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Chapter 9

Stephen Thomson

Topographies of Liberal Thought: Rand and Arendt and Race

i) Reception in the Public Realm

Rand and Arendt: the assonance is tempting. Yet these are two names rarely if ever voiced in the same breath. There are also some teasing circumstantial resemblances in their trajectories. Disembarking in the United States as bourgeois European Jews in flight from the totalitarian persecutions of early-twentieth century Europe—the one from Bolshevik Russia in 1926, the other Nazi Germany in 1941—both go on to enjoy sorts of philosophical prominence unusual for women in the 1950s and 1960s. Yet these parallels count for so little that the same biographer may write a life of each without mentioning the other. (Heller, 2009; Heller, 2015) Only, it seems, the contrarian genius of *Spiked* magazine has felt moved to unite them in print, under the deliciously paradoxical banner of an anti-feminist feminism. (Holdsworth, 2016) Otherwise, they might as well inhabit parallel, non-communicating universes. Or at least, since they did inhabit the same public sphere, it seems they occupy distant, maybe even radically dissymmetrical, areas of it. For while Rand addresses only the narrow, shady margin of the libertarian/neo-con right, Arendt has the run of the sunlit agora, commanding the respect of thinkers of widely diverging interests. It is not just a matter of appealing to distinct constituencies or sides. Rather their audiences are constituted in ways that are incommensurable, by an address that is either homogenizing or capable of diversity. If Arendt remains good to think with, even indispensable, in spite of whatever differences we may

have with her, it is because she invites us to think in a way that is nuanced, capacious, and multi-faceted. But Rand has only one side, offering a single point of entry, and a uniform issue; wearing ever deeper, with relentless trenchancy and driving tendentiousness, the same narrow furrow. This, then, would be why, in the city of political philosophy, one meets Arendt at every turn, and Rand hardly at all.

In the last analysis, I cannot honestly say I demur from the broad outline of this account. I would be only too happy never to have to meet a Rand; and, although I have been aware of her since she was namechecked by Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, I have hitherto managed to avoid the assignation with the greatest of ease. For this, I suppose, I am indebted to the topography outlined above. There are, nevertheless, some problems arising out of its common-sense appeal to the public sphere as a coherent urban space. For one thing, as some recent swellings seem to confirm, a Rand's narrowness may not preclude a certain power of amplification. There are pronouncements that proliferate in an algorithmic continuum whose most respectable (which is to say normalising) instances would be Jordan Peterson or Douglas Murray, that must remain all but incomprehensible without reference to Randian reason. And it does not matter if this 'reason' seems scarcely reasonable. This only means that the task of understanding how it functions as reason has yet to begin. Can the agora, which likes to think of itself as encompassing all reason, simply disown this dark reserve? The Murrays and Petersons, after all, like to insinuate that they *are* the agora, the real one that has been unjustly put in the shade. It may be vexing for the well-thinking that a lack of expansiveness should prove no impediment to expansion. But can the answer be to treat what is effectively a growing constituency of the public sphere as an alien invasion?

Here, then, is another problem with the topography outlined above. It effectively works to *ensure* that an Arendt and a Rand never meet. But it cannot thereby ensure that there is never at any point any overlap in their thinking, only prevent its discovery. And yet there is at least one salient instance where their thinking does, to a troubling degree, align. Both Arendt, in 'Reflections on Little Rock' (1958), and Rand, in her essay on 'Racism' (1963), oppose the tactics of the Civil Rights Movement, and for similar reasons. For while both claim to despise racism as much as any prejudice, they argue that one cannot, and must not, legislate for integration, since law and politics are forbidden to interfere in what are properly social or individual matters. Equally (and not quite coherently in either case), both take a dim view of direct action tactics, particularly those that target public schools and that seek to mobilize schoolchildren politically. [i] Despite what seem compelling prima facie grounds, however, no comparative analysis is ever made. The sole exception to this would seem to be Shane Moran who, in an article questioning Arendt's usefulness to the critique of globalization in light of the limitations of her racial politics, alerts us to some suggestive 'parallels', not least in the 'careful distinction between economic and political rights' that both Arendt and Rand draw. (Moran, 2013, 293, n.18) These remarks are, nevertheless, confined to an undeveloped footnote. This too may be an effect of the dissymmetry outlined above. For, while no one would be surprised to learn that Rand takes such a reactionary stance, the Arendt article tends to be seen as a problem in an otherwise impeccable œuvre; one that must be finessed, excused, or relegated to the margins. (Morey, 2014) Even in the growing critical literature on Arendt's problematic views on race, some are still reluctant to call her 'racist' in spite of the evidence of racism they find in *The Origins of Totalitarianism.* (Moruzzi, 2000, 97-98) And while others have more recently moved the question towards the centre of the œuvre, this never, with the exception of Moran, brings Rand into the picture. (Burroughs , 2015; Owens, 2017; Gines,

2014; Gines 2009) This is a pity because many of these critiques are concerned with the topographical dimension of Arendt's politics implicit in Moran's remark on the 'distinction between economic and political rights'. For the landscape of separate realms and spheres around which *The Human Condition* is ordered, stands accused of schematic rigidity, an over-preparedness to universalize, and consequently an insensitivity to the specific landscape of American racism. And this notion of schematic rigidity potentially poses, for Arendt, a problem even more fundamental than the stain of racism. What is supposed to distinguish Arendt is a nuance and complexity that stand above, and can survive, occasional lapses or disagreements. But what if nuance were but a veil cast over a set of concepts no less driven towards their own self-serving goals than those of a Rand? Could it be that Arendt is simply a more sophisticated version of a Rand?

I would not, ultimately, go this far. Certainly, one can have great fun at the expense of Rand's bug-eyed trenchancy. She does not simply lack nuance: she openly despises it. She fetishises an idea of clarity exemplified by the law of identity ('A is A'), and loathes whatever she sees as the 'fog' of arbitrariness and relativism. (Rand, 1975, 31) For these are obstacles in the way of the individual will of 'man', who must be helped in his titanic struggle towards self-realization by an art that shows him at his square-jawed best. It is thus in the name of heroism that her rare concessions to qualified judgment are made. This is why she loves Victor Hugo despite his political leanings (31 and passim); or (rather less plausibly) Vermeer because, despite the sordidness of his subject matter, his style 'projects clarity, discipline, confidence, purpose, power—a universe open to man'. (39) This is a landscape for heroes, akin to Rand's (rather artless) epitome of art: 'a heroic man, the skyline of New York, a sunlit landscape, pure colors, ecstatic music' (16). And if this reminds us of Gary Cooper in the closing shot of *The Fountainhead* (King Vidor,

1949) as discussed in Chapter 6 of this book—erect, chiseled, dwarfing the tall buildings that are his work—this is no accident. 'A is A' means 'A is A', and Rand is absolutely unafraid of tautology as she trawls her own novels for examples of good art. On one occasion she even rewrites the opening of *The Fountainhead* to show how bad it would have been if a weak-wristed liberal, and not she, had written the character of Roark. (Rand, 1975, 81 – 84) It never seems to occur to her that the 'real' Roark might also be awful in his way. Naturally, for he is awful the way Ayn Rand is awful. Her prose moves quickly, decisively, heroically from one slab of assertion to the next. The assertions may be odd, and the leap from one slab to the next vertiginous, but sheer speed and momentum carry her across the abyss, with a tempo that evinces an undeviating will, even as it deviates wildly. Presumably this is part of the thrill of reading her. But what Rand builds, slab by slab, is the mausoleum of what Arendt calls, in *The Life of the Mind,* 'thinking': that is, non-instrumental deliberation, a debate of the self with the self that follows no goal, and whose capacity to entertain 'unanswerable questions' may be an essential condition, not just for ethical being and art, but even for the possibility of posing answerable questions. (Arendt, 1977-78, 62) If Rand ever deliberated in an open-ended way, or tolerated a moment's disagreement with herself, there is no trace of it in her writing, only this single tumescent 'I' that lives by decree.

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But it is also important to note the extent to which Arendt's *The Human Condition* (1958) is also guided by an heroic vision, and one that is not wholly immune to satire. What she offers is, in large part, a lament for the passing of 'the public realm' in which alone 'the shining brightness we once called glory' was possible. (Arendt, 1998, 180) Her heroism seems thus to belong in a distant, bygone, and possibly Athenian age. Now, in modernity, we are stuck with the homogenising force

of ‘society’ which, because it has dissolved the boundaries between private and political, ‘excludes the possibility of action’ and replaces it with mere ‘behavior’, subject to mindless, statistical, technocratic management rather than politics. (40-43). So, in the end, ‘individual life’ will be ‘submerged in the over-all life process of the species’. (322) If this sounds grim we should note that, even in its Athenian heyday, the public realm scarcely guaranteed ‘glory’. One could count oneself lucky to get as far as ‘disclosure of self’ through speech and action. And if we were foolish enough to attempt action without speech, we would be revealed as ‘robots’. For in such a case we have to do with a ‘what’, not a ‘who’. (178-79). Since the barest personhood is not, thus, guaranteed even in the public realm, what hope is there for the subjacent realms of ‘Work’ and ‘Labor’? ‘Work’ at least has the dignity of providing ‘world’ by ‘erecting’ durable objects. But the private realm of ‘Labor’—the (Aristotelian) sphere of mere reproduction, of tasks that disappear in the doing and produce nothing—is so bound up with the merely physical life of the organism as to barely qualify as human. Indeed, to ‘live an entirely private life means above all to be deprived of things essential to a truly human life’. (58) But Arendt seems to accept this as a price worth paying for a thriving political realm. At one point she does at least express some passing sympathy for servants and ‘the violent injustice of forcing one part of humanity into the darkness of pain and necessity’. (119). But mainly she shares the Greek ‘impatience with every effort that left no trace, no monument, no great work worthy of remembrance’ and tends to overlook the dependence of such things on a host of non-monumental efforts. (81) For, after all, not even the greatest of men can stride into the agora without a good breakfast and clean socks.

Arendt’s discourse is nothing like as aggressively individualistic as Rand’s, and it goes some way to account for the interdependencies that structure the whole. Even so, it is ultimately the loss of

public man that exercises her, so that it is not at all clear that she sees the loss of individuality implicit in maintaining his existence as a structural injustice. From the point of view of the hegemon, it is natural to identify the polis with the limited, exclusive fraction of full citizens privileged with political life. But where, then, does this leave the wholeness of the topography of different spheres and realms? Just by producing such problems, Arendt's schema is infinitely more nuanced that Rand's. And yet, I am going to suggest, both alike circumnavigate the same abyss. If this claim seems dubious, the name I will give to the terrain in which this abyss is situated will seem even more so. I will call it liberalism.

ii) Reform and Education

It is a label Rand would emphatically reject. She despises 'liberals' as wrong-headed do-gooders whose appeal to 'society' only serves to shackle her heroic individuals. She has, it is true, been an inspiration for some of the heralds of the brand of laissez-faire political economy that we have come to know as 'neoliberalism'. The liberalism I want to evoke, however, is an expansive category that incorporates all manner of 'social' and 'economic' liberals and much else besides in a single problematic field; a field that can neither split nor unify because its protagonists are at once bound together and rent by a single aporia. A liberal, then, would be anyone who posits each and every human as *de iure* individual, yet who is constantly exercised by the difference between the individual in fact, and the individual worthy of their individuality. One of the names for this abyss, and the one in which we are all caught, is education. For education is at once the force charged with making all individuals worthy, and the currency in which their present deficit is calculated. In its most hopeful, moderately progressive versions, it is a means of speculatively flattening hierarchy by rotating it through ninety degrees and projecting it forward into time. In time, with

sufficient education, everyone will ascend the ladder. But in the meantime this meliorism is also a medium of delay. And who is to say this delay may not prove eternal, and the ladder just another pyramid in disguise? It may be that the degree of commitment to ensuring that the delay really is only a delay constitutes one of the most important political differences amongst 'liberals'.

To take a classic example, the essence of liberty for John Stuart Mill is that each is the best judge of his course of action, since 'no one but the person himself can judge of the sufficiency of the motive'. (Mill, 2006, 109) Yet, he also deplores the fashionable idea that we should 'search in our own minds and hearts for laws of conduct binding on ourselves and on all others'. (95) The appearance of contradiction here is a function of the extreme rarity of minds able to interrogate the 'grounds' of their opinions (43), sufficiently 'capacious' to reconcile both sides of a question (55), or possessed of the 'judicial faculty'. (60) And the only way to bridge this gap is to cultivate the 'soil' in which a 'small minority' can 'grow', who will serve the rest by 'opening their eyes'. (74) The project of equality demands this stratification. And in the meantime, the 'honour and glory of the average man is that he is capable of following', but 'with his eyes open'. (76) This, then, is the problematic that has shaped education's equivocal mission since at least the inception of bourgeois liberal democracy, and that has tended, at least since Condorcet, to ensure that it is equal and universal only insofar as it is elementary. But it is important to note also that the idea of education may bear a certain liberalism into the most revolutionary thinking. If Rosa Luxemburg rejects the claim that the German proletariat in 1919 are 'unripe' or 'immature', (Luxemburg, 1918) it is partly *because* they have outgrown the 'children's seven-league boots' of pre-Marxist socialism. (Luxemburg, 2006, 70) Structurally, temporally, education just is reform, even if it is the reform necessary to enable revolution. Now that it is a very long time since the revolution has not arrived,

any educator with transformative pretensions must live this delay as an agony and reckon, in the meantime, with their own involvement in reproduction.

I make this last point because it suggests why my own argument cannot absent itself from this problematic landscape or presume to adjudicate between Rand and Arendt from a place that is quite free of either. The preceding steps of argument also, I hope, suggest why it might be that the two converge on the matter of the education of African American children. The mere presence of such a parallel population, who must be said to be individuals, but not perhaps the same sort of individuals—worthy of education, but not in the same space—sheds a deeply unwelcome light on some topographical anomalies that otherwise pass as normal. The case of African Americans in the 1950s and 1960s (but not only then) illustrates in a spectacular way what it might mean to inhabit the same city, yet not inhabit the same city. The physical architecture of segregation enforces in a brutal and literal way a division of space within itself, erecting everywhere borders that paradoxically keep the fact of separation ever-present. Rand and Arendt alike struggle to reconcile this with an ideal of free association whereby space ought to accommodate a comfortable spread of groupings determined by nothing but their own preference. But they can only do so by accepting the hegemon's preference as predetermining the whole field of preferences. The school poses an acute problem for this logic of choice. For it is, even in the most normal circumstances, the place par excellence where the state by rights sequesters a form (albeit a curious form) of private property. Its standing in any topography of public and private, political and social, is thus profoundly equivocal.

ii) Rand's Racism

Rand's essay on 'Racism' ends by declaring the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, notably in their battles over education, the real racists. Since this reversal is currently enjoying considerable success in alt-right messaging, not the least interest of reading Rand's essay is to work out how she gets there. She starts with a typically idiosyncratic and tendentious definition: 'Racism is the lowest, most crudely primitive form of collectivism'. (Rand, 1964, 147) If this is unorthodox, it is also entirely predictable: anything Rand deems bad *must* be a manifestation of 'collectivism', if only to ensure that 'capitalism' is the solution. But how is the thing to be argued? The essence of racism, it transpires, is the abdication of individual responsibility and 'rationality' to 'chemical predestination', such that the racist asks to be judged not 'by his own character and actions', but rather by those of 'a collective of ancestors'. (147) Seen in this light, families that derive either shame or pride from their forebears, or 'the celebrity who starts his autobiography with a detailed account of his family history', are essentially engaged in the same enterprise that culminated in the 'wholesale slaughter of Nazi Germany' where the same 'racism' achieved 'full expression'. (147-48) In case one has any doubts about this rather bold teleology, Rand then doubles down on it, suggesting that all talk of 'blood' must inevitably lead to 'torrents of blood' (148-49).

It may seem, thus, that mass violence is the terminus towards which Rand is driving. But her argument is ultimately much less invested in racism's 'full expression' than in the essence presented by the family historian. True, she cannot resist lingering a little over the horrors of the Soviet Union. But the prime instance of 'racism' with which she will perorate is famously non-violent. It is also not a mass phenomenon, because in Rand's world there is no such thing. There

are no masses, only aggregates of individuals. Even *qua* fantasy, the collective cannot be a collective fantasy. The appearance of mass phenomena is thus a potential distraction that must be reduced to the individual level of the family historian. We should not be misled by talk of 'the greatness of the German (or French or Italian or Cambodian) race': any attempt to bolster '"tribal self-esteem" by alleging the inferiority of some other tribe' must be tracked back to each member's 'sense of his own inferiority'. (148-49) For there are no 'tribes', and no 'self' that could feel 'esteem' except individuals lured from their capitalist vocation by the 'quest for the unearned'.

It is on these grounds, then, that the 'Negro leaders' are the most notable racists of their time. They are quite right to protest against 'government-enforced discrimination' insofar as it impinges on their individual rights. But as soon as they make collective demands, they become racist. (153) As racists, they naturally proceed to collectivize others and attack their individual rights. Thus 'quotas' (one of Rand's bugbears) effectively demand 'that white men be penalized *for the sins of their ancestors*'. (154-55) Here we see how pivotal the instance of the family historian is. The only thing that can link 'white men' across history is genealogy, and it is racist. Rand's individuals are thus as disparate in time as they are in space. Whatever property anyone holds at any given point is theirs and theirs alone. This is their prime individual right, and any attempt to question it is an assault on individual rights. From this perspective, then, the 'Negro leaders' are making a tragic error: it is 'suicidal' that those 'who need the protection of individual rights most urgently—the Negroes—are now in the vanguard of the destruction of these rights'. (156-57)

For all its maniacal fidelity to the logic of individualism, this account cannot help but make a couple of pretty hefty concessions to obviously systemic phenomena. For it would seem hard to

parse ‘discrimination’ emanating from a ‘government’ in purely individualistic terms. And if, as it seems, the ‘Negros’ really do need ‘protection’ *as a group,* it must surely (on Rand’s own terms) be in response to some prior ‘racism’ that had already cast them as a collective. The history implicit in all of this seems glaringly obvious and hard to dismiss as the sins of ancestors. Indeed, it would be hard to imagine a process of collectivization more massive, coercive and brutal than the slavery of the middle passage and the plantations, not to mention their massive, ongoing, structural effects, from Jim Crow to segregation, and beyond. Rand does, in other contexts, and in more general terms, manage to gloss ‘slavery’ as an individual wrong, by determining it as the expropriation by one man of the sweat of another’s brow. (see ‘Man’s Rights’, in Rand, 1964, 113) But how can this massive, systematic, racialised appropriation of human beings be conjured away as the mere aggregate of individual sins of individual ancestors?

The short answer is ‘capitalism’. Rand is obliged to admit that the ‘major victims of such race prejudice as did exist were the Negroes’. But it was confined to ‘the noncapitalist’ or ‘feudal-agrarian’ South, and it was ‘the capitalist North that destroyed’ it (Rand, 1965, 151-52). Thereafter, in ‘its great era of capitalism, the United States was the freest country on earth—and the best refutation of racist theories’, welcoming and integrating men ‘of all races’, many of which had been at each other’s throats for generations in the Old World. For capitalism is ‘the only system that functions in a way which rewards rationality and penalizes all forms of irrationality, including racism’. (150-51) So it makes sense that ‘the Negroes’ were doing rather better for themselves *before* the ‘clamor for racial equality, propagated by the “liberals”’ made them disastrously ‘race-conscious’. (152) For this race-consciousness reintroduced a racism that capitalism would other-wise, left to its own devices, tend to repel.

Crucial to this picture is the conceit of capitalism as an immaculate conception, a new order that wipes the slate clean. Rand's account of 'a free market' where nothing counts except 'productive ability', which is to say 'individual ability', coupled with 'ambition' (150), reads like an uncritical, irony-free recapitulation of Marx's skewering of the exchange relation in which individuals A and B are 'indifferent' to each other 'as breathing individuals', and 'the general interest is precisely the generality of self-seeking interests'. (Marx, 1993, 242-45) But nothing highlights more clearly the extent to which Rand's economic thought lacks economic thought than its application to 'the Negroes'. For them, in Rand's terms, the price of admission to the intrinsic rationality of capitalism is forgetting the *hurt* of slavery. For this too is a *prejudice* that must be left at the door if capitalism is to realize itself in an aggregate of individuals who reciprocally accept that they have no one but themselves to thank for their success or failure. What this account conveniently forgets is accumulation; or, more specifically, that it must have a past, and not just a future. Even more specifically, Rand has no concept of primitive accumulation. For it is not just that African Americans had had practically no chance to accumulate for themselves under Jim Crow; or that they were now being ushered onto a playing field that, far from being level, was riven with structural exclusions, built on the back of their own labor; or that, in the bitterest of ironies, they were thus obliged to struggle against their own, but radically alienated, fixed capital. More than this, when Africans were first appropriated and brought to America en masse, it was as pure instruments of accumulation, and through an act of pure accumulation.

Rand is not, of course, obliged to think the thing in such specifically Marxian terms. It seems, nevertheless, that she thinks primitive origins are something she has to reckon with. Curiously

enough, this is where the very genealogy she otherwise seems to forbid comes into play. Thus racism is cast, from the very start, as a sort of atavism: it is the 'lowest, most crudely primitive'. As such, it tends to deal in 'brute force', and to arise in more primitive people: it is 'more prevalent among the poor white trash than among their intellectual betters'. (147-49) The genealogy at work here, the only one she will allow any deductive force, is an alien genealogy. It is the genealogy of collectivism; that through which 'statism [...] rises out of prehistorical tribal warfare'. (149-50) Capitalism, which knows no genealogy, is thus locked in a Manichean but assymetrical struggle *with genealogy*. The problem with this baroque fix is that, if it relieves capitalism of any responsibility to the past, it also renders it curiously impotent, defenceless against alien, atavistic incursions. Maybe this is why, as Rand concedes elsewhere, 'capitalism has never yet existed' in its pure state, but is rather 'the system of the future'. ('The Objectivist Ethics', Rand, 1964, 37) For while it is always already perfect in itself, capitalism's perfection *in fact* must await the achievement in each individual of the heroic struggle to overcome irrationality and realize themselves, individually. Herein lies the pathos of the hero, who can only bitterly resent those primitives whose unwonted apparition in actually existing capitalism withholds from him full enjoyment of the ideal state.

And so Rand's anti-racism arrives, through an elaborate detour, at exactly the same target as a more conventional American racism. She has, we are to understand, nothing against 'the Negro leaders' as 'Negroes'. It is just that their incorrigible refusal to understand how individual rights are bound up with private property makes her sad. But we have not quite done with the malice and duplicity of Rand's notion of 'private property'. For it would seem the category is sufficiently capacious to include *public* schools. She argues, in line with her general hatred of 'quotas', that

‘racial quotas in schools’ are ‘pure racism’. (156) And she is quick to add that such legislation would be ‘evil’ whether in the cause of ‘segregation or integration’. But she also argues *on the same page* that it is only in ‘privately owned establishments’ that one must never legislate: in ‘government owned facilities’ it is quite ‘proper to forbid all discrimination’. (156) It seems to follow, then, that public schools really are, in some way, private. But how? The evil of quotas, remember, is that they operate a zero sum game: what they give to one has to be taken from another. And the paragraphs following Rand’s remarks on schools are peppered (not entirely coherently) with indignant protests against any ‘claim to the property of another man’ or anything gained ‘at the expense of others’. (156) It would seem that the issue of school places is drawn into this topic such that a black child seeking to attend a ‘white’ school would *deprive* a white schoolchild of something that belongs to her by rights. Assuming an overall sufficiency of school places, this thing can only be the right of a white child to a place in a ‘white’ school, or its corollary, the exclusivity of the ‘white’ school. Of course, such exclusivity may indeed be construed as a form of social capital, or even a sort of property, but a sort whose value lies primarily in *depriving* others; in this instance, what is more, of a public good. Then again, is this not the secret of all ‘private property’?

This casts a baleful light on the ‘private means’ of protest of which Rand does approve: ‘economic boycott or social ostracism’. (156) Even leaving aside structural imbalances in economic ‘means’, how are the already-ostracised to practice ostracism? In terms of schools, Rand’s advice amounts to this: stay in your allotted place and pretend anyone cares. But we might also think of more fundamental ways in which the sacrality of ‘private property’ and ‘individual rights’ limits the terrain of protest open to those who started life in America *as* property. Rand reserves her most

extravagant 'outrage' for 'the mere idea of using children as pawns in a political game'. (156) Indeed, she rather grandly arrogates the outrage of 'all parents' in view of parental dereliction, and so assumes a right over the children, in the name of their individual rights. But to take this stance she must also forget that it concerns children whose great-great-grandparents might not even have enjoyed the right to keep their children, because they were legally the property of the slave-owner. Even now, it seems, the children are exposed to a rhetorical appropriation that, denying them agency, consigns them instead to a pathos of the individual that exhausts itself in the bare expression of their barest rights. Reduced, thus, to 'the smallest minority on earth' (154), there is literally nothing anyone can do for them.

iii) Arendt's Little Rock

The pathos of childhood plays an even more pivotal role in Arendt's 'Reflections on Little Rock'. But before we come to this, there is much ground to cover. The terms of Arendt's argument, which bear a close though not exact relation to the topography of *The Human Condition*, are by no means identical to those of Rand. Instead of the language of private property and individual rights, there is a more fine-grained consideration of the balance of power between political, public, social, and private realms. And these terminologies do not translate smoothly into each other. The social, for instance, stands in the place of Rand's individual at some points, and has slightly different implications. The overall topography nevertheless attempts to legislate, and ultimately fractures, along similar lines, and betrays analogous anomalies, notably on the status of public schools.

Expressed as a thesis, the thing may seem rock solid: equality belongs solely in the political realm,

not at all in the social; conversely, discrimination, which ought never to appear in the political is the very the law of the social. And, so long as Arendt's illustrative examples oblige these categories, all is well. Only, as in Rand, they founder on the rock of the very thing they are meant to legislate: racial difference. Let us start with 'society' because, as the realm where exclusivity is the norm, it is crucial to Arendt's argument. Here, everyone must be free to associate and form groups according to whatever criteria they choose. There can thus be no right to go to any hotel of one's choosing, because hotels clearly lie within the social. But there is no loss in this so long as society is ultimately inclusive at the level of mutual respect. Thus, Jews who claim the right to holiday in resorts that cater exclusively for Jews cannot complain if other groups wish to do the same with regard to their own kind. (52) The perfect balance of the example evinces a self-evident clarity and justice. And Arendt's argument unfolds with a sort of confidence in common sense that she might suspect in a more philosophical context.[ii]

The problems begin, however, when exceptions and grey areas are determined with the same confidence. So, Arendt says, the same principle of exclusivity 'obviously' does not apply to hotels 'in business districts', or to theatres and museums, or to buses and trains. For these 'are in fact public services', even if they are privately owned. (52) But is this really so obvious? And what sort of 'fact' is at stake when we might just as well say that the hotel is *in fact* privately owned? The common-sense notion of fact seems unable to settle the question. And so too, it seems, is Arendt. For, only a couple of pages earlier, she has paired the right to sit on a bus with, precisely, 'the right to go into any hotel', in a list of rights that she declares 'minor indeed' compared with the 'elementary human right' to 'marry whoever one wishes'. (49) So is there a right to choose your hotel after all? Or is it, as a 'minor' right, really no right at all? The answer certainly matters

in the case of the right to sit on the bus. For this had surely ceased, since 1955, to be in any sense 'minor'.

To be fair, Arendt does seem to clarify the matter of buses in the later passage: '[t]hough not strictly in the political realm', she says, buses 'are clearly in the public domain where all men are equal'. (52) But this clarity comes only at the price of a further equivocation. For it seems the 'public' can institute equality where it does not 'strictly' belong. Can we quite trust this 'domain' that has a habit of occupying portions of other realms, or acquiring their prerogatives? Or might the judgment of what is 'clearly [...] public' start to look like a matter of ad-hockery? Indeed, despite this claim to apodictic certainty in any given instance, the 'public' has no consistent force throughout Arendt's article. And this is pivotal when we come to her astonishment that the Supreme Court should have started its attempt to legally compel integration in 'of all places, the public schools'. (50)

Where and what is the 'public' in this instance? These schools are surely rather more *strictly* 'public' than the buses that might be privately owned, and rather more *obviously* places 'where all men are equal'. Indeed, one might even contend that, as legally-enforced expressions of the will of state, they are already somewhat more *strictly* political. And Arendt more or less concedes this last point later in the article when she singles out 'compulsory education' as the only matter in which the private rights of parents are 'legally restricted' in deference to the state's 'unchallengeable right to prescribe minimum requirements for future citizenship'. (55) But she immediately pivots to consider the school, not from the point of view of its legal and political constitution, but as it is *for the child.* It is 'the first place away from home where he establishes contact with the

public world that surrounds him and his family'. And, as Arendt is quick to add, *this* 'public world is not political but social'. (55) With this change of perspective—to the child, and to the school as lived experience—the pendulum of the 'public' thus swings all the way back to the opposing pole.

It may be tempting to see, behind this seeming desire to keep politics out of education, the shadow of totalitarianism. In 'The Crisis in Education', the essay she explicitly flags as the undeveloped backdrop for 'Reflections', Arendt tells us, 'Education can play no part in politics, because in politics we always have to deal with those who are already educated. Whoever wants to educate adults really wants to act as their guardian and prevent them from political activity'. (Arendt, 2006, 173) And it is easy to infer the corollary, that politics should not interfere in education lest it end in dragooning youth as the cadre of a new order. Here we might think of the 'jeering and grimacing mob of youngsters' that escorts Elizabeth Eckford off the premises of Little Rock Central High School in the famous photograph ('Reflections' 50), and of Arendt's warning, towards the end of 'Reflections', of the possible 'rise of mob and gang rule' (56), not to mention the part played by mobs in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951). Yet if 'Crisis' traces the genesis of the mob to a sort of politicisation, it is emphatically not in the form of indoctrination effected by a totalitarian entity positing itself as 'guardian'. The fault, indeed, lies with the *abdication* of adult authority promoted by 'Rousseauian' progressive education, and its propensity to leave each child 'a minority of one confronted by the absolute majority of all the others'. (Arendt, 2006, 178) The sort of tyranny that concerns us here is thus a Tocquevillian tyranny of the majority. Whatever dire political potential this may have, it is to be understood in the first instance as a properly social phenomenon. Moreover, the framing of this argument, in 'Reflections', in terms of familial or quasi-familial relations takes us into an area of the social that is markedly private. And this ultimately

means that even the mob is thoroughly depoliticised.

In ‘Reflections’, the scene of mob violence, which Arendt reads as ‘a fantastic caricature of progressive education’, is thus to be understood in private-social terms, as a matter of wrongs ‘adults’ have perpetrated on ‘children’ by abdicating authority. Even political intervention is drawn haplessly into this paradigm. Since Federal anti-segregation legislation simply cannot legislate such things, its only effect is ‘to burden children, black and white, with the working out of a problem which adults for generations have confessed themselves unable to solve’. (50) Law takes effect, thus, in the form of a cascade of smaller, more private abdications, dividing the scene by age rather than colour. Thus the prime wrong done to Elizabeth Eckford is that she ‘obviously, was asked to be a hero’ by adults who did not feel able to be heroic in their own persons. Her experience at the hands of the mob is secondary, contingent upon this, since the mob itself is likewise the product of adult abdication. Arendt, indeed, expresses sympathy for those of the jeering youngsters who will look back in shame when they ‘outgrow their present brutality’. (50) Axiomatically, for Arendt, none of the child actors can be a political subject, so that their actions, however grave, must be attributed to the misguided tutelage of their parents and other adults around them. The jeering youngsters of the mob are thus covered by a weird version of childhood innocence whose realisation is deferred until adulthood. But this convolution points to a problem in the whole adult-child schema: why are we to imagine that they will reach this point just by growing into *adults*? It is almost as if they were to grow into the children they ought to have been, had they not in fact grown up in the vast ambient racism of 1950s Arkansas, a racism that surely reaches into every realm and sphere. In other words, all this juggling of ‘adults’ and ‘children’ only serves to obfuscate the continuum of racism in which all stand.

There is, nevertheless, one more question we need to ask about ‘adults’: how exactly *should* they exercise their authority? Arendt is adamant that politics must not intervene in the social. This is why the Federal legislation is so misconceived. Our task is not ‘to abolish discrimination’, but rather ‘keep it confined within the social sphere, where it is legitimate, and prevent its trespassing on the political and the personal sphere, where it is destructive’. (‘Reflections’ 51). But if legislation is limited to policing the borders of the social, preserving it as a sort of homeland of discrimination, who or what is to protect the ‘personal sphere’, adrift in the social? Is this not an abdication on Arendt’s part? If, as the case of Elizabeth Eckhard would seem to suggest, there really is no protection in the social, is it entirely responsible to consign schoolchildren to this Wild West? Can the answer really be to take refuge in the placid equilibrium of Jewish hotels for Jewish holiday-makers?

The picture of ‘society’ painted in *The Human Condition* is rather less neat. And, unsurprisingly, some of this makes its way into ‘Reflections’. For, defined as ‘that curious, somewhat hybrid realm between the political and the private in which, since the beginning of the modern age, most men have spent the greater part of their lives’ (‘Reflections’ 51), society does seem to involve the political in some way. The question is, in what way? Arendt is clear that the principle of ‘equality’ obtains only in the political realm proper, so that neither legislative interference nor activism can be justified. Yet it seems none of this can prevent things that belong properly in the political from popping up in the social. And the net effect of this may be that politics proper is powerless to protect us from informal political attack.

Arendt's account of the political right of 'eligibility' (for political office) is a case in point. Although 'an inalienable right of every citizen', its 'equality is already restricted' by 'personal distinction' and other qualities on whose nature and genesis Arendt expatiates at some length, but in the vaguest terms, before concluding that they concern 'things in which all are equals to begin with'. (50-51) Somewhere in this remarkably garbled stretch of exposition is the unwelcome thought that access to this universal right must be anything but equal because it passes through markedly politicized areas of the social. What, after all, is 'personal distinction', and how does it come into being? And if, lacking this sauce, one's social being is confined to 'things in which all are equals to begin with', does this not seem to point in the direction of the awful dissolution into the 'over-all life process of the species' prophesied in *The Human Condition*? At the very least, the 'hybrid' nature of the social would seem to offer wildly different possibilities of access to the political to different subjects, including the possibility of being restricted to the private end of things, prey to more or less occulted forms of political power.

To seek refuge in the personal and the private would thus seem a catastrophe. Yet it is in precisely this direction that Arendt seems to urge African Americans. Rather than (mystifyingly in her view) fastening onto the cause of education, they should be demanding instead the 'elementary' right to marry whom they choose. (49) Seemingly they are advised to secure their private realm *before* they even think about ascending the steps of social and political power. At work here is an equivocation over whether the private realm of home offers refuge from the social, or is entirely encircled, and perhaps even infiltrated, by it. Arendt speaks of the 'protective four walls' beyond which we step into the 'public world' meaning, in the first instance 'the social sphere' (51), and at one point evokes a rather sentimental view of a 'private life' that few now, under the onslaught of

society, ‘know the rules of and live’. (53) And a little later she eulogises the home that is ‘strong and secure enough to shield its young against the demands of the social and the responsibilities of the political realm’. (55) But this refuge certainly will not work for the ‘mixed marriage’ which, since it ‘constitutes a challenge to society’, must expect to be challenged by it in return. Indeed, ‘the partners to such a marriage have so far preferred personal happiness to social adjustment that they are willing to bear the burden of discrimination. This is and must remain their private business’. (53) This, then, is the consequence of asserting the ‘elementary’ right to marry, at least for this couple. They are on their own, beaten back into a private realm that offers no protection of any sort, since it includes as ‘private business’ the hatred of the world they have been obliged to renounce.

One of the most remarkable aspects of this analysis is that Arendt does not pause to ask what this might mean for the children of such a couple. They have, it would seem, voluntarily forfeited any right to a home ‘strong and secure enough to shield its young’. And one must ask if this dreadful state of affairs applies uniquely to the mixed-race couple. Arendt, like Rand, assumes that Elizabeth Eckford’s parents *chose* to expose her to a baying mob that she might otherwise have avoided. But it beggars belief that the anger of the mob could be entirely alien to an Elizabeth Eckford. Even supposing she enjoys a well-insulated home, she is liable to it in some form the moment she takes a step beyond its ‘protective four walls’. For the landscape that meets her is everywhere cleft by lines indicating spaces she may enter, and spaces she may not, on pain of being met with a rage that may differ in number and intensity from that of the mob, but not in kind. This is segregation. And supposing she avoids the explosion of rage by toeing the line, does this mean she is free of it? Or is she swallowing it, and storing up a disquiet of her own that must be borne back into the

home before it can be voiced in safety? In which case, just how well insulated can her home be?

What we see here is the collapse of all these ‘realms’ and ‘spheres’ into the soup of ‘society’, where their negative instances continue to roam unchecked like zombies, ready to devour those whose last bastion is the ‘private’. To put this another way, any subject that utterly lacks political power also lacks social power and is ultimately unable to defend their private life, perhaps even their mere existence, against whatever social and political power is in the field. This is, indeed, more or less what Arendt prophesies, in *The Human Condition*, only as the fate of all in a world where society will finally have swallowed all other spheres. The differential instance of race in America, however, belies the putative uniformity and indifferentiation of this nightmare. It suggests that while the political, albeit in its most etiolated, bastardized form, may continue to intervene on behalf of some, there are others for whom it never fully existed in the first place. Indeed, it reminds us that this has always been more or less the case, even in the heyday of the public realm. For it concerns a class of people whose historical role is broadly structurally analogous to that of those women, servants, and slaves who, in Arendt’s Aristotelian ideal, were expected to absorb the burden of labour so that ‘men’ could live out their properly political lives. The solidity of the realms and spheres was only ever even notionally possible at the expense of naturalizing this *dependence*.

On what grounds, then, would one deny political agency to people on whom the political is nevertheless allowed to act? Why should one not decide, whenever one finds oneself on the sharp end of politics, that here and now are the time and place to act politically? And why should this question not extend *even* to children whose first 15 years may have been one long apprenticeship in the

politicisation of everyday life? Arendt and Rand are alike impossibly fastidious in their view of the proper bounds of political action. They take what one might call the hegemonic view, awarding to the already-constituted power the right to determine the decorum of protest. But the thing shows, if anything worse, in Arendt. For while, in Rand, this stance evinces an unshakeable faith in the justice and solidity of the political structure, Arendt is at this very time already announcing its decline and eventual disappearance. Surely, when summary justice is making a mockery of any attempt to assign legitimate spheres of action, no one should have to wait for the spheres to realign themselves before determining to act. But it seems Arendt finds it easier to imagine a society abandoned by politics, and the dissolution of her own schema, than the emergence of new political spaces.

To find out what this might look like, we might turn to Arendt's later essay *On Violence* (1970). Here, the whole business of different realms and spheres has vanished, and Arendt seems almost nostalgic for the tactics of 'boycotts, sit-ins, and demonstrations' which have, it turns out, proven 'highly successful'. For the focus has shifted to the 'large urban centers' where 'the basic irreconcilability of interests' has been 'dangerously exposed'. Remarkably, given her earlier contortions over the rather mild and legally-prosecuted request to attend school, Arendt is quite sympathetic to the view that the ensuing 'black riots' showed 'rationality' and 'restraint'. She also, however, understands the 'perfectly rational reaction' of the white underclass who have been 'singled out to pay the full price for ill-designed integration policies', and fears the emergence of a 'black racism' that might provoke a 'really violent white backlash'. (Rand, 1970,76-77) Arendt had already predicted something of the sort in 'Reflections', in view of the rise of the black population of the big

Northern cities, and the ‘special attraction for the mob’ that the question of race holds. (‘Reflections’ 47) And now that the mob and its violence really have moved centre-stage, it seems they have swept away all trace of the different realms and spheres, leaving in their wake the mere clash of races. It is as if analysis were obliged by circumstances to suspend its categories, declaring a sort of epistemological state of exception; and, moreover, as if racialisation were an inevitable consequence of this shift from a civil to a martial topic. The disappearance of Arendt’s topography is not, thus, an unalloyed cause for celebration. Indeed, if, as it seems, it has been hustled off the stage before it could be called to account for allowing such violence to arise out of it in the first place, we may have to demand its return.

v) Colonialism in the Public Sphere

This is also, by the same token, the point at which I have to step aside from the sort of immanent critique I have attempted till now, locating where Arendt and Rand run aground in their own terms, and only adducing racism in the final instance. For the entire point of this was to avoid determining the racism at work in their essays as a merely personal prejudice supervening on an otherwise healthy structure. The point has now come to suggest what remains to be included in these structures to account for their structural racism. A key passage from Frantz Fanon’s essay ‘On Violence’ from *The Wretched of the Earth* will help to point the way. In her essay *On Violence*, Arendt views Fanon’s essay not unsympathetically, given the dim view she takes of the current glorification of violence. But she overlooks his account of the complex relations between colony and metropolitan centre, and the place each gives to violence.

The colonized world is a world divided in two. The dividing line, the border, is represented

> by the barracks and the police stations. In the colonies, the official, legitimate agent, the spokesperson for the colonizer and the regime of oppression, is the police officer or the soldier. In capitalist societies, education, whether secular or religious, the teaching of moral reflexes handed down from father to son, the exemplary integrity of workers decorated after fifty years of loyal and faithful service, the fostering of love for harmony and wisdom, those aesthetic forms of respect for the status quo, instill in the exploited a mood of submission and inhibition which considerably eases the task of the agents of law and order. In capitalist countries a multitude of sermonizers, counselors, and "confusion-mongers" intervene between the exploited and the authorities. In colonial regions, however, the proximity and frequent, direct intervention by the police and the military ensure the colonized are kept under close scrutiny, and contained by rifle butts and napalm. We have seen how the government's agent uses a language of pure violence. The agent does not alleviate oppression or mask domination. He displays and demonstrates them with the clear conscience of the law enforcer, and brings violence into the homes and minds of the colonized subject. (Fanon, 2004, 3-4)

This is a key passage because it rams home Fanon's contention that, in the colonial landscape, it is not a question of approving or disapproving of violence. Here, *there is violence*. The situation imposes it. This is not to say that there is *no* violence within the political order of the metropolitan centre. Rather, it is muffled, deferred, channeled through the filters and buffers of civil institutions. But in the colony, the state of exception is the norm, such that there never was any distance between the most private realm, and the law in its most brutal instance. Likewise, this situation is intrinsically racialising even though, for Fanon, *there is no race*. It is, indeed, the crucible for the violent

imposition of race, as a means to normalizing violence. Crucially, however, Fanon's implied solution is not to import metropolitan civility into the colony. Rather, the violence of the colony is the privileged point from which we can engage the revolutionary hope of smashing the entire edifice. And this is ultimately because the colonized zone is not a mere extraterritorial elsewhere but a supplementary sphere or realm of the centre.

In short, what is missing from Arendt and Rand alike is a proper understanding of the part played by colonialism in the political spaces they predicate. The boundaries within which their normative rules and relations are supposed to obtain are drawn by the exclusion of another territory on which they nevertheless depend, historically, economically, and politically. So when emancipated slaves show their faces in the (metro)polis it is as the sign of the incomprehensible presence of an extraterritorial zone of subjection that was always *there*, but ought never to have been *here.* Arendt is quick to point out that the 'crime' of American slavery is distinct from the colonialism of the European nations in which America never participated, and consequently that American racism has a distinct genesis. ('Reflections' 46). But what are we to think when she suggests that the 'visibility' of black skin in the public realm is ineffaceable and something African Americans will just have to put up with? Such visible things, she suggests, cannot be dismissed as 'mere exterior appearances', because the public just is the realm of appearances. (47) But this is ultimately question-begging. What, we must ask, is it that is visible in the visibility of mere skin colour?

Arendt really ought to know better. It is not just that *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) identifies imperialism as one of the sources for the political horrors of the twentieth century. (Arendt, 2017) Her reading of Rosa Luxemburg leads her to Marx's notion of the 'original accumulation of

capital'[iii] as 'simple robbery', and even to posit an 'essential dependence of capitalism upon a noncapitalistic world'. (192-93). Yet in many important respects she continues to frame the outside of capitalism as radically heterogeneous. Indeed (drawing heavily on *The Heart of Darkness*) she casts the colonial world as a 'phantom world': an 'underworld' in which, without 'the delaying effect of social ethical values', men 'escaped the reality of civilization'. (248) These men thus no longer operate on the same ontological dimension as capitalism. This is why the colonial financier dominates this scene: his separation from 'normal banking', never mind 'production and exploitation', already gives him a 'touch of unreality'. (262). He is the part of capitalism that already embodies in embryo the willingness 'to abandon the so-called laws of capitalist production and their egalitarian tendencies' (266) that flourishes in the counterworld of imperialism. In a way, then, this topic of the unreality of the colonial zone saves the honor of the capitalist norm.

But there is one aspect of the colonized zone on whose reality Arendt is curiously insistent. For while 'race' generally does not mean very much, black Africans have 'a genuine race origin' (268), according to a 'precise meaning' of the word that concerns 'not at all the color of their skin but the fact that they behaved like a part of nature, that they treated nature as their undisputed master, that they had not created a human world, a human reality' (250-51). The real race is thus the one that fails to generate reality because it fails to take the first step towards capitalism. And it seems this reality of their race is antipathetic to their reality as human beings. Otherwise it is hard to see why the 'real crime' in South Africa, the one for which 'there could be no excuse and no humanly comprehensible reason', was the treatment of Indian and Chinese workers 'as though they were not human beings'. (269). Where, then, does Arendt stand on the Boers' discovery in black Africans of 'the only 'raw material' which Africa provided in abundance'? (252) And what, finally,

were the 'inherent conflicts' and 'serious difficulties' that made it harder for post-abolition England and America to live together with their ex-slaves? (230-31) For all Arendt's dismissal of 'the color of their skin' as the true marker of race, it is hard to imagine that the 'visibility' of the ex-slaves, linking them back to 'a genuine race origin' and a phantom world at the antipodes of capitalism and the public sphere has nothing to do with this.

There are at any rate signs that Arendt—in spite of her commitment to 'the central pillar of genuine nationhood, the equality of all peoples' (217), and her sense that imperialism was a catastrophic deviation for capitalism—cannot quite let go of the colonial sentiment for which some 'primitive' peoples are appropriable but not assimilable; indeed, appropriable *because* not assimilable. This is a serious problem for a serious philosopher anatomising the human condition and proposing a universal schema governing the very possibility of political life. But it takes a Rand to embrace this logic and unfold its consequences to the bitter end. In the Q&A after her graduation address to West Point, 6 March 1974, published as 'Philosophy: Who Needs It', Rand reprises some of the themes of the essay on 'Racism'. Because 'the smallest minority on Earth is an individual', one best defends any human being however categorized by embracing individual rights. Group rights of any sort are deleterious to individuality, and racist. Slavery was a great evil, but it came from the old world, and it is to the glory of America (and capitalism and individualism) that people died abolishing it. The real racists are the liberals who insist on bringing it up. (Rand, 1974) The remarks that have rightly received most attention, however, are those that declare the native Americans 'savages' who, because they have no concept of property, can have no right to it, and are therefore rightfully dispossessed. Do we not have the 'right to invade' dictatorships since, failing to respect individual rights, they have no rights themselves? If this analogy seems strained, we

should note that, for Rand, the 'savages' are bigger criminals than the dictators. Their pretended 'right to keep part of the earth untouched, unused, and not even as property' is an offence against the tide of civilization. Rand stops short of avowing genocide per se. But in case we were in any doubt over the general tendency of this unusually blunt version of Manifest Destiny, she immediately goes on to justify the Israeli appropriation of arab land. This, too, is only right. Because, whether in the Americas or in the Middle East, the bringers of individual rights have always 'represented the banner of the mind' and are always 'in the right'.

This 'banner of the mind' is the standard of the only collective Rand formally recognizes, just as the outrageous refusal to institute property rights is the only form of selfishness she deplores. It is sovereign, impassive, and nakedly unconcerned by the violence of the moment of its constitution. This is why Rand is such an embarrassment to liberal thought. She speaks her 'mind': the mind of the individual, and the mind that gives him his rights, even unto the right to liquidate any collective that has proven its inability to divest itself of the most primitive form of collectivity. This is a little too blunt for most 'liberals', and they may all too easily be drawn into the cardinal error of making us 'race-conscious' by protesting. Fools who, since they do not acknowledge the necessary constitution of 'mind', cannot know their own.

For all the stentorian self-certainty and sheer wrongness of this position, there is nevertheless perhaps something in it to which we liberals need to attend. Are we quite sure we do not ourselves speak with a mind constituted in the secret violence of primitive accumulation? For my own part, I have been privileged to lead the life of the mind in a terrain freed of want or coercion, in cities and institutions built to a greater or lesser degree on the wealth of enclosure and plantation, and

with no obligation to dwell on that fact even as I earnestly dissect the ills of these distant phenomena. Of course, this is precisely the sort of handwringing that would have the avatars of Rand hissing 'virtue signaling'. But they would miss the point, for the bleeding heart of my confession is that I am a liberal. Nothing brings home to me the basically liberal foundations of even my most radical intellectual adventures than my abiding preference, in spite of everything I have said, to think and deal with an Arendt rather than a Rand. And maybe all this means is that Arendt makes available to me a virtual world that gratifies my peculiar urges and talents, and gives my ridiculous reason a reason to exist. What is wrong with Rand, on the other hand, is not simply that I disagree with her or am offended by her, but that she seems too obvious, not worthy of the intellectual tools I want to exercise. Supposing I were standing in a burning house that Rand had set alight, I fear I would still not find her interesting enough to care. Actually, I believe I am standing in a burning house that Rand has set alight. But is this belief enough to stir me to action? And what would action look like anyway? Perhaps, at most, a chapter, a comparative critique, asking whether it is wise to deal with the pair as if they moved in separate worlds, or whether they are to be placed on the same map after all; and answering, finally, they *are and aren't*.

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[i] See Chapters 7 and 8 for more on this issue.

[ii] Cf *The Life of the Mind*, p.52.

[iii] 'Ursprüngliche Akkumulation', also known in English as 'primitive accumulation'. See *Capital* Vol.1, Part 8.