

**On Aristotle and Marx:
A Critique of Aristotelian Themes in Marxist Labor Theory**

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Abstract:

This paper examines the influences of Aristotelian moral economic thought on Marx's labor theory. This paper looks at certain moral ethical frameworks attributed to Aristotle and later used by Marx in developing his ideas on communism. The similarities between Marx's labor theory and Aristotle's ethical theories, including those on human flourishing (*eudaimonia*), justice and exchange, will be examined. This paper also finds that Marx's communist model is partly an adaptation of Aristotle's household economy (*oikonomia*). This study reveals not only the influences Aristotle's moral economic theory had on Marx, but also the implications of its applications to Marxist labor theory.

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“Marx was a revolutionary traditionalist.” - Horst Mewes

Introduction

It may be a surprise to the reader that Marx, the father of communism, might have any connections to the democratic Ancient Greeks. Then it may be even more surprising to learn that Marx's theories were at least partly based on and developed from Aristotle's works on moral economy. Further, there are many similarities between the works of Marx and Aristotle which help explain how Marx used Aristotelian philosophies as one of many bases for the development of communism.

On the outset, Marx and Aristotle had similarities in respect to their backgrounds. Aristotle was the son of the court physician to Phillip II of Macedon and later tutor to his son, Alexander the Great. Partly because of upbringing and partly because he was a pupil of Plato who wrote important works on political theory, Aristotle wrote much on politics and political theory. Marx was also immersed in politics, as he was a political exile at times, political journalist and political organizer at others. However, it will be the links between the two thinkers' works on moral economy that is of primary interest.

Aristotle's conception of the good person is one who practices *eudaimonia*. This excellence, or self-realization, is the result of nature, habit and reason. We experience self-realization through the practice of activities such as learning a new game, discussing

a topic, or engaging in stimulating work. Thus, labor constitutes an important part of self-realization, as much as work plays a major part in daily life. At the same time, self-realization is of moral concern as the exercise of complex skills promotes the happiness and well-being that make up human flourishing. Work, thus, can plausibly be considered both a moral and economic issue.

Marx was one who dealt with work as both a moral and economic issue. Marx criticized capitalism for its neglect of human faculties that would lead to the good life. At the same time, he espoused communism for its potential to replace the desire to possess increasing amounts of money with the desire to enjoy diverse and complex activities. Such values are in alignment with the Aristotelian conception of the type of good life that exemplifies human flourishing. Further, among other sources, Booth [1993] suggests that Marx looked towards Aristotle's theory on *oikos* or household to develop communism, a neo-household theory. As a result, Marx was able to build a moral economic theory that was able to address the limitations of classical liberalist theories but was also intrinsically limited by the ancient household model.

This paper seeks to understand the implications of one aspect of the moral economic philosophy of Marx: the influences of Aristotelian moral economic thought on Marx's labor theory. First, this paper will examine Aristotle's theories of human flourishing (*eudaimonia*) and justice in order to understand the theory of justice in exchange and the concept of moral economy. Secondly, this paper follows the development of moral economic theory in Marx as it examines Marx's usage and development of Aristotle's

moral theories in his own labor theories. Finally, an analysis of the implications of the linkage between the two philosophers will be presented.

The following is the outline of the paper. In Part I, the grounds of a discussion on the moral economic theories of Aristotle and Marx will be presented: definitions and theories will be outlined. In Part II, this paper will examine Aristotle's moral economic theory. The roots of the household economic model, theory of exchange, and the theory of labor value can be found in Aristotle's philosophy. Next, Marx's moral economic theory will be discussed in Part III. An analysis of Marx's development of his labor theory, along with the opposing analyses the theory has spurred, will be presented. Also, analyses of Marx's critiques of utilitarianism and capitalism will be presented in order to aid the understanding of Marx's development of his labor theory of value; further, similarities in Marx's critiques with Aristotle's assessments of value and markets will be drawn. Marx's ideas of human and social progress will also be presented and compared with Aristotle's.

Finally, in Part IV, a summary and analysis of the similarities and differences between Marx and Aristotle's moral economic theories, particularly in relation to morality, justice and markets, will be presented. An analysis of how Marx used and built upon Aristotle's moral economic philosophy will be presented as with the consequences of its applications. Marx's labor theory of value, use of *eudaimonism*, and application of the household model of economy will serve as examples of Marx's development of Aristotle's moral economic theory.

Part I: On Moral Economic Theory

Booth [1993] remarks that the economy is a relation among persons. This observation suggests that the economy is embedded in the consideration of legal, political, social and moral institutions. The study of moral economy is the branch of economics where moral considerations are important. As Booth puts it, “Because the economy is an ensemble of human relations, saturated by their moral and other norms; because, in various ways, it serves their many ends – for those reasons reflection on the moral location of the economy is vital to the understanding both of that institution/activity and of the human condition” (Booth [1993], p.6). The study of moral economy is important as it helps us to understand not only the human relations intrinsic to the workings of an economy, but also the human conditions reflected by such relationships. Marx and Aristotle added much to the study of the moral economy. Aristotle championed the study of moral economy; he was not concerned with efficiencies in production but, rather, with production’s relation to the good life, freedom and community. In *Capital*, vol. I, Marx observed that the economy is a relation among persons and that, under specific historical conditions, it can seem like a relation between persons and the things they produce or consume [Booth [1993], p.6).

Both Marx and Aristotle can be considered philosophers and economists in their own right. Both developed theories in the realm of moral ethics as well as in economics.

However, both were similar in that they removed moral consideration from the consideration of production. Murphy notes that Aristotle, for example, explicitly restricts technical reason (*techne*) to the realm of production (Murphy [1993], p. 34; NE 1140a and MM 1197a10-15). Yet, both Aristotle and Marx would evaluate other economic institutions, such as wealth acquisition and social division of labor, more politically. An understanding of why both Aristotle and Marx removed production itself from moral consideration but evaluated other economic institutions in moral consideration can be found by examining their economic and political thoughts.

Classical political economy stems from an implicit analogy between the management of a household and the management of a society. After all, economy in Greek (*oikonomia*) meant ‘household management.’ Yet, Aristotle would have disagreed, as he rejected any reduction of politics, which is in the social and therefore moral realm, to household management. It is true that Aristotle argued for the removal of any non-technical consideration (such as moral consideration) from his theory of production. Aristotle writes:

Production and action are different; about them we rely also on [our] popular discussions. And so the state involving reason and concerned with action is different from the state involving reason and concerned with production. Nor is one included in the other; for action is not production, and production is not action (NE 1140a1-6).

For Aristotle, because production and action differ, the type of reason to be used in consideration of production – technical reason - must therefore be different from that used in consideration of action – moral reason. It is unlikely, however, that he would

have considered collapsing the social dimension of labor – a realm in which moral considerations are important - into a study of technical efficiency.

Murphy claims that although classical political economists shared many fundamental similarities in thought with Aristotle, they differed from their ancient predecessor by expanding technical consideration in production to the social division of labor. Murphy characterizes classical political economists' treatment of the social division of labor as an analysis ruled by terms of physical efficiency: "They treat the social division of labor as but a special case of the more general maxim of instrumental reason: namely, that given an end (maximum output) we seek the best means (minimum input)" (Murphy [1993], p. 149). Classical political economists such as Smith, as well as Marx, would have agreed to the exclusive use of technical reason in production, as the notion of "social housekeeping" was central to what the institutions they proposed. The notion that political economy is social housekeeping serves, on the outset, to define economics as a technical rather than a moral or political science (Murphy [1993], p. 145). What Murphy interpreted classical political economists to mean by social housekeeping is exemplified by the example of the patriarchal head – or the father – of the household model typically selecting the most efficient means to the ends. The patriarchal head's authority would eliminate any political consideration or conflict. Marx's model of the communist economy is such a household: central planning will enable the "head" of the economy to maximize social welfare by allocating resources among competing uses (Murphy [1993], p. 146). It is true that Marx criticized capitalism in its effects on laborers on social terms; what is interesting is that Marx proposed a model – communism – that was meant to

maximize social welfare but only did so through the technical efficiency standards as determined by a despotic authority.

Moral Reason and the Division of Labor

Murphy defines technical division of labor to be an analysis of the division of tasks in contrast to the social division of labor, which is the assignment of workers to those tasks.

Murphy argues that because the classical political economists did not grasp the differences between technical and social division of labor, they merely assumed that the social division of labor is explained by the same efficiency criteria that explains the technical division of labor (Murphy [1993], p. 22). Murphy claims that Marx, for example, chose to distinguish the division of labor within a firm from the division of labor in society; Marx considered the former technical and the latter social (Murphy [1993], p. 23). Murphy argues that Marx's differentiation is erroneous in that the division of labor in a firm also effects human laborers and so should be considered in terms of its social as well as technical effects.

Murphy believes that moral reason is of consideration in the social division of labor. Moral reason chooses whole courses of action – ends and mean – and therefore concerns those activities in which ends and means cannot be readily separated (Murphy [1993], p. 42). An example given is that of an employer's usage of division of labor in limiting each worker to a different task; after all, this social division has effects on the mastery of skills, dignity of labor and social relations within the firm. Thus, Murphy argues that

ends and means are inseparable in the case of the social division of labor. In contrast, instrumental reason concerns the efficient choice of means to a pre-given and separate end (Murphy [1993], p.42). An example given is that of a craftsman who can choose several ways to divide his tasks in order to make a product. Yet how Marx seemingly overlooked social consideration of the division of labor within a firm and Aristotle removed consideration of morality from production is interesting both as a question and in its implications on both philosophers' thoughts on labor.

Efficiency vs. Quality

Further, the issue of using division of labor outside of technical division of tasks leads one to question its effects on efficiency versus quality in production. Murphy argues that a greater social division of labor does not simply produce the same product for a lower cost and price, but, instead, results in the creation of a different product (Murphy [1993], p.152). He gives the example of watches: a watch custom-made by a single artisan is a unique work of art whereas watches mass-produced through the use of division of labor are all standard. In addition, because cheapness is relative, if the social division of labor is extended universally, all commodities then have become cheaper although in comparative terms no commodity is cheaper. Also, because Murphy believes that the social division of labor is in the realm of production, and, unlike Marx and Aristotle, that production is of moral consideration, whether division of labor results in greater efficiency of production must be measured not only by hours and costs, but also by human satisfaction, acquisition of skills, and the like. It is plausible that the division of

labor in the form of factory work can cause dissatisfaction, which may translate into higher costs when strikes are held. Thus, the social division of labor does not necessarily result in either efficiency of production or equal quality. The social division of labor is an area of production in which moral consideration should exist.

Marx, however, disagreed. Marx believed that, at the least, the division of labor within a firm is to be considered differently from the division of labor across the whole of society. As suggested above, Marx's distinction stems from a failure to see that division of labor should, as Murphy does, be distinguished on social versus technical terms; after all, it is plausible that the division of labor within a firm also affects humans and so should be considered in the realm of moral action. Marx called the division of labor within a firm "technical" as he viewed it as merely the product of technical reason. On the other hand, Marx considered the division of labor across society as "social". Furthermore, Marx claimed that the capitalist stipulated the technical division of labor, while nature called for the social division of labor (Murphy [1993], p. 203). On the basis that technical reason led to efficiency and efficiency meant the natural, Marx also saw the division of labor within a firm as a "natural science" impervious to political consideration (Murphy [1993], p.206). In addition, Marx believed that the division of labor is a necessary condition for exchange, instead of exchange being a necessary condition for the division of labor (Murphy [1993], p. 204). In reducing the moral dimension of the division of labor in a firm to mere technical efficiency, Marx would be following the Aristotelian claim that production is governed solely by technical reason (Murphy [1993], p. 34; NE 1140a9 and MM 1197a12).

Part II: On Aristotle

On Justice and Equality

Although Aristotle removed moral consideration from production, the moral consideration of distribution and exchange could be found in Aristotle's ideas on justice. Aristotle's three conceptions of justice, according to DeGolyer [1992], also reveal much about the use of equality in Aristotle's economic theory. Aristotle's first subdivision of justice – distributive justice – confers social goods such as wealth, honor, and so forth, on the basis of socially established standards of merit that vary according to the social polity, be it democratic (with free birth as the standard), oligarchic (wealth), or aristocratic (virtue). Equality, based on distributive justice, therefore requires that shares of these social goods have the same ratios between persons. Aristotle's second division of justice – commutative or corrective justice – referred to private transactions. These private transactions could be either voluntary, as in the cases of buying and selling, or involuntary, as in the examples of theft or personal violence (DeGolyer [1992], 131). The goal of this type of justice is to ensure relative equality of persons before and after such private transactions occur.

Thirdly, reciprocal justice is Aristotle's conception of justice in relation to the exchange of goods. Reciprocal justice is a development of both of the first two Aristotelian justices; it is an extension of the concept of relative equality before and after transactions as well

as a valuation of goods as a socially defined process. This societal appraisal is apparent through Aristotle's requirement that commodities be equalized: "As therefore a builder is to a shoemaker, so must such and such a number of shoes be to a house; for without this reciprocal proportion, there can be no exchange and no association; and it cannot be secured unless the commodities be equal in a sense" (DeGolyer [1992], p.131; NE 1133a23-25). DeGolyer suggests that, by this, Aristotle means for social status to enter the commodity valuation process as a means of establishing commodity equivalency, although there is some ambiguity here. A more definite interpretation is that Aristotle meant that equalization is necessary at some level in order for exchange to occur.

In fact, Aristotle repeatedly insisted that goods must be equalized and comparable in order to ensure exchange (DeGolyer [1992], p. 132). This is due to Aristotle's belief that exchange occurs because different parties produce different things from one another: "[f]or no community [for exchange] is formed from two doctors. It is formed from a doctor and a farmer, and, in general, from people who are different and unequal and who must be equalized" (NE 1133a15-19). Money, for Aristotle, served as a means to compare the relative values of goods since "it measures everything, and so measures excess and deficiency –[for instance,] how many shoes are equal to a house" (NE 1133a21-23). For Aristotle, need held the community together by allowing exchanges to occur (NE 1133b8-10). Aristotle declares money to be the means by which equality in exchange can be established between goods produced by different laborers.

Aristotle's Economics: Exchange in the Consideration of Justice

A community can mean a social order or an amalgamation of human relationships. For Aristotle, the establishment of meaningful and just human relationships within a given social order was of primary concern. Aristotle's commentary on goods and modern economic matters was, therefore, only secondary in concern (DeGolyer [1992], p. 134). Aristotle's economics, therefore, was developed in a carefully defined context of community, with a clear emphasis on human considerations such as need, sharing, trust, fairness, and friendliness (DeGolyer [1992], p. 134).

Aristotle's view of non-community-oriented economics, such as modern-day economics, was highly critical. Aristotle characterized non-community-oriented economics in his discussion of the *kapeloi*, or traders, as unflattering; the traders' desire for a self-multiplication of money was unnatural and therefore criticized (DeGolyer [1992], p. 134). Clearly, Aristotle sought to differentiate economic exchange based on need, in which money is a means, from money-multiplying activities, in which the use of money was unnatural. Indeed, greed, as a driver of money-multiplication, has the potential to put humans in need, rather than help humans meet their need. Aristotle contended that justice should be rooted in community and foster particular types of relationships – ones in which human needs were met. Later, these requirements would form the cornerstones of Marx's communist society.

Aristotle finds justice to be relevant to a discussion of exchange because of the necessity of exchange for the existence of community. Aristotle gives the following clarifying example: “Let A be a farmer, C food, B a shoemaker, and D his product that has been equalized; if this sort of reciprocity were not possible, there would be no community” (NE 1133b5). The community given in his example – of A and B – would not exist without the exchange of food and shoes; without exchange, the shoemaker could not get food nor the farmer shoes. Their need for the other’s production results in their community: “Now clearly need holds [a community] together as a single unit, since people with no need of each other, both of them or either one, do not exchange, as they exchange whenever another requires what one has oneself, such as wine, when they allow the export of corn” (NE 1133b8-10). Exchange facilitates the sustenance of a community.

Aristotle proposes that justice also has applications to the realm of exchange in a community. Aristotle defines justice as a mean condition different from the extremes of injustices. To Aristotle, the just person “... does not award too much of what is choice-worthy to himself and too little to his neighbor (and the reverse with what is harmful), but awards what is proportionately equal; and he does the same in distributing between others” (NE 1134a4-7). Justice in distribution is found in following the use of equal exchange proportions between parties.

On the other hand, Aristotle defines injustice in relation to exchange as disproportionate excess and deficiency and the unjust person in a similar way: “The unjust person awards

himself an excess of what is beneficial, [considered] without qualification, and a deficiency of what is harmful, and, speaking as a whole, he acts similarly [in distribution between] others, but deviates from proportion in either direction” (NE 1134a10-13). Unlike the just person, the unjust person does not use the same exchange proportion in distribution. Aristotle goes on to define unjust actions: “In an unjust action getting too little good is suffering injustice and getting too much is doing injustice” (NE 1134a13-14). It is interesting that Aristotle failed to consider exchange between masters and slaves as unjust given that slaves definitely received a disproportionate compensation from masters as free laborers who performed their same duties might in the ancient economy. Yet, Aristotle’s definitions of unjust action in relation to exchange remained relevant, especially, as we will see, for Marx.

Eudaimonia

Although Aristotle writes about justice explicitly in his discussions on exchange, the fundamental basis of his theory of justice can be found in his theory of human flourishing (*eudaimonia*) (Murphy [1993], p. 5). *Eudaimonia*, translated as human flourishing or well-being, differs from happiness in that the former is more objective and refers to the state of one’s whole life, while the latter is more subjective, can refer to a certain emotion at one time. Aristotle defines the ultimate human goal as the realization of human capabilities in complex activities, or human flourishing; Murphy analyzes human flourishing to mean the “subjective experience of happiness and the objective exercise of moral, physical, and intellectual excellence” (Murphy [1993], p.5). According to

Aristotle, the exercise of complex skills results in both subjective pleasure and objective excellence; however, it is important to note that Aristotle considered objective excellence rather than subjective pleasure as much more important to the context of eudaimonism. Human flourishing is the product of doing rather than having; it is the product of the habitual exercise of skills. After all, Aristotle notes that pleasure arises “when we are exercising some faculty” (Murphy [1993], p.6; NE1153a9).

In terms of labor then, Aristotle would be keen to distinguish between work worthy of human flourishing and not. According to Aristotle, work is the unity of conception and execution (*noesis* and *poiesis*) (Murphy [1993], p.8; Met. 1032b15). Aristotle declares that “thinking occurs from the principle or the form, production from the end of thinking and thereafter” (Met. 1032b16-17). Production, therefore, does not necessitate but, rather, results from thinking. Using this difference between thinking and production, Aristotle analyzes skilled versus unskilled labor. Aristotle believes that what differentiates a skilled laborer from an unskilled laborer in terms of his work’s contribution to human flourishing is that the worker obeys himself as a skilled worker. In skilled work, the worker first thinks out what he then makes in matter while in unskilled labor, the worker executes the thought of another. Human flourishing also has to do with the freedom to exercise skills of one’s choice: “It is the mark of a free man not to live at another’s beck and call” (Murphy [1993], p.8; Rhet. 1367a27). Murphy agrees that there is value to the worker in the development of skill through the dialectic of conception and execution: “By learning the general principles of a craft, a skilled worker is able to solve problems that arise in execution; and by solving these particular problems in execution, he deepens his

conceptual knowledge of the general principles” (Murphy [1993], p.8). By gaining the autonomy to master a craft, the worker can both free himself from having to follow another’s command and also strive to achieve human flourishing with the exercise of skills.

Aristotle admits, however, that it is possible to split up the unity of conception and execution; however, Murphy is careful to argue that specialization is not what hinders workers from attaining human flourishing. The dichotomy of conception and execution is apparent when what one person thinks of is then executed by another; the Ancient Greek’s relations of slave owner to slave would have reflected this possibility. Murphy believes that this separation of conception from execution in fact undermines the worker’s capacity for the realization of complex skills, therefore hindering his ability to experience human flourishing. However, specialization does not itself cause such a block in human potential; specialization is “of moral concern only when it fragments work into monotonous routines that stifle the human capacity for thought, imagination, and skill” (Murphy [1993], p.9). The examples of the specialization of scientific, medical, and legal fields are given to prove that, in many cases, specialization of labor does not necessarily lead to the inability to master complex skills necessary for human flourishing. Murphy also mentions that white-collar mental work is subject to the divorce of conception and execution, but that is often left out as an example of the potential negative consequences of the division of labor. Later, Marx would implicitly appeal to the Aristotelian principle in his criticism of the separation of conception from execution in the industrial division of labor.

Production

Aristotle's criticism of specialization was linked directly to his ideas on justice and eudaimonia and would lead one to believe that Aristotle would give the consideration of moral reason in production his support. On the contrary, as mentioned earlier, Aristotle argued that production is governed only by technical reason (Murphy [1993], p.12; NE 1140a9 and MM 1197a12). In addition, Aristotle thought that many kinds of the division of labor are natural and not conventional. Aristotle explicitly argued labor is in the realm of technical and natural necessity, whereas action is in the realm of moral freedom and justice (NE 1140a9 and MM 1197a12). However, Murphy argues that Aristotle implicitly thought that morality should be considered in many other aspects of economics, such as the social division of labor (Murphy [1993], p.12). For example, Aristotle treats the social division of labor not merely as a technical but also as a political issue: "Shall every man be at once farmer, artisan, councilor, judge, or shall we suppose the several occupations just mentioned assigned to different person? Or, thirdly, shall some employments be assigned to individuals and others common to all?" (Murphy [1993], p.24; Pol. 1328b25). Because of its relevance to the community, specialization of labor is a political issue. The republican ideal of the civic order is noted by Murphy to be one in which every citizen participates in varied functions, from economics to the military; the social division of labor then could be assumed to have been seen as a threat to liberty and democracy for the Ancient Greek citizen.

Urmson [1988] offers an explanation as to why Aristotle was led to the view that production is purely technical. He attributes this to Aristotle's distinguishing between activity (*energeia*) as valuable in itself and process (*kinesis*) as pursued only for the sake of its results or products. Production, for Aristotle, lies in the realm of processes. Aristotle criticizes processes such as exercise of a craft, art or skill on his belief that such processes are carried out so that the producer may possess the end result. Urmson suggests that although many forms of production are pursued for the sake of the end product, this is not always the case. Further, Urmson notes that there are many processes which people carry out not for the sake of end results; the example of proving a theorem in mathematics not purely in order to have a theorem is given (Urmson [1998], p. 102). Aristotle failed to see the value in manufacturing. Yet, the fact that some people take pride in their craft, even in a capitalist society, reveals the value that can indeed be found in production.

Classical Political Economy's Roots in Aristotelian Thoughts

In explicitly calling for a dichotomy between moral reason and production, Aristotle would prove to be very much like the classical political economists who followed. Aristotle believed that "nature makes nothing in vain"; the classical political economist's view, as well as Marx's, that because nature economizes, the economy must be natural seems most Aristotelian then. Indeed, classical political economy is suggested to be largely an elaboration of Aristotelian concepts. Just as Aristotle believed that production is governed solely by technical reason, so, as Murphy suggests, the political economists

reduced moral consideration of the division of labor to technical efficiency. In addition, both Marxists and political economists tended to reduce the many dimensions of division of labor, whether between males and females, masters and slaves, or capitalists and proletariats to natural dimensions. Both schools of thought took the Aristotelian view that because nature economizes, the economy must be natural (Murphy [1993], p. 143). In addition, both schools thought that household management (*oikonomia*) is similar to political economy; one refers to the management of a household while the other to the management of a society. As mentioned earlier, Aristotle himself does not subscribe to this view.

The application of household management to political economy was at the very center of classical political economic thought (Murphy [1993], p.144). Household management implies selecting the most efficient means to achieving the goals of the household head. Murphy suggests that the notion of political economy as social housekeeping was in alignment with political economists' view of economics as a technical rather than a moral science. Taking this definition into account, it would make sense to intuit that the goal of economics would be to provide the most efficient means to the ends selected. The fact that we continue to refer to the national economy as the "domestic" economy further gives proof to political economy's ties to household management (Murphy [1993], p. 146). In addition, the classical political economy developed into a social science that lacked social politics. In the early development of classical political economy, Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* showed that a nation could economize itself and that statesmen should pursue a hands-off economic policy. In doing so, Smith

moved the consideration of government or political action far from the realm of classical political economy (Murphy [1993], p.146-7). On the other hand, Marx's model of the communist economy uses a patriarchal household in which central planning would allow the economy "head" to maximize social welfare by the efficient allocation of resources; whether such maximization of social welfare in a communist model could really occur has been proved dubitable by history. Yet, both Marx and Smith proposed economic models similar to a household economy in that the utility of one social group alone – either the capitalists or communist head – would be maximized.

Aristotle's Household Model of the Economy

In *On the Moral Architecture of the Economy*, Booth [1992], in his discussion on the origins of Marxist communism, shows how Marx strove to build a political and economic theory based on the ancient model of the economy. In doing so, Marx addressed the limitations of classical liberalist theories and looked towards Aristotle's theory on *oikos* or household to develop a neo-household theory, that of communism.

Booth begins by explaining Aristotle's reflections on the household-based Greek economy. The Greeks acknowledged that toil was a necessity for humans, but that the purpose of the *oikos* was to provide the leisurely life to the free, and not the provision of wealth as ends (Booth [1992], p.27). Aristotle believed that the household is comprised of two principal relationships. One, between male and female, survives by necessity of generation. The other, between master and slave, stood for the sake of preservation. The

purpose of the Aristotelian household, therefore, was to secure human livelihood or autarky, meaning independence from external forces. Aristotle believed that man is not self-sufficient; he is quoted by Booth as saying that “man is by nature a pairing creature even more than he is a political creature in as much as the household is an earlier and more necessary institution than the polis” (Booth [1992], p.35). For Aristotle, the household therefore serves as a partial solution to that lack of self-sustenance. The household serves as a community of persons, bound by a *philia*, a mutuality greater than that of a shared location, and having a common purpose, which was the wealth creation within the framework of need-satisfaction.

One criticism of this *oikos* theory, of which its importance is revealed later in the failure of Marx’s communist theory, is the despotic quality of the Greek household. Conveniently for Greek masters of the house, slaves existed to provide the manpower that would allow the household to function. Slaves were an essential part of the Greek household. They worked so that free members of the house had time to pursue the leisurely life. Slaves lived under the constraint or will of their masters (Booth [1992], p.71). Slaves also lacked both the time and ability to cultivate an excellent life containing friendship and worthwhile activities (Booth [1992], p.73). Artisans, farmers, merchants or those with modest property also seemed almost slave-like, as they were usually constrained by poverty or driven by wealth acquisition. Autarky and leisure are the two principal goods of the household in which Aristotle believed Greeks labored to achieve. However, the beauty of the *oikos* model of the good economy is that it lies in almost stark contrast to the market centered world, which is dominated by the acquisitive

life, consummation of wealth acquisition, and disruptions of the natural hierarchal order of the household itself.

Part III: On Marx

The reader can find many direct links to Greek antiquity, including Aristotle, in the works of Marx. Marx's dissertation was primarily concerned with the question of Socratic wisdom in Greek atomism. Marx also praised the ancient Greek model of citizenship over the modern bourgeois system. In fact, Marx could refer to the precise location of the most difficult passages in the Greek versions of Aristotle's works (DeGolyer [1992], p.108). More indirectly, Marx essentially reverted back to the central Aristotelian claim of the essentially political or social nature of man (Mewes [1992], p.20). It is the indirect but fundamental links between Aristotelian and Marxian philosophies that we seek to examine.

Marx's Distinction between Free and Necessary Labor

Marx's distinction between necessary and free labor suggests that he would agree with those who identified perfection with man playfully enjoying his own artistic creativity (Mewes [1992], p. 24). Although Marx's link to the German humanists is somewhat limited, one can nonetheless draw similarities between the two schools of thought. The German humanists admired Greek perfection and its characteristics: from "purity of

heart” to “free play inspired by beauty, to love of divine beauty” (Mewes [1992], p.24).

Marx, like the humanists, would find idealization in the Greeks.

Schiller was a representative German humanist who criticized modern human degradation as being far removed from what he saw as the more perfect Greek nature. Like Marx, Schiller focused on modern human alienation. Schiller saw men as morally depraved; this moral deprivation was a result of the essence of modern culture, which he saw as being the “imbalance” between human matter and spirit, body and soul (Mewes [1992], p. 27). These disharmonies could be extended to a social level – in the division of labor, classes and professions. He espoused the ancient Greek model of life. In ancient Greece he found a “Greek nature” which combined sense and spirit, reason and matter harmoniously. He questioned whether or not modernity could actually restore human harmony; his answer was that it would take a revolution of human character. He proposed that the ideal human being would be one who embodied the “idea of the absolute being founded purely in itself”, which Mewes analyzes as being the idea of true freedom. Schiller then explains that true freedom can be found not by doing necessary processes, but by playing; only in play is man truly human, and man truly plays only when he is truly man (Mewes [1992], p.29). Only through play can man find freedom and so achieve the ideal. Schiller’s distinction between play and necessity, therefore, is similar to Marx’s distinction between free and necessary labor. In addition, we will see that Marx accepted the German humanists’ vision of an emancipated universal humanity as the culmination of the development of man. This reflected Marx’s optimistic belief in the idea of human progress, common to all the European enlightenment thinkers.

The enlightenment thinker Lessing supported the idea that humanity could improve itself towards perfection. Lessing linked the notion of the moral progress of mankind partly to the history of the development of mankind. He asserted that just as human art can perfect individual human development, so nature must be able to develop humanity to perfection. He found the idea of an improving future based in human action; perfection would be attained when men “will do the good because it is the good” (Mewes, p.25; Lessing, “Ernst und Falk”, p. 561). Human reason would provide the fuel for this constant improvement towards perfection (Mewes, p. 25). Marx, influenced by thinkers such as Lessing, would later incorporate enlightenment beliefs into his own work by implying that the improvement of humanity would be possible under communism.

Classical Political Economy & Marx

Another philosopher, besides Aristotle, whose work led to the development of Marx’s moral economic thoughts is Locke. The classical liberalist Locke espoused a theory of political and economic relations based on contracts. Contracts would serve as the foundation of relations of power among persons. And an economy based on contracts is one that is based on markets.

Locke based his political contract theory on the premise that humans are born free, not slaves nor contract makers over other humans as objects of contracts (Booth [1993], p.101). A union between husband and wife, although having some natural associations

because of the idea of procreating, was seen as ultimately a relationship by contract (Booth [1993], p.103). Masters and servants also have a relation of consent in that a servant enters the household as a free, equal and independent person. Locke believed that a person who is under the domination of others lacks personal liberty. This conclusion is based on the belief of an individual being a limited self-proprietor, bound by obligations only to God, but free in relation to other humans (Booth [1993], p.113-114). Philosophers such as Rousseau and Hobbes also supported this contention. Rousseau argued that man is a free agent by nature and that there is no worse evil than for one person to dominate another (Booth [1993], p.121), while Hobbes argued that there is no natural hierarchy in the human condition while humans do seek domination over others naturally (Booth [1993], p.118). The condition that Locke argued a societal structure should remedy is that of *sumum malum*, or the desire of humans for domination over others (Booth [1993], p.115).

As presented by Booth, the problem of domination is central to liberalism. Liberalism was concerned with how power required to protect humans from dominating violence of others could be rendered legitimate and yet not violate the personal rights of the protected. The liberal answer lay in the contract and the contractarian idea of self-ownership (Booth [1993], p.126). The contract agent has a purpose, and that is to conduct an exchange that is intended to achieve some end held by the individual agent (Booth [1993], p.142). A societal structure in which the contracting agent operates is impersonal for good reason: it needs to reduce the act of submission to another power to just obedience to an objective authority. After all, the liberalists believed that it is the

subjection of one will to another that is the primary evil to be abolished (Booth [1993], p.145). Thus, the objectiveness and impersonality of a market system would allow for a justice of exchange that requires that all persons be treated equally through the means of equal pricing (Booth [1993], p.156). The liberalist theories aimed to provide a new moral economy in place of the household economy primarily through a basis of contractual relationships.

Although the liberalist theories presented above seem to espouse an impersonal market that operates by a 'free hand', Booth maintains that Locke would have condemned capitalist wage labor (Booth [1993], p.163) based on two reasons. Locke believed that a free person enters servitude voluntarily only if there are alternatives available; otherwise, since there are no other alternatives, that person enters servitude out of necessity and not by contract. Another reason is that Locke believed that to sell one's labor would be to reduce the seller to the level of a slave since the employer would have ultimate control over the seller's actions (Booth [1993], p.163-4). This is based on Locke's (liberal) definition of labor as actions of a person determined by his will; it would be impossible for a person to voluntarily alienate his labor by giving his actions over to the direction of another since his actions would then no longer be under his own will.

Marx's Criticism of Capitalism

Many of Marx's ideas were adapted from classical liberal tenets, the primary one being the ideal of individual autonomy. Marx's contention with liberalism, however, focuses

on whether contract-based markets do not, under capitalism, renege upon the promise of freedom in substantial ways. Marx revealed that the capitalist market had indeed placed new restrictions on autonomy in the modern world. Ultimately, Marx's criticism of capitalism led him to the conclusion that only the end of markets would allow individuals and society to control their affairs and be autonomous. Thus, Marx turned to the *oikos* of Aristotle.

Marx's critique of capitalism was based on the purpose of capitalism being the acquisition of wealth. Marx believed that the ancient economy rested on direct labor power as a commodity belonging to its owner. In this sense, the market can be seen as offering freedom because it gives the laborer a whole new range of choices with the exchange of one's labor (Booth [1993], p.182). But ultimately, the capitalist market is exploitative as its goal is to generate profit and is not motivated by need, use, or consumption. Wealth then was a mere end and not a means to a better end – a better end such as the leisurely life. Capitalism, with its impersonal nature and expansionary drive, creates a society in which all relations, including personal, become purely economic (Booth [1993], p.193). The ancient political economy that primarily seeks the satisfaction of the non-economic needs of its dominant members, is replaced by an economy, “the binding cement of which is the cash ‘nexus’ and which aims at the expansion of capital” (Booth [1993], p.193).

Marx offered his theory of the communist society as a solution. Marx intended the communist society as a “free association of persons, consciously regulating their

production”(Booth [1993], p.251). In that aspect, communism represents the restoration of a needs-driven, *oikos*-type economy over the profit-centered capitalist model. The human interchange with nature and among humans themselves would mean a departure from the market and toward more individual and collective purposes toward production and distribution. Based on Aristotle’s *oikos* theory as predecessor, Marx intended the neo-household economy to differ in that it would be non-despotic (Marx strongly disagreed with Aristotle’s beliefs about slavery). Marx acknowledged that the ancient economy of the *oikos* economy of the ancient Greeks relied on direct domination and servitude (Booth [1993], p.180). However, he believed that he could correct for the despotic nature of the ancient household economy. The failure of the Communist regimes of Russia and other countries shows that Marx was wrong in assuming this.

The Aristotelian household, as it stood, was not a perfect replacement for the market economy. Instead of the free hand of market forces, the Aristotelian household offered the commands of the *oikos* despot. Instead of preferences of all as determined by the market forces, the governing preferences of the free household members or the master made rules. And as for the impersonality/equality of market actors, the hierarchical, status based order of the household did not seem a great alternative. However, Booth writes that Marx acknowledged that the household relied on the denial of freedom and the good life for many of its members. Marx thought that this lack of freedom was caused by a lack of time and resources to allocate to obtain freedom. The solution Marx offered was through the technological revolutions of capitalism; such advances would allow a new social structure based on the ancient household model to do away with the negative

side-effects that came with its adoption. Marx's neo-Aristotelianism was then an attempt to connect the most ancient model – the *oikos* model – with the liberal values of autonomy.

Marx's return to the *oikos* model as the solution to the problems he had identified in capitalism was indeed disastrous. However, Booth [1993] suggests that Marx still had a lot to teach us. One lesson is that the alienation, exploitation, inequality of markets is an important and viable critique. Another is that Marx's failure to develop an adequate theory of the new household economy is not Marx's own shortcoming, but rather a problem in the application of the *oikos* model itself. After all, the household model itself contains elements that oppose autonomy, such as parental supervision, and are in conflict with the norms of liberalism. In addition, Booth raises the question of whether the household model should even have been extended to economic or political theory: the household is, after all, a sanctuaries of altruism, reciprocity and community with major differences from the characteristics of a society.

According to Booth [1992], the problems that Marx came across in the development of communism mainly involve Marx's application of the ancient *oikos* model to communism. Booth argues that Marx needed a better definition of scarcity, placed too great a faith in technology, and failed to reintroduce the *oikos* model without its despotic elements. Booth also explains that these difficulties may have been innate; after all, Marx had attempted to incorporate the Aristotelian model of the non-market economy, which subordinates the non-economic needs, such as leisure and freedom, of slaves to

those of the masters. Indeed, Booth suggests that the *oikos* and the seductiveness of the idea of its application so deeply entranced Marx that he failed either to weigh the serious implications of having a despotic centered model or to provide adequate solutions for it.

Division of Labor as a Moral Consideration

Marx's failed attempt to apply the *oikos* model was also tied to his removal of production, in regards to the division of labor within a firm, from moral consideration. As discussed above, Murphy differentiates the social from the technical division of labor, while Marx distinguishes between division of labor in a firm and in society. Marx's treatment of a firm's division of labor as means to greater production leaves the possibility that a division of labor that erodes worker morale may, in fact, undermine productivity. On the flip side, increasing worker morale may lead to increased productivity. Because, as Murphy suggests, the productivity of the social division of labor is inseparable from the consideration of human morale, the division of labor within a firm cannot merely be reduced to the technical division of jobs as Marx left it (Murphy [1993], p.150). However, consideration of the jobs' impact on morale must take place whether one considers the economy from a productivity or political point of view.

As discussed earlier, a greater social division of labor in general does not necessarily produce an identical product for a lower cost or price. In fact, the greater social division of labor may cheapen commodities both in regard to price and quality. Adam Smith contributed to the theory of the division of labor by suggesting that a division of labor in

general produces a greater quantity of goods, in contrast to thinkers who felt that it was specialization that produced more goods. Smith saw quality of goods produced as a subjective characteristic and thus takes physical productivity in terms of number as the only objective and thus indisputable measure of the superiority of using division of labor. Smith also argued that the increasing social division of labor in general causes growing wealth of nations (Murphy [1993], p. 154-5). However, Smith failed to see the moral dimensions of productivity; a lack of worker morale can potentially lead to lower productivity while the domination of workers also serves as a cause of productivity (Murphy [1993], p. 156).

Marx and the Social Division of Labor

While Smith introduced the issue of the division of labor for classical political economy, it was Marx who developed the implications of the problem of the social division of labor. Marx saw that nations would become wealthy only at the individual's expense from Smith's economic proposals; after all, increasing wealth of society meant increasingly relying on social divisions of labor. Marx's failure, however, is to have overlooked that there is a variety of efficient social divisions of labor for any given technical division of labor (Murphy [1993], p. 164). With this oversight, Marx could ultimately only recommend one source of release from the impoverishment brought about by the division of labor: use technology to escape from work. In this, Marx was similar to Aristotle. Aristotle believed that while production lies in the realm of necessity, leisure is in the realm of moral freedom. In believing such, Aristotle suggested that

Greek men could pursue leisure freely with reliance on slaves; Marx recommended a reliance on automated technology to free men from labor (Murphy [1993], p. 164). Both abandoned humanization of work as a possible solution to the problem of a lack of human creativity in achieving quantitative productivity through the social division of labor.

Marx's beliefs on social division of labor were severely limited by an adherence to Smith's thoughts on the same subject. Murphy believes that Marx was unable to develop an analysis of productivity within the consideration of moral freedom as he never wavered from a Smithian belief that the technical division of tasks entails the social division of workers (Murphy [1993], p. 164). In fact, in *Capital*, Marx asserts that there is an efficient division of workers through "a fixed mathematical relation or ratio which regulates...the relative number of labourers, or the relative size of the group of labourers, for each detail operation" (Murphy [1993], p.165; Marx, *Capital*, 1:14.3.327). Marx's belief in the need to use a social division of labor is evident in his concept of the "iron law of proportionality", the principle that different operations are not just distributed between different workers but according to certain mathematical proportions (Murphy [1993], p.165). This idea of a proportional method of comparison, as we will see, stems from Aristotle's call for a basis of comparison in order for exchange to occur.

In developing his ideas on division of labor, Marx concluded that technology both determined the social division of labor as well as held the potential to release workers from the negative implications of such a division. In *Capital*, Marx writes, "Labour is

organized, is divided differently according to the instruments it has at its disposal. The hand-mill presupposes a different division of labour from the steam-mill” (Murphy [1993], p.167; Marx, “The Poverty of Philosophy”, p. 166, 183). In addition, Marx argued that machinery has the potential to eliminate the need for human labor at every production stage. Marx based this argument on his belief that it would be imperative to ensure a seamless continuity from raw materials to a finished product in machine production (Murphy [1993], p. 168; Marx, *Capital*, 1:15.1.359-60). Further, Marx attributes the determination of the social division of labor to the objective needs of technology: “In its machinery system, Modern Industry has a productive organism that is purely objective, in which the labourer becomes a mere appendage to an already existing material condition of production” (Murphy [1993], p.168; Marx, *Capital*, 1:15.1.359). Marx saw that, in production, technology has the potential to reduce the worker’s capabilities through the division of labor.

Even when Marx sees technology as liberator of workers, he continues to employ the assumption that technology determines the social division of labor. Modern automation enables workers to move from one unskilled task to another: “Modern Industry, indeed, compels society, under penalty of death, to replace the detail-worker of today...by the fully developed individual, fit for a variety of labours” (Murphy [1993], p.171, Marx, *Capital*, 1:15.9.458). Marx’s views of technology as liberator and oppressor treat technology as an inexorable and natural force that shapes society; however, Marx fails to consider whether society and its customs in turn shape technology. Murphy suggests that the same technology can be adapted to a variety of uses and is, largely, the product of

social choice. For Marx, however, technology is out of the control of workers and “imposes itself after the manner of an overpowering natural law, and with the blindly destructive action of a natural law” (Murphy [1993], p.171; Marx, *Capital*, 1:15.9.458). Because technology is out of control of the workers, it dehumanizes and divides them.

Murphy disagrees with Marx’s assumption that technology determined the social division of labor. Firstly, Murphy disagrees by noting that machinery does not have the judgment and creativity unique to human beings. Nor does the use of technology to circumvent all human skill necessarily become a technological imperative (Murphy [1993], p.168). One can imagine many cases in which the use of machinery reduces efficiency: the use of modern-day hand held computers to take notes is far more inefficient than the use of pen and paper. Further Murphy argues by asserting that, technology, depending on how it is used, can be designed either to circumvent or augment the skill of the operator; a medical device used by a doctor can be used to help him or her perform a life-saving task instead of reducing his efforts (Murphy [1993], p.170).

Because Marx insisted that modern production led to the social division of labor, Murphy argues that Marx sometimes lost hope for the humanization for work. Marx writes, “It is one of the greatest misapprehensions to speak of free, human, social labour, of labour without private property. ‘Labour’ by its very nature is unfree, inhuman, unsocial activity...Hence, the abolition of private property will become a reality only when it is conceived as the abolition of ‘labour’” (Murphy [1993], p. 172, Marx, “On Frederick

List's Book" p. 278-9). In fact, Marx suggested that the social division of labor could only be vanquished by the abolition of labor itself: "The subjection of separate individuals to the division of labor can only be removed by the abolition of private property and of labor itself" (Murphy [1993], p.172; Marx, "German Ideology," 77). Ultimately, Marx looked to technology to create free time from labor. Marx even saw capitalism as an aid to the development of a communist utopia through its use and development of technology: "Capital in this way – quite unintentionally – reduces human labor...to a minimum. This will be to the advantage of emancipated labour and is the condition for its emancipation" (Murphy [1993], p.172).

Marx's blind faith in technology as an emancipating force led him to assume that technology would allow workers more leisure. He believed that "the saving of labour time is equivalent to the increase of free time" (Murphy [1993], p. 172; Marx, "Grundrisse," 29:87 and 97). Capitalism, with its use of technology to economize production time, would lead to a reduction in the workweek. However, this is an erroneous prediction as the use of technology does not itself create free time, although it can create the possibility for more free time (Murphy [1993], p. 172). Murphy's contention that Marx became disillusioned with labor and turned towards technology for salvation is indeed a striking contrast to Marx's earlier thoughts on labor as man's tool to achieve freedom, which we will explore later.

Division of Labor as Cause of Estrangement

Marx's criticism of the division of labor stems from his determination of estrangement as its result. In turn, Marx's view of estrangement can be revealed through an analysis of his theory of human nature. Marx conceptualized man as a species being (*Gattungswesen*): "[m]an is a species-being, not only because in practice and in theory he adopts the species...as his object, but – and this is only another way of expressing it – also because he treats himself as the actual living species; because he treats himself as a universal and therefore a free being" (Murphy [1993], p.216; Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," p. 275). Any individual person for Marx is a microcosm of the entire species: "[m]an's individual and species-life are not different" because man "is a being that treats the species as its own essential being, or that treats itself as a species-being" (Murphy [1993], p.216; Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," p. 275). Marx believes that anything that differentiates one person from another would estrange the person from his essence as a species being since each person is potentially the perfection of humanity.

Because the division of labor differentiates individuals, it estranges us from our essential human nature. Marx writes, "The division of labour is the economic expression of the social character of labour within the estrangement" (Murphy [1993], p.216; Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," p. 317). Further, it turns individual against society: "The division of labour also implies the contradiction between the

interest of the separate individual or the individual family and the common interest of all individuals” (Murphy [1993], p. 216; Marx, “German Ideology,” pgs. 46-7). Marx offers the communist society as a solution; in communism, there is no longer any division of labor as an individual will realize his nature as a species being through performing a variety of tasks for basic sustenance without having to become specialized (Murphy [1993], p.216). Specialization, after all, is a form of the division of labor and can estrange people. It is interesting that Murphy notes that Aristotle’s comment to this would be that someone who can do everything others do is precisely someone with no need of society –either a beast or a god (Murphy [1993], p. 217). Marx has, after all, essentially made his idealized individual, one who has achieved a species-being essence, into a self-contained society.

Marx gives us an image of the idealistic communist society in “The German Ideology”. In his discussion of the division of labor, Marx notes that communism, as opposed to capitalism, allows a man to pursue a multitude of activities: “...in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic” (Elster (ed.) [1986], p. 180; quoted from Marx, “The German Ideology”). Booth [1993] suggests that because there is no determination of activities by production/exchange, this is a description of a classless society. Marx’s ideal individual is unlike an individual in a bourgeois society who is in a

“situation of being assigned” (Booth [1993], p. 256). Rather, the ideal individual does what “he has a mind to.”

Criticisms

Murphy [1993] criticizes Marx for eventually giving up on labor and resorting to a dependency on machines to free humans from monotonous work, while others, such as Kain [1992], present an opposing viewpoint; Kain disagrees and argues that Marx continued to see value in labor. Murphy acknowledges Marx for seeing that “if the inexorable march of economic progress requires an increasingly fragmented social division of labor, then socially productive powers can increase only at the expense of the individual productive powers”; in essence, society would succeed at the expense of the individual (Murphy [1993], p. 164). However, Murphy argues that Marx failed to see that there is a variety of efficient social divisions of labor for any given technology. In doing so, Murphy draws a parallel between Marx and Aristotle; both philosophers turned to another source to free men from the constraints of production. Indeed, just as Aristotle turned to slaves to free an elite from labor, Marx sought escape from the necessity of labor in technology (Murphy [1993], p. 164). In doing so, Marx reverted to the Aristotelian view on production: production being in the realm of necessity, and leisure alone in the realm of moral freedom (NE 1140a9 and MM 1197a12). Murphy argues that the reason Marx believed such was because he believed the technical division of tasks logically entailed the social division of labor; thus, social division of labor was necessary for efficiency (Murphy [1993], p. 164). In fact, Marx goes on to argue that “[t]he

increase in productive power achieved through simple cooperation and the division of labour costs the capitalist nothing” (Murphy [1993], p. 165; Marx, “Economic Manuscript of 1861-63”, p.260). Murphy argues, however, that the division of labor is not necessarily efficient. Murphy gives the example of a fragmented division of labor in the factory requiring large supervisory staffs; this is true of an office environment as well. Large supervisory staffs merely add costs to the capitalist.

In addition, Murphy criticizes Marx for his use of technology as a saving resort for human labor. Marx believed that “the saving of labour time is equivalent to the increase of free time” (Murphy [1993], p. 172; Marx, “Grundrisse,” 29:87 and 97). In doing so, Marx assumes that advances in productivity will automatically be translated into reductions of the workweek. The advances of technology today without the reduction of the workweek proves contrary. Although technology can create the possibility for an increase of free time, Murphy states that technology itself cannot create free time. Murphy’s belief is based on the idea that the translation of productivity into free time is not merely a technical one, but a moral and political question as well (Murphy [1993], p. 172).

Kain [1992] represents an opposing viewpoint to Murphy on Marx’s opinions on labor. Kain disagrees with the idea of Marx giving up on labor. Marx describes his ideal society as one in which need directly regulates production (Kain [1992], p. 227-8; Marx, “Comments on Mill”, 3:227-28). Individuals work to realize their essence – their species being - through the satisfaction and development of needs; individuals do not work

merely as a means to exist. In such a society, a communal bond is consciously formed between members as they realize that their sharing directly satisfies the needs of others; in sharing, members realize the power and importance of others who satisfy and develop one's essence and one's own power and importance in satisfying others' essence (Kain [1992], p.229). In fact, production helps people realize their own essence: "[o]ur products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature" (Kain [1992], p. 228; Marx, "Comments on Mill" 3:227-28). Labor, which is exerted in order to facilitate production, therefore is important to the realization of human essence.

Part IV: On Marx & Aristotle

Marx's labor theory was rooted in the Aristotelian conception of eudaimonism. Gilbert [1992] suggests that, like Aristotle, Marx may have desired for humans to engage in activities for their own sakes in order to further *eudaimonia*. As he analyzed that capitalism disallowed the achievement of human flourishing, Marx intended communism to allow eudaimonistic activities to happen. Indeed, Gilbert implies that Marx 's goal was to set society in accordance with what was humanly natural (Gilbert [1992], p. 316). Such a eudaimonist view underlies Marx's thoughts on labor.

Although Marx's particular views about issues of justice, property, slavery and the treatment of women differ greatly from Aristotle's, the two had many fundamental similarities in their ethical frameworks which characterize them as eudaemonists and

moral realists, who believe in the existence of absolute morality. (According to Gilbert, moral realism recognizes progress in morality and advance in moral theory through successive approximations to the truth about human potentials for cooperation and freedom (Gilbert [1992], p. 303)). Both Marx and Aristotle share ideal notions about political life including the importance of a cooperative and free political life, based on common good, the role of politics as an arena for development of moral character; the need to continually develop justice and other moral goods, and the importance of deliberation and choice in serving the common good (Gilbert [1992], p. 304). Both agree that *eudaimonia* stems from activities that realize intrinsic human goods such as knowledge, friendship, and political community. Both Marx and Aristotle had moral theories supporting activities characterized by choice. For Aristotle, the highest human activities were conducted not under the pressure of necessity but by choice; for Marx, work for subsistence is characterized in the least by choice, but primarily as a necessary function (Gilbert [1992], p. 309).

Marx acknowledges many of Aristotle's theories directly. Marx commended Aristotle's discovery of the distinction between use value and exchange value, the derivation of the money form from the value form of commodities, and the recognition that equality between two physically different commodities subject to different uses must embody some third common characteristic (Gilbert [1992], p. 315). Gilbert argues that Aristotle had an even deeper analysis than Marx made insight on. Aristotle viewed money as a political tool to tie the complementary activities needed for justice together. Further, he saw money as tied to law or custom, not to nature. Providing another perspective,

Aristotle believed in the corrupting potential of money, but also in its power to unite diverse activities and needs, which could end up as furthering *eudaimonia*, strengthening the political life, and so is, in these circumstances, to be considered natural (Gilbert [1992], p. 315).

Marx's Development of Value Theory

Marx found a basis for the theory of value in Aristotle. Marx wrote, “if we go back to the great investigator who was the first to analyze the value-form, like so many other forms of thought, society and nature. I mean Aristotle” (DeGolyer [1992], p. 112). In *Capital*, Marx outlines Aristotle's idea for a common comparison of exchange between goods bed and house:

In the first place, he [Aristotle] states quite clearly that the money form Of the commodity is only a more developed aspect of the simple form of value, i.e. Of the expression of the value of a commodity in some other commodity chosen at random, for he says:

5 beds = 1 house
 is indistinguishable from
5 beds = a certain amount of money
(From DeGolyer [1992], p.112; *Capital*, p. 151-52)

Aristotle, Marx noted, saw that some qualitative and equative measure should be applied in order to value the goods. However, because Aristotle believed in equality as a necessary condition for exchange, Aristotle would abandon a further theory of value on the basis that it would be impossible for unlike things to be commensurable, or qualitatively equal (DeGolyer [1992], p.112). In other words, Aristotle discovered the need for finding a common basis of comparison, but stopped short from finding that

common basis. To this, Marx replied that human labor is the common basis of comparison across goods; all products can have an equal factor in the form of the human labor that is necessary for their existence (DeGolyer [1992], p. 112). For example, two products could now be compared on the basis of how many hours each took the same type of person, or different people with equal manpower, to make. Marx explained Aristotle's failure to uncover this common factor of comparison on the basis that Greek society was founded on slave labor; because of it, its natural basis was rooted in the inequality of men and their labor-powers. Further, Marx declared that until the concepts of human equality and, therefore, the equality of labor-power became more accepted, a discovery of human labor as an equalizing common factor was, of course, limited (DeGolyer [1992], p. 113). Indeed, slavery was a differentiating factor between the two philosophers.

On Freedom

Unlike the older Marx, the young and perhaps less disillusioned Marx is able to find production in the realm of freedom. For the young Marx, the human species is able to realize freedom through labor. Kain [1992] notes that for Marx, freedom demands three things: (1) self determination of the individual by universal and rational principles; (2) rational state laws and institutions, so that an individual can obey civil laws as he or she would obey laws of his own reasoning; and (3) a synthesis of feeling and custom that allows the individual to agree with and support these said state laws (Kain [1992], 215). The young Marx's model of freedom is achieved by the human species' labor in the

natural and objective world; not only do humans exist, labor and develop in this natural and objective world, but they also come to control it through the exercise of their labor. In doing so, the “subject constitutes the object, objectifies itself in it, finds itself at home with it, and thus is free” (Kain [1992], p.216); the human being, notes Kain, is able to find freedom in the natural and objective world by some sort of immersion.

Kain defines Marx’s concept of freedom to be the realization of a thing’s nature or essence. For Marx, “only that which is a realization of freedom can be called humanly good” (Kain [1992], p.216). Kain interprets this to mean that moral good is the realization of freedom for Marx. One of the tools that humans use to realize freedom is reason; Kain writes:

The human species works on its world through history and transforms it to conform with its own essence, such that in confronting the world the human species discovers itself and becomes conscious of the power of its own rationality objectively embedded in that world. Freedom, in short, is this development and objectification of reason in the world. Realizing this and living accordingly is morality. (Kain [1992], p.216)

Kain assumes that Marx believes the essence of a human being to be reason. After all, Kain acknowledges that “freedom does not mean being unhindered in any and all ways, but it means the unhindered development of what is the essence of the thing” (Kain [1992], 216). If freedom is attained by reason, then reason must be central to the human species’ essence or nature. And for Marx as interpreted by Kain, “the realization of the thing’s essence – its nature, what it inherently is – is the thing’s good” (Kain [1992], p.216).

Marx's concept of essence, central to his earlier thoughts on freedom, is comparable to Aristotle's. Aristotle finds the essence of a thing in its definition as the form of the thing. The essence of a thing is revealed in the process of development by which the essence can be attained. Each thing has and realizes its essence through its proper process, activity or function; for human beings, Aristotle believes that their proper activity or essence is to conduct activity in accordance with reason. Realization of reason through activity leads to happiness (Kain [1992], p.216). Indeed, Marx's realization of reason as essential to freedom, is similar to Aristotle's thoughts on realization of reason as essential to happiness. Yet, Marx disagrees with Aristotle's notion that the form or end of a thing is fixed and unchanging. Essences, for Marx, develop and can change through history (Kain [1992], p. 217). In addition, the link between freedom and essence is not as strong for Aristotle, while it is central to Marx's earlier thoughts.

Both Marx and Aristotle distinguished production as falling under the realm of necessity from leisure in the realm of freedom. Marx affirmed this difference in *Capital*: "In fact, the realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; thus in the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production." Marx completely removed production from consideration in the realm of freedom since labor itself was concerned with necessary and mundane constraints.

Similar to Aristotle, Marx identifies moral reason with leisured action and technical reason with production. Marx distinguishes production as the realm of necessity from

leisure as the realm of freedom in the third volume of *Capital*: “In fact, the realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; thus in the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production” (Murphy [1993], p. 172). Marx completely removed production within a firm from the realm of moral and political consideration. Marx observes modern industry as being “the technical subordination of the workman to the uniform motion of the instruments of labour,” rather than the political subordination of workers to the managers and engineers who design and deploy technology (Murphy [1993], p.170). Therefore, Marx separated firm production from moral consideration, and so made the moral humanization of production logically impossible. In supporting this separation of production of a firm from moral consideration, Marx modernized as well as democratized Aristotle’s support for the use of slaves in production in order to create freedom for the leisure of the few: technology can now be used to create free time for all workers. In both cases, production without reliance on human labor is a condition for moral and political freedom (Murphy [1993], p.173). Since only efficiency matters in a firm’s production to Marx, and machines are sufficient in achieving efficiency in many cases, it seems natural for Marx to turn to machines to free humans from unfulfilling labor.

Aristotle controversially argued that some forms of slavery are natural: first, because some people are born with deficient minds and /or bodies; second, because the master-slave relation mirrors the relation between soul and body (Murphy [1993], p.124; Pol. 1254a22, 34). Slavery, the contrast to freedom, was indeed, for Aristotle, a means for the

achievement of freedom by a smaller elite. Murphy points out that “[j]ust as Aristotle said that if shuttles would weave by themselves we would not need slaves, so Marx looks to automated technology to free men from the necessity of labor”(Murphy [1993], 164). Marx, although against slavery, would also seek the full, free human development in community as an ultimate goal for humanity as Aristotle did (DeGolyer [1992], p.119).

In *Capital*, Marx understood that Aristotle sought freedom as an ultimate goal:

“If... every tool, when summoned, or even of its own accord, could do the work that befits it, just as the creations of Daedalus moved of themselves, or the tripods of Hephaestos went of their own accord to their sacred work...then there would be no need either of apprentices for the master, or the slaves for the lords...They [Ancient philosophers] did not...comprehend that machinery is the surest means of lengthening the working day” (Kain [1992], p.229; Quoted from Marx, *Capital*, 1: 408).

Aristotle understood that, should tools be able to accomplish slaves’ tasks, slaves would not be needed to work so that their masters could pursue leisurely activities. Marx was critical in that Greeks such as Aristotle “did not...comprehend that machinery is the surest means of lengthening the working day”; Aristotle, thought Marx, did not foresee the potential negative aspects that machinery would bring about for humans. Yet, Marx himself would fall into the very same trap of an idealization of what machinery could do; perhaps this failure can be attributed to Marx’s inability to fully realize machinery’s effects on labor. Or perhaps machinery has not advanced enough to accomplish tasks in place and without any aid of humans, as Marx and Aristotle would desire.

On Friendship

Kain points out that Marx's ideal society would result in relationships between individuals like the community of friends Aristotle thought necessary for a good state (Kain [1992], p.229; NE 1155a, 1159b-1160a; Pol., p.1280b; Marx, "Comments on Mill," 3:227-28). Marx's ideal society is one in which members can realize their own essences through production, share the results of their production, and so realize other members' contributions to everyone else's needs. Marx writes:

Let us suppose we had carried out production as human beings... (1) In my production I would have objectified my individuality, its specific character, and therefore enjoyed not only an individual manifestation of my life during the activity, but also when looking at the object I would have the individual pleasure of knowing my personality to be objective, visible to the senses and hence a power beyond all doubt. (2) In your enjoyment or use of my product I would have the direct enjoyment of being conscious of having satisfied a human need by my work, that is, of having objectified man's essential nature, and of having created an object corresponding to the need of another man's essential nature. (3) I would have been for you the mediator between you and the species, and therefore would have become recognized and felt by yourself as a completion of your own essential nature and as a necessary part of yourself, and consequently would know myself to be confirmed both in your thought and love. (4) In the individual expression of my life I would have directly created our expression of your life, and therefore in my individual activity I would have directly confirmed and realized my true nature, my human nature, my communal nature.

Our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature (Marx, "Comments on Mill," 3:227-28).

Similarly, Aristotle's community is one held together by friendship (NE 1155a).

Complete friendship, for Aristotle, is the "friendship of good people similar in virtue; for they wish goods in the same way to each other insofar as they are good, and they are good in their own right" (NE 1156b8-10). Further, Aristotle's friends take pleasure in the

actions of others: “[They are pleasant for each other] because each person finds his own actions and actions of that kind pleasant, and the actions of good people are the same or similar” (NE 1156b15-19). Aristotle’s friendship of people similar in virtue is similar to Marx’s relationship between people who each realize their own essence while sharing the production’s results with others.

Further, Kain [1992] notes that while Marx claimed that the human essence is social and Aristotle claimed that humans are political animals, both, in fact, had compatible ideas. Although Marx claims that the human essence is social, he does not distinguish its connection to what is social as opposed to political or communal (Kain [1992], p. 227-229; Marx, “Comments on Mill,” 3:227-28). Marx believed that the political state involved community with elements of alienation and domination; Marx, however, defined the realization of human essence through embracing community in order to overcome the isolation of society as well as any domination and estrangement. Marx realized human essence is communal (Kain [1992], p.229). Similarly, Aristotle claims that the “political” involves both communal interaction and domination, including domination over slaves (Pol., 1252a, 1253a, 1280a). Yet, the philosophers seem to differ in regards to domination as Marx’s ideal community aims to get rid of domination while Aristotle’s conception of the community relied on slavery. But, as discussed previously, Aristotle may have agreed with Marx’s ideal when he noted that sufficient technology might free slaves from domination (Kain [1992], p.229; Marx, *Capital*, 1:408; Pol., 1253b).

On Exchange

Marx shared similar ideas with Aristotle on exchange. For the young Marx, estrangement permeates exchange. Kain [1992] interprets Marx's estrangement to mean "that a social phenomenon or institution – produced by the activity and interaction of individuals in society but appearing to be independent, objective, and autonomous – turns on and dominates those individuals" (Kain [1992], p.225). An exchange economy is defined by human beings producing and putting their products onto a market; independent market laws then facilitate the transfer of products between individuals. Marx argues that because human beings need these products but don't control them, the process of exchange comes to dominate humans resulting in human estrangement (Kain [1992], p.226; Marx, "Comments on Mill," 3:212, 218, 220). Kain also gives the analysis that because human beings need other human beings in many ways, from producing anything to developing a language, then, given that need indicates essence for Marx, it follows that human beings are essentially related to one another. Human essence for Marx is social. Marx believes that these essential social relationships are estranged by exchange since they stand between and control the interactions of human beings. In exchange, human beings are not free since their essential relations are controlled by market laws (Kain [1992], p. 226; Marx, "Comments on Mill," 3:212-13, 217-20).

Marx believes that exchange perverts human virtue because it results in the valuation of a human being through a medium such as money. Marx gives an example of how exchange has twisted the valuation of human virtues: the relationship between lender and

borrower is calculated in terms of potential credit risk. Kain suggests that trustworthiness, for one, is no longer a value or virtue which is an end in itself. The credit standard has replaced trustworthiness as a standard of morality. Given that the existence of human needs and the lack of control over products necessary to satisfy those needs in exchange, Marx concludes that human morality will almost inevitably be shaped, dominated, and distorted by market forces (Kain [1992], p. 226; Marx, “Comments on Mill,” 3:214-16; Pol.1258a). Thus, labor, which Marx believed was the essential activity of human beings – no longer aims at producing products directly needed by laborers and so no longer serves to help laborers realize their human essence. Instead, labor and its product become “a mere means to be exchanged for a wage to guarantee bare existence” (Kain [1992], p. 226).

Both Aristotle and Marx believed that exchange could pervert human virtue. They acknowledged, however, the necessity of exchange although it is not the human’s highest end. Rather, such necessary exchange should occur only to allow human beings to proceed on to the sorts of activities involved in the good life, which is defined by a life involving activities that are ends in themselves and thus the highest realization of one’s essence. Marx believed that production should be measured by need and, thus, by human essence. When essence and need are in alignment, real exchange – that of labor for the product – occurs (Kain [1992], p. 226-27; Marx, “Comments on Mill,” 3:219-25; Pol.,1256a-1258b).

On Alienation

Marx's theory of alienation also borrows from the Aristotelian conception of the natural. Marx invokes an Aristotelian sense of natural justice by characterizing capitalist wage labor as "unnatural." For Aristotle, a thing's nature indicates its function and the final cause or end to which it tends; Aristotle also refers to the natural in relation to ethics as that which appeals to human nature (Irwin [1999], p. 339-340; NE 1147a24, 1167b29, 1170a13). Marx interprets productive activity in capitalism as serving as only the bare necessities of the laborer, rather than as conducive to realization of the laborer's species being, similar to the Aristotelian conception of the "final cause or end to which it tends". Marx writes, "What he [the worker] produces for himself is not the silk that he weaves, not the gold that he draws from the mine, not the palace that he builds" (Gilbert [1992], p. 306; Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, p.24).

Critique of Utilitarianism

Both Aristotle and Marx held beliefs distinct from those either of utilitarians or rights-based ethical theorists. Gilbert [1992] declares Marx to be a moral realist whose repudiation of utilitarianism is based on a eudaimonist vision. For example, Marx criticized the utilitarian "stupidity of merging all the manifold relationships of people in the one relation of usefulness" or pleasure (Gilbert [1992], p. 305; Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, p. 449). Marx disagrees with using usefulness, in terms of labor capacity, for example, to account for the relationships between people. Marx instead

proposed a conception of need that would relate individuals to each other based on community (Gilbert [1992], p. 305; Marx, *Capital*, 1961, 1: 609-10). Gilbert notes that Aristotle can be interpreted to deepen Marx's argument. Aristotle contrasted genuine friendship – based on mutual concern – with defective friendships based on flattery or monetary gain, even when they result in pleasure. Aristotle also distinguished good pleasures versus malign pleasures: malign pleasures were those of a sick person accompanied by depraved activities while a good pleasure must arise from the intrinsic merit of an activity (Gilbert [1992], p. 305; NE 1173b21-1174a13). Both Aristotle and Marx seemingly would have valued the human motives well as the results of an activity in consideration of the activity's value; utilitarians differed in evaluating only the ends.

Marx's strong emphasis on human motives is evidenced by his critique of Smith. Gilbert notes that Smith argues for the following: "in an exchange economy, a common good is produced unconsciously through an invisible hand. Each seeks their own self-interest; but given the complex interdependence of each on all, self-seeking produces the common good more effectively than if individuals had sought it consciously" (Gilbert, p. 227). Gilbert interprets Marx's objection to Smith's model on largely a moral basis. Marx objects to this model because it, regardless of its efficiency, does not account for human intent; acting selfishly and indirectly allowing a good to come about without good motivations is not moral. Morality for Marx requires conscious intent; to act morally, one must realize rationally what the good is and then act upon this rational knowledge (Gilbert, p. 227; Marx, "Comments on Mill", 3:217). Marx's consideration of human intent in an action is similar to Aristotle's. Aristotle writes, "[b]ut for actions in accord

with the virtues to be done temperately or justly it does not suffice that they themselves have the right qualities. Rather, the agent must also be in the right state when he does them. First, he must know [that he is doing virtuous actions]; second, he must decide on them, and decide on them for themselves; and third, he must also do them from a firm and unchanging state” (NE 1105a). It is plausible that Aristotle, like Marx, would have criticized Smith’s invisible hand model for failing to consider the motivation behind production as important.

While classical utilitarianism defined virtue as necessarily a result of pleasure or happiness, other theorists, including Aristotle and Marx, rejected the tendency to identify virtue with happiness (Kain [1992], p.235). Aristotle defines *eudaimonia* as the satisfaction accompanying a well-performed activity. Aristotle identifies the proper function of the human being as performing activity in conformity with a rational principle or virtue. *Eudaimonia* is a result of these activities (Kain [1992], p.242; NE 1097b-1098a, 1076a-1077a). Kain asserts that it follows that the more the performance of an activity accords with our essence, the higher the satisfaction (Kain [1992], p. 235).

Marx, like Aristotle, notes, although implicitly, that activity should lead to *eudaimonia*. Specifically, Marx notes in several places that species activity ought to lead to happiness (in the Greek sense of *eudaimonia*) and that it ought to be enjoyable and satisfying (Kain [1992], p.234; Marx, “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts”, 3:239, 278, 298-301; Marx, “Comments on Mill”, 3: 227-228). Marx’s assertion that higher wages for workers would only produce better-paid slaves is an example of Marx’s difference from

utilitarians. Kain assumes that utilitarians, taking this example, would conclude that higher wages for workers would result in their increased enjoyment or happiness; the fact that workers are alienated or not free would not be considered into the utilitarian calculus (Kain [1992], p. 235). On the contrary, Marx would have looked at the situation more unfavorably as happiness without freedom would not result in realization of human essence, which is complementary to *eudaimonia*. Aristotle would have surely agreed with Marx on his criticism as *eudaimonia* would only be realized if humans satisfied their rational principles or virtue through labor; an increase of wages without accompanying virtuous activity would not necessarily result in the ideal achievement of *eudaimonia*. Kain also notes that Marx's species could serve as a replacement of Aristotle's final cause, defined as the highest being for whose good all action is done (Kain [1992], p. 235; "Comments on Mill," 3: 227-28). Because Marx believes that our highest end is in free species activity itself, it seems plausible to extend Aristotle's thoughts on the final cause: free species activity is equivalent to *eudaimonia*.

Society versus Individual

Just as Marx saw the idealized person as a one-person society, he saw the idealized society as an individual; Aristotle differed in this matter by rejecting the analogy between society and the individual. Marx argues that society can be seen as an individual: "[i]f the whole society were considered as a single individual, necessary labour would consist of the sum of all the particular functions of labour which are made independent by the division of labour" (Murphy [1993], p.217; Marx, "Grundrisse," 28:450). Marx believes

that individuals realized their social nature by encompassing the entire division of labor, as discussed above, but only as organs of the collective: “when the labourer co-operates systematically with others, he strips off the fetters of his individuality and develops the capabilities of his species” (Murphy [1993], p. 218; Marx, *Capital*, 1:13.312). Division of labor, as Murphy notes, serves to affirm the collective’s nature, although disregarding the individual’s species-being essence. On the other hand, Murphy notes that Aristotle, unlike Marx, believed that a society could never have the unity of the individual soul on the basis that society contains more diversity and complexity than any individual. Aristotle also believed that individual stipulation contained more unity and clarity than social custom did (Murphy [1993], p. 220). While Marx saw human individuality as being constrained by the social division of labor, he also saw individuality as a constraint on the social division of labor. Marx saw this as an extension of Aristotle’s famous characterization of man as a political animal: “The reason of this is that man is, if not as Aristotle contends, a political animal, at all events a social animal” (Murphy [1993], p. 218; Marx, *Capital*, 1:13.309). As mentioned above, because the individual realizes his social nature only as one of many organs of the collective worker, it follows that in order to realize his social nature, a worker must, in some respect, disregard his own individuality.

Part V: Conclusion

It is apparent even from this paper alone that Marx’s ideas had roots in many philosophers besides for Aristotle. Aristotle, however, is a notable contributor to Marx’s

thinking in that Marx modernized many of the Greek philosopher's thoughts. Marx's critique of utilitarianism was rooted in an eudaimonistic analysis of the value of an activity itself versus its end result. Also, Marx's species-being model was a development of Aristotle's eudaimonism; Marx believed that humans should strive in functions including diversity of labor to attain species-being status just as Aristotle believed that humans should pursue activities to help them realize *eudaimonia*. Marx acknowledged that he found the roots of his theory of value or comparison in Aristotle's works. Indeed, as Booth and Murphy suggest, Marx's communist model was a modern application of Aristotle's *oikos* model of a needs-driven, rather than greed-driven, economic society.

At the same time, Marx inherited problems inherent in the usage of Aristotle's theories. The reduction of production within a firm to merely technical considerations is found in both Marx and Aristotle's works. Urnson has criticized Aristotle's consideration of production as merely technical. Murphy has criticized Marx's consideration of the division of labor merely in terms of technical efficiency. In addition, while Marx thought that slavery, which existed in the ancient *oikos*, would be abolished in communism, instead, the communist head would take on the despotic nature inherent to such a patriarchal model.

Many similarities can be drawn between Marx's moral economic theories and Aristotle's. As mentioned previously, both Marx and Aristotle agreed that humans must engage in activities for their own sakes in order to achieve *eudaimonia*; otherwise, the world of action is in the wrong and is unnatural. Through communism, Marx's aim was to set the

social accord with what is humanly natural. In addition, both identified moral reason with leisured action and technical reason with a process such as production in a firm. Friendship for both philosophers was an important human characteristic; both espoused social communities in which friendship was essential. Both philosophers would also agree that market exchange perverted human values and that humans should value leisurely over necessary action. The philosophers' ideas on freedom were also complementary; both felt that reason was essential to a realization of human essence. On the other hand, many contrasts between the philosophers are due to a result of historical and environmental context and not by differences in fundamental moral tenets. Slavery, for example, was an institution common to Ancient Greeks rather than nineteenth century Europeans and therefore, plausibly, espoused by Aristotle but not by Marx.

What, then, can we stand to learn from an analysis of the connections between the two philosophers' works? One lesson has to do with the fact that the eudaimonistic ideal of human flourishing was critical to both philosophers' works. This suggests that the relevance of human flourishing is an important consideration in morality. Further, Marx's development of Aristotle's *eudaimonia* is relevant to modern-day study of labor theory. Because work continues to be an important part of the human life and *eudaimonia* as life's goal, both philosophers' theories of self-realization serve as good guides to industrial reform and any social economic change.

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