

On Hannah Arendt's Political Thought: Finding the Locus of the Political and the Anti-Political

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Abstract

This paper attempts to find the locus of Hannah Arendt's conception of the political and the anti-political. In doing so, the paper identifies Arendt's essential qualifications of the political and the anti-political and attempt to find concrete spaces where we can more or less locate these events. However, this does not mean, as this paper tries to show that these said loci are uncontroversial, incontestable, and an ideal representative of Arendt's articulation of such activities, most especially the political. Despite this, the paper dares to find the spaces whereby the political and the anti-political could possibly be thought to thrive. The space where anti-political resides can be thought easily, whereas, the political is not. In Arendtian sense, the political is elusive and fragile that it can easily be overwhelmed by anti-political activities.

The insights are coming mostly from her two major *oeuvres* namely: *The Human Condition* and *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. This paper is divided into two major sections: firstly, an exposition of Arendt's concept of the political explicated in *The Human Condition* and of anti-political in *The Origins of the Totalitarianism* and secondly, an attempt to find their loci in our everyday affairs.

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Keywords: the political, anti-political, totalitarianism, political action

Introduction

The paper tries to present the political thoughts of Hannah Arendt, particularly on her conception of the political and the anti-political. The primary interest of Arendt in articulating the distinction of these human activities is to let us reexamine what we have done so far in the way we deal with our human lives, most importantly, in our dealings with our political lives. In one of her major works, *The Human Condition*, Arendt poses an existential question: what are we doing? which captures the kind of our lack of political imagination and engagement in dealing with things in the world, insofar, as these things are reflective of our own doing as well. This existential question becomes the primary concern of Arendt and a wellspring whereby her political cogitations, articulations, and argumentations are to be understood. Due to this, Arendt has conceived novel political insights, totally different and unique from the traditional political tradition. In this sense, Arendt and her political thought defy any attempt for categorization. Part of the novelty of her political thought is her conception of the political and the anti-political. These two Arendtian concepts are at the heart of her political thought. For this reason, this paper wants to shed light on these Arendtian terms and not only that but most importantly to try to find the locus for this human activity. To do this, the following must be considered: (a) to provide adequate discussion of these concepts; (b) to identify their essential conditions as a guide for (c) locating the possible locus or space where the political and the anti-political thrive.

However, such endeavor of finding the locus of the political and the anti-political is not without difficulty. This paper, therefore, does not hold to claim that the loci whereby these activities lurk are incontestable and indefeasible. Rather, as this paper tries to show, the space for the political, in this case, the local marketplace cannot be purely thought of as purely political for some obvious reasons. Unlike the space for the political, as

this paper suggests, is adulterated by pre-political activities and elusive, the locus of the anti-political is not. Anti-political activities, as Arendt contends can be easily detected and mostly overwhelm the political. These anti-political activities take the form of various modes and exploit various instruments such as mass and social media today. In the following sections, I endeavor to articulate these insights. I will start explicating Arendt's views on the political and the anti-political by drawing much of her thoughts from two of her major works namely: *The Human Condition* and *The Origins of Totalitarianism* but, of course, not limited to it.

Hannah Arendt on the Political

In the prologue of the *The Human Condition*, Arendt underlines her main purpose in writing her daunting and densely unorthodox work, "a reconsideration of the human condition from the vantage point of our newest experiences and our most recent fears,"² rendering a thought to rethink and re-examine our human condition in a totally unique and new way which I think is needed today. She observes that "thoughtlessness- the heedless recklessness or hopeless confusion or complacent repetition of 'truths' which have become trivial and empty—seems to me among the outstanding characteristics of our time."³ That being said, she invites us to think about 'what we are doing' amidst the banality of our daily experiences "in a world of unprecedented technological advances and of post-totalitarian social and political formations."⁴ *The Human Condition* reflects Arendt's character as a thinker who is "original and disturbingly unorthodox."⁵ Elisabeth Young-Bruehl describes it as "a startling book: a bold, challenging theoretical lexicon, in which familiar words receive completely unfamiliar definitions."⁶ Margaret Canovan, on the other hand, considers the work as "belonging to no genre, it has

² Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago and London: The University Chicago Press, 1958), 5.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Why Arendt Matters* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 80.

⁵ Margaret Canovan, *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1.

⁶ Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Why Arendt Matters*, 79.

had no successful imitators.”⁷ Arendt does not see politics as simply a transactional activity by individuals endowed with the capacity to act. But rather, politics offers novelty and it is its own end,⁸ a form of culture,⁹ although elusive, its essence, for Arendt following Aristotle, is action. Drawing from Aristotle’s conception of politics,¹⁰ Arendt argues that politics is its own end, that is, it is done for its own sake, not for the sake of something else other than itself. As an activity, it is not directed toward another end, as if politics is a means to an end. Arendt does not subscribe to a so-called instrumental conception of politics. As Villa argues “Arendt’s Aristotelian insistence” is important such that “the public realm [politics] is a sphere unto itself, separated by a wide gulf from the interests and desires that make up civil society.”¹¹ While politics as culture, Canovan argues that, though there are glaring differences between culture and politics, yet, it can be thought that both are public occurrences or events.¹² Canovan justifies the identity of politics and culture saying: “Politics takes place in a public realm which is continuous with that created and inhabited by cultural activities, and takes its place alongside culture among the death-defying capacities of man.”¹³ Going back to the character of the text (*The Human Condition*), its unorthodoxy is a reflection of Arendt’s political attitude and orientation: one, her emphatic attitude towards negative thought

⁷ Margaret Canovan, “Introduction,” in Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), vii.

⁸ See Dana R. Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

⁹ See Margaret Canovan, “Politics as Culture: Hannah Arendt and the Public Realm,” in *Hannah Arendt: Critical Essays*, ed. Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra K. Hinchman (SUNY Press, 1994), 179-210.

¹⁰ See Jürgen Habermas’ essay “Hannah Arendt’s Communications Concept of Power,” translated by Thomas McCarthy in *Hannah Arendt: Critical Essays*, eds. Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra K. Hinchman (SUNY Press, 1994), 214. Here Habermas attributes to Arendt the systematic renewal of the “Aristotelian concept of praxis” (214). Further elaboration of this renewal of Aristotelian concept can be found in Dana R. Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political*, 3.

¹¹ Dana R. Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political*, 4.

¹² Margaret Canovan, “Politics as Culture: Hannah Arendt and the Public Realm,” 185. Canovan draws her insight partly from Hannah Arendt’s essay “The Crisis in Culture”. See Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (New York: Penguin Books, 1968).

¹³ *Ibid.*

and “thoughtlessness”¹⁴ as dangerous residues of modernity that abominates the political sphere; second, her nostalgia of the Greek *polis* that profoundly influenced her. As Canovan argues, Arendt is not offering anything prescriptive about politics at all in a sense that “it offers political prescriptions backed up by philosophical arguments” rather, Arendt is “concerned with the *setting for politics rather than politics itself*.”¹⁵

The Human Condition is not only a kind of prolegomena to politics but really is a work worthy to be considered as a form of a thematic and thoughtful discourse on political theory. More than her phenomenological analysis of the forms of human activity is her critical analysis of the traditional political philosophy which she believes misrepresented the role of human activity, charging Plato as the prime suspect, who positioned human activity ‘upside-down’¹⁶ until the flourishing of Marxian ideologies.¹⁷

Such critical observation brings us to a new way of understanding the human condition and its subtleties. Definitely, with such fervor and zeal to rehabilitate the forms of human activity—human condition as such, enables us to set our gazes wider than they used to be to re-evaluate the present condition of politics. Indicative of this is Arendt’s account of the “rise of the social”¹⁸ or ‘society’ that encroaches and blurs the distinction

¹⁴ Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), 287-288.

¹⁵ Canovan, “Introduction,” in Arendt, *HC* viii. Emphasis added.

¹⁶ Arendt’s appropriation of Plato is somehow a misunderstanding because as she argued in the book, it was Aristotle who, for her, rehabilitate action (*phronesis*) as essentially political and the highest good rather than contemplation which she thought Plato is endorsing. But, in fact, it is the other way around.

¹⁷ Arendt, *HC* 234.

¹⁸ Arendt, *HC* 38. Seyla Benhabib identifies this hostile attitude of Arendt towards the ‘social’ as being anti-modernist. “This relentlessly negative account of the ‘rise of the social’ and the decline of the public realm has been identified as the core of Arendt’s political ‘anti-modernism.’” See Seyla Benhabib, “Hannah Arendt and the Redemptive Power of Narrative,” in *Hannah Arendt: Critical Essays*, eds. Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra K. Hinchman (SUNY Press, 1994), 111-137.

between public and private realm.¹⁹ She wishes to interrogate and challenge the entire tradition of political philosophy for its lack of sense of historicity and ability to protect political life from the gradual encroachment of sociality. She, moreover, hopes to liberate the public realm from social concern and treat the malady that affects human condition, most especially the exile of human action from political life due to valuation and “glorification of labor as the source of all values and its elevation of the *animal laborans* to the position traditionally held by the *animal rationale*.”²⁰ Arendt tries to rehabilitate and bring action to its rightful place – as a necessary condition for a genuine political activity where “spontaneous action or outstanding achievement” is no longer placed outside of human activity.”²¹

Arendt distinguishes and categorizes three fundamental elements of human activities: *labor*, *work*, and *action*. Each of these holds certain character and undertakes particular processes. Labor is concerned with “life itself,” an activity that aims for the survival of the body. Work is concerned with “worldliness,” or craftsmanship. It directs the person’s activity to build human artifices. It is an activity that aims for immortality, while action is characterized by human plurality, freedom, and equality. Plurality, according to Arendt, “is the condition of human action because we are all the same, that is, human, in such a way that nobody is ever the same as anyone else who ever lived, lives, or will live.”²² In other words, what conditions humans to act and create something new, distinct, and unique is the fact that we are not of the same character, though, of the same species, yet each one has various capacities to do things on their own. This capacity to do things on their own, to create or begin something new, and to expect the unexpected is due to freedom. Arendt attributed freedom to action simply because, for her, freedom makes action

¹⁹ Arendt for example observes: “It is decisive that society, on all its levels, excludes the possibility of action, which formerly was excluded from the household. Instead, society expects from each of its members a certain kind of behavior, imposing innumerable and various rules, all of which tend to ‘normalize’ its members, to make them behave, to exclude spontaneous action or outstanding achievement.” *Human Condition*, 40.

²⁰ Arendt, *HC* 85.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, 8.

possible. As Arendt puts it: "the new beginning inherent in birth can make itself felt in the world only because the newcomer possesses the capacity of beginning something new, that is, of acting."²³ Though labor, work, and action are distinct in operations and processes, these three assume an equal role in an overall activity of human beings. Arendt places 'labor' and 'work' to the household – the private realm, while 'action' to the public realm. She explains,

Labor assures not only individual survival, but the life of the species. *Work* and its product, the human artifact, bestow a measure of permanence and durability upon the futility of moral life and the fleeting character of human time. *Action*, in so far as it engages in founding and preserving political bodies, creates the condition for remembrance, that is, for history.²⁴

But this does not mean that 'action' is better than labor and work since these two pre-political activities are prerequisites by which one needs to satisfy before one decides to enter into the public realm. We can see this distinction when we look into the Greek set-up which Arendt greatly admired namely, the Greek *polis*. In order to understand the pivotal role of action in politics, Arendt invokes the historical Greek *polis*. For her, the *polis* is an archetype *par excellence* of the distinction between public and private realm.

Arendt's longing for the Greek *polis* is brought about by her deep concern on the blurring of distinction between the private and the public realm. On this issue, some viewed her yearning for the Greek *polis* as something that has no positive implication to her political thought, and that her nostalgia should be dismissed right away. But for Villa, Arendt "romanticizes Greek political life, but her depiction of the *polis* is no exercise in nostalgia...her theory of action reformulates politics in terms of continuous and direct civil involvement."²⁵ Another reason for the

²³ Ibid., 9.

²⁴ Arendt, *HC* 8-9. Italics added.

²⁵ Dana R. Villa, "Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political," 4.

blurring of distinction is due to the 'rise of the social' as an inevitable consequence of modernity "which is neither private nor public" and which "origin coincided with the emergence of the modern age and which found its political form in the nation-state."²⁶ Arendt anxiously feared that politics as an activity will be compromised. She emphatically declares that "the dividing line is entirely blurred" and the emergence of the modern age creates difficult problems to resolve. Moreover, mindful of this issue, Arendt tries to find a way to rehabilitate the distinction between the public and private sphere and to mitigate the strictures of action due to such unexpected emergence of the 'social.'

Such blurring of distinction, for Arendt, is a product of our rudimentary understanding of the inherent constitution that governs both the private and public realm. This inspires Arendt to return to the Greek *polis* as the best archetype or model which holds the 'old sanctity of the hearth' and the 'sacred boundaries' between the private and the public, for in protecting such boundaries will enable us to truly participate in the affairs of the world. Arendt believes that to be able to participate in the public affairs one should possess certain propriety and character that one may consider one's own, for "the fact that without owning a house a man could not participate in the affairs of the world because he had no location in it which was properly his own."²⁷ In other words, one cannot authentically engage in political activity when one carries with him his own private concerns. Thus, this is not just a mere nostalgia of the *polis* or/and her "high-minded and highly idealized picture of Greek political life,"²⁸ because what Arendt wanted to do is neither to resurrect nor to reproduce a replica of the *polis* in this modern age, but to let the *polis* be an archetype of remembrance for modern politics.

The *polis* as a political sphere is a sphere of plurality and freedom and not of necessity, for necessity is "primarily a pre-political phenomenon, characteristic of the private household

²⁶ Arendt, *HC* 28.

²⁷ Arendt, *HC* 29-30.

²⁸ Seyla Benhabib, "Hannah Arendt and the Redemptive Power of Narrative," 112.

organization.”²⁹ Freedom now assumes a vital importance in understanding the public realm where action takes place. In order for one to be free, in a sense of freeing oneself from the necessities of life typified by labor and work, one must engage in the activity of the *polis*. However, plurality and freedom are not only the distinguishing features of the *polis*, but also equality. If one desires to gain freedom one should go out from one's own household and engage in public activity. Only then one can be able to find equality. Since it is in the *polis* where equality resides, then it is the *polis* alone that equalizes individuals. This equality is seen in one's capacity to speak and act without which no production of rational and discursive dialogue will occur.³⁰ Speech and action are two important aspects of human life for “a life without speech and without action... is literally dead to the world; it has ceased to be a human life because it is no longer lived among men.”³¹

We can say, therefore, that the *polis* where the political is located functions first as a space of appearances wherein men able to permanently and actively engage in political activity, and, secondly, the *polis* offers a remedy for the tentativeness of action and spontaneity of speech. The *polis* should not be thought only as a physical place but should be formally understood as “an organization of people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true space lies between people living together, and its true space lies between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be.”³² It is then hard in these present times to find such descriptive character of a *polis* because politics today no longer holds the ‘sacred boundaries’ unlike the ancient Greek politics. But what is equally important to identify, more than the spatial location of the *polis* today is the locus of the anti-political which is always within the grid view of the political. This means that wherever the political finds its fertile ground, somewhere within that ground lurks the anti-political. What is crucial for Arendt in bringing this issue is the fact that the anti-political is responsible for stultifying the cogs of

²⁹ Arendt, *HC* 31.

³⁰ Arendt, *HC* 179.

³¹ Arendt, *HC* 176.

³² Arendt, *HC* 198.

the political processes and procedures to the point of making it totally inept.

It is then through our understanding of Arendt's representation of the *polis* when we start to understand that action is a *conditio sine qua non* and its realization is constituted only in the public space – the space of appearances. The political is simply an action that preserves plurality, freedom, and equality that takes place within the public realm, and its obliteration leads to the effacement of the political and opens the way for the emergence of the anti-political.

Hannah Arendt on the Anti-Political

In tracing the vestiges of the inversion of the political, it is proper to examine Hannah Arendt's three-volume *magnus opus* *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. It is in this seminal, dense, and difficult phenomenological work where one finds the opposite of political activity. On the one hand, *The Human Condition* provides us the text for understanding the political and its necessary conditions, the *Origins of Totalitarianism*³³ on the other hand, gives us telegraphs of powerful ideas and thoughts on what counts as anti-political activity or in Dana Villa's terms "the problem of political evil – evil as policy – on an enormous and hitherto unimaginable scale."³⁴

Arendt presents in unequivocal manner the themes and salient points the readers should have to anticipate. She describes her work as doing phenomenological analysis of the concrete human experiences in a time of terror and horrendous evilish episode in the life of Jewish people in Europe. She sees the

³³ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: A Harvest Book, 1976). *OT* hereafter. The term *totalitarianism* is according to Peter Baehr was coined by Giovanni Amendola in May 1923. Baehr describes totalitarianism's beginning as as a "condemnation of Fascist ambitions to monopolize power and to transform Italian society through the creation of a new political religion." See Peter Baehr, *Hannah Arendt, Totalitarianism, and The Social Sciences* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 10.

³⁴ Dana R. Villa, "Introduction: the development of Arendt's political thought," in *Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt*, ed. Dana R. Villa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 2.

orgiastic and frenzy mode of totalitarian despots towards absolute power through their "attempt at global conquest and total domination" which "has been the destructive way out of all impasses. Its victory may coincide with the destruction of humanity; wherever it has ruled, it has begun to destroy the essence of man."³⁵ This biting statement points to something to which Arendt would believe humanly impossible to accomplish. No man in his right mind is capable of thinking and making an attempt to abominate and erase the traces of humanity of those whom totalitarian leaders considered their enemies. Only those who were hypnotized by "fictitious" psychology and the spell of "prophetic scientificity,"³⁶ are, for Arendt, capable of doing totally and bizarrely barbaric acts. This then became the measure of totalitarianism with its impeccable propaganda based on scientific prophecies that harbored a grand delusional character - a project of 'total domination' through global conquest. Not only on the basis of fictitious and fantastical desires that totalitarian movements invested itself with but above all is the general principle which they legitimized as the key to enormous control of power. This general principle is "the totalitarian belief that everything is possible."³⁷ Arendt argues that this all the more only proves the pathological condition of totalitarian movements since such belief "seems to have proved [as well] only that everything can be destroyed."³⁸ Paradoxical it may seem, but this did not stop the totalitarian despots of Europe to implement the blueprint of such fictional and fantastical project. Totalitarian movements' 'perpetual-motion mania'³⁹ brought itself to damnation, for it is through constant moving where they can hold perpetually its destructive power. This megalomaniac psychological mind-frame of totalitarian movements made us realize that totalitarianism was conceived out of distorted and hyper-antipolitical imaginings, ideals, and fantasies of those who embraced this form of government. What seems to be an antidote to such malady is simply to remain human such as not to expect too much from the promises that politics can offer.

³⁵Arendt, *OT* viii.

³⁶ Arendt, *OT* 350.

³⁷ Arendt, *OT* 459.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Arendt, *OT* 306.

Drawing from her potent discussion on Nazism as an offshoot of a totalitarian movement, her view of totalitarianism, quite descriptively, is a chaotic, feverishly dynamic, and non-utilitarian movement of annihilation assailing all the facets of human nature and human world making politics implausible. Arendt claims that the novelty of totalitarianism lies in the idea that “everything we know of totalitarianism demonstrates a horrible originality” for it constitutes “every action that breaks with all traditions.”⁴⁰ What is paradoxical in this totalitarian novelty, however, is that it signifies an assault on the very ability of one to think and act as a unique individual. For Arendt the phenomenon reveals “modern man’s deep-rooted suspicion of everything he did to make himself” which implies a self-destructive effect, believing that “everything is possible”⁴¹ and “everything is permitted.”⁴² Such fantastical thinking is not what a normal person can utter, believe, and do. Clearly, those totalitarian movements in their pursuit of total domination are steadfast and zealous to execute orders usually orders of liquidation of those adversaries of totalitarian propaganda movement.⁴³

It is in concentration and extermination camps where totalitarian belief, ‘everything is permissible and possible’ is being verified. Such fantasy and madness grounded on unreal, illusive psychological framework of totalitarian adherents are reinforced by the thought that the victims are ‘superfluous.’ This permitted them, for the sake of ‘super-sense,’ the necessity of destroying the trace of human dignity. The widespread experience of ‘superfluous-ness’ in those slaughterhouses outstripped every person their individuality and this seems, for Arendt, supported by “political, social, and economic events everywhere [sic] in silent conspiracy with totalitarian instruments devised for making men superfluous.”⁴⁴ But what really makes totalitarianism a realizable phenomenon is not because of its basic principles and

⁴⁰ Arendt, *OT* 434-435.

⁴¹ Arendt, *OT* 459.

⁴² Arendt, *OT* 440.

⁴³ Arendt, *OT* 442.

⁴⁴ Arendt, *OT* 458.

leaders alone but most importantly its members from below – the masses. Arendt observes:

The totalitarian movements aim at and succeed in organizing masses – not classes...not citizens with opinions about and interest in, the handling of affairs...and depend on the sheer force of numbers to such an extent that totalitarian regimes seem impossible, even under otherwise favorable circumstances, in countries with relatively small population.⁴⁵

The masses, according to Arendt, are the uprooted, disoriented people who are no longer had any clear sense of reality or self-interest because the world they had inhabited had been shattered by the mayhem of economic inflation, lack of “class articulateness,” revolution, war, and unemployment. It is, therefore, the masses that served to be the basic structure of the totalitarian movement without which the latter will be impossible. This in effect created a breakdown of the class system and “automatic breakdown of the party system, chiefly because these parties, being interest parties, could no longer represent class interests”⁴⁶ which set a stage for totalitarian movement and eventually a totalitarian state.

Also, central to Arendt's phenomenological analysis of totalitarianism is the emphasis on the role of propaganda and terror in the realization and success of total domination. “Propaganda and terror are two sides of the same coin”, Arendt says, and they are ‘technical maneuver’ and an instrument for ‘psychological warfare’ in order to win a battle against the adversaries of the totalitarian movement. For her, “*propaganda* is one, and possibly the most important, instrument of totalitarianism for dealing with the non-utilitarian world; *terror*, on the contrary, is the very essence of its form of government.”⁴⁷ The content of propaganda and the rule of terror in the totalitarian system are closely connected to the primordial aim of

⁴⁵ Arendt, *OT* 308.

⁴⁶ Arendt, *OT* 314.

⁴⁷ Arendt, *OT* 344. Emphasis is mine.

the 'modern masses'. Since a 'modern mass' constitutes the body of a totalitarian system or movement, it is therefore that the latter would be dependent on the former. Characteristic of a 'modern masses', Arendt explicates, is that "they do not believe in anything visible in the reality of their own experience; they do not trust their eyes and ears but only their imaginations, which may be caught by anything that is at once universal and consistent in itself."⁴⁸ Totalitarian propaganda, although "thrives to escape from reality into fiction, from coincidence into consistency,"⁴⁹ it was still not enough to satisfy the requirements. Hence, since such longing of the 'modern masses' cannot be fulfilled "a completely consistent, comprehensible, and predictable world without seriously conflicting with common sense,"⁵⁰ became a chief disability or weakness of totalitarian propaganda because the 'masses' experienced a psychological and social feeling of 'homelessness', they became obsessed 'by a desire to escape from reality.'

Such obsession, however, ultimately led to a kind of a "verdict against the world in which they are forced to live and in which they cannot exist."⁵¹ The result of such revolt of the 'modern masses' against reality, common sense, and 'the plausibilities of the world' was again the consequence of their 'atomization' and their 'loss of social status'. In this seeming tragic condition of the modern masses, we are led to think that they are fated to fall in the bosom of fantasy world. Whatever alternative propaganda the totalitarian movements would offer, the 'modern masses' would absolutely choose for it is in here where they can relate and ultimately be connected. Totalitarianism, therefore, built its questionable foundation primarily on the requirements of the 'modern masses' which play a vital role in the success of totalitarian movements' grand scheme.

In the previous discussion, it was already laid clear how propaganda and terror as two faces of the same coin serve as mechanisms for its own success. More than simply a by-product

⁴⁸ Arendt, *OT* 351.

⁴⁹ Arendt, *OT* 352.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Arendt, *OT* 352.

of a totalitarian rule, they are vital to its own survival. Since propaganda with all its ideological underpinnings is rooted in fiction, such fictional character is also reflected in terror which "in a situation where the dividing line between fiction and reality is blurred" and "could only rely on mere fiction."⁵² Terror, ultimately, thrown away from the very ground of the world the inherent plurality of men and the possibility of a meaningful action in a sense that "it destroys one essential prerequisite of all freedom which is simply the capacity of motion, which cannot exist without space."⁵³

A vivid description of the disappearance of public space for a possible political action of men can be seen in the practices in concentration and extermination camps. Obviously, since, 'terror is the essence of totalitarian movement,' concentration or extermination camps do not simply speak of death or killing but what is most tragic to realize is its purpose, which is 'fantastical' in character. This purpose is to annihilate the individuality of each person and the person's capacity for action.⁵⁴ Arendt argues that "those who aspire to total domination must liquidate all spontaneity, such as the mere *existence of individuality* will always engender, and track it down in its most private forms, regardless of how un-political and harmless these may seem."⁵⁵ Unlike the coercion and violence used by ordinary tyrants, totalitarian leaders aim to advance the project of total domination through erasing the traces of human individuality by atomization.

Yet, there is more to this fantasy formation of total domination. Total domination processes, schemes and practices are useful in preparing for the completion of the totalitarian task. The functional *modus operandi* of totalitarian regimes was essential to annihilating the plurality of men and their inherent individuality. But in what ways do these totalitarian regimes

⁵² Arendt, *OT* 353.

⁵³ Arendt, *OT* 446.

⁵⁴ Arendt explains: "Total power can be achieved and safeguarded only in a world of conditioned reflexes, of marionettes without the slightest trace of *spontaneity*. Precisely because man's resources are so great, he can fully dominate only when he becomes a specimen of the animal-species man." *OT* 457.

⁵⁵ Arendt, *OT* 456. Italics added.

execute its grand and fantastical venture of annihilating men of their being-ness?

First, the death of the 'juridical person' in man was stripped out and placed beyond the frontiers of law and its protection. It is here when recognition of lawlessness as characteristic of a totalitarian regime can be simply explained. Second, the murder of the 'moral person' in man was being achieved through the founding of concentration camps placed apart from the rest of the world. Third, after the eradication of 'judicial person' and the murder of the 'moral person' comes the total destruction of the individuality, the very essence of plurality; through institutionalizing torture totalitarian regimes enabled them to destroy man's individuality.⁵⁶

The outcome is a total diminution of human beings to the lowest possible denominator of 'identical reactions'. These three steps for the destruction of man's being-ness implies that man's 'character' is a threat to them and even the most just legal rules are obstacles. And what is most intolerable for them is the existence of individuality "that distinguishes one man from another" and "as long as men have not been made equally superfluous."⁵⁷ But such bizarre dream of totalitarian regimes never had completely succeeded in making man totally 'superfluous' despite their incontestable determination to abolish man's individuality by "arbitrary selection of various groups for concentration camps, by constant purges of the ruling apparatus, by mass liquidation."⁵⁸ In other words, what made totalitarianism a kind of perversion and the reversal of politics is not only of the omnipresence and permanence of terror, the race-thinking, the anti-Semitic consciousness that destroyed Jewish communities, and imperialism but most importantly, is the attempt to making man 'superfluous' and his individuality to vanish forever. These fantastical, preposterous and implausible steps for total domination are impeccably hostile to the very essence and nature of politics according to Arendt.

⁵⁶ Arendt, *OT* 454.

⁵⁷ Arendt, *OT* 457.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

The freedom and equality were curtailed for nothing, making these qualities useless and threat for the ideal dream of a totalitarian world. In other words, totalitarianism is a hindrance, a total suppression of politics par excellence. This form of government amounts to a quite descriptive enunciation of an extreme politicization of society and of privacy which leads to an absolute or total dissolution or abolition of politics itself as an important sphere of human affairs.

Finding the Locus of Hannah Arendt's Political and Anti-Political: The Marketplace and the Media

In this section, I would like to center my discussion on the idea of "marketplace" as a metaphor for the political – a new locus of action, a new "agora" while traditional and social media as one of most influential institutions and harbingers of pop culture as spaces of subtle attack on the political, trying to overturn the Arendtian political formulae by giving more weight on labor and work rather than on action as an archetype of political inversion – an anti-political.

A. The 'Marketplace': An Agoraic Image of the Political

In *The Human Condition*, Arendt offers the basic principles of the political. In order to avoid perversion of politics, we need to remind ourselves always of this Arendtian question: 'what are we doing?' and "how we think about *what* we are doing and particularly on what inhibits us in our thinking?"⁵⁹ Her phenomenological analysis of the human condition allows her to philosophically articulate the importance and value of political action and how the public realm provides a space for such fragile human activity.

One possible loci that stand as a metaphorical representation of the political would be the 'marketplace'—a new 'agora', sort of a modern *polis*. Our question now would be, how does a 'marketplace' be considered as the public space, a new 'agora', a sort of a modern *polis*—the locus of the political? This question may be answered through and by understanding the

⁵⁹ Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Why Arendt Matters*, 80.

requirements set by Arendt regarding the conditions and characteristic of political action and what constitutes the public realm as an exclusive sphere of freedom, equality, and plurality.

One of the very important requirements for Arendt is that it should be a realm where people gather together to relate to each other, that despite their plurality, to share something in common – that is to think of not their own personal, private interest but rather on how to take care of the world which they all inhabited. It is a space where speech and action operate among the plurality of actors. For one to engage in political activity one must first ‘master’ the necessity of the private realm as a preparatory requirement for public engagement. It is, for Arendt, through mastering the household and satisfies its needs that one can truly engage and involve himself in political activity. This is simply because Arendt requires those who desire to be political actors to abandon their private interests once they participate in political activity. This abandonment of private interest makes politics truly politics because what it only aims at is the articulation and fulfillment of what is considered common interest. However, because of the evolving condition and formation of economic and business structural systems, our marketplaces gradually lost this agoraic image.⁶⁰ But it still does preserve the essential agoraic features that we can metaphorically link to Arendt’s concept of the political such as a ‘public space’ for diverse business transactions, a locus of where free individuals are given opportunities to engage in dialogue and sharing of opinions, and a representation of Arendtian condition of action i.e., human plurality.

What I am trying to do, in fact, is not merely to identify a concrete location of the political but most importantly is to show and articulate that human activities that take place in such space are themselves images of Arendtian principles and conditions of

⁶⁰ Hannah Arendt, in fact, underscores the morphological commodification of agora due to Marx’s inversion of the political that no longer values action as a political end but rather labor. Arendt observes “People who met on the exchange market, to be sure, were no longer the fabricators themselves, and they did not meet as persons but as owners of commodities and exchange values, as Marx abundantly pointed out.” 162.

the political. Being mindful of the limitations of such metaphor, the articulation of its political ambiance is at the same time revealing its anti-political strands - in what sense?

We may think of marketplace as just a mere space of necessity—that is providing economic goods and services for consumption of the household, yet, what we fail to notice is how marketplace provides a space for freedom, equality, and action. Arendt laments that the replacement of the Ancient Greek 'agora' with statistical analysis muddled the division between the public and private realm. Such replacement led to the dissolution of it and she charged the modern age of hijacking the public realm by allowing the 'new real' the 'rise of the social' to invade and succeed it. Arendt complains that the modern government is like a household – an *oikos* because what it does belong to the activity of the private realm, attending and resolving private matters which, in effect, becomes collective concerns.⁶¹ Arendt argues,

Since the rise of society, since the admission of household and housekeeping activities to the public realm, an irresistible tendency to grow, to devour the older realms of the political and private as well as the more recently established sphere of intimacy, has been one of the outstanding characteristics of the new real.⁶²

Her empathy and yearning for the 'agora' is linked to her desire to provide a space for pure politics—that is devoid of any economic tinges and influence of private interests. What then are the features of 'marketplace' that satisfy the conditions and requirements of the political? What are the strictures which we can set aside, recognizably being part of its limitations?

The marketplace in its topographical sense is characterized by elements present in the Greek 'agora', a place where business transactions take place and where necessities of private household are acquired. Basically, a place where all commodities, resources, and services closely linked to human

⁶¹ Arendt, *HC* 33.

⁶² Arendt, *HC* 45.

necessities are to be found. Today, this marketplace takes in different forms such as shopping malls or ordinary public markets.

Under the conditions of the political, a public space is the space 'where freedom can appear'. In marketplaces, various types of businesses reinforce spaces for dialogue, the disclosure of identities, exchange of opinions and rational conversations responsive to the formation of politics. Marketplaces cater to the creation of mini spaces like the omnipresence of coffee shops, saloons, and many other microcosmic public hubs that allow the plurality of actors to engage in speech and action. The same is true in public markets wherein the plurality of sellers and buyers are presently engaging in dialogue and various transactions. In the case of a buyer-seller relationship, a trader should possess courage and good marketing qualities in order to effectively discharge his products/goods to customers and in order to successfully achieve his goal of selling his goods, good speech and action must be employed.⁶³ Apparently, this form of activity, in Arendtian sense, is pre-political and resembles nothing of what is political. True enough it is, but this does not deny the possibility of engaging in overlapping discourses. In other words, when people in this space engage in dialogue, the dialogue does not involve singularity of concern but rather a plurality, which might involve matter concerning common interest. In this case, people's action and speech are not only tied to economic interest or something of pre-political nature but could be as well of political interest.

Like in any political affairs where heterogeneity of political actors converge and attend to a political engagement, agonal spirit should be the proper disposition of all political actors. In Arendt's view, this agonal spirit must be the primary disposition of all political stakeholders, displaying a kind of political and moral greatness, preeminence and heroism amidst competition and cruelty that speech and action produce in the process of political exercise, "the passionate drive to show one's self in measuring up against others."⁶⁴ This is a competitive space in

⁶³ Arendt, *HC* 179.

⁶⁴ Arendt, *HC* 194.

which an involved actor is competing for precedence, recognition, and acclaim - a space in which one seeks a guarantee against futility and the passage of all things human. In such case, this resembles somehow the movement of action and motives found as well in the marketplace. Although many belonging to such space is engaged in activities that are purely instrumental in nature, it should not be thought that all throughout, the ties to economic and instrumental activity cannot be overcome or deserted. In some cases, actors within the marketplace once economic motives and goals are achieved, other discourses and activities unfold.

There is no crystal clear locus where to find Arendt's concept of the political space, more so, a metaphor that encapsulates the totality of her concept. In this case, although a marketplace is taken here to be symbolic of the political space in line with Arendt's conditions and requirements, it cannot be deemed as totally political for there are elements present within its structure that is hostile to the political. In other words, what I am trying to present here are implicit features of a marketplace that closely connected to the political based on the requirements set by Arendt. It could be thought that any action that is political should be 'pure' devoid of any matters concerning the household or the private realm. On the contrary, people who are in marketplaces literally bring with them their private concerns, but in time when interaction takes place between them and the sellers, the content of interaction, of their dialogue may take a different form and can be without any private interests. Although the conversation may spur from strictly a matter of private interest, it can go beyond the private interest one is advancing at that very moment which, of course, may not be clearly determined. If such event takes place, this for Arendt, reflects the political where action takes its course and absolutely the presence of 'unpredictability' and 'irreversibility' becomes inevitable.

B. The Locus of Hannah Arendt's concept of the Anti-political

What is hostile to the political is deemed to be anti-political. It has been described and intimated in the *Origins* the

novel character and features of the anti-political and how it abolishes the spaces for common concerns. Arendt's analysis of totalitarianism is driven by a paradoxical amalgamation of fervor: the belief that 'everything is possible and permissible' and human beings are merely an animal species ruled by the law of history and nature, in the service of which individuals are entirely dispensable – human species as merely specimens for 'pseudo-scientific' experimentation for the 'scientificity' of prophecy as the ground force of totalitarian ideology.

What constitutes the conditions of anti-political is its hostility or antagonistic character towards the political. One of the symptoms of totalitarian rule, according to Arendt, is the attempt to conquer the 'universe' for total domination which led to barbaric actions such as the attempt to eradicate human plurality and the space for public debate, the murder of 'moral and judicial person' through liquidation of classes unsympathetic to the totalitarian movement, disappearance of individuality and subscribing to the psychology of fantasy, fiction, and the unimaginable kind of rule of true violence and terror. These characteristics of totalitarianism are but an extreme opposite of the political. Although, totalitarianism exemplified the human capacity to begin, to act in ways that is new, unpredictable, contingent, and the power to think, yet, what seems to be paradoxical in totalitarian *novelty* is that it embodies an attack on the very ability to think and act as a unique individual which is essential to the flourishing of the political.

In this section what I intend to present is an illustration of the kind of character of the anti-political, its conditions, and features which closely resemble with the features of various media such as television and social media as well, for instance, in the use of advertising to distort our perception of reality through anaesthetizing human sensibilities or consciousness. These anaesthetic procedures are in various forms like media use of subliminal seduction which results to regression of human capacity to think and decide beyond the material value, and most importantly, to the reality itself which human plurality is

grounded.⁶⁵ I suspect that television media, more so, social media is to some extent promotes anti-political agenda which is a kind of a paradox. This anti-political agenda can be seen from many parts of media's operations. With this, I resolved to look at particular forms of media use such as advertisement and some TV gag-shows such as *Banana Split* to show how themes, tonalities, and presentations are formatted according to the ideology of its capitalist owners.⁶⁶ My assumption is that these media programs are embedded with ideologies propagated by the capitalist class. These ideologies if to examine critically may reveal destructive elements that can subliminally distort our consciousness and furthermore, trying to blur the distinction between reality and fiction. The themes which I would like to deal here with are about media's obsession towards reification and objectification of the eroticity of the human bodies,⁶⁷ status, and formation of hyperreal phenomena mostly depicted and effected by TV ads and gag-show like *Banana Split*. Television programs invest so much in the exploitation of the human body as seductive capital for

⁶⁵ For detailed analysis on this see Jean Baudrillard, *Seduction*, trans. Brian Singer (Montreal: CTheory Books, 2001); *The Mirror of Production*, trans. Mark Poster (St. Louis, Mo.: Telos Press, 1975); *Simulations*, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton and Philip Beitchman (New York: Columbia University, 1983); Marshall McLuhan, "The Medium is the Message," in Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas M. Kellner eds., *Media and Cultural Studies* (Malden, MA.: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 107-116.

⁶⁶ For substantive, in-depth analysis and relevant sources see "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)" in Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1971); Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (New York City: Penguin Books, 2005); Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power* (New York City: Longman Group, 1989); Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London: Arnold, 1995); Pierre Bourdieu, *On Television* trans. Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson (New York: The New Press, 1996); Teun A. van Dijk, *Discourse and Power* (New York: Macmillan Palgrave, 2008).

⁶⁷ See related texts Michel Henry, *Philosophy and Phenomenology of the Body*, trans. Girard Etzkorn (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975); Gerard Loughlin, *Alien Sex: The Body and Desire in Cinema and Theology* (Malden, Ma.: Blackwell Publishing, 2004); A more relevant study that more or less touches on the same issue is written by Reuben Ramas Cañete, "Selling the Image of Masculinity Among Selected Philippine Clothing Stores," *Plaridal* 8, no. 1 (2011): 349-359.

viewers to hold and hook. These, in effect, can be considered anti-political in Arendt's standards.

This issue concerning the emergence of pop culture and the ubiquitous media presence in every household is not anymore new to us. But what is being neglected about the role of media is its power to influence people. In fact, it is not only through news programs, TV sitcoms, gag shows and other educational TV programs that people become hooked but also to add-on seconder flips in between intervals like advertisements. Commercials consciously and/or unconsciously affect audiences' perception of things and life. In fact, Arendt compared the assertions of totalitarian propaganda as having a 'scientific' nature to advertising techniques whose main target is the masses:

It is true that the advertising columns of every newspaper show this 'scientificity', by which manufacturer proves with facts and figures and the help of a 'research' department that his is the 'best soap in the world'. It is also true that there is a certain element of violence in the imaginative exaggerations of publicity men, that behind the assertion that girls who do not use this particular brand of soap may go through life with pimples and without a husband, lies the wild dream of monopoly, the dream that one day the manufacturer of the 'only soap may prevent pimples' may have the power to deprive of husbands all girls who do not use soap."⁶⁸

Arendt's comparison between advertising techniques and the totalitarian propaganda seeking for the 'scientificity' of its assertions is properly assimilated. In trying to assert the 'scientific' proofs of totalitarian propaganda, it tended to crave for ideologies which can be justified 'scientifically' and that would support their insistence of 'scientific prophecy'. Such obsession for the 'scientific' nature of totalitarian propaganda is closely related to how commercials tend to deceive and disillusion its audience. Through sophisticated and scientific advertising

⁶⁸ Arendt, *OT* 345.

techniques applied nowadays by advertising firms, it cannot but powerfully influence the consciousness of its audiences. Audiences become so wrapped-up by consumerism and materialism that they have lost control of the sweeping cruelty of capitalism. This quotidian reality suppresses audiences' ability to engage in a healthy conversation and paralyzes their capacity to be rational in their judgment.⁶⁹ What rather becomes the prevailing habit of people today is to consign to passivity and let the capitalists decide for them.

In such a mode of subliminal seduction, we see how it is in a way become anti-political. Making things look so marvelous and so amazing, yet behind and beneath such appearances is its psychology grounded on fantasy, bizarre imagination, and illusion. In Arendtian sense, the anti-political is hostile to action while things and events are thought to be fantastical. TV commercials somehow carry such task of tempering and influencing people to be hostile to politics, not to induce participation in the public space for public discussions and consensus-building, which consequently cause people to become ruthless consumerists and materialists so that they will think less of the public interests and more on their personal and private interests.⁷⁰

Meanwhile, analyzing the form, format, and content of gag-shows, like the *Banana Split*⁷¹, enables us to find certain anti-political elements. Looking into its program content and form, the gag-show which composed mainly of all-female stars is primarily intended for comedy entertainment.⁷² Obviously, it is a show that flaunts sexiness of female casts because all are all tagged as 'young-sexy stars'. The format follows the formula of comedy

⁶⁹ See Theodor W. Adorno, *The Culture Industry* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

⁷⁰ For related topic see Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002); Herbert Marcuse, "Some Social Implications of Modern Technology," *Social Sciences* 9 (1941): 138-163.

⁷¹ My description here of the show is based on my observation way back 2009 when I first wrote this essay and I decided to retain my description of it for the purposes of the point that I want to emphasize.

⁷² Today the casts are no longer the same, only Angelica Panganiban remains in the show as of this time.

entertainment and to add balance and enticement to the show, they are joined with male casts. What all the girls do is to get pull pranks and ‘play’ with male guests. This show is totally for entertainment yet what is destructing and quite ideological is the portrayal of women as an object of pleasure and in its sinister conveyance of ideological view of women’s inferiority complex.⁷³ Drawing from feminist media theory, *Banana Split* attributed a negative value to women. Although, it could be posited that the show is inclined to promote empowerment of women, yet if we inclined to believe in the notion of feminist media theory that speaks about the portrayal of women on media as a sex symbol or object of men,⁷⁴ it may indeed be right to think that it is.

Given such format and how it appears to suggest an idea that purports women as sex objects is due to the existing dominant ideology.⁷⁵ Media outfits use such prevailing ideology on women as a capital to strengthen and gain more income or economic wealth. In media studies, it is not surprising under the neo-Marxist school of thought⁷⁶ that media is considered to be an institution that promotes the interest of the capitalist classes or the elite. Although media is an autonomous institution, it is still subject to control and manipulation of other existing institutions such as the business sectors, the Church, government, and academe. In Althusserian language, these institutions are part of the Ideological State Apparatuses, or in Gramsci’s political vocabulary – hegemonic institutions.⁷⁷ Such Althusserian notion

⁷³ Reminiscent of this is Luce Irigaray’s battlecry: ‘woman is sex’. See Luce Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, trans. Carolyn Burke and Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1984); See also Michel Foucault *Politics, Philosophy, Culture*, trans. Alan Sheridan et al., and ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York: Routledge, 1990).

⁷⁴ See Irigaray and Foucault.

⁷⁵ To understand ideology formation and relevant discussion on hegemony see Walter L. Adamson, *Hegemony and Revolution: Antonio Gramsci’s Political and Cultural Theory* (California: University of California Press, 1980); Louis Althusser on “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation).”

⁷⁶ Leading media cultural theorists are those coming from the Frankfurt School notably Adorno, Marcuse, Horkheimer, Habermas, and most especially today Douglas Kellner.

⁷⁷ Althusser was in a way influenced by Gramsci through the latter’s work *Prison Notebooks*, most especially Gramsci’s reading of Machievelli. See

is suggestive of how media uses women as an object for entertainment and reduces them into mere object and commodity. However, what makes this show anti-political is its effort to resurrect Filipino derailed and parochial view on women, legitimizing the notion that women are mere commodities and objects of pleasure. This is clearly symptomatic of what Arendt calls 'scientificity' of propaganda or ideology; trying to provide a scientific claim that indeed in this patriarchal society, women are just merely object or commodity and that their responsibility are only limited to household activity. Reminiscent of Arendt's totalitarianism is the role of ideology in the operations of totalitarian propaganda. It serves to be a motor for providing the totalitarian movement something that will lead them to accomplish its megalomaniac project.⁷⁸

In our recent experience, we have been invaded and overwhelmed by the use of social media, and because of its enormous power to control, manipulated exploit, and abuse, it hegemonizes and legitimizes social practices that are deplorable and bizarre. More importantly, with the massive use and influence of social media, it becomes the most powerful tool to distort truth and manufacture lies for political and ideological purposes. The emergence of fake news, for instance, as a tool of propaganda and terror tries to challenge the strength or power of various democratic institutions as well as to destroy political adversaries. With this recent political experience, it leads to engulf and enervate human capacity to actively engage in genuine political action. But, it should be considered as well that despite this deplorable and nauseating situation, social media can be used to counter the totalitarian propaganda by using the same media to propagate activities that create rather than destroy the human-made world.

Media, therefore, if we look at it in an ideological perspective are replete with hidden totalitarian violence proliferating dominant consumerist ideological frames which

Gregory Elliot's introduction "In the Mirror of Machiavelli" in Louis Althusser, *Machiavelli and Us*, ed. François Matheron, trans., Gregory Eliot (London and New York: Verso, 2000), xiv.

⁷⁸ Arendt, *OT* 468.

ordinary audiences have no ability to discover. In the process of carrying and making oneself expose to such shows will gradually and eventually form a kind of perspective that is hostile to the political advocacy of women as equal human beings, not just merely a household mistress or a mere object of sex and only with economic value but most importantly human beings worthy of respect and care.

Conclusion

Hannah Arendt's political insights offer fertile and robust ground in understanding politics in a more uncanny and original way. Yet it is something that we should aspire to achieve. Arendt's depiction of the bipolarity of human action - political and anti-political, indeed provides us the ways and means to deal with politics and what makes politics a pure, quixotic political activity.

The paper then shows that in an attempt to locate concrete spaces for the political and the anti-political, Arendt's views of politics have been revealed and remained insightful insofar as we have the interest and the desire to make the human-made world a place where humans can flourish by knowing how to live. Most importantly, the identification of the locus of the political and the anti-political hopes to appropriate Arendt's thoughts in today's political condition and at the same time tries to invite a way of rethinking our notion of politics. It is shown in the discussion that the concrete locus of the political is something contentious and infeasible, making the problem concerning the political still difficult to resolve. However, this does not mean that there is no other possible space where the political thrives. As seen above, despite the complexity of the market, we can still say that it still allows a space for the political to thrive.

Finding the locus of the anti-political is not difficult compared to its opposite. The presence of propaganda, terror, and force indicates totalitarian, anti-political tendencies which can be located in various forms of human activities and platforms. The powerful presence of instrumentalities, such as, media platforms caters to various conflicting and opposing functions such that in

some ways media allow and reinforce activities that are anti-political, and thus totalitarian.

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