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is always concerned with the same object. If the sameness of the object can no longer be discerned, no common nature of men, least of all the unnatural conformism of a mass society, can prevent the destruction of the common world, which is usually preceded by the destruction of the many aspects in which it presents itself to human plurality. This can happen under conditions of radical isolation, where nobody can any longer agree with anybody else, as is usually the case in tyrannies. But it may also happen under conditions of mass society or mass hysteria, where we see all people suddenly behave as though they were members of one family, each multiplying and prolonging the perspective of his neighbor. In both instances, men have become entirely private, that is, they have been deprived of seeing and hearing others, of being seen and being heard by them. They are all imprisoned in the subjectivity of their own singular experience, which does not cease to be singular if the same experience is multiplied innumerable times. The end of the common world has come when it is seen only under one aspect and is permitted to present itself in only one perspective.

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THE PRIVATE REALM: PROPERTY

It is with respect to this multiple significance of the public realm that the term "private," in its original privative sense, has meaning. To live an entirely private life means above all to be deprived of things essential to a truly human life: to be deprived of the reality that comes from being seen and heard by others, to be deprived of an "objective" relationship with them that comes from being related to and separated from them through the intermediary of a common world of things, to be deprived of the possibility of achieving something more permanent than life itself. The privation of privacy lies in the absence of others; as far as they are concerned, private man does not appear, and therefore it is as though he did not exist. Whatever he does remains without significance and consequence to others, and what matters to him is without interest to other people.

Under modern circumstances, this deprivation of "objective"

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relationships to others and of a reality guaranteed through them has become the mass phenomenon of loneliness, where it has assumed its most extreme and most antihuman form.⁵² The reason for this extremity is that mass society not only destroys the public realm but the private as well, deprives men not only of their place in the world but of their private home, where they once felt sheltered against the world and where, at any rate, even those excluded from the world could find a substitute in the warmth of the hearth and the limited reality of family life. The full development of the life of hearth and family into an inner and private space we owe to the extraordinary political sense of the Roman people who, unlike the Greeks, never sacrificed the private to the public, but on the contrary understood that these two realms could exist only in the form of coexistence. And although the conditions of slaves probably were hardly better in Rome than in Athens, it is quite characteristic that a Roman writer should have believed that to slaves the household of the master was what the *res publica* was to citizens.⁵³ Yet no matter how bearable private life in the family might have been, it could obviously never be more than a substitute, even though the private realm in Rome as in Athens offered plenty of room for activities which we today class higher than political activity, such as the accumulation of wealth in Greece or the devotion to art and science in Rome. This "liberal" attitude, which could under certain circumstances result in very prosperous and highly educated slaves, meant only that to be prosperous had no reality in the Greek *polis* and to be a philosopher was without much consequence in the Roman republic.⁵⁴

52. For modern loneliness as a mass phenomenon see David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd* (1950).

53. So Plinius Junior, quoted in W. L. Westermann, "Sklaverei," in Pauly-Wissowa, Suppl. VI, p. 1045.

54. There is plenty of evidence for this different estimation of wealth and culture in Rome and Greece. But it is interesting to note how consistently this estimate coincided with the position of slaves. Roman slaves played a much greater role in Roman culture than in Greece, where, on the other hand, their role in economic life was much more important (see Westermann, in Pauly-Wissowa, p. 984).

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It is a matter of course that the privative trait of privacy, the consciousness of being deprived of something essential in a life spent exclusively in the restricted sphere of the household, should have been weakened almost to the point of extinction by the rise of Christianity. Christian morality, as distinguished from its fundamental religious precepts, has always insisted that everybody should mind his own business and that political responsibility constituted first of all a burden, undertaken exclusively for the sake of the well-being and salvation of those it freed from worry about public affairs.⁵⁵ It is surprising that this attitude should have survived into the secular modern age to such an extent that Karl Marx, who in this as in other respects only summed up, conceptualized, and transformed into a program the underlying assumptions of two hundred years of modernity, could eventually predict and hope for the “withering away” of the whole public realm. The difference between the Christian and socialist viewpoints in this respect, the one viewing government as a necessary evil because of man’s sinfulness and the other hoping to abolish it eventually, is not a difference in estimate of the public sphere itself, but of human nature. What is impossible to perceive from either point of view is that Marx’s “withering away of the state” had been preceded by a withering away of the public realm, or rather by its transformation into a very restricted sphere of government; in Marx’s day, this government had already begun to wither further, that is, to be transformed into a nation-wide “housekeeping,” until in our own day it has begun to disappear altogether into the even more restricted, impersonal sphere of administration.

It seems to be in the nature of the relationship between the public and private realms that the final stage of the disappearance

55. Augustine (*De civitate Dei* xix. 19) sees in the duty of *caritas* toward the *utilitas proximi* (“the interest of one’s neighbor”) the limitation of *otium* and contemplation. But “in active life, it is not the honors or power of this life we should covet, . . . but the welfare of those who are under us [*salutem subditorum*].” Obviously, this kind of responsibility resembles the responsibility of the household head for his family more than political responsibility, properly speaking. The Christian precept to mind one’s own business is derived from I Thess. 4: 11: “that ye study to be quiet and to do your own business” (*prattein ta idia*, whereby *ta idia* is understood as opposed to *ta koina* [“public common affairs”]).

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of the public realm should be accompanied by the threatened liquidation of the private realm as well. Nor is it an accident that the whole discussion has eventually turned into an argument about the desirability or undesirability of privately owned property. For the word "private" in connection with property, even in terms of ancient political thought, immediately loses its privative character and much of its opposition to the public realm in general; property apparently possesses certain qualifications which, though lying in the private realm, were always thought to be of utmost importance to the political body.

The profound connection between private and public, manifest on its most elementary level in the question of private property, is likely to be misunderstood today because of the modern equation of property and wealth on one side and propertylessness and poverty on the other. This misunderstanding is all the more annoying as both, property as well as wealth, are historically of greater relevance to the public realm than any other private matter or concern and have played, at least formally, more or less the same role as the chief condition for admission to the public realm and full-fledged citizenship. It is therefore easy to forget that wealth and property, far from being the same, are of an entirely different nature. The present emergence everywhere of actually or potentially very wealthy societies which at the same time are essentially propertyless, because the wealth of any single individual consists of his share in the annual income of society as a whole, clearly shows how little these two things are connected.

Prior to the modern age, which began with the expropriation of the poor and then proceeded to emancipate the new propertyless classes, all civilizations have rested upon the sacredness of private property. Wealth, on the contrary, whether privately owned or publicly distributed, had never been sacred before. Originally, property meant no more or less than to have one's location in a particular part of the world and therefore to belong to the body politic, that is, to be the head of one of the families which together constituted the public realm. This piece of privately owned world was so completely identical with the family who owned it⁵⁶ that

56. Coulanges (*op. cit.*) holds: "The true signification of *familia* is property; it designates the field, the house, money, and slaves" (p. 107). Yet, this "prop-

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the expulsion of a citizen could mean not merely the confiscation of his estate but the actual destruction of the building itself.⁵⁷ The wealth of a foreigner or a slave was under no circumstances a substitute for this property,⁵⁸ and poverty did not deprive the head of a family of this location in the world and the citizenship resulting from it. In early times, if he happened to lose his location, he almost automatically lost his citizenship and the protection of the law as well.⁵⁹ The sacredness of this privacy was like the sacredness of the hidden, namely, of birth and death, the beginning and end of the mortals who, like all living creatures, grow out of and return to the darkness of an underworld.⁶⁰ The non-privative trait of the household realm originally lay in its being the realm of birth and death which must be hidden from the public realm because it harbors the things hidden from human eyes and

erty" is not seen as attached to the family; on the contrary, "the family is attached to the hearth, the hearth is attached to the soil" (p. 62). The point is: "The fortune is immovable like the hearth and the tomb to which it is attached. It is the man who passes away" (p. 74).

57. Levasseur (*op. cit.*) relates the medieval foundation of a community and the conditions of admission to it: "Il ne suffisait pas d'habiter la ville pour avoir droit à cette admission. Il fallait . . . posséder une maison. . . ." Furthermore: "Toute injure proférée en public contre la commune entraînait la démolition de la maison et le bannissement du coupable" (p. 240, including n. 3).

58. The distinction is most obvious in the case of slaves who, though without property in the ancient understanding (that is, without a place of their own), were by no means propertyless in the modern sense. The *peculium* (the "private possession of a slave") could amount to considerable sums and even contain slaves of his own (*vicarii*). Barrow speaks of "the property which the humblest of his class possessed" (*Slavery in the Roman Empire*, p. 122; this work is the best report on the role of the *peculium*).

59. Coulanges reports a remark of Aristotle that in ancient times the son could not be a citizen during the lifetime of his father; upon his death, only the eldest son enjoyed political rights (*op. cit.*, p. 228). Coulanges holds that the Roman *plebs* originally consisted of people without home and hearth, that it therefore was clearly distinct from the *populus Romanus* (pp. 229 ff.).

60. "The whole of this religion was inclosed within the walls of each house. . . . All these gods, the Hearth, the Lares, and the Manes, were called the hidden gods, or gods of the interior. To all the acts of this religion secrecy was necessary, *sacrificia occulta*, as Cicero said (*De arusp. respl.* 17)" (Coulanges, *op. cit.*, p. 37).

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impenetrable to human knowledge.⁶¹ It is hidden because man does not know where he comes from when he is born and where he goes when he dies.

Not the interior of this realm, which remains hidden and of no public significance, but its exterior appearance is important for the city as well, and it appears in the realm of the city through the boundaries between one household and the other. The law originally was identified with this boundary line,⁶² which in ancient times was still actually a space, a kind of no man's land⁶³ between the private and the public, sheltering and protecting both realms while, at the same time, separating them from each other. The law of the *polis*, to be sure, transcended this ancient understanding from which, however, it retained its original spatial significance. The law of the city-state was neither the content of political action (the idea that political activity is primarily legislating, though Roman in origin, is essentially modern and found its greatest expression in Kant's political philosophy) nor was it a catalogue of prohibitions, resting, as all modern laws still do, upon the Thou Shalt Nots of the Decalogue. It was quite literally a

61. It seems as though the Eleusinian Mysteries provided for a common and quasi-public experience of this whole realm, which, because of its very nature and even though it was common to all, needed to be hidden, kept secret from the public realm: Everybody could participate in them, but nobody was permitted to talk about them. The mysteries concerned the unspeakable, and experiences beyond speech were non-political and perhaps antipolitical by definition (see Karl Kerényi, *Die Geburt der Helena* [1943-45], pp. 48 ff.). That they concerned the secret of birth and death seems proved by a fragment of Pindar: *oide men biou teleutan, oiden de diosdoton archan* (frag. 137a), where the initiated is said to know "the end of life and the Zeus-given beginning."

62. The Greek word for law, *nomos*, derives from *nemein*, which means to distribute, to possess (what has been distributed), and to dwell. The combination of law and hedge in the word *nomos* is quite manifest in a fragment of Heraclitus: *machesthai chrē ton dēmon hyper tou nomou hokōsper teicheos* ("the people should fight for the law as for a wall"). The Roman word for law, *lex*, has an entirely different meaning; it indicates a formal relationship between people rather than the wall that separates them from others. But the boundary and its god, Terminus, who separated the *agrum publicum a privato* (Livius) was more highly revered than the corresponding *theoi horoi* in Greece.

63. Coulanges reports an ancient Greek law according to which two buildings never were permitted to touch (*op. cit.*, p. 63).

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wall, without which there might have been an agglomeration of houses, a town (*asty*), but not a city, a political community. This wall-like law was sacred, but only the inclosure was political.⁶⁴ Without it a public realm could no more exist than a piece of property without a fence to hedge it in; the one harbored and inclosed political life as the other sheltered and protected the biological life process of the family.⁶⁵

It is therefore not really accurate to say that private property, prior to the modern age, was thought to be a self-evident condition for admission to the public realm; it is much more than that. Privacy was like the other, the dark and hidden side of the public realm, and while to be political meant to attain the highest possibility of human existence, to have no private place of one's own (like a slave) meant to be no longer human.

Of an altogether different and historically later origin is the political significance of private wealth from which one draws the means of one's livelihood. We mentioned earlier the ancient identification of necessity with the private realm of the household, where each had to master the necessities of life for himself. The free man, who disposed of his own privacy and was not, like a slave, at the disposition of a master, could still be "forced" by poverty. Poverty forces the free man to act like a slave.⁶⁶ Private wealth, therefore, became a condition for admission to public life not because its owner was engaged in accumulating it but, on the contrary, because it assured with reasonable certainty that its owner would not have to engage in providing for himself the

64. The word *polis* originally connoted something like a "ring-wall," and it seems the Latin *urbs* also expressed the notion of a "circle" and was derived from the same root as *orbis*. We find the same connection in our word "town," which originally, like the German *Zaun*, meant a surrounding fence (see R. B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought* [1954], p. 444, n. 1).

65. The legislator therefore did not need to be a citizen and frequently was called in from the outside. His work was not political; political life, however, could begin only after he had finished his legislation.

66. Demosthenes *Orations* 57. 45: "Poverty forces the free to do many slavish and base things" (*polla doulika kai tapeina pragmata tous eleutherous hē penia bizetai poiein*).

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means of use and consumption and was free for public activity.⁶⁷ Public life, obviously, was possible only after the much more urgent needs of life itself had been taken care of. The means to take care of them was labor, and the wealth of a person therefore was frequently counted in terms of the number of laborers, that is, slaves, he owned.⁶⁸ To own property meant here to be master over one's own necessities of life and therefore potentially to be a free person, free to transcend his own life and enter the world all have in common.

Only with the emergence of such a common world in concrete tangibility, that is, with the rise of the city-state, could this kind of private ownership acquire its eminent political significance, and it is therefore almost a matter of course that the famous "disdain for menial occupations" is not yet to be found in the Homeric world. If the property-owner chose to enlarge his property instead of using it up in leading a political life, it was as though he willingly sacrificed his freedom and became voluntarily what the slave was against his own will, a servant of necessity.⁶⁹

67. This condition for admission to the public realm was still in existence in the earlier Middle Ages. The English "Books of Customs" still drew "a sharp distinction between the craftsman and the freeman, *franke homme*, of the town. . . . If a craftsman became so rich that he wished to become a freeman, he must first foreswear his craft and get rid of all his tools from his house" (W. J. Ashley, *op. cit.*, p. 83). It was only under the rule of Edward III that the craftsmen became so rich that "instead of the craftsmen being incapable of citizenship, citizenship came to be bound up with membership of one of the companies" (p. 89).

68. Coulanges, in distinction from other authors, stresses the time- and strength-consuming activities demanded from an ancient citizen, rather than his "leisure," and sees rightly that Aristotle's statement that no man who had to work for his livelihood could be a citizen is a simple statement of fact rather than the expression of a prejudice (*op. cit.*, pp. 335 ff.). It is characteristic of the modern development that riches as such, regardless of the occupation of their owner, became a qualification for citizenship: only now was it a mere privilege to be a citizen, unconnected with any specifically political activities.

69. This seems to me to be the solution of the "well-known puzzle in the study of the economic history of the ancient world that industry developed up to a certain point, but stopped short of making progress which might have been expected. . . . [in view of the fact that] thoroughness and capacity for organization on a large scale is shown by the Romans in other departments, in the public services and the army" (Barrow, *Slavery in the Roman Empire*, pp. 109-10). It

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Up to the beginning of the modern age, this kind of property had never been held to be sacred, and only where wealth as the source of income coincided with the piece of land on which a family was located, that is, in an essentially agricultural society, could these two types of property coincide to such an extent that all property assumed the character of sacredness. Modern advocates of private property, at any rate, who unanimously understand it as privately owned wealth and nothing else, have little cause to appeal to a tradition according to which there could be no free public realm without a proper establishment and protection of privacy. For the enormous and still proceeding accumulation of wealth in modern society, which was started by expropriation—the expropriation of the peasant classes which in turn was the almost accidental consequence of the expropriation of Church and monastic property after the Reformation⁷⁰—has never shown

seems a prejudice due to modern conditions to expect the same capacity for organization in private as in “public services.” Max Weber, in his remarkable essay (*op. cit.*) had already insisted on the fact that ancient cities were rather “centers of consumption than of production” and that the ancient slave owner was a “rentier and not a capitalist [*Unternehmer*]” (pp. 13, 22 ff., and 144). The very indifference of ancient writers to economic questions, and the lack of documents in this respect, give additional weight to Weber’s argument.

70. All histories of the working class, that is, a class of people who are without any property and live only from the work of their hands, suffer from the naïve assumption that there has always been such a class. Yet, as we saw, even slaves were not without property in antiquity, and the so-called free labor in antiquity usually turns out to consist of “free shopkeepers, traders and craftsmen” (Barrow, *Slavery in the Roman Empire*, p. 126). M. E. Park (*The Plebs Urbana in Cicero’s Day* [1921]), therefore, comes to the conclusion that there was no free labor, since the free man always appears to be an owner of some sort. W. J. Ashley sums up the situation in the Middle Ages up to the fifteenth century: “There was as yet no large class of wage laborers, no ‘working class’ in the modern sense of the term. By ‘working men,’ we mean a number of men, from among whom individuals may indeed rise to become masters, but the majority of whom cannot hope ever to rise to a higher position. But in the fourteenth century a few years’ work as a journeyman was but a stage through which the poorer men had to pass, while the majority probably set up for themselves as master craftsmen as soon as apprenticeship was over” (*op. cit.*, pp. 93–94).

Thus, the working class in antiquity was neither free nor without property; if, through manumission, the slave was given (in Rome) or had bought (in

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much consideration for private property but has sacrificed it whenever it came into conflict with the accumulation of wealth. Proudhon's dictum that property is theft has a solid basis of truth in the origins of modern capitalism; it is all the more significant that even Proudhon hesitated to accept the doubtful remedy of general expropriation, because he knew quite well that the abolition of private property, while it might cure the evil of poverty, was only too likely to invite the greater evil of tyranny.⁷¹ Since he did not distinguish between property and wealth, his two insights appear in his work like contradictions, which in fact they are not. Individual appropriation of wealth will in the long run respect private property no more than socialization of the accumulation process. It is not an invention of Karl Marx but actually in the very nature of this society itself that privacy in every sense can only hinder the development of social "productivity" and that considerations of private ownership therefore should be overruled in favor of the ever-increasing process of social wealth.⁷²

Athens) his freedom, he did not become a free laborer but instantly became an independent businessman or craftsman. ("Most slaves seem to have taken into freedom some capital of their own" to set up in trade and industry [Barrow, *Slavery in the Roman Empire*, p. 103]). And in the Middle Ages, to be a worker in the modern sense of the term was a temporary stage in one's life, a preparation for mastership and manhood. Hired labor in the Middle Ages was an exception, and the German day laborers (the *Tagelöhner* in Luther's Bible translation) or the French *manœuvres* lived outside the settled communities and were identical with the poor, the "labouring poor" in England (see Pierre Brizon, *Histoire du travail et des travailleurs* [1926], p. 40). Moreover, the fact that no code of law before the *Code Napoléon* offers any treatment of free labor (see W. Endemann, *Die Behandlung der Arbeit im Privatrecht* [1896], pp. 49, 53) shows conclusively how recent the existence of a working class is.

71. See the ingenious comment on "property is theft" which occurs in Proudhon's posthumously published *Théorie de la propriété*, pp. 209-10, where he presents property in its "egoist, satanic nature" as the "most efficient means to resist despotism without overthrowing the state."

72. I must confess that I fail to see on what grounds in present-day society liberal economists (who today call themselves conservatives) can justify their optimism that the private appropriation of wealth will suffice to guard individual liberties—that is, will fulfil the same role as private property. In a jobholding

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What we called earlier the rise of the social coincided historically with the transformation of the private care for private property into a public concern. Society, when it first entered the public realm, assumed the disguise of an organization of property-owners who, instead of claiming access to the public realm because of their wealth, demanded protection from it for the accumulation of more wealth. In the words of Bodin, government belonged to kings and property to subjects, so that it was the duty of the kings to rule in the interest of their subjects' property. "The commonwealth," as has recently been pointed out, "largely existed for the common *wealth*."⁷³

When this common wealth, the result of activities formerly banished to the privacy of the households, was permitted to take over the public realm, private possessions—which are essentially much less permanent and much more vulnerable to the mortality of their owners than the common world, which always grows out of the past and is intended to last for future generations—began to undermine the durability of the world. It is true that wealth can be accumulated to a point where no individual life-span can use it up, so that the family rather than the individual becomes its owner. Yet wealth remains something to be used and consumed no matter how many individual life-spans it may sustain. Only when wealth became capital, whose chief function was to generate more capital, did private property equal or come close to the permanence inherent in the commonly shared world.⁷⁴ How-

society, these liberties are safe only as long as they are guaranteed by the state, and even now they are constantly threatened, not by the state, but by society, which distributes the jobs and determines the share of individual appropriation.

73. R. W. K. Hinton, "Was Charles I a Tyrant?" *Review of Politics*, Vol. XVIII (January, 1956).

74. For the history of the word "capital" deriving from the Latin *caput*, which in Roman law was employed for the principal of a debt, see W. J. Ashley, *op. cit.*, pp. 429 and 433, n. 183. Only eighteenth-century writers began to use the word in the modern sense as "wealth invested in such a way as to bring gain."

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ever, this permanence is of a different nature; it is the permanence of a process rather than the permanence of a stable structure. Without the process of accumulation, wealth would at once fall back into the opposite process of disintegration through use and consumption.

Common wealth, therefore, can never become common in the sense we speak of a common world; it remained, or rather was intended to remain, strictly private. Only the government, appointed to shield the private owners from each other in the competitive struggle for more wealth, was common. The obvious contradiction in this modern concept of government, where the only thing people have in common is their private interests, need no longer bother us as it still bothered Marx, since we know that the contradiction between private and public, typical of the initial stages of the modern age, has been a temporary phenomenon which introduced the utter extinction of the very difference between the private and public realms, the submersion of both in the sphere of the social. By the same token, we are in a far better position to realize the consequences for human existence when both the public and private spheres of life are gone, the public because it has become a function of the private and the private because it has become the only common concern left.

Seen from this viewpoint, the modern discovery of intimacy seems a flight from the whole outer world into the inner subjectivity of the individual, which formerly had been sheltered and protected by the private realm. The dissolution of this realm into the social may most conveniently be watched in the progressing transformation of immobile into mobile property until eventually the distinction between property and wealth, between the *fungibles* and the *consumptibles* of Roman law, loses all significance because every tangible, "fungible" thing has become an object of "consumption"; it lost its private use value which was determined by its location and acquired an exclusively social value determined through its ever-changing exchangeability whose fluctuation could itself be fixed only temporarily by relating it to the common denominator of money.⁷⁵ Closely connected with this social evapora-

75. Medieval economic theory did not yet conceive of money as a common denominator and yardstick but counted it among the *consumptibles*.

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tion of the tangible was the most revolutionary modern contribution to the concept of property, according to which property was not a fixed and firmly located part of the world acquired by its owner in one way or another but, on the contrary, had its source in man himself, in his possession of a body and his indisputable ownership of the strength of this body, which Marx called "labor-power."

Thus modern property lost its worldly character and was located in the person himself, that is, in what an individual could lose only along with his life. Historically, Locke's assumption that the labor of one's body is the origin of property is more than doubtful; but in view of the fact that we already live under conditions where our only reliable property is our skill and our labor power, it is more than likely that it will become true. For wealth, after it became a public concern, has grown to such proportions that it is almost unmanageable by private ownership. It is as though the public realm had taken its revenge against those who tried to use it for their private interests. The greatest threat here, however, is not the abolition of private ownership of wealth but the abolition of private property in the sense of a tangible, worldly place of one's own.

In order to understand the danger to human existence from the elimination of the private realm, for which the intimate is not a very reliable substitute, it may be best to consider those non-privative traits of privacy which are older than, and independent of, the discovery of intimacy. The difference between what we have in common and what we own privately is first that our private possessions, which we use and consume daily, are much more urgently needed than any part of the common world; without property, as Locke pointed out, "the common is of no use."⁷⁶ The same necessity that, from the standpoint of the public realm, shows only its negative aspect as a deprivation of freedom possesses a driving force whose urgency is unmatched by the so-called higher desires and aspirations of man; not only will it always be the first among man's needs and worries, it will also prevent the apathy and disappearance of initiative which so obvi-

76. *Second Treatise of Civil Government*, sec. 27.

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ously threatens all overly wealthy communities.⁷⁷ Necessity and life are so intimately related and connected that life itself is threatened where necessity is altogether eliminated. For the elimination of necessity, far from resulting automatically in the establishment of freedom, only blurs the distinguishing line between freedom and necessity. (Modern discussions of freedom, where freedom is never understood as an objective state of human existence but either presents an unsolvable problem of subjectivity, of an entirely undetermined or determined will, or develops out of necessity, all point to the fact that the objective, tangible difference between being free and being forced by necessity is no longer perceived.)

The second outstanding non-privative characteristic of privacy is that the four walls of one's private property offer the only reliable hiding place from the common public world, not only from everything that goes on in it but also from its very publicity, from being seen and being heard. A life spent entirely in public, in the presence of others, becomes, as we would say, shallow. While it retains its visibility, it loses the quality of rising into sight from some darker ground which must remain hidden if it is not to lose its depth in a very real, non-subjective sense. The only efficient way to guarantee the darkness of what needs to be hidden against the light of publicity is private property, a privately owned place to hide in.⁷⁸

While it is only natural that the non-privative traits of privacy should appear most clearly when men are threatened with deprivation of it, the practical treatment of private property by premodern political bodies indicates clearly that men have always been conscious of their existence and importance. This, however, did not make them protect the activities in the private realm directly, but rather the boundaries separating the privately owned from other parts of the world, most of all from the common world itself. The distinguishing mark of modern political and economic theory,

77. The relatively few instances of ancient authors praising labor and poverty are inspired by this danger (for references see G. Herzog-Hauser, *op. cit.*).

78. The Greek and Latin words for the interior of the house, *megaron* and *atrium*, have a strong connotation of darkness and blackness (see Mommsen, *op. cit.*, pp. 22 and 236).

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on the other hand, in so far as it regards private property as a crucial issue, has been its stress upon the private activities of property-owners and their need of government protection for the sake of accumulation of wealth at the expense of the tangible property itself. What is important to the public realm, however, is not the more or less enterprising spirit of private businessmen but the fences around the houses and gardens of citizens. The invasion of privacy by society, the "socialization of man" (Marx), is most efficiently carried through by means of expropriation, but this is not the only way. Here, as in other respects, the revolutionary measures of socialism or communism can very well be replaced by a slower and no less certain "withering away" of the private realm in general and of private property in particular.

The distinction between the private and public realms, seen from the viewpoint of privacy rather than of the body politic, equals the distinction between things that should be shown and things that should be hidden. Only the modern age, in its rebellion against society, has discovered how rich and manifold the realm of the hidden can be under the conditions of intimacy; but it is striking that from the beginning of history to our own time it has always been the bodily part of human existence that needed to be hidden in privacy, all things connected with the necessity of the life process itself, which prior to the modern age comprehended all activities serving the subsistence of the individual and the survival of the species. Hidden away were the laborers who "with their bodies minister to the [bodily] needs of life,"⁷⁹ and the women who with their bodies guarantee the physical survival of the species. Women and slaves belonged to the same category and were hidden away not only because they were somebody else's property but because their life was "laborious," devoted to bodily functions.⁸⁰ In the beginning of the modern age, when "free"

79. Aristotle *Politics* 1254b25.

80. The life of a woman is called *ponētikos* by Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* 775a33. That women and slaves belonged and lived together, that no woman, not even the wife of the household head, lived among her equals—other free women—so that rank depended much less on birth than on "occupation" or function, is very well presented by Wallon (*op. cit.*, I, 77 ff.), who speaks of a "confusion des rangs, ce partage de toutes les fonctions domestiques": "Les

The Public and the Private Realm

labor had lost its hiding place in the privacy of the household, the laborers were hidden away and segregated from the community like criminals behind high walls and under constant supervision.⁸¹ The fact that the modern age emancipated the working classes and the women at nearly the same historical moment must certainly be counted among the characteristics of an age which no longer believes that bodily functions and material concerns should be hidden. It is all the more symptomatic of the nature of these phenomena that the few remnants of strict privacy even in our own civilization relate to "necessities" in the original sense of being necessitated by having a body.

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THE LOCATION OF HUMAN ACTIVITIES

Although the distinction between private and public coincides with the opposition of necessity and freedom, of futility and permanence, and, finally, of shame and honor, it is by no means true that only the necessary, the futile, and the shameful have their proper place in the private realm. The most elementary meaning of the two realms indicates that there are things that need to be hidden and others that need to be displayed publicly if they are to exist at all. If we look at these things, regardless of where we find them in any given civilization, we shall see that each human activity points to its proper location in the world. This is true for the chief activities of the *vita activa*, labor, work, and action; but there is one, admittedly extreme, example of this phenomenon, whose advantage for illustration is that it played a considerable role in political theory.

Goodness in an absolute sense, as distinguished from the "good-for" or the "excellent" in Greek and Roman antiquity, became known in our civilization only with the rise of Christianity. Since

femmes . . . se confondaient avec leurs esclaves dans les soins habituels de la vie intérieure. De quelque rang qu'elles fussent, le travail était leur apanage, comme aux hommes la guerre."

81. See Pierre Brizon, *Histoire du travail et des travailleurs* (4th ed.; 1926), p. 184, concerning the conditions of factory work in the seventeenth century.