual humanity will be stripped from them fulfil a third form, referred above to as 'killing the soul'. All mass evil involves some variation/combination of these three elements.

Any intervention that seeks to prevent such mass evil must therefore tackle the problem of pernicious ideology. This poses serious problems for the field of philosophy for it catapults it into conflict with systems of belief that are often considered sacred and untouchable. Most of the great religious traditions, for example, carry clauses in their theology that fit the Arendtian calculus of pernicious ideology. Certain expressions of nationalism are also very close to fulfilling the requirements of perniciousness and the growing conflict with regard to the challenges presented by multiculturalism makes this issue particularly germane.

In this context Allenby (2006) argues that

> the challenge of internalizing a multiculturalism that rejects the absolutes of specific religious and belief traditions is proving a bridge too far for many,

> and as even a cursory glance at news headlines demonstrates, conflict, not agreement on foundational truths, is the immediate result. Under conditions of systems and ontological complexity which push people beyond their adaptive capacity, retreat to fundamentalism -- religious, environmental, scientific, philosophical, ideological -- is a common response. (p.1)

A key phrase here is the notion of 'adaptive capacity'. This concept may include a way to help individuals to resist the attraction of the kind of totalising ideologies that Arendt is so concerned about. This might be best formulated in terms of the question, what can increase the 'adaptive capacity' of individuals so that they can integrate new ideological frames that are inclusive and benign. This idea relates well to the discussion above where Ricoeur (1987) suggests that "the integrative function of ideology prevents us from pushing its polemical element to its destructive point… The point then is really to integrate and not to suppress or destroy one's enemy". (p.263) The task for philosophy would then be to prevent ideology from losing this integrative function, whereby for Ricoeur 'the integrative function becomes frozen, when it becomes rhetorical in the bad sense, when schematization and rationalisation prevail". (p.266) This proves to be a great challenge because it poses the question as to whether it is possible for such a form of ideology to exist. It is beyond the scope of this work to fully explore this matter. Perhaps the limit of the work here to accept that Arendt has given us the possibility of identifying the structure of pernicious ideology, and in doing so provides the grounds for challenging those susceptible to its embrace. This is at the very least a useful beginning.

As a final conclusion to this thesis it seems important to reiterate the extent of its scope as it relates to the problem of evil. More specifically it is considered relevant to state clearly that Arendt did not suggest at any point that evil is banal, nor did she suggest that her account of a particular expression of evil in the world was all encompassing. Equally, the content of this research project is limited to explicating a very specific corner of the universe of evil as it plays out its deadly game in the human condition. That corner can be usefully described as seeking out some way of understanding the process by which ordinary people who, undriven by malevolence, can engage in colluding with, and to varied extents actualising evil, insofar as their efforts or negligence brings great expanses of suffering and destruction into the world. As a result of this investigation certain measures have emerged that can assist in limiting this human defect. In conclusion it seems particularly appropriate to end with

Arendt's (1994) evocation that, in the context of all the complexities that go to make up the human story of evil:

> This, however is certain: Upon them and only upon them, who are filled with a genuine fear of the inescapable guilt of the human race, can there be any reliance when it comes to fighting fearlessly, uncompromisingly, everywhere against the incalculable evil that men are capable of bringing about. (p.132)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hannah Arendt. Core Texts

1964	"Personal Responsibility under Dictatorship," lecture---1964 The Hannah Arendt Papers at the Library of Congress Essays and lectures---" (1 of 2 folders) (Series: Speeches and Writings File, 1923-1975,
1970	On Violence. Harcourt. New York. 1970
1971	"Thinking and Moral Considerations". Social Research, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Autumn 1971), pp. 417-446
1978	The Life of the Mind: Thinking. Secker and Warburg. London (1978)
1985	The Origins of Totalitarianism. Harcourt Brace and Co. New York. 19851983 Men in Dark Times. Harcourt Brace and Co. New York. 1983
1989	Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy. University of Chicago Press 1989
1993	Between Past and Future. Penguin. New York. 1993
1994	Essays in Understanding. 1930-1954 Formation, Exile,and Totalitarianism. Schocken. New York. 1994
1995	Men in Dark Times. Brace and Co. London.1995
1998	The Human Condition 2nd Ed. Chicago University Press. Chicago 1998
2000	The Portable Hannah Arendt. Ed. Baehr. P. Penguin Classics. New York. 2000
2003	Responsibility and Judgement New York. Schocken. 2003
2006	Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil. Penguin Books. New York. 2006.

Secondary Literature

Agamben G	Remnants of Auschwitz. The Witness and the Archive. Zone Books New York. 1999
_____	The Omnibus Homo Sacer. Stanford University Press. Stanford. 2017
Aharony. M.	Hannah Arendt and the Idea of Total Domination. Holocaust and Genocide Studies 24, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 193–224
Allenby. B.	Ideology, Totalizing Discourses, and Authenticity. Greenbiz Webcasts. April 30th 2006. https://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2006/04/30/ideology-totalizing-discourses and-authenticity
Althusser. L.	Essays on Ideology. Verso. London. 1984
Alvarez. A.	Genocidal Crimes. Routledge. New York. 2010
Amery. J.	At the mind's limits: contemplations by a survivor of Auschwitz and its realities. London: Granta: 1999.
Aron. R.	The Opium of the Intellectuals (Trans by Terence Kilmartin) Norton. New York.1960.
Aronson. E.	The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance: A Current Perspective. Advances in Experimental Social Psychology. 4. (1969) pp. 1-34
Augustine. St.	Augustine Essentials: The Complete Unabridged Texts. Revelation Insight Publishing. New York. 2009
Baofu. P	Beyond Ethics to Post Ethics: A Preface to a New Theory of Morality and Immorality. Information Age Publishing. Charlotte NC. 2012
Balfour. D.L.	Review. Hitler's Bureaucrats: The Nazi Security Police and the Banality of Evil by Yaacov Lozowick. Administrative Theory and Praxis. Vol 25, No. 1. 2003. pp. 143-153
Bandura, A. (1999).	Moral disengagement in the perpetration of inhumanities. Personality and Social Psychology Review. [Special Issue on Evil and Violence],1999 3, pp193-209.
Barak. Y.	Increased Risk of Attempted Suicide Among Aging Holocaust Survivors. The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry Volume 13, Issue 8, August 2005, Pages 701-704
Basu. S.	Rethinking Knowledge as Ideology. Social Scientist. Vol 40. No1/2 Jan-Feb 2012 pp. 69-80

Bauman. Z.	Modernity and the Holocaust. Cornell University Press. 1991.
Baumeister. R.F.	Human evil: The myth of pure evil and the true causes of violence. In M. Mikulincer & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), Herzliya series on personality and social psychology. The social psychology of morality: Exploring the causes of good and evil (pp. 367-380). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association. 2012
_____	Evil: Inside Human Violence and Cruelty. Freeman and Co. New York. 1997
Bat-Ami B.	On. Terrorism, Evil and Everyday Depravity. Hypatia, Vol. 18, No. 1, Feminist Philosophy and the Problem of Evil. (Winter, 2003) pp. 157-163
Becker. E.	Escape from Evil. Free Press. New York. 1975
Bentham. J.	The Principles of Morals and Legislation. Prometheus Books. London. 1988
Bergen. B.J.	The Banality of Evil: Hannah Arendt and the "Final Solution" Rowman and Littlefield. Lanham Md. 1998
Berman. M.	Coming to our Senses. Body and Spirit in the Hidden History of the West. Echo Point Books and Media. New York. 2015
Bernstein. R.J.	Are Arendt's Reflections on Evil Still Relevant? The Review of Politics 70 (2008), pp.64-76.
Birmingham. P.	Holes of Oblivion: The Banality of Radical Evil. Hypatia. Vol 18. No. 1 (Winter 2003) pp. 80-103
_____	Hannah Arendt and Human Rights: The Predicament of Common Responsibility. Indiana University Press. Bloomington. 2006
Bloom. A.	The Closing of the American Mind: how higher education has failed democracy and impoverished the souls of today's students. Harmondsworth. Penguin. New York. 1988.
Boggs. C.	The Socialist Tradition. From Crisis to Decline. Routledge. New York. 1995
Boobbyer. P.	The Stalin Era. Routledge. New York. 2000
Borges. J. L.	'A Problem' In Collected Fictions, (trans Hurley. A.) Penguin Books New York. 1999. pp.308-309.
Boym. S.	Mimicry and the Soviet Subject: Varlam Shalamov and Hannah Arendt. Slavic Review. Vol 67. No 2. (Summer 2008) pp 342-363

Brantlinger. P.	Bread and Circuses: Theories of Mass Cultures as Social Decay. Cornell University Press. London. 1983
Brenner, C.	The Psychoanalytic Concept of Aggression. Int. J. Psycho-Analysis, 52:137-144. 1971
Brisson. S.	Aftermath: Violence and the remaking of the self. Princeton University Press. 2002
Browning C.	Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland. Penguin Books. London. 2001
_____	Fateful months: essays on the emergence of the final solution. Holmes & Meier. London 1985
Calder. T.	The Concept of Evil. Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. Winter. 2014 pp. 1-44
Card. C.	The Atrocity Paradigm. A Theory of Evil. Oxford University Press. New York. 2002
Carnahan. T. McFarland.S.	"Revisiting the Stanford prison experiment: could participant self-selection have led to the cruelty?". Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin. 33 (5): 603–14.2007
Chomsky. N.	Necessary Illusions. Thought Control in Democratic Societies. House of Anansi Press. Ontario. 2003
Clendinnen. I.	Reading the Holocaust. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press. 1999
Cole. P.	The Myth of Evil: Demonising the Enemy. Edinburgh University Press. Edinburgh. 2006.
Craft. C.	Why are families being separated at the US border? The Guardian. International Edition. Mon June 18th. 2018
Dawes. J.	Evil Men. Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts. 2014
De Tocqueville A	Selections from Democracy in America. Wildside Press. Holicog. 2008
Delbanco A	The Death of Satan. How Americans have lost the sense of evil. Farrar Straus and Gitoux. New York. 1995
Des Pres. T.	The Survivor : An anatomy of life in the death camps. New York : Oxford University Press 1976
Dixon, P., O'Kane, E.,	Northern Ireland since 1969. Pearson. Harlow. 2011
Dorris. J.	Lack of Character: Personality and Moral Behaviour. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge 2010

Dossa. S.	Hannah Arendt on Eichmann: The Public, The Private and Evil The Review of Politics. Vol. 46, No. 2 pp. 163-182
Dostoyevsky. F.	Notes from the Underground. Dover Publications. New York.1992
_____	The Brothers Karamazov. Wordsworth Classics. Hertfordshire. 2007
DSM-5	Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders : DSM-5. American Psychiatric Association. Arlington, Va. 2013 5th ed.
Durham. J.	Durkheim on the Sacred. http//www.bytrentsacred.co.uk. 2001
Durkheim. E.	The elementary forms of the religious life. Allen and Unwin London 1976 .
Eagleton. T.	Ideology. Longman. London. 1994
Ehrenreich. B.	Smile Or Die : How Positive Thinking Fooled America and the World. Granta Books. London.2010
Erfourth. M	The Voegelin Enigma. The American Interest. Dec 10th 2014 https://www.the-american-interest.com/2014/12/10/the-voegelin-enigma/
Erikson. E. H.	Childhood and Society. Norton, New York. 1964
_____	Identity and the Life Cycle. Norton & Co. New York. 1994
Evans, R. E.	Nazism, Christianity and Political Religion: A Debate. Journal of Contemporary History, Vol. 42, No. 1. Sage Publications, Ltd., January, 2007.
Evans S. Walsh. E.	in Fear and Trembling. Kierkegaard. S. Cambridge University Press. New York. 2006
Ezra. M.	The Eichmann Polemics: Hannah Arendt and Her Critics. Democratiya No 9 Summer 2007 pp. 141-165.
Figes. O.	The Whisperers. Private Lives in Stalin's Russia. Penguin. London. 2007
Florence R.	Emissary of the Doomed: Bargaining for Lives in the Holocaust. Viking Press. New York. 2010
Formosa. P	Kant on the Radical Evil of Human Nature. The Philosophical Forum. 2007. pp 221-245
Frankl. V.	Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy. Beacon Press. Boston. 1992
Freeden. M	Ideology. Oxford University Press. 2003

Freud. S.	Civilization and its Discontents trans. James Strachey. London. Norton and Co. 1961
_____	The Future of An Illusion. Norton. New York. 1961
Fromm. E.	The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness. Harmondsworth Penguin. London. 1973
_____	Escape from Freedom. Holt Paperbacks, New York. 1969
Garrard. E.	Evil as an Explanatory Concept. The Monist, Vol. 85, No. 2, Evil (April 2002), pp. 320-336
Garrard E. Scarre. G	Moral Philosophy and the Holocaust. Ashgate Publishing. Altershot. UK. 2003
Gentile. E.	Politics as Religion. Princeton University Press. Princeton. 2006.
Geras. N.	In a Class of its Own. In Moral Philosophy and the Holocaust. Eds. Garrard. E. Scarre.G. Ashgate Publishing. Altershot. UK. 2003 pp. 25-55.
Goethe. L.	"Letter to Herder, June 7th cited in. Paul Wilford. A Look at Kantian Theodicy: Rational Faith and the Idea of History. American Dialectic, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2014 (172-203)
Goldenberg. D.	The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Princeton University Press. Princeton. 2003
Goldhagen, D.J.	Hitler's Willing Executioners. Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust. Abacus. London 1997
_____	Healers as Killers https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/the-nazi-doctors-by-robert-jay-lifton/ Dec 1983
Gray. J.	Straw Dogs : Thoughts on Humans and other Animals. Granta. London. 2002
Grant. R.W.	In Search of Goodness. University of Chicago Press. Chicago. 2011
Gregory. D.	The Black Flag.: Guantanamo Bay and the State of Exception. Human Geography Vol 88, No. 4. (2006) pp 405-427
Griffin. J. Tyrell I.	Human Givens. A new approach to emotional health and clear thinking. London. HG Publishing 2004
Halpern. D.F.	Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking Psychology Press. New York. 2013
Harari. Y.N.	Homo Deus. A Brief History of Tomorrow. Harville Secker. London 2016

_____	21 Lessons for the 21st Century. Jonathan Cape. London 2018
Hartouni, Valerie	Visualizing Atrocity: Arendt, Evil, and the Optics of Thoughtlessness . New York University Press 2012
Haritos-Fatouros, M.	The official torturer: A learning model for obedience to the authority of violence. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 18(13), 1107-1120. 1988
Hauerwas. S.	Time Magazine. March 2003.
Hawkes. D.	Ideology. Routledge. New York. 1996.
Haybron. D.M.	Moral Monsters and Saints. The Monist, Vol 85, No 2, Evil (April 2002) pp. 260-284
Hedges. C.	America. The Farewell Tour. Simon and Shuster. New York. 2018
Heidegger. M.	Being and Time. Blackwell Publishing. Oxford. 1962
_____	What is Called Thinking. (Trans Wieck. F.D. Gray. J.G.) Harper and Row. New York. 1968
Hewitt.A.	The Bad Seed: Auschwitz and the Physiology of Evil. In 'Radical Evil'. Ed. Copjec J. Verso. London 1996
Hilberg. R.	The Destruction of the European Jews. Holmes & Meier Student Edition. London. 1985
Hill. M.A.	Hannah Arendt: The Recovery of the Public World, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1979
Hitler. A.	Mein Kampf. Jaico Publishing House. Mumbai.2015
Hobbes. T.	Leviathan. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 1991
Hume. D.	Essays: Moral Political &Literary. Liberty Fund Inc. Indianapolis.1987.
Jowett. G. O'Donnell.V.	Propaganda and Persuasion. Sage Publications. London. 2007.
Jung. C.J.	Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Volume 5: Symbols of Transformation. Routledge &Kegan Paul London.1964
_____	Aion. Collected Works. Vol 9. Routledge & Kegan Paul. London. 1964
_____	Civilisation in Transition. The Collected Works. Vol 10. Routledge & Kegan Paul. London. 1964
Kant. I.	Critique of Pure Reason. Ed. Politis.V. Everyman. London. 2002.
_____	Critique of Judgement. (trans; Pluhar.W.) Hackett Publishing. Indiana. 1987

_____	Lectures on Philosophical Theology. (trans Wood. A. Clark. G.) New York. Cornell University Press. (1978)
_____	The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals. M. Gregor (Trans and ed.) Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 1997
_____	Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone. T.M. Green and H.H. Hudson (trans) Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 1978
_____	Practical Philosophy: Immanuel Kant 1724-1804. Mary J. Gregor. Cambridge University Press. New York 1996
Katz, S.T.	The Holocaust in Historical Context. Vol.1. The Holocaust and Mass Death before the Modern Age. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994
Kampowski. S	Arendt, Augustine, and the New Beginning: The Action Theory and Moral Thought of Hannah Arendt in the Light of Her Dissertation on St. Augustine. Grand Rapids. MI. Eerdmans, 2008
Kappeler. S.	The Will to Violence. The Politics of Personal Behaviour. Polity Press. Cambridge. 1995.
Kekes. J.	Facing Evil. Princeton University Press. Princeton. 1990
_____	The Roots of Evil. Cornell University Press. New York. 2005
Kershaw. I.	Hitler, 1889-1936: Hubris. Norton and Co. London. 2000
Kierkegaard. S.	The Sickness unto Death: A Christian Psychological Exposition for the Upbuilding and Awakening. Trans Hong. H., Hong. E. Princeton University Press. New Jersey. 1980
_____	Fear and Trembling. Evans S. Walsh. E. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. New York. 2006
Klabunde. A.	Magda Goebbels. Sphere. London. 2003
Kohlberg. L.	The Philosophy of Moral Development: Moral Stages and the Idea of Justice: 1 (Essays on moral development) Harper Collins. New York. 1981
Kotkin. S.	Stalin: Waiting for Hitler. Penguin. New York. 2017
Lackey. D.	Four Types of Murderers: Stalin, Hitler, Churchill, Truman. In Moral Philosophy and the Holocaust. Eds. Garrard. E. Scarre. G. Ashgate. Vermont. 2003. pp 117-136.
Lang. B.	Act and Idea in the Nazi Genocide . University of Chicago Press. Chicago 1990
Le Bon. G.	The Crowd. A Study of the Popular Mind. Dover publications. New York. 2003

Lecky. P.	Self Consistency: A Theory of Personality. Island Press. New York. 1945
Lefort. C.	Thinking with and against Hannah Arendt Social Research: An International Quarterly, Volume 69, Number 2, Summer 2002. pp. 447-459
Leibniz. G.W.	Theodicy. (abridged). G.M.Dent. London 1996
Lemke. T.	"A Zone of Indistinction"–A Critique of Giorgio Agamben's Concept of Biopolitics. Outlines. Critical Practice Studies. Vol.7(1) 2005. pp 3-13
Lemkin. R.	Axis rule in occupied Europe : laws of occupation, analysis of government, proposals for redress. Lawbook Exchange. New Jersey 2008
Levi P.	The Drowned and the Saved. London. Abacus. 1987
_____	If This is a Man. London. Michael Joseph. 1987
Lewis C.S.	Mere Christianity. Fount Paperbacks. Glasgow. 1978.
Lifton. R.J.	The Nazi Doctors. Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide. Basic Books New York 2000
Loomis. S.	Paris in the Terror. Lippincot. Philadelphia. 1964.
Lorenz. C.	On Aggression. Methuen. London. 1963
Lozowick Y. (2002)	Hitler's Bureaucrats: The Nazi Security Police and the Banality of Evil. Continuum. New York. 2002
Lyotard. J.F.	The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge. Manchester University Press. Manchester. 2004.
MacCannell. J.F.	Fascism and the Voice of Conscience. In Radical Evil. Ed Joan Copjec. Verso. London 1996.
Machiavelli. N.	The Prince. Dover Publications. New York. 1992
Mackey. H.P.	Making Room for Faith: The Gospel According to Kant. The Maynooth Review / Revieú Mhá NuadVol. 3, No. 1 (Jun., 1977), pp. 20-37
Mann. M.	The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing Cambridge University Press. New York. 2005
Mannheim. K.	Ideology and Utopia. Routledge. New York. 1997
Marcuse. H.	One Dimensional Man. Sphere Books. London. 1968

Marx. K. Engels. F.	The Communist Manifesto. The Merlin Press Ltd. London. 1998
Maslow. A.	Motivation and Personality. Harper and Row. New York. 1970
Masterson. P.	Atheism and Alienation. Pelican. London. 1973
Mathewes C. T.	A Tale of Two Judgments: Bonhoeffer and Arendt on Evil, Understanding, and Limits, and the Limits of Understanding Evil. The Journal of Religion, Vol. 80 (Jul.2000) pp.375-404.
McCleery, M., J.	Debunking the Myths of Operation Demetrius: The Introduction of Internment in Northern Ireland in 1971. Irish Political Studies 27(3) 411-430 2012
Medvedev. R.	Let History Judge. The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism. (Trans. Taylor. C) Alfred Knopf. New York. 1971
Metsner. H.	Mattogno and the Activity & Situation Report of Einsatzgruppe B on its Gas Vans. http://holocaustcontroversies.blogspot.com Sept 2016
Michaelson. G.E.	Fallen Freedom: Kant on Radical Evil and Moral Regeneration. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 1998
Midgely. M.	Wickedness: A Philosophical Essay. London. Routledge. 1997
Milgram. S.	Obedience to Authority : an experimental view. London : Printer and Martin. 2005
_____	The Dilemma of Obedience. The Phi Delta Kappan Vol. 55, No. 9 (May, 1974), pp. 603-606
Miller. A.	For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-Rearing and the Roots of Violence. Farrar Strauss Giroux. New York. 1985
Monbiot. G.	How Did We Get Into This Mess. Verso. London. 2016
Morris H.	The Tattooist of Auschwitz. Zaffre Publications. New York. 2018
Moyn. S.	Hannah Arendt on the Secular. New German Critique, No. 105, Political Theology (Fall, 2008), pp.71-96
Murray. M.	"Leibniz on the Problem of Evil". The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. (Fall 2008 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.)
Nagorski. A.	In Pursuit. The Men and Women who hunted the Nazis. Simon and Schuster . London. 2016
Naimark. N.	Stalin's Genocides. Princeton University Press. Princeton. 2011

Niebuhr. R.	The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation : Human Nature Vol 1. John Knox Press. Kentucky.1941
Neiman. S.	Evil in Modern Thought. Princeton University Press. New Jersey. 2002
Nietzsche. F.	The Gay Science. Ed. Williams. B. Cambridge University Press. New York. 2001
_____	The Genealogy of Morals. (Trans Douglas Smith.) Oxford University Press. 1996
_____	Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future. (trans Kaufman. W.) Vintage Books. New York. 1998
_____	Twilight of the Idols with The Antichrist and Ecco Homo. (Trans Ludovici. A.M.) Wordsworth Classics of World Literature. Hertfortshire. 2007
_____	Untimely Meditations. Ed. Breazeale. D. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge 1997
Nisbet. R.A.	Rousseau and Totalitarianism. The Journal of Politics, Vol. 5, No. 2 (May, 1943), pp. 93-114
Novick. P.	The Holocaust and Collective Memory. Bloomsbury. London. 2003
Nozick. R.	Theological Explanations. 2001 Ploughshares, Vol. 11, No. 4. International Writing (1985), pp. 151-166
Nugent. S. M.	Five Prerequisites for Teaching Critical Thinking. Research and Teaching in Developmental Education Vol. 6, No. 2 (Spring 1990), pp. 85-96
Nussbaum. M.	The Fragility of Goodness. Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 1987.
O'Hagan. T.	Rousseau. Routledge. New York. 2003
O'Murchadha. F.	"Violence and Responsibility" in K. Breen and A. Fives: Philosophy and Public Matters. London: Palgrave, pp. 245-262.
Ortega. Y. Gassett.	The Revolt of the Masses. Allen and Unwin. London. 1961
Orwell. G.	1984. Penguin . London. 2008
Peterson. J.	Maps of Meaning. The Architecture of Belief. Routledge. New York. 1999
Rand. A.	Atlas Shrugged. Penguin Modern Classics. London. 2007
Rank. O.	Beyond Psychology. Dover Publications. New York. 2012

Reiterman. T.	Raven: The Untold Story of the Rev. Jim Jones and His People. E.P. Dutton. Boston. 1982
Ressler. R. Shachtman. T.	Whoever Fights Monsters. St. Martin's Press. New York. 1993
Ricoeur P.	The Symbolism of Evil. trans, E,Buchanon. Boston. Beacon Press. 1967
_____	Lectures on Ideology and Utopia. George H Taylor (George Howard) : Columbia University Press New York, 1986
_____	Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers. Delhi. 2008
_____	The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur. Ed. Lewis Edwin Hahn Open Court. La Salle. Ill. 1995
Robinson. J.	And the crooked shall be made straight: The Eichmann trial, the Jewish catastrophe, and Hannah Arendt's narrative. Macmillan. New York. 1965.
Roderick. R.	The Self Under Siege. Philosophy in the Twentieth Century. Lecture Series. The Teaching Company. Virginia. 1993 http://rickroderick.org/301-paul-ricoeur-the-masters-of-suspicion-1993/
Rogers. C.	On Becoming a Person. London. Constable. 1969
Rousset. D.	Les Jours de Notre Mort. Paris 1947. Cited in: Origins of Totalitarianism. Harcourt Brace and Co. New York. 1985 p.455.
Rousseau J.J.	Emile. J.M.Dent. London. 1993
_____	The Social Contract. Cosimo Inc. New York. 2008
Rushkoff. D.	Throwing Rocks at the Google Bus. Portfolio. New York. 2016
_____	Program or be Programmed. Ten commands for a digital age. Shoemaker Hoard, Div Of Avalon Publishing Group Inc. Washington. 2011
Russell. J.B.	The Prince of Darkness : radical evil and the power of good in history. Cornell University Press. N.Y. London . 1992
Safranski. R.	Nietzsche. A Philosophical Biography. Norton and Co. New York. 2003
Safrian. H.	Eichmann's Men. (Trans Ute.Stargardt) Cambridge University Press. Cambridge 2010
Sanford. E.	Bread and Circuses. The Classical Weekly, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Nov. 26, 1951), pp. 17-21

Shell. S.M.	Kant and the Limits of Autonomy. Harvard University Press. Boston. 2009
Singer. M.	The Concept of Evil. Philosophy. Vol 79. No 308. (Apr 2004). pp 185-214
Singer. P.	How Are We To Live? Ethics in an age of self-interest. Mandarin. London. 1993
Schmitt. C.	Carl Schmitt, Political Theology, Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty. George Schwab (trans.). University of Chicago Press. Chicago. 2005
Skinner. B. F.	Science and Human Behaviour. Free Press. New York. 1965.
Snyder T.	Black Earth. The Holocaust as History and Warning. Vintage. London. 2016
_____	On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century. Bodley Head. London. 2017
Solzhenitsyn. A.	The Gulag Archipelago. The Harville Press. London. 1986.
_____	We Never make Mistakes. Norton. London. 2003.
Stangneth. B.	Eichmann before Jerusalem: The Unexamined Life of a Mass Murderer . Alfred Knopf. New York. 2014
Staten. H.	"Radical Evil" Revived: Hitler, Kant, Luther, Neo-Lacanians. In, Modernity and the Problem of Evil. Indiana University Press. Indiana. 2005.
Stone. D.	Theoretical Interpretations of the Holocaust. Ed. Stone. D. Rodopi. Altlanta. 2001
Stone. M.	The Anatomy of Evil. Prometheus Books. New York. 2009
Styron. W.	Sophie's Choice. Random House. New York. 1979
Swatos. W. Christiano. K	Secularisation Theory: The Course of a Concept. Sociology of Religion Vol. 60, No. 3 (Autumn, 1999), pp. 209-228
Swatos.W. Olson.D.	The Secularisation Debate. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers. New York. 2000
Tenenbaum. J.	The Einsatzgruppen. Jewish Social Studies Vol. 17, No. 1 (Jan., 1955), pp. 43-64
Tuttle. H.N.	The Crowd is Untruth. The Existential Critique of Mass Society in the Thought of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Ortega y Gasset. Peter Lang. New York. 2012
Twenge J.M. Campbell. W.	The Narcissism Epidemic. Living in the Age of Entitlement. Atria. New York. 2013.

Vaksberg, A.	Stalin's Prosecutor: The Life of Andrei Vyshinsky. Grove Weidenfeld. New York., 1990.
Valent. P	From Survival to Fulfilment: a framework for the life-trauma dialectic. Philadelphia. Brunner/Mazel. 1998
Van Dijk. T.	Ideology. A Multidisciplinary Approach. Sage Publications. London. 2000.
Vardy. S. Vardy. A.	Cannibalism in Stalin's Russia and Mao's China. East European Quarterly. XLI, No. 2 June 2002. Pp. 223-238
Velleman. D. J.	From Self Psychology to Moral Philosophy. Philosophical Perspectives, Vol 14, Action and Freedom (2000), pp 349-377
Villa, Dana	Beyond Good and Evil: Arendt, Nietzsche, and the Aestheticization of Political Action" Political Theory Vol. 20, No. 2 (May, 1992), pp. 274-308
Vitz. P.	Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self Worship. Eerdmans. Michigan 1977
Voegelin. E.	Modernity Without Restraint: The Political Religions, The New Science of Politics, and Science, Politics, and Gnosticism (Collected Works of Eric Voegelin, Volume 5) Univ of Missouri Press. Missouri. 2000
_____	Debating Totalitarianism: An Exchange of letters between Hannah Arendt and Eric Voegelin. Author(s): Peter Baehr and Gordon. C. Wells. History and Theory Vol. 51, No. 3 (October 2012), pp. 364-380
Waller. J.	Becoming Evil: How people commit genocide and mass killing Oxford University Press. New York. 2002
Weber. M.	The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. Allen and Unwin. London. 1976.
Westen, D.; Blagov, P.	Neural Bases of Motivated Reasoning: An fMRI Study of Emotional Constraints on Partisan Political Judgment in the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election. Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience. 18 (11): 2005 pp.1947–1958.
Weintraub. K.	The Value of the Individual: Self and Circumstance in Autobiography. University of Chicago Press. Chicago.1978.
Whitfield S.J.	Hannah Arendt and the Banality of Evil. The History Teacher. Vol 14 (Aug. 1981) pp 469-481
Willoughby. R.	North Korea. Vol 3. The Bradt Travel Guides. The Globe Pequot Press. Connecticut 2014.

Zapotoczny. W.S.	Beyond Duty. Why Some Soldiers Commit Atrocities. Fonthill Media Ltd. London. 2017
Zimbardo. P.	The Stanford Prison Experiment. A Simulation Study of the Psychology of Imprisonment. Stanford University Press. 1971
Zimbardo. P	The Lucifer Effect. Rider. London 2007.
Zimmerman. M. E.	Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity. Indiana University Press. Bloomington. 1990.
Zias. J.	Crucifixion in Antiquity. The Anthropological Evidence. Centre for Online Judaic Studies. http://cojs.org/joe-zias-crucifixion-in-antiquity-the-anthropological-evidence/
Zizek. S.	The Sublime Object of Ideology. Verso. London 1989
Zizek. S.	The Courage of Hopelessness. Chronicles of a year of Living Dangerously. Penguin. London 2017.
_____	The Dark Matter of Violence. In; In Defence of the Terror: Liberty or Death in the French Revolution. Wahnich. S. Verso. London.2012 pp. xi-xxx
Zizek. S. Herscher. A	Everything Provokes Fascism/Plečnik avec Laibach. Assemblage No. 33 (Aug., 1997), pp. 58-75
Zubok. V.	Totalitarian Societies and Democratic Transition. Central European University Press. New York. 2017