

THE VALUE OF WORK IN NIGERIA

with Reference to Laborem Exercens

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To all lovers of Work.

Introduction

The world in which we live today is experiencing what could be described as a revolution in the area of work. We notice that institutions and big companies are crumbling. The world is undergoing a deep and worse economic crisis since the Great Depression. Starting from America and sweeping across Europe, Asia and Africa the continents are going through a tough time in history. Many jobs are lost while big establishments are closed as a result of financial crises. Many workers lose their jobs daily for the the unfortunate fact that there is no money to pay them. The massive youth unemployment which might be considered as the worst in history is sweeping across the globe. The youths are roaming about the streets looking for job. Unable to find one they end up in a woeful frustration. Not being able to invest their energy in work and in contributing to the growth of the society, they get involved in crimes. As a result, the drums of war are heard across Africa, the Middle East and some other parts of Asia.

Work as a phenomenon, which undoubtedly is what keeps people positively busy most, is gradually disappearing. Machines have taken the place of human beings in the dynamics of work, thereby carrying out the thinking and planning that are meant for workers. Consequently the worker as a human agent is displaced. In such a situation the direct and personal satisfaction / fulfilment accompanying work disappear equally. The traditional ideas we have about work itself are gradually fading away. As a society, we are undergoing a radical change in the way we think about work. We are starved of meaning and purpose in our lives, and with the breakdown of Job security in the corporate world we are no longer willing to separate our values from our work.-1

“The role of work in society has changed. It used to be central and exclusive of concern and desire. Today, where physical survival is no longer a primary concern in the industrial countries, society has opened to new experiences in which enjoyment has become an end in itself, up to the point where many people just accept a “boring Job” in order to spend more time watching television, or sports and leisure. Job satisfaction and how people perceive their work is changing in this enjoyment society”². Today, many value their work because of the

¹ Schaff, K., Philosophy and Problems of Work. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., New York. p.1.

² Ruding, H.O., „The New Rhythm in life and Work and the Optimal Economic Model“, Work as Key to The Social Question: The Great Social and Economic Transformations and the Subjective Dimension of Work. Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2002, p. 311-312.

money they make out of it or inversely by the number of hours needed to earn the income that they individually deem necessary for their spending. Few seem to attain this natural satisfaction, which goes with a job that is properly done, although international research generally shows a high level of job satisfaction. However, the real source of this satisfaction is often not looked into, nor is the willingness to continue the same job until the official retirement age. There is a danger when workers and also managers begin practicing “economism”, as John -Paul II has termed it, because they begin instrumentalising what is an integral part of themselves. In the words of this Pope, they indulge in the self-delusionary thinking that money can justify one's existence.³

To make work meaningful, there is a longing or tendency to equate it with life purpose. Work is considered as meaningful if it adds to the quality of life of those around us. Work is an instrument for making our creations to be a blessing to the world. Sometimes we think of a world without work. The possibility of finding such a world is a question to be answered. If at all we find it, how would it be a meaningful world for human beings? And what activities would human beings engage in if work becomes only one of many modes of self-realization?⁴ “Consider the following thought experiment. If all the current social conditions under which work as a necessary feature of human life were suspended, what would human beings do with their new found freedom from necessary work? For the moment, let us set aside the standard concerns about how we would produce and organize the material goods and necessary services for our survival. Furthermore, let us assume that all the social, political, and legal mechanisms that mediate the relation between such goods and our individual contribution to their production no longer structure our practices and occupy our day- to- day activities. What would humans do tomorrow if there was no work to go to, and everyone had the entire day to play? Can we even imagine such an arrangement? How could human life be organized in such a way, so that individuals and societies would continue to survive and flourish? What would individuals then choose to do with their newly created time?”⁵

Attempting a definite answer to such abstractions is almost impossible, but as Kory Schaff responds... no doubt many individuals might choose to work in spite of the newly created time for unstructured activity. After all, “it is true that some of us work not because we have to, but

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Schaff, K., *op. cit.*, p. 1.

⁵ *ibid.*

because we find our jobs fulfilling, challenging, or consistent with our life-plans”.⁶ Many others may not choose to work, however, preferring the pursuits of leisure or other activities in which they feel more fulfilled and happy. Of those who do choose to work, how many would do so because it is the most prominent, or even sole, activity for their self-realization? It is likely that many would continue to work simply because the structured activity of their employment often takes precedence over other important aspects of life, including family, friends, learning, and the development of neglected or underutilized talents.⁷

Having seen that the society, even provided with all that it needs to make life comfortable and a free time for enjoyment, thereby being set free from work, some people would still go to work, is work therefore a fundamental dimension of man's life on earth. Pope John Paul II emphasized that man is born to work as well as called to it, that work is for man and that it is a lifelong activity which man must pursue.⁸

It is therefore my intention in this project to examine man as a creature called to work and born into work. It is true that through work, man provides himself and his family with the basic necessities of life and everyday needs. For this reason, he charges wages for his sweat. Work goes beyond and should exceed the boundaries of the material benefit that comes out of it to the satisfaction and fulfilment for the very purpose we should work. The modern society has attached so much importance to money and material possession, the question then is how do we go along working in the spirit of improvement and renewal of the earth? The modern man understands work only as a means of making his daily bread. For this reason, he engages himself in an occupation that he has little or no interest in. He ends up quarrelling everyday with the people that he or she is supposed to serve through work. The result is low work output and waste of talents and the society loses an opportunity for improvement as every creature is supposed to contribute uniquely.

A good example is Nigeria where there is massive youth unemployment, a country with a population estimate of about over 180,000,000 people and Africa's most populous nation, and despite being the sixth Oil producing countries in the world is ranked among the poorest and the fourth where people are mostly enslaved. About 50 percent of her young men and women

⁶ *ibid.* p. 1-2.

⁷ Schor, J., *The Overworked American: The unexpected Decline of Leisure*. Basic Book, New York, 1991.

⁸ Kirwan, J., *Pope John Paul II: Laborem Exercens*. Catholic Truth Society, London, 1984, p.7.

are educated and could compete with their peers all over the world in the field of work, but it is unfortunate that a country with such natural and human resources is industrially backwards.

It is common in Nigeria to see Students after graduation in Universities and high schools of technology they end up roaming the streets looking for employment opportunities, among them are even those who acquired technical knowledge. The reasons are lack of empowerment to set up something in form of self-employment and lack of the will to do so. In order to provide for their daily needs, people accept works and jobs with little or no knowledge and with no interest and the result is low output.

The failed political structure, coupled with a high rate of corruption which in effect ushered in decadence of traditional values among which the values of industriousness and manual work, led to the high value attached to the white collar jobs and political offices over manual works. Embezzlement of public funds and other foul means of acquiring wealth are glorified, while diligent to duty, reward for hard work, etc. are neglected. Certain types of manual work are scorned as awful and therefore tagged as odd because it takes time to make a living out of them. Many workers in Nigeria today are ashamed of identifying with their work because they are manual works. The injustice in wage imbalance and remuneration created a situation whereby almost every part of the country's work-force wants to occupy a position in an oil Company or in the Government since they loot public funds and become rich quick without labouring much. Such attitude discourages the youths from engaging in some manual and technical works, and has really diminished the meaning and value of work. Instead of joining the workforce with joy and commitment some even aspire to be fraudsters as occupation.

There is little commitment on the part of those who work, as it is the case with many workers who after accepting an offer to render service abandon them to pursue other goals. For instance a teacher coming to school in the morning after registering his presence; leaves the school for his private business or hand worker after accepting money for service, refuses to show up. Contracts are given to individuals or groups who know nothing about the contracted work. What they do after winning the contract by fraudulence means, is to further contract those who will do the actual work, may be this time, the so called cheap labourers. Of course, we are now talking about two contractors of the one contract which normally implies doubling the supposed cost of the contract. Work, employment and performance is no more about qualification but more of having connection (that is bribing ones way into an office one

knows little or nothing about). At the end of the day, efforts and hard-work are sacrificed at the expense of Corruption that sees the entire work process distorted. As a result many qualified professionals have fled the country to other parts of the world. And just recently it was reported in the national daily that Britain records the highest number of practicing Nigerian medical Doctors and it is also the same story in many other fields of human resources.

Do we then sit down and fold our arms and watch our brains drained and talents waste away? The much that was achieved by the fore-fathers who understood work properly and worked with the real spirit of self-realization is rusting away.

This, therefore, calls for a re-orientation in every sector of the Nigerian Society. More importantly, it demands encouragement, enlightenment and empowerment by the Government on the part of the youths so that they may embrace and approach work with the right spirit of working, and so, help in the building of the society in which one is part of.

The above concern informed the captioning of this work as the Value of Work in the present day Nigeria and possibility of re-orientation of our approach and concept of work towards achieving a meaningful development in the modern Nigeria Society.

What I intend to achieve through this project, is to initiate a move towards self-examination and assessment. The citizens, especially the youths, are roaming the streets carrying files full of credentials looking for employment, whereas many of them can create jobs for themselves and even employ others. What has happened to the talents God or Nature has given us? If the Government could not provide employment opportunities, should the citizenry fold their hands and wait till eternity? In the present day Nigeria, it has become competitive attending University Education and high schools of Technology, but one wonders then what the graduates do at the end of their graduation with the knowledge they acquired in those institutions, especially those who study practical sciences. My suggestion is that they do not need to wait to be employed by some group of companies; instead they could start something on their own in a very little way, after all, so many big companies with big names around the world today started as small scale. The love of money has ruined many talents in Nigeria. Many do not even trust themselves that they can do it. Some are misled into doing some other

things that are not their calling, just because the other person is doing it and he is making a living out of it.

This project creates the consciousness of the diversity of talents in individuals and how they could help in the right approach of self-realization through work and help in the development of the society.

In order to achieve my objective in this research, the work will be divided into six chapters. The first chapter will take care of the definition of the term “Work”, tracing its origin, development and use. Many philosophers and thinkers have tried to define work as we shall see but I will take as a working definition of work according to Pope John Paul II.

Going through different periods in history, starting with the ancient, running through the middle ages and the modern era, thinkers and philosophers have reasoned differently about work; some positively, others negatively, and these thoughts have had influences in our world today. The first Chapter will also, in form of a summary, run through different ages in history and their attitudes towards work. Work generally speaking is a universal concept, granted that this project has my country Nigeria in focus, but the experience in question, that is the changing concept of work, is a global phenomenon. For this reason, the knowledge of how people in different era approached work will enable us pass a judgment as regards what we are experiencing in our world of work today and to know the era that has mostly influenced the contemporary man's attitude to work.

The second Chapter of this project will concentrate on the modern thoughts on work as presented by Pope John Paul II, looking into his philosophical theories of “Participation” and “the Acting Person”, which eventually influenced his thoughts on Man, the subject of work. In this chapter, the questions of the Meaningfulness of work and the Humanization of Work will be raised and possible answers given. If work is specifically a human activity as suggested by John Paul II, then we will look into ways of making work to have a more human face and the roles to be played by certain groups, organization or institution in realizing this. Work should lead to self-fulfilment and this of course is the basic message I would like to pass across. In addition, I will discuss the concept of self-realization and self-fulfilment, with the intention of findind out what it actually means to be self-fulfilled and self-realized. This

will take me through Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas and Karol Wojtyla in connection with the philosophical thoughts of the Ultimate End.

The third Chapter tries to present various reasons why people work and addresses also the concern whether work should be seen as a punishment placed on humanity or has work a saving grace on the part of humanity. Important here is also the situation whereby people have choice or alternative for not working, will they still like to work? This will lead to my presentation of work as necessity for social well-being of the society. The issue of wages and other social benefits will be discussed. Important also are the questions bordering on who has right to work, and on whether sex has anything to do in deciding who does which work and where. Highly interesting and revealing is the treatment on whether conditions imposed upon people by nature such as slavery, age and deformity play any role in work?

Work is a universal concept. Therefore the fourth chapter of this project discusses the concept of work in Africa. Having seen the journey of the development of thoughts on work in Western World, it is also important to look into the attitude of work in Africa especially in the olden times and later the situation of work in the present day Nigeria. This will help us determine the amount of value given to work. In doing this, I will first present the image of work in Nigeria before and after British colonization. This will enable us see if it is still the same value that has been attached to work or whether several setbacks have occurred and now required to be corrected. In determining this I will expose the attitude to work in Nigeria today and the influence the love of money and power has on work and how corruption and easy way of life helped in destroying the traditional values of work.

The fifth Chapter of this work will still concentrate on the Nigerian problem and what actually contributed to the fall of the traditional way of thinking about work. Chapter Six will then take care of the possible remedies of this development. Then by way of conclusion, I will search for the way out of this situation. In doing this, a call for a re-orientation concerning the present day Nigerian attitude to work will be opted. Putting forward the image of work we have been presenting in the course of this research as it was put together by John Paul II.

Chapter One

The Meaning of Work

1.1. What is Work?

The human condition compels the existence of work as a condition of life. Work creates our human-made environment. Human beings are both in nature as biological beings subject to the laws of nature and outside of nature through the material and social environment they create as extensions of their culture. According to Herbert Applebaum, "No definition is satisfactory because work relates to all human activities, and one would have to exhaust all such activities to exhaust the province of work".⁹ Since by work we mean all human activities, there is no definition of work that can satisfactorily explain all aspects of human culture. At work, humans use materials, forces and living organisms of nature to fashion tools, with which to make, grow, and build things to satisfy human needs. Making things is not the only kind of work. Teachers, clerks, engineers, scientists, nurses, doctors, accountants, secretaries, guards and so on, do not make anything. These people satisfy needs through service to others. Both making things and performing services are useful aspects of work.¹⁰

Work is an English word used in the broadest sense to denote both the process of doing something and the state of something done. The English word work is got from the Indo-European root "werg-on " meaning "to do, to act". This could also be compared with the German word "werk" which means "work, action or performance" and the Greek word εργον, "work".¹¹

We notice also that in the French roots of the English language and related culture the word "travail" is used which means, in English, both "exceedingly hard work" and "intense pain and agony." The root of this word also is traced to the Old Latin "tripalium" meaning an instrument of torture. Another Latin word "poena " having its Greek equivalent "ponos " also means punishment. "Travail is one central dimension of work for Anglo-Saxons. The word "Work" itself comes from the Anglo - Saxon "Worc" or "Weorc", which means labour,

⁹ Applebaum, H., *The Concept of Work : Ancient, Medieval, and Modern*. Albany, New York: State University Press Albany, (Introduction) 1993.

¹⁰ Gamst, F.C., (ed), *Meaning of Work: Consideration for the Twenty-first Century*. State University Press, Albany New York: 1995, p.46.

¹¹ *ibid.* p. 2.

action, deed, but it is used practically to mean affliction, pain, trouble or distress. It also means structure, edifice or construction, it comes from the verb “Wyrcean”, which means “to do”, to “construct”¹² Overall we have an ambivalent view of work. It can be a moral necessity, “Satan finds work for idle hands”, and the deity's lifelong curse of travail upon humans, “in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground”¹³ In the folk's view of work, a dimension of "mind-numbing drudgery" is also found. As far back as 1670 we find recorded the familiar aphorism, „All works and no play makes Jack a dull boy“.¹⁴

One fact to be noticed in the various views about work is that work is seen as a disease and punishment upon humanity. John Paul II sees it differently. He defines work as “any activity by man, whether manual or intellectual, whatever its nature or circumstances; it means any human activity that can and must be recognized as work, in the midst of all the many activities of which man is capable and to which he is predisposed by his very nature, by virtue of humanity itself”.¹⁵ Having been made in the image and likeness of God himself, Man has to continue the creative work of God on earth. He does that when he subdues the earth and renews it. Kory Schaff defines work as a human activity which takes existing conditions and transforms them so that the new conditions more completely satisfy our needs and desires.¹⁶ Work is that which makes man different from the rest of created things who expand some kind of effort in the process of acting upon and taking from their environment whatever they need for survival.¹⁷ The activities these creatures perform are so in order to sustain themselves, and cannot be referred to as work because “Man alone is adapted to work. Only he works and in working fulfils his life on earth. Wherefore, work bears man's signature, the distinctive mark of his human nature, the mark of a person who is acting within a community of persons, a mark which reveals him as he truly is and constitutes to a certain extent his very nature”.¹⁸

¹² Okuma, Peter, C., *Understanding Human Work and Dignity*. Enugu Nigeria. Snaap Press Ltd, 1997, p. 15.

¹³ Gamst, F.C., *op. cit.*, p. 46.

¹⁴ *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 2, P – Z. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971. p. 1884 – 1928.

¹⁵ Pope John Paul II., *Laborem Exercens*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1981, p.1.

¹⁶ Okrent, M., „Work, Play and Technology“. Schaff, Kory (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.74.

¹⁷ Watson, T., *Sociology, Work and Industry*. T.J Press Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall, London, 1980, p. 2.

¹⁸ Kirwan, J., *op. cit.*, p.1.

1.2. Labour and Work

The difference between labour and work is not often made; sometimes the two words are understood to mean the same thing whereas they are not traditionally. According to Hannah Arendt, there are clear phenomenal evidences to prove this point and trying to ignore it will be striking. Although historically, it is clear that apart from few scattered remarks “which moreover were never developed even in the theories of their authors, there is hardly anything in either the pre-modern tradition of political thought or in the large body of modern labour theories to support it.”¹⁹ Granted that historical evidence to support this is scarce, notwithstanding, there is one articulate and obstinate testimony, that is, the undisputable fact that “every European language, ancient and modern, contains two etymologically unrelated words for what we have to come to think of as the same activity, and retains them in the face of their persistent synonymous usage.”²⁰

John Locke made distinction between working hands and a labouring body. And his distinction is traced back to ancient Greek distinction between the *cheirotechnes*, meaning craftsman, which corresponds to German word *Handwerker* and those who like “slaves and tame animals with their bodies minister to the necessities of life”²¹ or in the Greek idiom, to (σωματι εργαζεσθαι) *somati ergazesthai*, work with their bodies.²² As Hannah Arendt observes, at this early stage even the words labour and work are already treated as the same because here the word *ponein* (labour) was not used instead *erganzesthai* (work) was used to refer to those who attend to the necessities of life.²³

In old German language, “*Arebet*” means burdensome bodily activity and Slavish equivalent “*rabota*” also means compulsory labour or service. The Latin word “*labour*” means swaying under the weight of bodily activity and its English derivative “*Labour*” means bodily work.²⁴ In French the word “*labeur*” means difficult or heavy work and the Spanish “*trabajo*” is even stronger in expression since it points to torture, trouble, bother, worry and torment.²⁵

¹⁹ Arendt, H., *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998, p. 80.

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ Aristotle, *Politics*; translated by Benjamin Jowett; with introduction, analysis and index by H.W.C Davis. New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 2000. 1254B25.

²² Grimm, *Wörterbuch*, pp. 1854ff in Arendt, H., *Human Condition* op. cit.

²³ Arendt, H., op. cit. p. 80.

²⁴ Bokranz, R & Landau, K., *Einführung in die Arbeitswissenschaft*. Germany, Stuttgart: Ulmer Verlag, 1991, p. 13.

²⁵ Neuberger, O., *Arbeit*. Germany, Stuttgart: Enke Verlag, 1985, p. 2.

The Greek language distinguishes between *ponein* and *ergazesthai*. In Latin, there is also the distinction between *laborare*, *facere* or *fabricari*, which have the same etymological root. The French distinguished between *travailler* and *ouvrer*. The Germans distinguished between *arbeiten* and *werken*. One thing we have to observe is that, “in all these cases, only the equivalents for labour have an unequivocal connotation of pain and trouble.”²⁶ The German *Arbeit* applied originally only to farm labour executed by serfs and not to the work of the craftsman, which is called *Werk*. The French *travailler* replaced the older *labourer* and is derived from *tripalium*, a kind of torture.²⁷

At this point, it is necessary to know why such important distinction was overlooked. Hannah Arendt explains: “Contempt for labouring, originally arising out of a passionate striving for freedom from necessity and a no less passionate impatience with every effort that left no trace, no monument, no great work worthy of remembrance, spread with the increasing demands of polis life upon the time of the citizens and its insistence on their abstention (skhole) from all but political activities, until it covered everything that demanded an effort.”²⁸

These etymological roots of “work” show that it is a very strenuous and energetic activity and has very often a negative value. The historical development of the term is very important if one really wants to appreciate the meaning of it.²⁹

During the ancient period, work was understood as *opera servilia* and was meant for slaves and citizens of the lower class. The members of the upper class do not work. They engage themselves in other noble and befitting activities like contemplation, philosophizing, and civil service. And these free activities (*opera liberalia*) were specifically meant for the free citizens. Before the 18th century, the passive meaning of work as burdensome, torturing, worrying, troubling etc. dominated. Even at that time already, the active meaning of work as a

²⁶ Grimm, op. cit., p. 80.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ Arendt, H., op.cit., p. 81.

²⁹ Nothelle-Wildfeuer, U., “Duplex Ordo cognitionis” – Zur systematischen Grundlegung einer Katholischen Soziallehre im Anspruch von Philosophie und Theologie. Germany, Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag, 1991, p.598.

N/B. The detailed history of the development of work will be treated in the following chapter

strenuous activity in pursuit of a desired goal had begun to be incorporated into the concept of work.³⁰

1.3. Work through the Ages

1.3. 1. The Greeks

The ancient Greeks understood work as a curse and nothing else. “The earliest Greek poets, Homer and Hesiod, found no inherent value in work. Homer thought the gods were displeased with man and condemned him to toil. Hesiod recognized the necessity for farmers to toil in the fields to extract from it their escape from hunger and subjection to others. Other than that, work was a curse: the Greek word for work *ponos*, meant sorrow”³¹. For them *ponos* which has the same root as the Latin *poena* (sorrow), was coloured with that sense of heavy and burdensome task which we feel in the words of fatigue, travail, or burden. The phrase which in English is restricted to downright drudgery, the Greeks applied to physical work of every sort.

1.3. 2. Attitude to Work in the time of Homer

As presented in the epic of Homer, institutions, relationships and social values characterized this period. Homer depicted his society as a functioning cultural system, reflecting the viewpoint of nobility. It was a simple, class society, not far removed from earlier tribal chieftainships. “Its class nature is reflected in the differentiated access to economic resources available to the noble heads of household”³²

The aristocratic *oikos*, the household is the key institution of Homeric world. “The *oikos* was a family group residing on a landed estate and including father, mother, unmarried children, sons with wives, and grandparents. It encompassed slaves, hired workers and craftsmen,

³⁰ Onaga, C. V. C., *Civilization of Work: The Necessity for a Social-Ethical Foundation of a True Civilization of Work in Nigeria and the Methods of its Realisation*. Frankfurt, Germany: Peter Lang GmbH, 2000, p. 40.

³¹ Goodale, T.L & Godbey, G.C., *The Evolution of Leisure: Historical and Philosophical Perspectives*. Venture Publishing, Inc., U.S.A, 1995, p.32.

³² Applebaum, H., *op. cit.*, p. 3.

retainer, guests, visiting relatives and allies, and strangers”³³. The *oikos* was headed by an aristocratic male, that family root with the mythical warriors.

1.3. 2. 1. Work rooted in Cultural Life

The world of work is separated and freed from the home, family life, and from other activities of the citizens. But in nonmarket, nonindustrial cultures, work is not separated from other activities. “There is unity raising a family and hunting or gathering; between making pots and training children, and between building houses and practicing one’s religion. There is often no separate word for work”³⁴.

Production in most of nonmarket societies is taken care of by the kinship unit. This arrangement played an important role in the organization of the *oikos* in Homeric times.

Work is an entire household activity in the time of Homer. Among those who worked was the queen as seen in the case of Penelope, the wife of Odysseus who wove garments. Laertes the father of Odysseus also tended a vineyard. Odysseus himself boasted that he could cut grass with a scythe drive a pair of oxen and plough a clean furrow.³⁵ The herdsmen had the responsibility of taking care of the crucial source of wealth, the flocks. Harvesting was taken care of by the men called *mowers* with a sickle. The boy did the work of gathering the grain for binders. Noble men also worked as most were seen in estates supervising, managing, and directing the work in the field³⁶. Work in ancient Greece means more than a mere activity for the satisfaction of material needs. Work on the land was part of the natural divine order and requires sacrifice to Zeus and Demeter ³⁷.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ Malinowski, B., *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1992.

³⁵ *Odyssey*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, translated by A. T. Murray. Two volumes. London: William Heinemann, Ltd. 1945, 18: 336 – 380.

³⁶ *Iliad*, Loeb Classical Library Edition, translated by A. T. Murray. Two volumes. London: William Heinemann, Ltd. 1939. 15:556 – 557

³⁷ Hesiod, “Works and Days.” “Theogony,” “Shield,” translated by AN. Athanassakis. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983. pp. 390, 415, 465-466.

Work was also seen as a religious activity. Some primitive cultures cling to Magic and Religion in their effort to get the best out of nature. The connection between religion and work is also expressed in some form of myth. For instance, certain goddesses are seen as presiding over fertility. It is important to note that some traditional African societies like the Igbos of Nigeria as we shall see in the later chapters of this work also share this belief and practice.

Work in non-market cultures is also an integral part of political status. In most of these non-market cultures, it is the work of the political leaders (the chieftains) to arrange, direct and lead in communal work. In most circumstances, the leader requires certain knowledge and skills. “A Maori leader is versed in technical skills and magic, thus combining work, politics, and religion. Odysseus was similarly skilled in the crafts: he is a builder of boats as well as his own bedroom, in the art of politics and diplomacy and is the noble head of a large household and a favourite of the gods, especially Athena. In his person, work, kinship, religion, and politics converge.”³⁸

The nature of the political life typical of many Greek communities in the ninth and eighth century B.C. was revealed in the position of Odysseus. “The political arrangement was that of a chiefdom; not fully centralized and largely dependent on the personal competence of the chief or king. The base of the local chief’s power was his *oikos*, the treasure stored there, and the number of men and women, both free and slave, whose work and labour he controlled. Political authority and control over the work of others formed an inextricable web in the power structure of Homeric society.”³⁹

The Communal Nature of Work

The communal nature of work is captured in Homer's description of a rustic scene on the Shield of Achilles. “Therein he (Hephaistos, the craftsman god) set also soft fallow-land, rich tilth and wide, that was three times ploughed; and ploughers full many therein were wheeling their yokes and driving them this way and that. And whensoever after turning they came to the headland of the field, then would a man come forth to each and give into his hands a cup of honey-sweet wine.... Therein he set also a king's demesne-land wherein labourers were reaping, bearing sharp sickles in their hands. Some handfuls were falling in rows to the ground along the swathe, while others the binders of sheaves were binding with twisted ropes of straw. Three binders stood hard by them, while behind them boys would gather the handfuls and bearing them in their arms would busily give them to the binders; and among them the king, staff in hand, was standing in silence at the swathe, joy in his heart. And heralds apart beneath an oak were making ready a feast, and were dressing a great ox they had slain for sacrifice; and the women sprinkled the flesh with white barley in abundance, for the workers' mid-day meal. Therein he set also a vineyard heavily laden with clusters, a vineyard

³⁸ Applebaum, H., op. cit., p. 11.

³⁹ *ibid.* p. 12.

fair and wrought of gold; black were the grapes, and the vines were set up throughout on silver poles... and one single path led thereto, whereby the vintagers went and came, when so ever they gathered the vintage. And maidens and youths in childish glee were bearing the honey-sweet fruit in wicker baskets. And in their midst a boy made pleasant music with a clear-toned lyre, and thereto sang sweet the Linos-song with his delicate voice; and his fellows beating the earth in unison therewith followed on with bounding feet mid dance and shouting.”⁴⁰

In this scene we see all the ingredients of the communal nature of work; men and women, old and young, king and commoner, work and feasting, music and dance, and drink and work. In According to Finley I. Moses, “A man's work and the evaluation of his skills, what he did and what he was not to do in the acquisition of goods and their disposition within the *oikos* and without were all status-bound.... With respect to work and wealth... the determinant was always the particular social grouping to which one belonged not the skills, desires or enterprise of an individual.”⁴¹

1.3. 2. 2. Household and Division of Labour

The communal character of work noticeable in Homer’s time shows that the work done by individuals was also done on behalf of the household as a whole. The final products were arranged and preserved in a well secured central place. These products were redistributed by the head of *oikos* when he considered it necessary and right.

Women did not work in the fields but in the house. They did spinning, weaving, carding, grinding corn, baking bread, making beds, cleaning, caring for clothing and general servant

⁴⁰ Iliad, op. cit., 18, 543 – 575.

Herskovits J. Melville provides here a representative example from the Dogon of West Africa to prove that the communal nature of work in nonmarket societies is a distinguishing feature of those cultures. “It is clear that individual advantage... is not the sole force that causes men to work in the society we are studying. Each person is motivated, more or less consciously, in more or less indirect ways by the desire for the well-being, wealth and prestige of the community as a whole (Herskovits, M. J., Economic Anthropology. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. 1952, p.7) In the Pacific and in Africa, communal work performed for chiefs and headmen is a social obligation, and those who refuse suffer ostracism or accusation of sorcery, a means for controlling shirkers (Harris, Marvin., Culture, People, Nature. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975. p. 363 – 365). The work debt owed to the chief is repaid by him in various ways – gifts, public feasts, redistribution of goods, and military security. All of this is portrayed in the Homeric poems.

⁴¹ Finley, M. I., The World of Odysseus. New York: Pelican Books, 1979. p. 75.

duties like serving food, waiting on the mistress of the house, carrying torches and bathing their master and their mistress. Most household labour in the large *oikos* was done by female slaves. However, noble women were also pictured weaving, spinning, and making garments.⁴² Even the noble women also worked. “Work, even the washing of clothes, was not too menial for noble women”⁴³.

Males work mostly in the field taking care of agricultural heavy task which include: tilling the ground, clearing, herding, tending grape vines, building walls, piling up dung, building fences, and guarding the flocks. The question of specialization did not arise since each man was able to do a range of duties. Metal workers referred to as specialists were usually commissioned from outside the household to do their work.

Males, both free and slave also carried out duties in the household. Some cut meat, others were heralds. And others, mostly free men, were retainers, working in various capacities serving the noble head of the household.

In a situation where the household is made up of both productive and consumptive unit, cooperation and reciprocity between men and women is necessary for the smooth functioning of the household. Women’s work is viewed with the context of communal work and receives its due recognition. It is true that the Homeric world is male-dominated, but Homer devotes a great deal of the poem to describe women’s work. “Besides the goddesses, there were numerous women who are treated sympathetically and admiringly....”⁴⁴

There is no indication that there was anything in form of “slave work” and “free work”. The slave and free performed the same work, only that the slaves worked under constraint while the free could choose where, how, and when to work.

⁴² Iliad, op. cit., 6:23 – 24; 22:440 – 441.

⁴³ Odyssey, op. cit., 6:30 – 97.

⁴⁴ Pomeroy, S. B., Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity. New York: Schocken Books, 1975, p. 30.

1.3. 2. 3. Work Incentives

Survival in terms of provision of food and shelter, necessary to support one's life is the major incentive to work in all societies. This we know does not exhaust the incentives to work. "There is also force of tradition, the desire for approval, the securing of peer cooperation and the seeking of prestige for work well done are all additional incentive"⁴⁵.

According to Herskovits "The prestige that accrues to the hard worker, the fast worker, the careful worker, the competent worker, is thus a significant factor in motivating labour in most societies"⁴⁶

1.3. 3. Classic Greeks

The Archaic period of Ancient Greece according to Finley I. Moses, was approximately between 776 B.C, the date of the first Olympic Games, and 490 B.C.⁴⁷ If then the Homeric world was characterized by warrior/heroes, gifts exchange, and reciprocity, the Archaic period ushered in colonization, emergence of the polis, trade, money, class conflict, and craft industry. During this period, the attitude towards work took an opposite approach to that of the Homeric period. Farm work was esteemed, but any form of wage work was considered a form of slavery. Service to others was seen as unworthy of a truly free man. The free man was the active man of leisure, free to engage in politics and contemplation. "The free man was a user of products, never a maker of products."⁴⁸ The Greek classical literature is filled with observations about the inferior nature of those who must perform manual work.

⁴⁵ *ibid.* p. 15.

⁴⁶ Herskovits, M. J., *op. cit.*, p. 123.

⁴⁷ Finley, M. I., *Early Greece: The Bronze and Archaic Ages*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1981. p. Viii – ix.

⁴⁸ *ibid.* p. 49.

Ancient Greece: Refers to a period of Greek civilization history that lasted from the Archaic period of the 8th to 6th centuries BC to the end of antiquity (about. 600 AD).

Classical Period (500 – 336BC): Points to a period of ancient Greek history which is dated between about 500 B.C, the period Greeks began to come into conflict with the kingdom of Persia to the east and the death of the Macedonian king and conqueror Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. It is the period in which Athens reached its greatest political and cultural heights and the democratic system of government under the Athenian statesman Pericles was full development, also the building of the Parthenon on the Acropolis; the creation of the tragedies of Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides; and the founding of the philosophical schools of Socrates and Plato.

Plato was not interested in training people who must work to make them fit for governing. He stated instead that those who needed to work must be willing to accept an inferior status.

1.3. 3. 1. Attitude to Work in the time of Aristotle

For Aristotle, man reaches his potentialities as a human being when he is the citizen of a state. He is by law of his nature part of a state. Although in point of time the individual person comes before the state, in logical order, the state comes first. Man cannot realize himself as man without the political order.

“Hence it is evident that the state is a creation of nature and that man is by nature a political animal. And he who by nature and not by mere accident is without a state is either a bad man or above humanity....”⁴⁹ In the ideal state, the qualities of the good man and the good citizen are identical.

Aristotle believes that only citizens should be allowed to own land and that the citizen should have others who work on his land so as to free the citizen to indulge in war, politics and the art of governance. Music and contemplation for him were the highest ends of a cultivated man and the pursuit of philosophy and the noblest pursuits could be mastered only by education and training which in turn could only be available to the man of leisure.⁵⁰

There were two types of city-states: democracy and oligarchy, the one being ruled by the majority and the other ruled by the few. The first was ruled by those who worked and the second was ruled by those who did not work. He noted that “constitutions vary because the people (*demos*) and the class called the notables vary”.⁵¹ Therefore one can rightly say that

Hellenistic Period (336-146 BC): Referred to a period between the conquest of the Persian Empire by Alexander the Great and the establishment of Roman supremacy, in which Greek culture and learning were pre-eminent in the Mediterranean and Asia Minor. It is called Hellenistic (Greek, Hellas, "Greece") to distinguish it from the Hellenic culture of classical Greece.

⁴⁹Aristotle., op. cit., 1253a.

⁵⁰Applebaum, H., op. cit., p. 64.

⁵¹Aristotle., op. cit., 1291a24.

democracy in the sense of Aristotle is based on those who work because Aristotle identified the people (*demos*) by occupation.⁵² Hence he writes:

“So far as the people are concerned, one sort is engaged in farming; a second is engaged in the arts and crafts; a third is the marketing sort which is engaged in buying and selling; a fourth is the maritime sort which in turn is partly naval, partly mercantile, partly employed on ferries and partly engaged in fisheries... A fifth sort is composed of unskilled labourers and persons whose means are too small to enable them to enjoy any leisure; a sixth consists of those who are not of free birth by two citizen parents; and there may also be other sorts of a similar character”⁵³.

Furthermore, that all democracies are based on rule by the majority, with variations based on whether or not there are property qualifications for office, whether laws are to govern behaviour or decrees by the majority are to govern, and whether every person is eligible for office or there are restrictions on eligibility for office. Oligarchies are based on the holding of office being restricted to those with a property qualification high enough to exclude the majority or where office is based on heredity and privilege.⁵⁴ It is significant that among the notables who rule in the oligarchic form of government as referred to by Aristotle are rulers whose actions are based on work as in the democracy, but on “wealth, birth, merit, culture and other qualities of the same order”⁵⁵.

Unlike Plato, Aristotle accepted the idea that an individual could fulfil several functions in the state such as working in the field and serving in the army. “It often falls to the same persons both to serve in the army and to till the fields”⁵⁶.

Aristotle saw the best type of democracy to be the one based on farmers out of various forms of democracy.

“Such people, not having any great amount of property, are busily occupied; and they have thus no time for attending the assembly. Not possessing the necessities of life, they stick to

⁵²Applebaum, H., op. cit., p. 64.

⁵³Aristotle., op. cit., 1291a21.

⁵⁴ ibid. 1293a41-1292b12.

⁵⁵ ibid. 1291a22.

⁵⁶Ibid. 1291a15.

their work and do not covet what does not belong to them; indeed they find more pleasure in work than they do in politics and government”⁵⁷.

Pastoralists who keep herds and flocks were considered to be the second-best populace in a democracy, according to Aristotle:

“Many of their characteristics are similar to those of farmers; but with their robust physique and their capacity for camping out in the open, they are specially trained and hardened into a good condition for war”⁵⁸.

Aristotle does not consider the other occupations as worthy beyond the farmers and pastoralists.

“Next best to an agricultural and in many respects similar are a pastoral people who live by their flocks; they are the best trained of any for war, robust in body and able to camp out. The people of whom other democracies consist are far inferior to them, for their life is inferior; there is no room for moral excellence in any of their employments whether they are mechanics or traders or labourers”⁵⁹.

Aristotle then complains that the city occupations permit such people to revolve around the marketplace and to attend the assembly while the farmers and pastoralists are scattered in the countryside and have no time to attend meetings of the assembly.

“Besides, people of this class can readily come to the assembly because they are continually moving about in the city and in the agora; whereas husbandmen are scattered over the country and do not meet or equally feel the want of assembling together”⁶⁰. Aristotle then makes a rule that there shall be no meetings of the popular assembly which cannot be attended by all the inhabitants of the countryside⁶¹.

⁵⁷Ibid. 1318b1.

⁵⁸ Aristotle, op. cit., 1319a11.

⁵⁹ ibid. 1319a 12.

⁶⁰ ibid. 1319a 13.

⁶¹ ibid. 1319a 15.

1.3. 3. 1. 1. Aristotle on Slavery

In the first book of the *Politics* Aristotle notes that a state is made up of households and for him, “a complete household consists of slaves and freemen”⁶².

He suggests that the relationship between master and slave or servant is natural because all households require some source of labour, either animal or human, to be self-sustaining. He goes on to say: “indeed the use made of slaves and of tame animals is not very different; for both with their bodies minister to the needs of life”⁶³.

But the relationship between master and slave is only one of three basic relationships that are found in households; the other two are between husband and wife, and between parent and children.

He posits “the mutual relations of the members of a household admitting a threefold combination; namely those of master and servant, those of husband and wife, and those of father and son. These latter two relationships for him differ in kind from the relationship between master and slave. According to him, “nature has distinguished between the female and the slave”⁶⁴.

He then provides a number of characteristics of slaves. First of all he says that a slave is a piece of property which belongs to the household. “Property is a part of the household he writes, and therefore the art of acquiring property is a part of the art of managing the household; for no man can live well or indeed live at all unless he be provided with necessaries. And as in the arts which have a definite sphere the workers must have their own proper instruments for the accomplishment of their work, so it is in the management of a household. Now, instruments are various sorts; some are living others lifeless; in the rudder, the pilot of a ship has a lifeless, in the look-out man, a living instrument; for in the arts the servant is a kind of instrument”⁶⁵.

Then he becomes more specific as to the kind of property. In particular, a slave is an instrument or tool to be used by the household. However “...a possession he says is an

⁶² *ibid.* 1253b2.

⁶³ *ibid.* 1254b 24-5.

⁶⁴ *ibid.* 1252b1.

⁶⁵ *ibid.* 1253b4.

instrument for maintaining life. And so in the arrangement of the family, a slave is a property and the servant is himself an instrument, which takes precedence of all other instruments”.⁶⁶

He distinguished between the activity of a household slave which is action and the activity of a manual labourer which is production. He states that the activity of household life is higher than mere production of goods because the latter is subordinate to the former. Aristotle therefore implies that the activity of a household slave is somewhat more elevated than the activity of hired manual workers, for example leather workers who produce goods that are used to support the activity of the household.

He differentiated two types of slaves. “The words slavery and slave are used in two senses. There is a slave or slavery by law as well as by nature. The law of which I speak is a sort of convention – the law by which whatever is taken in war is supposed to belong to the victors”⁶⁷.

There is a greater element of force involved when it comes to slavery by law, and there is no common interest between a master and a conventional slave: all the benefits of the relationship accrue to the master. The attitude of Aristotle towards slavery by law is confusing. However, one can say that Aristotle recognized the legitimacy of slavery by nature.

1.3. 3. 1. 2. Slavery by Nature

Aristotle argues that for both the natural ruler and the subject to be preserved a union must exist. For he who can foresee with his mind is by nature intended to be lord and master and he who can work with his body is a subject and by nature a slave; hence master and slave have the same interest.⁶⁸

Who is then for him a natural slave? “...he who can be and therefore is another’s and he who participates in reason enough to apprehend but not to have, reason, is a slave by nature”⁶⁹. That means someone who “participates in rational principle enough to apprehend but not to have such a principle”.

⁶⁶ *ibid.* 1253b34.

⁶⁷ Aristotle, *op. cit.*, 1255a4-7.

⁶⁸ *ibid.* 1252a 32-5.

⁶⁹ *ibid.* 1254b21-22.

This lack of sufficient reason is something congenital: “From the hour of their birth, some are marked out for subjection others for rule”⁷⁰.

Aristotle then summarizes his position with the following comment: “It is clear then that some men are by nature free and others slaves and that for the latter slavery is both expedient and right”⁷¹.

Aristotle and his followers somehow point to barbarians or foreigners as potential sources for natural slaves because of their inferiority. As he was describing the farmer or husbandmen class of people he says: “The very best thing of all would be that the husbandmen should be slaves taken from among men who are not all of the same race.... The next best thing would be that they should be perioeci of foreign race and of a like inferior nature; some of them should be the slaves of individuals and employed on the private estates of men of property, the remainder should be the property of the state and employed on the common land”⁷². Aristotle therefore implies that foreigners are inferior to Greeks. Earlier in the *Politics* he notes: “Hellenes do not like to call Hellenes slaves, but confine the term to barbarians”⁷³

What sort of qualities has a natural slave? Aristotle admits the difficulty involved in answering the question. He states, however, that both free men and slaves “must have a share of virtue but varying according to their various natures”⁷⁴. He goes on to say that “although the parts of the soul are present in [the free man and the slave], they are present in different degrees”⁷⁵. He concludes by stating: “We determined that a slave is useful for the wants of life and therefore he will obviously require only so much virtue as will prevent him from failing in his duty through cowardice or lack of self-control”⁷⁶. Therefore slaves must have some virtues, and it is the responsibility of the master to help the slave acquire his small amount of virtue. He writes:

“It is manifest then that the master ought to be the source of such excellence in the slave and not a mere possessor of the art of mastership which trains the slave in his duties. Wherefore

⁷⁰ *ibid.* 1254a23.

⁷¹ *ibid.* 1255a2-3.

⁷² Aristotle, 1330a25-35.

⁷³ *ibid.* 1255a29.

⁷⁴ *ibid.* 1260a4-5.

⁷⁵ *ibid.* 1260a11.

⁷⁶ *ibid.* 1260a34-6.

they are mistaken who forbid us to converse with slaves and say that we should employ command only, for slaves stand even more in need of admonition than children.”⁷⁷

What disturbed Aristotle is that slaves had such a strong voice in the courts, assembly and other city-states posts and that they were paid for their services. Aristotle believed that there were a number of forms of servile labour, besides that of slavery, and these were “men who live by the work of their hands; and the menial craftsman, or mechanic, belongs to this class. This is the reason why in some states the working classes were once upon a time excluded from office, in the days before the institution of the extreme form of democracy”⁷⁸ He went further to say that the qualities for exercising political rule were absent in those who worked with their hands⁷⁹.

Aristotle concluded that states will very likely contain a large number of slaves, resident aliens and foreigners⁸⁰. And these three noncitizen categories performed work in the trades and commerce. They lived in the urban area and in the port of Piraeus. In Athens, metics especially were employed in the navy as rowers. The number of rowers required in the large navy was such that it could not be met solely by the citizen body because they were also engaged in farming, the trades and other types of work.⁸¹

Aristotle considered the mechanical art to have a degrading effect on body and mind, preventing them from attaining the qualities for good citizens and men qualified to govern the city-state. Why? He maintains that the mechanical habit leads to the perfection of technical skill and no more⁸². He then compares it to playing music stating that those who prepare for competitions can achieve only mechanical or technical perfection which has nothing to do

⁷⁷ *ibid.* 1260B4-7.

Herbert Applebaum, commenting on Aristotle’s views on slavery, points out that there is the mistaken impression for Aristotle that the existence of slavery released citizens from working so they could participate in the Athenian government. Nothing could be further from the truth. Aristotle clearly identifies citizens as farmers, artisans, merchants, seamen, and unskilled labourers. Slavery did exist, but most of the work was done by citizens. Slaves assisted in the work. They did not predominate, except perhaps on large landed estates or in large workshops, of which there were few. The majority of Athenian citizens worked. (Applebaum, H., *op. cit.*, p. 66).

⁷⁸ Aristotle, *op. cit.*, 1277a12-1277b.

⁷⁹ *ibid.* 1277b16.

⁸⁰ *ibid.* 1326a6.

⁸¹ Applebaum, H., *op. cit.*, p. 66.

⁸² Aristotle, *op. cit.*, 1341b13.

with the mind. Hence, he treated music as not a thing of the mind but rather something to merely serve a pleasure – and vulgar pleasure at that. To perfect a technique is to be stricken with a mechanical bent of mind.⁸³

Aristotle's view of bodily training casts more light on his view of work. He remarks that gymnastic exercise promotes health and military prowess⁸⁴. However, in states where this is overdone, it hinders the development and growth of the frame. Aristotle approves gentle exercise which develops fine bodies to match fine souls. He sees workers as receiving no bodily training. The frame of the artisan becomes cramped and warped by the monotonous movements of his trade. So, too, the farm worker is left hard and stiff-jointed. Neither will have the supple limbs required for fighting as an art. All studies, all exercises and all activities, "should be regarded as ends in themselves while studies pursued with a view to an occupation should be regarded merely as means and matters of necessity"⁸⁵. He believes that no person can be truly free if he is under the constraint of "necessity"

Just like Plato, Aristotle did not believe that working people even farmers could be trained to rule the state nor could they be truly good citizens if they were required to work. Hence he constructed a model society based on servile labour of one kind or another which could release all citizens from work so that they might devote themselves to politics, philosophy, contemplation and the military.

Herbert Applebaum noted that: "It is ironic that Plato and Aristotle who both believed that the democratic city-state was the best form of government should have devised models that so much resembled the oligarchy of Sparta. Inevitably, it was a question of who should do the work of the society and all such models failed to cope with the issue of work, no matter how ingenious and brilliant were the philosophers who struggled with the question of forms of Government"⁸⁶

⁸³Applebaum, H., op. cit., p. 66.

⁸⁴Aristotle, op. cit., 1338a7.

⁸⁵Aristotle, op. cit., 1338a6.

⁸⁶Applebaum, H., op. cit., p. 67.

1.3. 4. Hellenistic Greece

Two main philosophical trends, Stoicism and Epicureanism, distinguished this period. Stoics maintained a universe of rational structures subject to rational explanation. For them, cosmic events and human actions were part of the same order. Wisdom was seen as a step beyond rationality, being harmony between actions and events. Work, just like all other aspects of the universe, was part of the order of things.

The importance and contribution of this thought to the work-world is that `` through their teaching, work is moralized ... an ethics of work and workmanship arises``⁸⁷

Stoicism reshaped attitudes toward manual work, postulating the notion of “calling”, a concept that was later developed by Christian thinkers into the idea that everyone even the lowliest person had a mission in life to fulfil.⁸⁸

1.3. 5. The Romans

Cicero, a renowned statesman and thinker during the late Roman Republic and a representative of the ruling elite, considered as "vulgar and undesirable" all hired workmen and manual labourers, whose very wage was a mark of their slavery. Thus he writes:

“ Now in regard to trades and other means of livelihood, which one are to be considered becoming to a gentleman and which ones are vulgar, we have been taught, in general, as follows. First, those means of livelihood are rejected as undesirable which incur people's ill-will, as those tax-gatherers and usurers. Unbecoming to a gentleman, too, and vulgar are the means of livelihood of all hired workmen whom we pay for mere manual labour, not for artistic skill; for in their case the wage they receive is a pledge of their slavery. Vulgar we must consider those also who buy from wholesale merchants to retail immediately; for they would get not profits without a great deal of downright lying; and verily, there is no action that is meaner than misrepresentation. And all mechanics are engaged in vulgar trades; for no

⁸⁷Edelstein, L., *The Meaning of Stoicism*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA., 1966, p.76.

⁸⁸ Gamst, F.C, *The Meaning of Work*. op. cit. p. 50.

workshop can have anything liberal about it. Least respectable of all are those trades which cater for sensual pleasures: “Fishmongers, butchers, cooks, poultriers and fishermen,”....

But the professions in which either a higher degree of intelligence is required or from which no small benefit to society is derived – medicine and architecture, for example, and teaching – these are proper for those whose position they become. Trade, if it is on small scale, is to be considered vulgar but if wholesale and on a large scale, importing large quantities from all parts of the world and distributing to many without misrepresentation, it is not to be greatly disparaged. Nay, it even seems to deserve the highest respect, if those who are engaged in it, satiated, or rather, I should say, satisfied with the fortune they have made, make their way from the port to a country estate, as they have often made it from the sea into port. But of all the occupations by which gain is secured none is better than agriculture none more profitable none more delightful none more becoming to a freeman”.⁸⁹

In the ancient world, an important distinction was made between the man who worked for himself and the man who worked for others and only the man who worked for himself was considered to have social prestige.

Rome put its slave system in place during the late Roman Republic. Writers on agriculture assumed an agricultural system based on large estates, run for profit and manned by slave men and women. The Roman bureaucracy increasingly used slaves, as in the case of the water system, which was maintained by a work force of 700 slaves.⁹⁰ Work in the mines was mostly done by slaves and condemned criminals. Both small and large households employed slaves, with the large aristocratic households having slave specialists ministering to the needs and wants of the wealthy.⁹¹

An important significant aspect of Roman society was the existence of collegia, clubs made up of people sharing the same craft. They provided benefits for members. Collegia provided an outlet where working people could mingle with peers. They gave commoners a sense of importance. They were important politically, as Roman statesman sought to mobilize their

⁸⁹ Cicero, *De Officiis*. Loeb Library Edition, translated by Walter Miller. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1938. Book 1: pp 42, 150 – 151.

⁹⁰ Frontinus, *Strategems and Aqueducts*. Loeb Library: William Heinemann, Ltd. 1925. II. 116.

⁹¹ Petronius, *Satyricon*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 1987.

vote during elections.⁹² And at one juncture in Rome's history they appeared so powerful and dangerous, that Augustus outlawed them.

Roman Empire extolled agricultural work, particularly the small, working farmer. Cato, writing *On Agriculture* in the second century B.C., said: "It is from the farming class that the bravest men and the sturdiest soldiers come, their calling is most highly respected, their livelihood is most assured and is looked on with the least hostility, and those who are engaged in that pursuit are least inclined to be disaffected".⁹³

The Roman elite never held in high esteem handicraft and artisan work which were considered as manual work. During the Empire, however, artisans began to have higher status as their importance grew in proportion to the decline of slave labour. Free men found it profitable to undertake craft work. Masses of free men were employed in public works project. Still the prejudice against manual labour did not disappear.⁹⁴

Roman opinion was articulated by Seneca who said that "wisdom does not teach our fingers but our minds."⁹⁵

During the Roman period, women shared in their husband's work, particularly in the finer crafts, luxury trades, perfumery and tailored clothing. The mother of Emperor Marcus Aurelius was prominent in the brick manufacturing business. Women worked in service occupations like nursing and midwifery, where there were opportunities to achieve some distinction. The social role of women was predominant in the home and in the upbringing of children. The Roman attitude toward mothers was generally positive, intense and emotional.⁹⁶

⁹² Carcopino, J., *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 1968. p 178.

⁹³ Cato, M. P., *On Agriculture*. Leob Library Edition, translated by William D. Hooper, revised by Harrison Boyd. London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1936. 1: 4.

⁹⁴ Brunt, P. A., *Free Labour and Public Works at Rome*. *Journal of Roman Studies*, vol. 70, 1980. p. 88.

⁹⁵ Guinagh, K. & Dorjahn, A.P., *Latin Translation*. Longmans, Green, New York, 1942, p. 498.

⁹⁶ Gamst, F. C., *op. cit.* p. 51.

1.3. 6. The Hebrews Attitude to Work

Just like the Greeks, the Hebrews thought of work as painful drudgery. They felt that they knew why our race is obliged to work. It was because it is its duty to expiate the original sin committed by its forefathers in the earthly Paradise. For them, as for the Greeks, work is a hard necessity. But it is no longer a blind tragic necessity. "It is accepted as a penalty, as an expiation, through which man may atone for the sin of his ancestors and re-conquer his own lost spiritual dignity. "97 The Hebrews never saw labourer's intent on their work in the fields without greeting and blessing them. But none the less work is a heavy yoke, hard to bear, and Ecclesiastes sighs, ``the labour of man does not satisfy the soul``.98

For the Hebrew thinker, man's task is to lead the world, troubled and disturbed by man's abuse of his liberty, back to the cosmic unity and harmony which reigned when man was first brought into being by divine activity. For them, the world is not merely something that exists but something that ought to exist, not a reality already completed, a field for passive contemplation. It is an ideal to be realized by man's efforts. It is the gradual and continuous process of restoration of the primal harmony destroyed by original sin, a process that will end in the reunion of justice and happiness, with the kingdom of God upon earth.

Rabbinical literature holds steadily to the view that the Kingdom of God will emerge slowly from present reality, thanks to the good will and work of man in brotherly relations with his fellow man. In the thought of the rabbis, work, not only intellectual but manual, reacquires dignity and value. "Love Work" is the maxim of Semea. To work is to cooperate with God in the great purpose of the world's salvation.

The school of Rabbi Ishmael prescribes that to the labour of the Law - contemplation should be added the work of society – industry. The Pharisees maintain that the teaching of the Law is not enough. They exalt human manual labour, consider it preferable to idle contemplation and necessary to health and they blame the father who does not teach his son an honest occupation. "Blessed is the man who bows himself like an ox under the yoke and like an ass to the burden". "He who lives by his labour is superior to the God-fearing man." 99 Arthur

97Tilgher, A., „Work Through The Ages“, Nosow, Sigmund & Form, William H (ed.), Man, Work and Society: A reader in the Sociology of occupations. Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1962. p.13.

98 ibid.

99 ibid.

Geoghegan characterizes the ancient Hebrew attitude towards work: “Surely, if the Most High is described as the Divine Labourer, it cannot be dishonourable for a man to work.”¹⁰⁰ Mosaic law showed solicitude for the man who worked for wages, something neither the Greeks nor the Romans ever did (Deuteronomy, 24.14). The Old Testament depicts many of the Hebrew leaders performing work; Gideon in the wine press,¹⁰¹ Saul working in the fields,¹⁰² David keeping sheep,¹⁰³ and Elisha ploughing.¹⁰⁴ Most of the Rabbinical teachers were workingmen; masons, woodcutters, charcoal makers, sandal makers, bakers and grave diggers.

He summarizes the Hebrew attitude toward Agriculture with the following words: “The land which they worked was sacred. The agricultural details which they executed were prescribed by the Lord God Himself. Farm work was consequently, a service performed for God. It was specifically ordained by Him and, in turn, was consecrated to Him. The produce itself was the gift of God. It was in the fruit of his labours that the pious husbandman was blessed by the Most High. Accordingly, from the time of their settlement in the Promised Land the Hebrews considered themselves a farming-folk and God the Patron of Agriculture”¹⁰⁵

Idleness is for the Hebrews the greatest harm and there was no occupation so unimportant that a man may not be proud of it. Geoghegan quoting Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah writes: “Great is work for every craftsman walks out with the implements of his calling and is proud of them. Thus the weaver walks out with a shuttle in his ear. The dyer walks out with wool in his ear. The scribe walks out with his pen behind his ear. All are proud of their craft. God speaks of his work, how much more should man”¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰⁰ Gamst, F. C., op. cit. p. 51.

¹⁰¹ Judges 6:11.

¹⁰² 1 Samuel 11:5.

¹⁰³ 1 Samuel 16:11.

¹⁰⁴ 1 Kings 19:19

¹⁰⁵ Geoghegan, A. T, *The Attitude Towards Labour in Early Christian and Ancient Culture*. Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C. 1945, p.64.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.* p.83.

1.3. 7. The Christian Attitude to Work

The New Testament represents this period, there we see Christ's attitude toward work. He was born into the home of an artisan and was one himself, a carpenter. His companions were workers. And in his preaching, he drew material from the world of work. Early Christian thinkers had a positive attitude toward work particularly St. Paul and St. Augustine. Paul was a tentmaker, practiced his trade and used the expression, " my fellow workers." One of his most often cited sayings was, " If anyone does not work, let him not eat." St Augustine wrote an important treatise on the subject of work, *De Opere Monachorum*, in which he extolled work as a means of moral perfection. In his "City of God", Augustine brought out one of the great tributes to human work, referring to the genius of man and his astonishing arts. Augustine saw work partly as a necessity for sustenance, and partly as the result of exuberant invention and the remarkable vigour of the human mind.

The teachings of St. Paul and St. Augustine reinforced the respect for work. Both saw work as providing independence for the individual, as offering a pathway to humility, and as a means of offering charity to others. In the lay world, St. Augustine maintained, " rich people should prize and administer wealth as a trust from God. They may use it to pay for personal needs, to provide for their heirs, and for other charges fitting to their class; all else belongs to the poor, to charity." ¹⁰⁷ Many wealthy Christians followed their preaching, gave up their wealth, and

¹⁰⁷Tilgher, A., op. cit., p. 14.

Mosaic Law showed solicitude for the man who worked for wages, something neither the Greeks nor the Romans ever did. Achilles said the worst fate for any man was to be a man for hire, and Cicero stated that a man for hire was enslaved. But, in the Old Testament, in Deuteronomy, there is the following idea: " You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brethren or one of the sojourners who are in your land within your towns; you shall give him his hire on the day he earns it, before the sun goes down; lest he cry against you to the Lord, and it be sin in you".(Deut. 24:14)

Some rabbis argued that the study of the Torah was superior to physical work and that it was impossible to attain wisdom and be engaged in physical work. An example of this attitude comes from Ecclesiasticus, a Book of Wisdom, based on the teaching of Jesus, the son of Sirach. It may reflect the Greek influence in arguing that leisure is required for learning. " The wisdom of the scribe cometh by opportunity of leisure; and he that hath little business shall become wise" (Ecclesiasticus 38:24- 39: 11, cited from (Barker, E., *From Alexander to Constantine, Passages, and Documents Illustrating the History of Social and political Ideas, 336 B.C – AD. 337*, translated by Ernest Barker. New York: University Press of America, 1956. p. 140 – 141)

distributed their goods to the needy. Christian communities of the third century were social welfare communities, providing work for the unemployed and supporting the unemployable. Work and charity were the two important messages of the early Christian Church, along with the word of God and the teachings of Christ.

1.3. 8. The Early Catholicism and Attitude to Work

The early Catholicism did something to dignify work, added a new value, a spiritual dignity beyond that already granted by the conceptions of Israel. The aristocratic Greek scorn of the labouring classes dwindled. From the monasteries, above all from those of the Benedictines, where the monks alternated work with prayer, where sons of nobles and princes bent their delicate bodies to humble labour, the cult of work spread into lay society. "Work, do not despair!" the great words of St. Benedict ring down the centuries. Yet work is never exalted as anything of value in itself, but only as an instrument of purification, of charity and of expiation. The doctrines of that period recognize no value in work itself; moreover the work most honoured by Catholicism at that time is religious and intellectual (reading, copying manuscripts, etc.). Manual work, limited solely to what is necessary for the monastery, is unloaded on the shoulders of the lay brothers to whom spiritual work is forbidden, thus making a radical distinction between spiritual and material labour. Furthermore, work which St. Augustine and St. Benedict dignify by their notice is that done in a religious order. The work done by outsiders in the great world is regarded with indulgent charity but is in no way honoured. And high above even intellectual monastery work, the fathers placed pure contemplation, passive meditation on divine matters.¹⁰⁸ The Benedictine monastery as Frederick C. Gamst puts it "provided the basis for the later development of the positive

Some rabbis advocated a happy medium. Rabbi Jashua b. Hananiah said, "If a man learns two paragraphs of Law in the morning and two in the evening, and is busy at his work all the day, they reckon it to him as if he had fulfilled the whole law". Judah the Prince said, "Get yourself a handicraft as well as the Torah" (Geoghegan, A. T., op. Cit. p. 77-78)

The attitude toward Labour was not uniform, with the upper classes scorning work with the hands. Even some rabbis disdained the workingman, considering him to be ignorant.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p.15.

attitude toward work by placing in the social fabric an institution that accepted work as part of a person's moral commitment." ¹⁰⁹

1.3. 9. Attitude to Work in the Middle Ages

The ninth and tenth centuries in northern Europe witnessed the introduction of a number of new inventions and techniques. The use of horses in agriculture helped a lot. The Church's position was that spiritual life was enhanced by work on three counts: first, work helped to protect against the dangers of idleness; second, work created opportunities for both charity and communal self-sufficiency; third, work was the means through which humans exercised their stewardship over nature. On a more profound level, man's work was viewed as being in the image of God's work, which was the work of creation. Any profession or trade that did not create was seen as inferior. The artisan who transformed materials into objects, performed creative work, but the merchant who created nothing was condemned.

Thinking of the Middle-Ages we think of guilds and the apprenticeship system for the learning of craft. It was indeed from this period that our romanticized concept of work stemmed, a concept based on the idea of the craftsperson working with his or her own tools and materials, controlling the work process, possessing technical knowledge and skill and selling the product. Craft-work was associated with this period. It was during this period that towns and cities arose after the disruptions of invaders from the east and north ceased. In the cities and towns people were free of feudal restrictions. A German expression, "the city makes you free, " shows the fact that in the cities, people were free to learn a craft and become independent. As Howell puts it, though not without controversy "that during the three centuries that closed the Middle Ages, men were in short supply and that women were impelled into the work world. The unlucky ones became prostitutes and street people. Luckier ones found work in textiles, domestic service, peddling, or in entering convents. The luckiest worked in their own craft, training as apprentices and becoming master crafts-persons in their own right." ¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹Applebaum, H., op. cit., p.52.

¹¹⁰ Howell, M.C., *Women, Production and Patriarchy in late Medieval Cities*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1988, pp. 193-197.

The Middle-Ages was based upon the interdependence between the three orders: priests (oratores), warriors/nobles (bellatores) and workers (laboratores). Even though workers were at the bottom of the social ladder, they did have a recognized place in the society. They had duties, but they also had rights, just as the other orders.

Ovit believes that medieval society aimed at, but never achieved, a social order based upon a morally centred place for the concept of work. This was reflected in the monastic moment, but it never spread to the rest of medieval society and culture.¹¹¹

1.3. 10. Attitude to Work in the Modern Period

1.3. 10. 1. Luther and Calvin

Protestantism is the moving force and the profound spiritual revolution which established work in the modern mind as the base and key of life, with Luther as the first voice.

For Luther, work was basis for charity and a defence against idleness. However, Luther broke with monastic thinking which he considered selfishness and an abdication of responsibility to the world at large. He saw work as the base of society and the basis for differing social classes. He believed everyone should work within the confines and according to the traditions of one's trade or profession into which one was born. Luther's doctrine of "calling" was his most important idea about the work ethic.¹¹²

For Luther as for medieval Catholicism, work is natural. It has both penal and educational character. From these premises, he draws a conclusion that all who can work, should work; that idleness, beggary, lending at interest are unnatural; that charity should be bestowed only on those who cannot work; that the monastic contemplative life is the result of egotism and lack of human affection on the part of monks, who evade in the cloister their duty to their neighbours in the world. The idea of work acquired in Luther's teachings a universal extension. Work, according to him, is the universal base of the society, the real cause of differing social classes. He had little sympathy with commerce, because he recognized no real

¹¹¹Ovit, G. Jr., *The Restoration of Perfection: Labour and Technology in Medieval Culture*. Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ., 1987, p. 204.

¹¹²Gamst, F. C., *op. cit.* p. 54.

work in it. The purpose of labour should be maintenance, not profit. Everyone should earn his living and no more, within the confines and according to the methods of the trade or profession to which he was born. To seek by means of work to pass from one class to another, to rise in the social hierarchy, is to go against God's laws. God assigns to everyone his place. He best serves God who stays where God puts him.

Luther held that work is a form of serving God, as long as it is legitimate, whatever it may be, with the limits of his own profession. There is just one best way to serve God he maintained, "to do most perfectly the work of one's profession.

With this idea, Luther swept away all distinction between religious piety and activity in the world, all question of superiority of one to the other. So long as work is done in the spirit of obedience to God and of love for one's neighbour, every variety of labour has equal spiritual dignity. Work is the service of God on earth. All professions are necessary to the common life of mankind. Hence, no one is more necessary than another to piety and blessedness.

It was with Luther that the German word meaning profession (Beruf) took on a religious colour which it was never to lose, and which from German passed into all the analogous words of Protestant countries. Profession and vocation or calling became synonymous and from his hands work came forth endowed with religious dignity.

Calvin on the other hand with predestination as its keystone builds his logical philosophy of life. God is absolute power, illimitable energy, infinitely beyond the grasp of our reason, our ideas of justice. An abyss yawns between man and God, between the finite and the infinite. God is all, man is nothing. Man lives only to glorify God, and if he fails in this his fate is everlasting death. Now God has judged it fitting for his glory that only a small part of mankind (and this chosen regardless of good deeds or merit) shall know everlasting life. All other men must be eternally damned....¹¹³

With Calvinism comes a new attitude toward labour. All men, even the rich, must work, because to work is the will of God. Their sweat and toil have value only as they help to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

¹¹³Tilgher, A., op. cit., p.18.

Calvin freed work from the hampering ideas of caste. In his hands, work became mobile, fluid, and man-made rather than God-given. Unlike Luther, Calvin encouraged trade, profits, and finance, considering them as on the same level as the earnings of workmen when based on diligence, industry, and hard work. Calvin believed that profit was a sign of God's blessing.¹¹⁴

All this sounds like the beginning of modern business. And so it is. Going through history, the first germ of capitalistic civilization could be unquestionably traced back to Calvin, in his doctrine of unflagging ardour to make the earth the mirror of divine majesty.

Work alone for him suffices, and to please God, work must not be casual, now this, now that, now prolonged for the whole day, tomorrow abandoned after an hour. Intermittent occasional work will not do. It must be methodical, disciplined, rational, uniform, and hence specialized work. To select a calling and follow it with all one's conscience is a religious duty. Calvin laid the foundation of the tremendous discipline of the modern factory founded on the division of labour, very different from the easy ways of the independent artisan. He maintained that it is one's duty to extract the greatest possible gain from work; not for the love of money, nor to satisfy a thirst for pleasure, but so that more blessing may fall upon the head of the next needy person. And for him success (which is proved by profit) is the certain indication that the chosen profession is pleasing to God and the greater the profit, the greater the certainty of serving God with one's work.¹¹⁵

Calvin just unlike Luther considered it no virtue to remain satisfied with the profession to which one is born. On the contrary, he said it is everyone's duty to seek out the profession which will bring to him and the society the greatest return. Even if that means abandoning an inherited trade or station in life, the change is not only permitted, it is ordered as a duty.¹¹⁶

Deny the world but live in the world, work in it, succeed in making yourself wealthy in order that the earth may reflect the majesty of God and of his saints! Such is the command of Calvin. And this command is traced to be the foundation of our modern age with its cult for work for the sake of work, of thrift, of wealth, with its abhorrence of rest and of pleasure.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ Gamst, F. C., op. cit. p. 55.

¹¹⁵ Tilgher, A., op. cit. p. 19.

¹¹⁶ *ibid.* Pp 18 – 19

¹¹⁷ *ibid.* p. 20.

1.3. 10. 2. Work as Presented by Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes' introduction to the *Leviathan*, ranked by some philosophers as one of the greatest philosophical works in English, gives us a clue to his philosophical position, which is materialist and humanist – humanist in the sense that he believed that the human world was created by the arts of man, and not God.¹¹⁸ It is also materialist because he sought to explain the world in terms of the mechanics of motion and quantitative mathematics and geometry. Hobbes states that, whereas God made the world of nature, the arts of man can imitate the nature made by God. Hobbes compares a Commonwealth with the organs and parts of the man's body as so many parts of a mechanical device, "such as was intended by the artificer"¹¹⁹.

While Hobbes did not discuss work as such, thinkers saw his philosophy as being much relevant to a study on work because the nature of man, as he saw him, was based on the arts of mankind, on a materialist approach to the natural world and on government as created by man just as if man were creating any other object by his work.¹²⁰ Hobbes saw government as an artificial man created by man, the artificer. It is the familiar image of God the workman, creating the natural world and man, the workman or artificer, creating his own government and man-made environment. Hobbes cited observation and knowledge of the world as based on "craft and science" rather than on magic and his object in writing *Leviathan* was to redirect man's goals towards seeing the world in a new way – a way that sounds, with its stress on science and empirical observation, to be very modern.

Thomas Hobbes had a different view of property, as well as rights, than did John Locke. Whereas Locke believed that one's property was inviolable and could not be taken from him without his consent, because his own labour was the basis of his property. Hobbes, on the other hand, believed that the sovereign – whether an assembly or one man – had the right to all the land in common, hence the commonwealth. The political sovereign has the obligation of protecting each individual, and no individual can take the property of another individual. But this does not apply to the sovereign, which has absolute power over the commonwealth. The modern concept of eminent domain – whereby the state can, with due compensation, appropriate property for the common good – is an example of this principle. This was an

¹¹⁸ Hobbes, T., *Leviathan*. Modern Library Edition. New York: Random House, 1939, p. 129.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*

¹²⁰ Applebaum, H., *op. cit.*, p.350.

important issue at the time in the struggle between Parliament and the monarchy. Charles II attempted to secure money through forced loans and arbitrary taxation, until the Parliament finally passed a law that the monarchy could not institute any taxation with the consent of Parliament.

According to Hobbes, all those who could not work because of physical disability were to be taken care of by the state. But all others should be forced to work. To eliminate the excuse of not being able to find employment, the government should develop the arts and mechanical trades – agriculture, navigation, and manufacturing – so that everyone could find some form of work. If there was a surplus of labour, they were to be sent to work in uninhabited lands, such as America¹²¹

He argues further that: “It is not enough, for a man to labour for the maintenance of his life, but also to fight (if need be), for the securing of his labour”¹²².

Commenting on the value of goods in a still undeveloped market society, Hobbes viewed labour as the principle element in the value of goods. “A man’s Labour also is a commodity exchangeable for benefit, as well as any other thing”¹²³.

Hobbes lived in a transitional period between the medieval world and the modern one and was a transitional figure. He was a conservative politically, yet he was advanced as a social thinker, basing his ideas of human society and nature on the concept of motion. He was also modern in his view of man as acquisitive, scientific, and rational. He recognized the older, aristocratic values of honour, yet he criticized the aristocracy for not being more industrious. He favoured work for all classes, yet he enjoyed the leisured life of a man devoted to intellectual pursuits.

With his view of human nature as constantly in motion he believed that no man could be at rest since his appetites and aversions would not allow this. Hobbes saw man as being a product of appetites – which impelled him toward certain goals which were deemed to be good because they satisfied appetites – along with aversions – which repelled him from things he conceived of as being evil. Power for Thomas Hobbes was not something sinister, but the means by which appetites were satisfied. Happiness therefore was not so much the

¹²¹Hobbes, T., op. cit., p. 334.

¹²² Ibid. P. 226.

¹²³ Ibid. P. 161.

satisfaction of appetites, as it was the success rate in finding the means to satisfy one's appetites.

Appetites, aversions, power, success, motion – all these sound very modern. Honour, status, lineage, chivalry, dignity, pride – all these sound very traditional. Hobbes combined both sets of values in his philosophy. Thus, it is not surprising to find some observers characterizing Hobbes's view of man as bourgeois, while others saw him as combining a modern scientific outlook with traditionalist moral wisdom.

1.3. 10. 3. Work as Presented by John Locke

John Locke's view of work was seen in the most important writings *Second Treatise on Government*, in which he sets forth his view that the labour of one's body and the work of one's hands is the foundation of property. This part of Locke's ideas is so significant, that it bears quoting at length, as taken from the translation by Peter Laslett, the great authority on Locke.¹²⁴

¹²⁴Applebaum, H., *op. cit.*, p. 355.

Note: Macpherson, representing those who see Hobbes philosophy as emphasizing attributes close to modern forms, points out that Hobbes's political theory is derived from his analysis of human nature. (Macpherson, C. B., *Hobbes's Bourgeois Man*. In *Hobbes Studies*, edited by K. C. Brown. Oxford, England: basil Blackwell, 1965, P. 170)

One of Hobbes's basic postulates of human nature is that men seek material gain in a competitive manner. The argument is that men are hostile to each other because they have appetites for things which they cannot enjoy in common. (Hobbes, T., *op. cit.*, p. 81).

Macpherson points to Hobbes's notion of liberty, as contained in Chapter 21 of *Leviathan*, where Hobbes states: "The liberty of a subject... is the liberty to buy, and sell, and otherwise contract with one another; to choose their own abode, their own diet, their own trade of life, and institute their children as they themselves think fit; and the like". (Hobbes, T., *op. cit.*, p. 197 – 198).

This passage according to him sounds quite modern, particularly the point about the liberty to contract with one another and the liberty to choose one's own trade. Elsewhere in *Leviathan*, Hobbes, he pointed out, did say that people should be forced to work, but he was referring to able-bodied men who were idle for one reason or another. However, he is saying that people should be free to choose their own trades and should be free to buy and sell from one another, which is, according to Macpherson, a very "bourgeois" outlook Macpherson, C. B., *op. cit.*, p. 165 – 176).

From this view of work, freedom to choose one's trade is a release from the obligations of feudal society and is the precondition for a market society, along with the liberty to make contracts and to buy and sell. We see here, in nascent form, the beginning of the modern era, just as England of the seventeenth century was beginning to

exhibit signs of growing freedoms necessary for a bourgeois society along with the growth and expansion of science, technology, and exploration – all of which became important and original sources for the accumulation of money capital for investment in new manufacturing, land, and the improvement of agriculture.

Macpherson recognizes that England had not reached the stage of a self-regulating market society during Hobbes's lifetime. (Macpherson, C. B., op. cit., p. 180). Still Hobbes did not view men as being freed from the relations of status and reciprocal obligations which was the mark of medieval society. What Hobbes did not yet see was the separation from and the worker's lack of freedom in his means for working. Hobbes lived in a period when most people worked on the land, farming their plots, either as yeoman owners or as tenants. Those who lived in the cities worked in small shops, either as master craftsmen or as journeymen and apprentices. Macpherson concludes that "Hobbes understood the essential nature of bourgeois society more thoroughly than most of his contemporaries and many of his successors." (Macpherson, C. B., op. cit., p. 182). If this is true, then we must view the philosophy of Hobbes as an important precursor to the study of the modern world and its preconditions for work, both politically and philosophically. (Applebaum, H., op. cit., p. 353).

Thomas Keith representing those who emphasized the traditional aspects of Hobbes moral philosophy states: "For Arendt, Hobbes was the only great philosopher to whom the bourgeoisie can rightly and exclusively lay claim" (Arendt, H., *The Human Condition*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. 1958, p. 139). Most other modern commentators who have considered the problem have echoed this verdict. It is unlikely that so many authorities can have been completely mistaken in this interpretation. (Thomas, K. *The Social origin of Hobbes's Political Thought*. In *Hobbes Studies*, edited by Keith Brown. Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell, 1965, p.186).

Then after making this point, Thomas Keith goes on to present commentary and citations from Hobbes's writings which he says, "may help to prevent future commentators from automatically characterizing Hobbes's thought as bourgeois and thereby oversimplifying what is a highly complex position". (ibid. p. 187).

Note: Thomas Keith points out that Hobbes' writings convey that he took for granted a relatively advanced economy, where men may sell their labour, (Hobbes, T., op. cit., p. 233) where the market is a stimulus to the increase of manufactured products, (ibid. p. 338) and where all things obey money. (Thomas, K., op. cit., p. 187) Titles of honour are available to moneyed men and riches are a sign of power. Commenting that, in any underdeveloped society, labour is the basic factor of production, Thomas quotes Hobbes from the *Leviathan*: "...plenty dependeth, next to God's favour, merely on the labour and industry of men." (Hobbes, T., op.cit., P. 232). Regarding riches, they come from thrift, not from capital investment, the role of which Hobbes does not mention. Poverty is seen by Hobbes as resulting from folly, sloth, or luxury. The ultimate goal seems to be represented by the Dutch, who grew rich as a trading nation. Thomas concludes that "although Hobbes considered his society to be progressing, it belongs firmly to the preindustrial era" (ibid. p. 188). Thomas concludes that Hobbes had a decidedly old-fashioned look, with his emphasis on knowledge, honour, nobility, reputation, friend, and even natural beauty. Thomas argues that it was for honour and dignity that Hobbes saw men striving, rather than for poverty. (ibid. p. 190) Thomas concludes:

A preliminary glance at the society reflected in Hobbes's writing thus suggests that it differs in several important respects from the picture usually presented by his interpreters. In particular, the economy is somewhat less advanced than is usually suggested; the social hierarchy, although largely contractual, still retains marked traces of patriarchalism; and the concern for reputation and honour in the upper reaches of society is more marked than any desire for riches. Nevertheless, the growth of capitalism is reflected in the emancipation of individuals from many of the old customary bonds and in the obvious presence of acquisitive appetites. In fact, in Hobbes's world elements of old and new in social organization are to be encountered side by side. It is only to be expected that his own social sympathies should reveal a similar transitional character. (Thomas, K., op. cit., p. 191).

The purpose of this brief review of Hobbes was not because he was particularly interested in the subject of work, as John Locke was, but to present his philosophy as reflecting the changing and transitional nature of society, which would lead to new outlooks on work and the philosophical perspective on work. There is also Hobbes's

“Though the Earth and all inferior Creatures be common to all men, yet every Man has a Property in his own Person. This no Body has any Right to but himself. The Labour of his Body, and the work of his Hands, we may say are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the State that nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his Labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his Property. It being by him removed from the common state Nature placed it in, it hath by this labour something annexed to it, that excludes the common right of other men. For this Labour being the unquestionable Property of the labourer, no Man but he can have a right to what that is once joined to, at least where there is enough, and as good left in common for others.

He that is nourished by the Acorns he pickt up under an Oak, or the Apples he gathered from the Trees in the wood, he certainly appropriated them to himself, No Body can deny but the nourishment is his. I ask then, when did they begin to be his? When he digested? Or when he eats? Or when he boiled? Or when he brought them Home? Or when he picks them up? And ‘tis plain, if the first gathering made them not his, nothing else could. That labour put a distinction between them and common. That added something to them more than Nature, the common Mother of all, had done; and so they became his private right. And will anyone say he had no right to those Acorns or Apples he thus appropriated, because he had not the consent of all Mankind to make them his? Was it a Robbery thus to assume to himself what belonged to all in common? If such a consent as that was necessary, Man has starved, notwithstanding the Plenty God had given him. We see in Commons, which remain so by Compact, that ‘tis the taking any part of what is common, and removing it out of the state

rationalistic and scientific outlook, concepts that would have a profound effect on the way in which work was viewed in the subsequent eighteenth century or the Enlightenment in France. It would be fitting to conclude with Gary Herbert’s evaluation of Hobbes Philosophy.

Hobbes is resituated in philosophical history at the inception of a tradition that runs through Leibniz and Hegel. He remains a political realist for whom liberty is a product of order more than chaos and a philosophical materialist for whom matter vanishes into motion, and motion into the dynamics of reciprocal individuation. The gap that ordinarily isolates bodies from the perception of bodies and, hence, physics from psychology, has disappeared. He has given us a philosophy of man that denies the radical separation of reason and desire, Just as its collapses the radical difference of sense and understanding. His account of the acquisition of knowledge makes it inseparable from man’s creative acquisition of mastery over nature. Hobbes’s invocation to man is that he “imitate the creation”, that is, invest himself in the “indefatigable generation of knowledge” (Herbert, G. B., Thomas Hobbes: The Unity of Scientific and Moral Wisdom. Vancouver, Canada: University of British Columbia press, 1989, p. 183).

Nature leaves it in, which begins the property; without which the Common is of no use. And the taking of this or that part does not depend on the express consent of all the Commoners. Thus the grass my Horse has bit; the Turfs my servant has cut; and the Ore I have digg'd in any place where I have a right to them in common with others, become my property, without the assignation of consent of any body. The labour that was mine, removing them out of that common state they were in, hath fixed my Property in them”¹²⁵

Herbert Applebaum commenting on this passage pointed out the need for one to realize the concept of property as was presented by Locke which is much broader than the one commonly in use in the modern period. One's own body, one's own labour, and the products one consumes are conceived of as property. Today, we take property to mean an external product or object or part of nature, such as land, buildings homes, furniture, and personal effects such as clothing and jewelry. There is also business property – land, machines, raw materials, finished product inventory, and equipment for transportation and communication. These are concrete things, apart from one's own body or labour. But for Locke, property begins with one's labour, which is the element that enables one to take materials out of the state of nature and appropriate it to oneself.¹²⁶

He saw this as an important concept of Locke, since he considered the basis of government to be a social contract between the people and the government, with the government charged to protect one's life, limb, liberties, and property. Property and the need to protect it was the basis for government, and labour was the basis of property. Thus property existed before government, and government's role was to protect property. Locke also asserted that, when government can no longer perform its function of protecting life and property, then the people have the right of revolution and can replace the government.

According to Peter Laslett who wrote an introduction to Locke's treatises, Locke's definition of property and that of Richard Baxter are saying the same thing when compared. For Baxter, “Property is naturally antecedent to Government, which doth not Give it, but regulate it to the Common good; Everyman is born with a property in his own members, and nature giveth him a property in his children, and his food and other just acquisitions of his industry. Therefore no Ruler can justly deprive men of their property, unless it be by some law of God (as in

¹²⁵ Locke, J., *Two Treatises of Government*. UK: Cambridge University Press, Edited with an Introduction by Peter Laslett 1988. p. 287 – 289.

¹²⁶ Applebaum, H., *op. cit.*, p. 356.

execution of injustice on such as forfeit it) or by their own consent by themselves or their Delegates or Progenitors; and Men's lives and liberties are the chief parts of their property. That is the peoples just reserved Property, and Liberty, which neither God taketh from them, by the power which his own laws give the Ruler, nor is given away by their own foresaid consent"¹²⁷.

For Locke, anyone can appropriate land, as long as there is enough for others. But it is against the law of nature for one to appropriate nature's products and then let them spoil, and by doing so deprive others of their benefits. He postulates a condition in the past when there was plenty of land, and a man could take whatever land he could use for cultivation to support himself and his family. Among many primitive people, although they consider the land as belonging to the whole tribe or clan, they do not allocate land for use by families to support themselves. With time, such land practically becomes their property, passing from one generation to another although, legally, it still belongs to the tribe or clan as a whole. Writing at the end of the seventeenth century, Locke points to America as a place of surplus of land and where one may improve it with one's labour and thereby take it as his property. To some extent this did take place, especially during the movement to the West¹²⁸.

Locke's labour theory of value was contained in the following passage:

"Nor is it so strange, as perhaps before consideration it may appear that the Property of labour should be able to over-balance the Community of Land. For 'tis Labour indeed that puts the difference of value on everything; and let any consider what the difference is between an Acre of Land planted with Tobacco, or sugar, sown with Wheat or Barley; and an Acre of the same Land lying in common, without any husbandry upon it, and he will find, that the improvement of labour makes the far greater part of the value. I think it will be but a very modest Computation to say, that of the Products of the Earth useful to the life of man, 9/10 are the effects of labour. Nay, if we will rightly estimate things as they come to our use and cast up the several Expences about them, what in them is purely owing to Nature, and what to labour, we shall find, that in most of them 99/100 are wholly to be put on the account of labour"¹²⁹.

¹²⁷ Locke, J., op. cit., p. 287 footnote 27.

¹²⁸ Applebaum, H., op. cit., p. 357.

¹²⁹ Locke, J., op. cit., p. 296.

Laslett was convinced that what led Locke to this concept of property was part of his seeking a solution to the problem of how the original state of communism led to private property.¹³⁰ Locke's solution was that every man has a property in his own person; that his work and his hands belong to him, and this principle can also be applied to nature. When one's work is mixed with nature, then one has the right to make the outcome his property. According to Laslett, this formulation that "tis Labour indeed that puts the difference of value on everything" is perhaps the most influential statement he ever made.¹³¹

Property so acquired was not unlimited, for it was confined originally to what a man and his family could use and waste. It also extended to the land as well as the fruits on it. However, it should not be used to get people to submit to another's will. The whole argument was intended to show that individual property did not arise from the common consent of all mankind, but that property was that "which Labour and Industry began."¹³²

Governments are set up to protect property according to Locke, as well as the lives and liberties of its subjects. Property for Locke is not defined as material possessions. It is instead more general, being "Lives, Liberties and Estates, which I call by the general name Property."¹³³ Richard Baxter, the Puritan thinker, also thought that "men's lives and liberties are the chief part of their property."¹³⁴ Supporting Locke, Baxter believed that the origin of property lay in a man's work or industry.

Property for Locke seemed to symbolize rights in their concrete form, and to provide tangible aspects of a person's powers. A person could conceive of property as distinguishable from himself, although a part of himself. If such attributes as one's life and liberty could be embodied in something concrete – such as property – then one would have something with which to negotiate. People cannot alienate any part of their personalities, but they can alienate that with which they have chosen to mix their own selves – namely, the work of their hands and minds.

¹³⁰ *ibid.* p. 100.

¹³¹ *ibid.* P. 314.

¹³² Laslett, P., Translation of John Locke's Two Treatises of Government. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1967, p. 317.

¹³³ *ibid.* p. 368.

¹³⁴ *ibid.* p. 101.

Laslett points out that the conventional judgment of Locke's view of property – that it described a natural, inalienable right – is correct.¹³⁵ Property was precisely that part of a human being which he could alienate, but only with his consent. In Locke's system, it seemed that it is through his theory of property that men could proceed from the abstract world of liberty based on their relationships with God and natural law, to the concrete world of political liberty guaranteed by governments and political organs.

Neal wood examined Locke's treatise, "Some Thoughts Concerning Education," which was published in 1693. At the time, average young English gentleman was educated to have a disdain for physical labour, trade, and commerce. By way of contrast, Locke stressed mental and manual labour, the practical and the useful, industry, perseverance, enterprise, thrift, and sobriety. The gulf separating the two outlooks was basically between a traditional noble-class ethic and a modern work ethic, each involving a different notion of the meaning of rational conduct. Wood says that, may be more than anything else, Locke's ideal recalls the original capitalist spirit or entrepreneurial ethos so carefully identified, depicted, and analyzed in relation to the changing material conditions of early modern society by scholars like Werner Sombart (1915, 1931), Max Weber (1950), Ernst Troeltsch (1981), R. H. Tawney (1947), and Joseph Schumpeter (1947). Locke's writing on education (1968) was intended as an aid to gentlemen in instructing their children, helping them to form the attitudes and conduct for their future in spearheading the transformation of the English countryside from reliance on a traditional mode of production to a more advanced form of agrarian enterprise.¹³⁶

Locke recommends that gentlemanly youth should become acquainted with books on husbandry, planting, and gardening, and that they should acquire a manual skill such as painting, woodworking, gardening, and tempering and working with iron. Locke makes reference to ancients like Cincinnatus, Cato Major, and Cyrus the Great, people that combined an active life of governmental affairs with manual occupations such as agriculture, husbandry, and gardening. Locke was anxious over the attitudes of the landed gentry who had traditional disdain for manual labour and practical activity, and he called for great industry and less frivolous indolence among the gentry. John Locke's writing about the poor stressed

¹³⁵ *ibid.* p. 102.

¹³⁶ Applebaum, H., *op. cit.*, p. 359.

unrelenting, draconian methods of labour to instil in them the work ethic, thrift, and sobriety.¹³⁷

Locke saw agriculture as the foundation of English society. And as he was a student, he was influenced by some important intellectual traditions that stressed agriculture and the ideas of the Baconian-inspired Puritan reformers of the English Revolution. Bacon called for the application of science to agriculture and husbandry. Locke saw agricultural society as divided among landholders, labourers, and brokers, or merchants and shopkeepers. The landlord's land affords the materials, the labourers provide the work, and the brokers distribute the products.¹³⁸

Locke said that the land provided not only materials for food and drink, but wool, flax, silk, and cotton for cloth; weld, woad, madder, and saffron for dyes; flax, linseed, and soleseed for oil; hides for shoes and leather goods; hemp for rope; wood, peat, and coal for fuel; timber, sand, stone, and clay, for buildings, ships, naval stores, furniture and household wares; and ores for the metal industries. Locke saw the landowner and the agricultural worker as the basic elements of the English economy. He criticized the class of brokers, merchants, and traders, whom he considered to be the unproductive sector of the economy. He also favoured the small craftsman who sold his own products.¹³⁹

On agriculture, he mentioned the day labourer who was paid by the tenant for his labour power during a fixed period of time, usually by the week. Day labourers, he said, worked from dawn to dusk, twelve hours or more, with time for dinner, rest, and in the summer, for sleep. These day labourers were distinguished from servant-in-husbandry and task workers.

For him, servant-in-husbandry were young men and women, between the ages of 15 and 24, who were serving a sort of agricultural apprenticeship. They sometimes came from the better rural families of the land owner. In addition to room and board they received a small remuneration, often paid quarterly. The women usually worked in the dairy, with cows and with poultry, while the men took care of the larger animals and sheep, ploughed, carted, and harrowed. There were also task workers, usually men with skills, who were paid for performing a specific task or service.

¹³⁷ Wood, N., *John Locke and Agrarian Capitalism*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1984. p. 106.

¹³⁸ Letwin, W., *The Origin of Scientific Economics: English Thought, 1660 – 1776*. London: Methuen, 1963. p. 273-300.

¹³⁹ *ibid.*

Both servants-in-husbandry and task workers were disappearing from English rural scene in favour of the day labourers by the nineteenth century. In Locke's time, servants-in-husbandry were well practiced in the North and west, while in the more advanced regions of the South and East the day labourers were preferred agrarian workers.¹⁴⁰

In his commentary, Wood points out that Locke and many of his contemporaries saw day labourers as an inferior sort of human being and the lowest on the English social scale¹⁴¹. English workers avoided day-labouring for wages as one would avoid plague. Servants-in-husbandry according to him were of higher status. When their service was completed, many became farmers themselves, turning to day labour only as a last option. Locke accepted without criticism the fact that day labourers were barely able to earn subsistence wages. As did many of his peers, he thought the division of society between rich and poor to be inevitable. Locke believed that the difference in income between landlords and workers would be conducive to internal peace because, in their efforts simply to survive, workers would be less likely to foment discord.¹⁴²

Quoting Locke Wood writes; "For the labourer's share, being seldom more than a bare subsistence, never allows that body of men time or opportunity to raise their thoughts above that, or struggle with the richer for theirs (as one common interest) unless when some common and great distress, uniting them in one universal ferment, make them forget respect, and emboldens them to crave to their wants with armed force; and then sometimes they break in upon the rich, and sweep all like a deluge. But this rarely happens but in the maladministration of neglected, or mismanaged government."¹⁴³

Locke holds that the best means for maintaining labour discipline was by means of a more severe poor law. Thus, in spite of his radical views on the necessity for revolution should government become rapine and repressive, it was clear that his class view reflected his own status, which was that of an absentee landlord of an estate which he inherited from his father in 1661 and which gave him a modest income of 240 pounds per year. In 1692, Locke was writing like a good Puritan stressing rationality, frugality, sobriety, diligence, thrift, good

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.* p. 360.

¹⁴¹ Wood, N., *op. cit.*, p. 43.

¹⁴² *ibid.*

¹⁴³ Wood, N., *op. cit.*, p. 44.

husbandry, good order, and well-ordered trade, and opposing extravagant living and ill-husbandry. Landholders must tighten their belts and manage their estate efficiently.¹⁴⁴

In his writing “Some Thoughts Concerning Education”, Locke preoccupied himself with the corruption of the gentry. He sought the solution in education and the cultivation of the mind so that the enlightened individual would approach problems from a dispassionate, rational, calculating, and self-directing perspective. Beginning from Bacon to Locke, writers on science slowly brought about an intellectual climate in which scientific laws, or the laws of nature were equated with the law of god as immutable rational precepts.¹⁴⁵

Wood pointed out that Locke was the first of the classical political thinker to place such great emphasis on labour, making it the cornerstone of his edifice of political ideas.¹⁴⁶ Wood explains that man, according to Locke, was created as homo faber in the image of God his maker, deus faber. Each man is God’s property as the product of the workmanship of God. The world and its fruits were given by God to men in common to be used for their benefit. Following God’s command to subdue the earth by working on it, the individual could appropriate what he needed for his own preservation from the common storehouse of nature. He could legitimately acquire property by means of the work of his own hands, and by mixing his labour with anything in nature. Labour was the origin of and entitlement to private possessions and land as distinct from what was common. Man had property in his own person, and since work was an extension of his person, anything which he mixed with his labour became his property by natural right. Also, labour was the basis of value of all things, as illustrated by Locke.¹⁴⁷

“An Acre of Land that bears here Twenty Bushels of Wheat, and another in America, which with the same Husbandry would do the like, are without doubt, of the same natural, intrinsic Value... ‘Tis Labour then which puts the greatest part of Value upon land, without which it would scarcely be worth anything; ‘tis to that we owe the greatest part of all its useful Products; for all that the straw, bran, Bread, of that Acre of wheat, is more worth than the products of an acre of as good Land, which lies waste, is all the effect of Labour. For ‘tis not barely the Plough-man’s Pains, the reaper’s Toil, and the Bakers Sweat, is to be counted into

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.* p. 46.

¹⁴⁵ Hill, C., *The Pelican Economic History of Britain, 1530 – 1780. Reformation to Industrial Revolution.* Vol.2. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1986. p. 208.

¹⁴⁶ Wood, N., *op. cit.*, p. 53.

¹⁴⁷ Laslett, P., *op. cit.*, p. 316.

Bread we eat; the Labour of those who broke the oxen, who digged and wrought the iron and stones, who felled and framed the Timber employed about the plough, Mill, Oven, or any other Utensils, which are a vast Number, requisite to his Corn, from its being seed to be sown to its being made Bread, must all be charged on the account of Labour, and received as an effect of that: Nature and Earth furnished only the almost worthless Materials, as in themselves. 'Twould be a stranger catalogue of things, that Industry provided and made use of, about every loaf of Bread, before it came to our use, if we could trace them; Iron, Wood, Leather, Bark, Timber, Stone, Bricks, Coals, Lime, Cloth, Dying-Drugs, Pitch, Tar, Masts, Ropes, and all the Materials made use of in the Ship, that brought any of the Commodities made use of by any of the workmen, to any part of the work, all which, t'would be almost impossible, at least too long, to reckon up.”¹⁴⁸

Using the image of God as a maker, Locke proceeds to prove that man is to have property in his own work by working in a God-like fashion. Work then, becomes a moral activity. Locke speaks of God as a maker bringing man into being out of pre-existing matter. He also believed that man had no knowledge of substances, because he did not make them – God did. But man could have knowledge of things which he did make – products, actions institutions, practices, and social relations. Locke insists that God must be the author of certain definite principles of action for man. Man cannot be made to be idle because he has an agile, rational mind which is capable of knowledge. All this equipment for action could not be furnished so that man should remain idle. Therefore, God intended man to do something.¹⁴⁹

Locke argues that the universe handed over to mankind should not be left untouched, instead the command have to be obeyed and that it is through labour that man responded to the command. Hence he writes: “God gave the World to men in Common; but since he gave it them for their benefit, and the greatest Conveniences of Life they were capable to draw from it, it cannot be supposed He meant it should always remain common and uncultivated. He gave it to the use of the industrious and rational and labour was to be his title to it....”¹⁵⁰

Locke is saying here that after creating the universe, God handed it over to humanity for their well-being. Granted that it is made for the common use, the intention was not for it to remain like that belonging to all and uncultivated instead man as a rational being should through his

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.* p. 316.

¹⁴⁹ Applebaum, H., *op. cit.*, pp.362-363.

¹⁵⁰ Locke, J., *op. cit.*, p. 291.

reason improve on the creation. It is through labour he does this, first by appropriating it through his sweat.

A question came up, if gathering the Acorns or other fruits of the earth (in other words labour or work) makes or gives one right to them then there is a tendency that one may accumulate as much as he will. Locke's reply was that the Natural law should guide all. The same law which says it is ours also says one should not exceed the boundary. Meaning that no one should take more than he can make use of from what nature has provided. To what extent can one accumulate? He replies: "As much as anyone can make use of to any advantage of life before it spoils, so much he may by his labour fix a property in. Whatever is beyond this is more than his share and belongs to others. Nothing was made by God for man to spoil or destroy."¹⁵¹ Guided by reason especially keeping within the bounds set by reason of what might serve for his use, quarrels or contentions about property could be avoided. When confronted with the situation where some men were richer and others were poor and that some had more than others, Locke's explanation was that money was responsible, in other words gold and silver which can be stored and accumulated without getting spoil. Notwithstanding, Locke still believes that individual subsistence does not give him an exclusive right, after all he still remain a tenant –in-common.¹⁵²

For Locke, when God gave the world in common to all mankind, he commanded man also to labour and penury of his condition required it of him. God commanded him to subdue the earth, to improve it for the improvement of life and therein lay out something upon it that was his own, his labour. "He that, in obedience to this command of God, subdued, tilled and sowed any part of it, thereby annexed to it something that was his property, which another had no title to, nor could without injury take from him."¹⁵³

Work or labour according to Locke becomes a direct command of God and man responds to this command appropriating property through his labour.

¹⁵¹ *ibid.* p. 290.

¹⁵² Tully, J., *A Discourse on Property: John Locke and his Adversaries*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1980.p. 105.

¹⁵³ Locke, J., *op. cit.*, p. 291.

“Labour and work have become, through Locke’s argument, a fulfilment of man’s natural law obligations, expressing the will of God. We see here the Calvinist influence which saw one’s calling as fulfilling the will of God.”¹⁵⁴

Locke brought work or labour activity within the providence of natural law obligations which means everyone must work. And then he shows that he who appropriates land by labouring has increased the common stock available to mankind by increasing the productivity of land. If this productivity is ten times that of idle land and if he cultivates ten acres, he has, in effect, given ninety acres to mankind.¹⁵⁵ Since according to Locke labour makes, by far, the greatest part of the value of things, He states that social policy should increase the numbers of men rather than the largeness of dominions as the means by which nations accumulate wealth.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Applebaum, H., op. cit., p. 364.

¹⁵⁵ Locke, J., op. cit., p. 37.

¹⁵⁶ ibid. p. 42.

N/B: From a moral stand point, it was important to Locke to distinguish between those engaged in productive work and those who did not. Ashcraft quoting from a letter of Locke's to a friend writes: “I think everyone, according to what way providence has placed him in, is bound to labour for the public good, as far as he is able, or else he has no right to eat” (Ashcraft, R., *Locke's Two Treatises of Government*- London: Allen and Unwin, 1987. p. 134).

Other voices that made contributions within this period include:

Francis Bacon was one of the first to advocate the importance of the mechanical arts in the development of scientific knowledge.

French Enlightenment- Diderot, Voltaire and Rousseau also added their voices to the reflection on work.

Denis Diderot sought to weld the mechanical arts to the physical and social sciences. His underlying philosophy was rationalism and faith in human progress. He insisted that all arts, the mechanical as well as the liberal, must have both a theoretical as well as a practical side. He wanted to give artisans their due and admonished the liberal arts for having contempt for the mechanical arts. He felt that his mission was to teach workers to have a better opinion of themselves.

Voltaire also propagated the idea of progress through human effort rather than reliance on the deity. In his book *Candide*, Voltaire concluded with the concept that life become bearable through work, embodied in the memorable words, " we must cultivate our garden". He established a watch-making industry at Ferney, Switzerland and built homes for workers and attracted craftsmen to his model town.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau as the son of a watch-maker tasted the atmosphere of the workshop at the early stage. Born in Geneva (1712) Rousseau was influenced by the Calvinist work ethic. He also had a first-hand experience of work, being apprenticed to an engraver at the age of twelve. Rousseau's respect for the artisan way of life was

especially clear in his tract on education, *Emile*, in which he said " Man in the society is bound to work. . . . Emile shall learn a trade. I would rather have him a shoemaker than a poet, I would rather he paved streets than painted flowers on china. . . . We have made him a worker and a thinker" (Rousseau, J.J., *The Education of Emile*. Rolland, Maurois & (ed.) *French thought in the Eighteenth Century*. Cassell & Co., London, 1953, p.66)

Scottish Enlightenment: Adam Smith gave the work world a developed formulation of a theory of work. Not only did he formulate a labour theory of value, but division of labour and monotonization of work were attributed to him. In his book *The Wealth of the Nations*, Smith believed that the understandings of men are formed by their ordinary employments. Adam Ferguson, his associate in the Scottish Enlightenment, also believed that a man's character was formed by his "work function".

Smith and **Ferguson** saw that the division of labour increased workers' productivity through specialization, but they also observed that extreme subdivision of labour led to human deprivation by contracting the mind through the repetitive nature of overly subdivided work. Adam Smith thought the ill effects of the subdivision of labour in industry could be overcome by education. He was sympathetic to the working man and advocated high wages to provide incentives to work. In essence he viewed work, or labour, as the basis of a nation's wealth and also as the measure of value of all goods in a society.

Benjamin Franklin certainly deserves to be ranked as an Enlightenment man. His writings, his public career, his mastery of the craft of printing, all combined to make him a model of the blending of the hand and mind, of intellectual and manual labourer, of the public and private man of action. He was also a man of science with his experiments in electricity. Franklin espoused the Puritan work ethic of Calvinism. Karl Marx and Max Weber recognized his contribution as a philosopher of the work ethic. Marx credited Franklin with coining the concept of man as a " tool-making animal" (Marx, K., *Capital: Modern Edition*. Random House, New York, 1906, p.358)

Utopian Socialists: Three of the most prominent of these early reformers were Robert Owen, an Englishman, and two Frenchmen, Charles Fourier and Claude Henri de Rouvroy de Saint-Simon.

The Utopians believed that work and its improvement was a key to a better world. They rejected the capitalist view of work, which was based mainly on rationalism and cost efficiency. Instead, they saw work as a liberating, creative force that could transform workers as well as the world for the better. The Utopians believed that by reason and through the education of society's leaders, as well as through the example of model communities, and that social conditions could be reformed. Though the Utopians failed to reform the society at large through convictions, nevertheless, the Utopian Socialists left a legacy of good works, creative ideas, and a strong belief in the creative and transforming power of work as part of the condition of mankind.

1.3. 11. Modern Period: The 19th Century Concept of Work

The 19th century was the century of industrialism, and work, as we know it, based on industrial cultures. Work in industrial society holds a central place in the life of the individual and belongs to the public sphere where it is wage work. Work in the home, unpaid work, voluntary work is not recognized in economic terms. Work in the public sphere enables one to acquire a social existence and a social identity. Work in this period becomes part of a network of exchanges, in which persons are measured against each other. Work requires obligations and duties, but it also confers rights upon those who engage in work in the marketplace.

1.3. 11. 1. The Impact of Industrial Revolution on Work

Thinking about work in the nineteenth century, is thinking about the industrial revolution and thinking about the industrial revolution we remember England, we think about cotton and the machine.

History has it that England was the first industrialized nation in the world. It happened that between the period of 1770 to 1850 till the middle of nineteenth century, England was still referred to as the “workshop of the world”. The rival nations were the United States, Germany and France. The industry that produced cotton set the pace of industrial revolution and this was in Manchester, England. The question to be addressed is that “What actually went on in this industry or factory that brought about change in form of a revolution which starting in England spread across Europe and America. David Landes gives us reply and writes: “In the eighteenth century, a series of inventions transformed the manufacture of cotton in England and gave rise to a new mode of production – the factory system. During these years, other branches of industry affected comparable advances, and all these together mutually reinforcing one another made possible further gains on an ever-widening front. The abundance and variety of these innovations almost defy compilation, but they may be subsumed under three principles: the substitution of machines – rapid, regular, precise, tireless – for human skill and effort; the substitution of inanimate for animate sources of power, in particular, the introduction of engines for converting heat into work, thereby opening to man a new and almost unlimited supply of energy; the use of new and far more abundant raw

materials, in particular the substitution of mineral for vegetable or animal substances.”¹⁵⁷ In other words, machine was introduced into the working system. It became a substitute for man power and the effect was that it worked tirelessly and increased production. This was a remarkable achievement. “The introduction of mechanical tools and machines into textile production in England was an epoch-making process in the history of mankind.”¹⁵⁸ Then in 1733, the English engineer Kay invented the flying shuttle system, which doubled the weaver’s productivity. And with this breakthrough, the Royal society, who was the first scientific society in England, made a great offer for inventions that would speed and boast spinning process. The result of this was the invention of series of machines. The highest point was the invention of Arkwright’s spinning machines which he developed in 1769, 1771 and 1775. He succeeded in using water to drive his machines, and, when they were put into action, they led to the establishment of what could be called factories, with their subdivisions of labour, as compared with the older mills which were places where artisans were collected and performed the same work rather than being divided into specialists performing different tasks.¹⁵⁹

Without a source of power greater than what human beings and animals can supply development of mechanized industry which concentrates on large unit production would not have been possible.

The solution was found in the use of steam engine then advanced to coal and then from steam and coal which may not be said to have created industrial Revolution, but permitted its extraordinary development and diffusion, till the nineteenth century when materials and machine construction had advanced to the point where full advantage could be taken of the steam engine.¹⁶⁰

Then from England it spread across Europe and America though England was later overtaken by some countries like Germany and United States. As machines were required for making consumer’s goods, demand came for precise, smoothly working parts. “This required workers for a specialized machine-construction industry, in which imaginative artisans had an

¹⁵⁷ Landes, D. S., *The Unbound Prometheus: Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1969, p. 41.

¹⁵⁸ Applebaum, H., *op. cit.*, p. 410.

¹⁵⁹ Kuczynski, J., *The Rise of the Working Class*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967, pp. 45-48.

¹⁶⁰ Applebaum, H., *op. cit.*, p. 410.

opportunity to modify old tools and devise new ones to create equipment that would enable workers running the machine to do more in less time and with as little training as possible.”¹⁶¹

1.3. 11. 2. Technology and Work

As the nineteenth century advances, the original things which made up the Industrial Revolution which included: the new machinery in textiles, the development of iron and steel industry together with the steam engine and railroads, the development of the factory system, the expansion of fossil-fuel energy sources, and the introduction of new institutional forms such as the joint-stock company, the banking, and the monetary system – all these started playing important roles and from the look of things, it seems contraries in Western Europe were coming to what according to Marx was ”mature capitalism.”¹⁶² Then at the closing period of the nineteenth century, new things of technology and invention opened up new areas of investment. The electrical power and motors were expanded, the chemical industry brought in new products in the form of synthetics; accuracy in manufacturing and assembly line machines; and the great impact of the internal combustion engine and the automotive industry.¹⁶³

Important Factor

Education boasted economic performance in a great way within this period. Germany for instance excelled in the four areas of education that affected her economic performance. (a) The ability to read, write and calculate. (b) The working skills of the craftsman and mechanic (c) The engineer’s combination of scientific principle and applied training (d) High-level scientific knowledge, both theoretical and applied.

At the middle of the century, the German school system was already popular throughout Europe and this could be seen as one of her greatest achievements and could also explain

¹⁶¹ Landes, D. S., *op. cit.*, p. 105

¹⁶² Applebaum, H., *p. cit.*, p.413.

¹⁶³ *ibid.*

partly the reason why Germany was well known for “its work ethic, the quality of its work and its devotion to disciplined workmanship.”¹⁶⁴

With improved knowledge of science and technology, the older view gave way to the new view of scientific research along theoretical lines as organized by industry. The merging of science and technology has now led to new products and methods that is changing work and consumer goods, with Computer technology and telecommunications technology as record breaking point.

German industry in the nineteenth century created a total and integrated effort of the universities, industrial laboratories, professional societies, trade associations, and government-sponsored research in a continuous scientific-technological drive as the basis for modern industry.

1.3. 11. 3. Karl Marx

The modern theory of work changed with the coming of Karl Marx on the stage. The impact he made is still noticeable today. He was born in 1818 in Trier, in Germany. His family was Jewish who later converted to Christianity to enable his father to pursue his career as a lawyer in the face of anti-Jewish laws. Marx studied law in Bonn and Berlin, and then did his PhD in Philosophy, comparing the views of Democritus and Epicurus. After finishing his doctorate in 1841, he had high hopes of getting an academic job. As the chance did not come, he joined a group of radical thinkers. Turning to journalism, Marx rapidly became involved in political and social issues and soon found himself embracing the communist theory.

Karl Marx view of the importance of work came from his belief that the fundamental tie which unites men to one another in society is their relationship as producers¹⁶⁵. Marx then defines labour as man’s metabolism with nature¹⁶⁶. Work for him is a process in which both man and nature participate, and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates and controls the material reactions between himself and Nature. He opposes himself to Nature as one of

¹⁶⁴ Campbell, J., *Joy in Work, German Work: The National Debate, 1800-1945*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989, p. 35.

¹⁶⁵ Meek, R. L., *Studies in the Labour Theory of Value*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1973. p. 139.

¹⁶⁶ Marx, K., *Capital*. Modern Library Edition. New York: Randon House, 1906. p. 201.

her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appropriate nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants¹⁶⁷. He states that man changes his own nature by acting on nature.¹⁶⁸ That implies that the human person transforms himself and his society by working. The quality that differentiates him from other animals is that other animals work, spider weave and bees construct cells, Marx argues but "what distinguished the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality"¹⁶⁹

The primary factors of work according to him are (a) the personal activity of man, or work itself (labour power); (b) the subject of that work (materials); and (c) instruments (tools). An instrument of work which is usually tools or machines is a thing which the worker interposes between himself and the subject of his labour. He uses mechanical, physical, and chemical properties of some substances so that he can make other substances subservient to his aim. As the earth is his original larder, so too, it is man's original tool house. As soon as labour undergoes the least development, it requires specially prepared instrument. The means of labour see domesticated animals undergoing modifications and thereby playing a part as instruments of labour especially when used as work animals. The use and fabrication of instruments of labour is specifically characteristic of the human process.¹⁷⁰

Tools, machines are used to transfer labour to its subject and in addition, other elements are necessary for carrying on the work process. The earth is a universal instrument of this sort, because it provides a place and field for work activity. Workshop, canals, roads, and the like are instruments in this class. In the work process, products from previous work enter into it as a means of production- tools and raw materials. The same use-value according to him is both the product of a previous process as well as a means of production in a later process. A product like grapes, although ready to be consumed, can also be used for another product, as when it is used for wine. Hence, a use-value can be raw material, an instrument of labour, or a final product ready to be consumed.¹⁷¹ Therefore Marx summarizes the labour process as follows.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.* p. 197-198.

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.* P. 198.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.* p. 200.

¹⁷¹ Applebaum, H., *op. cit.* p. 437.

“In the labour-process, therefore, man’s activity, with the help of the instruments of labour, effects an alteration, designed from the commencement, in the material worked upon. The process disappears in the product; the latter is a use-value, Nature’s material adapted by a change of form to the wants of man. Labour has incorporated itself with its subject; the former is materialized, the latter transformed. That which in the labourer appeared as movement, now appears in the product as a fixed quality without motion. The blacksmith forges and the product is a forging”¹⁷²

A thing which is not put into use decays away, Marx argues. A machine which does not work is useless and will decay and iron rusts, and wood rots when not in use. In one of his inspiring passages, he says:

“Living labour must seize upon these things and rouse them from their death-sleep, change them from mere possible use-value into real and effective ones. Bathed in the fire of labour, appropriated as part and parcel of labour’s organism, and, as it were, made alive for the performance of their functions in the process, they are in truth consumed with a purpose, as elementary constituents of new use-values, of new products, ever ready as a means of subsistence for individual consumption, or as a means of production for some new labour-process”¹⁷³

Karl Marx distinguished between work and labour, seeing work as the qualitative aspect of the work process, and labour as the value-creating and quantitative aspect of the work process.¹⁷⁴ Engels casts more light to the distinction and writes: “The English language has two different expressions for these two different aspects of labour; in the Simple Labour-process, the process of producing Use-Values, it is Work; in the process of creation of Value, it is Labour, taking the term in its strictly economic sense”¹⁷⁵.

Marx continues: “If we proceed, further, and compare the process of producing value with the labour-process, pure and simple, we find that the latter consists of the useful labour, the work that produces use-values. Here we contemplate the labour as producing a particular article; we view it under its qualitative aspect alone, with regard to its end aim. But viewed as a value-

¹⁷² Marx, K., op., cit. p. 201.

¹⁷³ *ibid.* p. 204.

¹⁷⁴ Applebaum, H., op., cit., p. 437.

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.* p. 437-438.

creating process, the same labour process presents itself under the quantitative aspect alone. Here it is a question merely of the time occupied by the labourer in doing the work”.¹⁷⁶

On cooperation in work, Marx states that a large number of workers at the same time and place in order to produce the same commodity with one entrepreneur as a master, constitutes both historically and logically, the starting point of capitalist production.¹⁷⁷

In other words the power of the capitalist production lies in quantitatively larger production which was made possible by a greater number of workers. The difference between medieval and capitalist production was not quality but larger quantity. However, when the raw materials, storehouses, implements, and utensils are used simultaneously – or in turn – by many workmen and consumed in common, it leads to economies in the means of production. One workshop built for twenty men costs less than twenty small workshops. When many hands take part in one undivided operation – such as raising a heavy weight – the effect is that it could only be done by many hands and would not be feasible for a single worker to accomplish.¹⁷⁸

“Not only have we here an increase in the productive power of the individual by means of cooperation, but the creation of a new power, namely, the collective power of masses.... Apart from the new power that arises from the fusion of many forces into one single force, mere social contact begets in most industries an emulation and a stimulation of the animal spirits that heighten the efficiency of each individual workman.... The reason of this is that a man is, if not as Aristotle contends, a political, at all events a social animal.”¹⁷⁹

That is to say, twelve masons working together will achieve more in a day than a single mason working for twelve days. The reason Marx explains, “is that a body of men working in concert has hands and eyes both before and behind, and is, to a certain degree omni-present. The various parts of the work progress simultaneously”¹⁸⁰.

¹⁷⁶ Marx, K., op., cit. p.218.

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.* p. 353.

¹⁷⁸ Applebaum, H., op., cit., p. 438.

¹⁷⁹ Marx, K., op., cit., p. 357-358.

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.* p. 359.

Cooperation in work has also another advantage in that it gives room for work to be carried on over an extended space. This is especially true of large engineering works, such as constructing roads, railways, canals and irrigation works.

Marx remarks that all combined labour on a large scale requires direction by an authority to achieve harmony among workers. Therefore the work of direction he says is one of the functions of the capital. For the work of the union, cooperation, and connection between various work functions is not the act of men who do the work but the capital that brought them together. If the capitalist is released from doing the work himself, the work of supervision goes to managers, supervisors, and foremen. The form of control becomes despotic. By bringing workers together in a mass, the capitalist gains an additional benefit from the additional productivity that accrues through cooperative labour. This benefit also accrues to capital. The social productive power of cooperation is the starting point of capitalist production, coinciding with the birth of capital itself.¹⁸¹

Handicraft skill for Marx was the foundation of the manufacturing period, which predominated the nineteenth century period. He noted that capital had to repeatedly battle with disobedience of the workmen. Throughout the manufacturing period, there were reports of lack of discipline among the workmen. The narrow technical basis on which manufacture stood came into conflict with the requirements of production that were created by manufacture itself¹⁸². Gradually the factory system and the use of large-scale machinery production – together with the introduction of scientific management techniques spread and the deskilling of the working class launched into full force the industrial system of production.

Marx commenting on the nature of Machinery says that the difference between a tool and a machine is that a tool is powered by the hand while a machine is power by the wind, water, steam, electricity, or sometimes by animals. The essential components of all fully developed machinery are: the motor mechanism, the transmitting mechanism, and finally the tool or working machine¹⁸³. The motor mechanism he identifies with steam, electricity, wind or water. The transmitting mechanism he says made up of gears, fly-wheels, toothed wheel, pullies, straps, bands, pinions, and shafts which regulate the motion changing it from linear to

¹⁸¹ *ibid.* P. 367

¹⁸² *ibid.* P.403-404.

¹⁸³ *ibid.* P. 407.

circular, as an example – to divide and distribute the motion the working parts of the machine. The tool or working machine is that part of machinery with which the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century started. It serves as the starting point whenever a handicraft or a manufacture is turned into an industry carried on by machinery.¹⁸⁴

Machines are more efficient and more accurate than human hands in making various geometric shapes. With few exceptions, machinery operates only by means of associated labour or labour in common. Thus, the cooperative character of work is a technical necessity dictated by machinery as an instrument of labour¹⁸⁵.

Marx noted that the introduction of machine gradually changed the work process. The division of labour in the factory is no longer determined by occupations or trades, as was the case in the manufacturing stage, instead it rests on the machine. A man noted no more for what he does or his trade instead with his machine. Through deskilling, he lost his trade and becomes the operator of a machine that has replaced division of labour.

1.3. 11. 3. 1. On Alienation of Labour

Karl Marx was influenced so much by the philosophical thoughts of Hegel especially on the alienation of labour. For Hegel, work was seen as man's creation of himself. Hegel, as we know, was very much familiar with the writings of Adam Smith especially on the division of labour. Thus he presented his ideal society as differentiated according to types of labour and stratification based on the division of labour. While treating labour, Hegel came very close to the idea that we shall later find in Marx. For Marx, Hegel "conceives labour as the essence, the self-confirming essence of man"¹⁸⁶

Herbert Applebaum writes: "Alienation to Hegel was not a marginal aspect of labour which could be rectified. It was fundamental and immanent to the structure of society"¹⁸⁷. Hegel sees labour as something good that comes out when man confronts the natural, external, and

¹⁸⁴Applebaum, H., op., cit., p. 440.

¹⁸⁵ Marx, K., op. cit., p. 421-422.

¹⁸⁶ Marx, K., "The Economic and Philosophical manuscripts". In Karl Marx, the Essential Writings, edited by Frederic L. Bender. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1844, p. 203.

¹⁸⁷Applebaum, H., op., cit., p. 441.

objective world. Through the labour process man objectifies his subjective powers, and it is through the instrumentality of work on an object that man, a subject becomes an objective actuality. Citing from Hegel, where he says “I have done something, I have externalized myself”¹⁸⁸. Labour was seen as a social necessity by Hegel because in creating the world, work relates at the same time to other human beings through exchange. And the more labour is divided, it becomes more productive but the more the producer loses the immediate satisfaction he gets from labour. Alienation is the price man has to pay for the advancement in work process through the introduction of a machine. The aim of the work process is to create for each person his own objective world, but it ended up been a process through which man loses all control and direction. “Far from being integrated into the objective world through creative consciousness, the abstract nature of labour, together with the division of labour, makes man alien to the objective world. Thus, Hegel was one of the early radical critics of the modern industrial system”.¹⁸⁹ Tool and Machine for him brought about improvement and have helped a lot but they created some distance between man and nature. Machines separated man from nature when compared to tools. Machine removes the vitality that was there when man was using tool and at the end both man and work became more mechanical. And the more work becomes mechanical, the less value it has. Thus Karl Lowith quoting from Hegel writes:

“Work becomes even more absolutely dull,... the skill of the individual becomes infinitely more limited, and the consciousness of the factory worker is reduced to complete apathy. The connection between the type of work performed and the whole unending mass of needs increases incalculably, becoming a blind dependence, so that a far-distant operation often restricts the work of a whole class of men who satisfy their needs by means, making it superfluous and of no use”¹⁹⁰ Initially, work was for the satisfaction of the immediate need of the individual, but becoming abstract, that is through the universality of wage work, the whole idea changes from the satisfaction of individual need to the universal need. So it is no longer possible for man to satisfy his needs instead it is by collaborating in the total satisfaction of everyone’s need that he achieves it. And as work become more abstract and universal, the existence of money comes in as a sign of universality.

¹⁸⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ Avineri, S., Labour, Alienation and Social Classes. In *The Legacy of Hegel*, edited by J.J. O’Malley, K: W: Algozin, H:P Kainz, and L: C. Rice. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973. p. 203.

¹⁹⁰ Lowith, K., *From Hegel to Nietzsche*. Loyn, H. R., editor New York: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1984, p. 267.

For Gellner, what Marx wished was to create a society in which mankind would be able to eliminate social stratification and the coercion of work¹⁹¹ Marx intention was to make the work ethic universal and free work of any reward, making it an end itself or the ultimate fulfilment. In the German Ideology he writes:

“As soon as labour is distributed, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic.”¹⁹²

This shows that the idea of work as its own reward was the essence of the work ethic as was passed on from the period of handicrafts. We work because we like it, and we look down on those who do not work at all, work only as a means, or are forced to work. In the ideal society as presented by Marx, work is to be its own reward and life finds meaning in work. Marx looked for a way he could create a society in which work would be freely chosen, and man would be at peace with his work and his fellow man. He saw the main destiny of the proletariat to bring about a society in which work would bring about peaceful, self-rewarding and unconstrained productivity¹⁹³.

Concerning alienation, Marx states that the human world is devalued to the extent that there is an increase in value in the worldly things. Labour for him not only creates goods, but it also produces the worker as a commodity.¹⁹⁴

Marx tries to explain what is involved with alienation and argues; the worker can create nothing without nature. The latter is the material in which labour is realized. Thus, the worker becomes a slave of the object, in that, by receiving an object of work, he receives a means of

¹⁹¹Gellner, E., *Plough, Sword, and Book: The Structure of Human History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1988, p. 34.

¹⁹² Marx, K, and Engels, F., *Basic Writings*, edited by Lewis S. Feuer. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co. 1959, p.254.

¹⁹³Gellner, E., *op. cit.*, p. 35.

¹⁹⁴ Marx, K., “The Economic and Philosophical manuscripts” *op. cit.*, p.71.

subsistence. The object enables him to exist as a physical subject, and he can maintain himself as a physical subject only in that he is a worker. He explains further:

“The alienation of the worker in his object is expressed as follows in the laws of political economy: the more the worker produces the less he has to consume; the more value he creates the more worthless he becomes; the more refined his product the more crude and misshapen the worker; the more civilized the product the more barbarous the worker; the more powerful the work the more feeble the worker; the more the work manifests intelligence the more the worker declines in intelligence and becomes a slave of nature”¹⁹⁵

What then constitutes the alienation of labour Marx continues: “First, that work is external to the worker, that it is not part of his nature; and that, consequently, he does not fulfil himself in his work but denies himself, has a feeling of misery rather than well-being, does not develop freely his mental and physical energies but is physically exhausted and mentally debased. The worker, therefore, feels himself at home only during his leisure time, whereas at work he feels homeless. His work is not voluntary but imposed, forced labour. It is not the satisfaction of a need, but only a means for satisfying other needs. Its alien character is clearly shown by the fact that as soon as there is no physical or other compulsion it is avoided like the plague. External labour, labour in which man alienates himself, is a labour of self-sacrifice, of mortification. Finally, the external character of work for the worker is shown by the fact that it is not his own work but work for someone else, that in work he does not belong to himself but to another person.”¹⁹⁶

He sees work as a positive thing and a creative activity. It is not necessarily a curse and therefore could be done with liberty and choice, as well as with creativity and happiness. Work could also be understood as a cessation from rest, in the way rest also could be viewed as a cessation from work¹⁹⁷. Marx argues that once a society reaches the stage of the machine as automation – in modern terminology, automation – the worker’s activity is limited to that of a mere abstraction and of a watcher of the machine to protect it from damage. With the help of the tool, the worker puts life to it with his own skill and dexterity. With automation, it is the machine that possesses the skill in the worker’s place. The machine becomes the virtuoso, and

¹⁹⁵Marx, K., *Early Writings*, translated & edited by T.B. Bottomore with Foreword by Erich Fromm.

USA: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964. p. 123 – 124.

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.* p. 124 – 125.

¹⁹⁷Marx, K., *The Grundrisse*, translated by David McLellan. New York: Harper & Row, 1971. p. 435.

the worker is an appendage. The knowledge which animates the machine does not exist in the consciousness of the worker, but acts upon him through the machine as an alien force¹⁹⁸

In a large-scale production, labouring becomes labour in the abstract.... It is no longer work in the sense that its goal is not to produce use-value as such, but only value. Knowledge and skill is no longer embodied in the skills of the work force. Work has turned to a technological application of science, and is not subordinated to the skill of the worker. The attempt to give a scientific character to production, reducing work to a simple element, presupposes a definite historical development of the productive forces. Tools of labour make the worker independent, establishing him as a worker. Machine makes him dependent and establishes him as a mere labourer. Machine pushes aside the communal aspect of work and reduces the individual worker to helplessness.¹⁹⁹

Karl Marx's labour theory of value as well as his solution for the alienation of labour was contained in an amazing curious passage in his book, the Grundrisse, where he says:

“As soon as labour in the direct form has ceased to be the great well-spring of wealth, labour time ceases and must cease to be its measure, and hence, exchange value (must cease to be the measure) of use value. The surplus labour of the mass ceased to be the condition for the development of the general wealth, just as the non-labour of the few, for the development of the general powers of the human head. With that, production based on exchange value breaks down, and the direct material production process is stripped of the form of penury and antithesis. The free development of individualities, and hence not the reduction of necessary labour time so as to posit surplus labour, but rather the general reduction of the necessary labour of the society to a minimum, which then corresponds to the artistic, scientific etc. development of the individuals in the time set free, and with the means created, for all of them. Capital itself is the moving contradiction, in that it presses to reduce labour time to a minimum.... On the one side, then, it calls to life all the powers of science and of nature, as of social combination, and of social intercourse, in order to make the creation of wealth independent (relatively) of the labour time employed on it. On the other side, it wants to use labour time as the measuring rod for the giant social forces thereby created, and to confine them within the limits required to maintain the already created value as value. True wealth of

¹⁹⁸ *ibid.* p. 438 – 439.

¹⁹⁹ Applebaum, H., *op.*, *cit.*, p. 445-446.

a nation is when the working day is 6 rather than 12 hours. Wealth is not command over surplus labour time (real wealth), but rather disposable time outside that needed in direct production, for every individual and the whole society. Nature builds no machines, no locomotives, railways, electric telegraphs, self-acting mules, etc. These are products of human industry; natural material transformed into organs of the human will over nature, or of human participation in nature. They are organs of human brain, created by the human hand; the power of knowledge, objectified. The development of fixed capital indicates to what degree general social knowledge has become a direct force of production and to what degree, hence, the conditions of the process of social life itself have come under the control of the general intellect and been transformed in accordance with it. To what degree the powers of social production have been produced, not only in the form of knowledge, but also as immediate organs of social practice, or the real life process”²⁰⁰

Thus, for Marx Communism becomes here the cure-all for these acts of dehumanization of the worker. Communism is, he stated, “the positive abolition of private property, of human self-alienation, and thus the real appropriation of human nature through and for man. It is therefore, the return of man himself as a social, i.e. really human, being...”²⁰¹ Also, money, in the form of wages, adds to this alienation of the worker from his labour. People labour for the sake of the wage and not for the sake of labour²⁰². These same wages also show that the worker is a slave to the object he produces. It also demonstrates that the work belongs to someone else - the person paying the wages²⁰³.

Remarks

Karl Marx was an outstanding figure and a genius who turned the world around with his economic theories. His contribution to the development of the social and historical sciences was unique and the method he used in analysis of poverty and exploitation. He was a materialist and sought together with Friedrich Engel to fight and end capitalist exploitation of the worker and the metaphysical interpretation of the world, which he believes was distracting workers from fighting for social justice and the equity in our world. In this project, we are not

²⁰⁰ Marx, K., Grundrisse. op. cit. p. 284 – 285.

²⁰¹Fromm, E., Marx Concept of Man. Continuum, New York, 1966, p. 127.

²⁰² ibid. p. 106.

²⁰³ ibid. pp. 97,99.

treating Marx's economic theories as such but we concentrate on the areas that will be of great importance to our inquiry into the value of work. And his theory on alienation is the foundation to this regard. The question then is of what importance is Marx's theory of alienated labour to our world. Herbert Applebaum says: granted that it might have been so in his own time, Marx's assumption that the worker receives less and less from his product has not turned out to be historically true. Notwithstanding, with respect to the human aspect of work and the fact that workers do not fulfil themselves in their work, this has turned out to be true for the majority of jobs. Manufacturing takes care of only 15 or 16 percent of jobs, and many of those involve single operations and computers, with computer watching demanding less intelligence, not more. "The decline of the work ethic, the decline of quality in work, the lessening of skills, the computerization of everything, and the transfer to the computer of the operations of the human brain are all pushing work into the trends which Marx, and Hegel before him, saw happening in the nineteenth century. What is different today is that people have more things, but, as Marx predicted, the more things we have, the less human we have"²⁰⁴

Concerning his view of work Hannah Arendt says the creation of man through human labour was one of Marx's persistent ideas, so much so that Marx sought to replace the concept of man as an animal rationale by defining him as an animal laborans. She believes that the very reason for the elevation of labour in the modern age was its "productivity," and what she describes as the "seemingly blasphemous notion of Marx" that labour (and not God) created man or that labour (and not reason) distinguished man from the other animals was only the most radical and consistent formulation of something upon which the whole modern age was agreed.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴Applebaum, H., op., cit., p. 444.

²⁰⁵Arendt, H., *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. p. 86.

Thorstein Veblen presented in his book; *Theory of the leisure Class*, the idea that the industrial system required men who are technically competent, efficient, and rational, whereas those who ran American business were incompetent, wasteful, and irrational he said. Veblen saw a conflict between producing goods to satisfy human needs and producing goods to make a profit.

Veblen's most developed analysis of work is contained in his book, "The instinct of Workmanship" (1914).

Veblen viewed the handicraft tradition of work as a constellation of beliefs, customs, habits, and values, shared by members of a given craft or trade. He saw modern technological exigencies enforcing attitudes that affected the principles of workmanship. Veblen believed that habituation to the principles of business and pecuniary

goals undermined and invaded the sense of workmanship. Work, workmen, equipment, and products for him then were all rated by businessmen on the scale of money values. This for him was a destructive practice that had a negative effect on workmanship.

Henri Bergson argues that, man is essentially an inventor who knows how to make tools and an intelligent being insofar as he is an artisan. Bergson saw man as a maker, a fabricating being with an intelligence that treats all things mechanically. He believed that work bestowed upon man feelings that elevate him and make him rise in every direction. Adriano Tilgher said of him " No philosopher has placed higher, has more worthily celebrated, the productive labour of man. No one before him stated clearly that it is as an artisan that man celebrates his divinity. It is thanks to Bergson that homo faber becomes synonymous with homo sapiens" (Applebaum, H., op. cit., p. 62)

Hendrik de Man lived and studied work in many countries. His most important book, *Joy in Work*, was based on his experiences and first-hand studies in Belgium, France, Germany, Russia and the United States. De Man believed that most workers generally aim at joy in work and do not simply view work as only a means to gain a livelihood. He thought it a mistake to look for variables to measure joy in work. Particular occupations, levels of income, age, sex, country and family may all combine in various complex syndromes to either permit or frustrate satisfaction in work. These variables shift over time.

Like Marx, de Man was convinced that with the advance of machine technology, workers were increasingly controlled by their own creation. (De Man, H., *Joy in Work*. George. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London, 1929, p. 130-134). Thus, they are destined to be passive, not active subjects in the work process, with work increasingly losing its intrinsic meaning for workers. What they could hope for was a reduction in the work day, an increase in their standard of living, and a seeking for satisfaction outside of the workplace.

Hannah Arendt (1906-75) was born in Germany and became a United States citizen in 1951. Her views on work are contained in her book, *The Human Condition* (1958). Arendt sees work, labour, and action as the three fundamental human activities. She considers labour as the undifferentiated use of the body to perform work, while work is the use of the hands and head to create man-made things that are durable and that can be used to create other things. Labouring disappears in consumption. Work for her creates the man-made world of things. While acknowledging that the distinction is not absolute, Arendt sees labour and work as comparable to Marx's distinction between abstract and concrete labour. Labour assimilates man to nature, work distinguishes man from nature. Labour is mechanical and cyclical, adjusting man to nature, while work distances man from nature. With labour man accepts external nature, with work man puts his own stamp on nature. Labour is judged by subjective criteria of human desires, while work is judged by objective criteria that give man a measure of independence. Above all, through work, man creates his own world that endures and outlasts generations (Arendt., H., op. cit., p. 173).

1.3. 11. 4. Positive Effects of Technology

According to Ortega y Gasset, technology in the real sense began around the year 1600, when man, in his theoretical thinking about the world, came to regard it as a machine. Before that, the world was generally believed to be an “amechanical entity”, which has spiritual powers of more or less arbitrary and uncontrollable nature as its ultimate essence. But today, technology stands out making engineers to devote their lives to it. Technology in the middle Ages was not seen as a profession because man did not know that he has inventive power. But today, the engineer welcomes the occupation of inventor. Unlike the primitive man, he knows before he begins to invent that he is capable of doing so, which means that he has technology. Therefore, technology is the concrete realization of the general technical function of man.²⁰⁶

For every other animal, he argues, existence means actual realization of an essence. But it was different for man for whom existence does not mean to exist at once, instead a possibility and an effort toward accomplishing his existence. Contrary to every other created being, man, in existing, has to make his existence. He has to solve the practical problem of bringing into reality the program that is himself. Life means to do and this to do is action. Man is self-made and a self-creative process. Therefore, he points out that “at the very root of his essence man finds himself called upon to be an engineer... In short, human life is production... It is creation; and it is thinking, theory, science in a secondary not primary sense only because these are needed for self-creation. To live is to find means and ways of realizing the program which we are.”²⁰⁷

Inventions have helped in bringing new things and new ideas into our world. They were and are unexpected departures from the norm, and surprises which the society adjusted to after the fact. It was very slow in the past because people did not understand it and also due to the fact that people find it difficult many a time to say goodbye to the normal way of doing things. Through the advancement made in scientific researches our world today can boast of new

She sees work as the defining characteristic of homo faber. And like Henri Bergson, Hannah Arendt believes it is the crafting nature of mankind that is necessary for the survival of all the works of mankind, from the works of artists to that of monument builders.

²⁰⁶ Ortega, G. J., *Thoughts on Technology: in Philosophy and Technology*, edited by Carl Mitcham and Robert Mackey. New York: The Free Press, 1983, p. 311.

²⁰⁷*ibid.*, p. 229.

machines that make work and life easy. The modern world no longer sit and wait for inventions to come by instead Scientists and Researchers foster and force it, they work tirelessly seeing answers and solutions as a way out of the constraints which physical nature imposed upon us in the past.

The first to foresee the physical power and potential in scientific knowledge was Francis Bacon. With the help of technology and science, we can pry new alternatives out of nature. Technology is now a social phenomenon giving men the power and will to create new possibilities and in turn, more choices, more opportunities, and more freedom. With more freedom, man can become more human enhance more human dignity and unrestricted human aspirations.²⁰⁸

1.3. 11.5. Negative Effects of Technology

One of the major negative effects of machine or technology on work is alienation and dehumanization. Technology brought about the loss of control over work and the deskilling of labour. It also brought unemployment as many workers were displaced by machines. It is necessary to point out here that alienation and dehumanization has been discussed in details in another section of this work. So we will turn our attention to other negative effects of technology.

Granted that technology creates new opportunities, but it also opened ways to creating negative forces. There is no doubt that humanity through technology has created instrument of mass destruction. The nuclear weapons of war and the nuclear energy, which are dominating international politics today, are the product of technology. The issue of environmental pollution is not forgotten, the heavy duty production plants in most of the industrialized nations of the world have caused more harm than good. John Paul II comments: “...exploitation of the earth not only for industrial but also for military purposes and the uncontrolled development of technology outside the framework of a long-range authentically humanistic plan often bring with them a threat to man’s natural environment, alienate him in his relations with nature and remove him from nature.”²⁰⁹ And this now posed a big problem

²⁰⁸ Mesthene, E. G., Technology and Wisdom. In Philosophy and Technology, op. cit., p. 111.

²⁰⁹Redemptor hominis. No. 15.

and put the human existence at a risk. The modern world has not finally found a solution on how to dispose the toxic wastes and abandoned products of technology. We hear cases of attempts by most of the industrialized nations of the world to dispose these expired gadgets in some third world countries especially in Africa. But we know very well that this is no solution at all. While some used products could be recycled, others might not. Man is therefore threatened by the product of his hands. John Paul II sees this threat and writes: “The man of today seems ever to be under threat from what he produces, that is to say from the result of the work of his hands and, even more so, of the work of his intellect and the tendencies of his will. All too soon, and often in an unforeseeable way, what this manifold activity of man yields is not only subjected to “alienation”, in the sense that it is simply taken away from the person who produces it, but rather it turns against man himself, at least in part, through the indirect consequences of its effects returning on himself. It is or can be directed against him.”²¹⁰ He sees the whole thing as a drama of present –day human existence in its broadest and universal dimension. Man is therefore afraid of most of the things he produces; “he is afraid that it can become the means and instrument for an unimaginable self-destruction....”²¹¹

Technology created jobs as some argue, but we have to remember that it has also removed more than it created. For instance, computer which is the product of technology offered people job opportunities and made work easy. But the number of workers displaced by computer system of work is more than those it offered jobs. A computer can do the work of 20 persons. Some firms and companies dismiss workers replacing them with computers.

By opening new opportunities, technology destroyed some values. For instance, modern plumbing according to Albert Borgmann, destroyed the village pump or stream where women enjoyed socializing. Women by coming to the public tap or by going to the stream to fetch water interact with each other and such forum was used to disseminate information. In Europe where houses are heated in winter, modern central heating destroyed the wood-burning stove which used to be taken care of by the whole family working together to keep it burning.²¹²

We all know that it is not good to return to those times but the human intercourse that used to go hand in hand with traditional ways of working was destroyed by modern technology.

²¹⁰ *ibid.* No. 15.

²¹¹ *ibid.*

²¹² Borgmann, A., *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987. 119, 41-42.

Borgmann remarks that houses are now constructed with central heating systems and thermostats, to enable easy functioning but in the nineteenth century, “to achieve warmth in Montana, trees had to be felled, logs had to be split, and wood had to be hauled and stacked. The whole house could not be warmed with a wood-burning stove. Yet, the wood-burning stove furnished more than mere warmth. It also became a focus, a hearth, and a place where the family gathered. Coldness marked the morning. Warmth flowed during the course of the day, as different members of the family were assigned tasks that defined their place in the household. The mother built the fire, the children kept the firebox filled, and the father cut the wood. It provided the family with a regular and bodily engagement with the rhythm of the season, woven together through the threat of cold and the solace of warmth, the smell of wood smoke, the exertion of sawing and carrying, the teaching of skills, and the fidelity to daily tasks. It was getting the sense of the world through work and the manifold sense of body and the sociability of the family²¹³

²¹³ *ibid.* p. 41-42.

Chapter Two: Work in the Modern Period: 20th Century

2. 1. The Unique Role by John Paul II

With the thoughts of John Paul II, we come to the point of departure of this project, since all other reflections and arguments will be based on his theory on work.

It is no exaggeration to state that Pope John Paul II is one of the most important Catholic theoreticians in the modern world. This conclusion is based on the weight of his views on work, which are contained in his encyclical *Laborem exercens* (On Human Work). In the introduction to the encyclical, the Pope presents the thesis that work is the distinguishing characteristic of man: " Only man is capable of work, and only man works, at the same time by work occupying his existence on earth."²¹⁴ Pope John Paul II believes that work and its problems are at the heart of the social problems of the modern age. If the work ethic is in danger, the Pope believes, so are certain important values of mankind, since work endangers fidelity, responsibility, and self-realization.

The Pope criticized both capitalist and socialist nations for making human beings the objects of work rather than the subjects of their own work.²¹⁵ In *Laborem exercens*, the Pope asserts the principle of the " priority of labour over capital." He believes that the ultimate aim of work is to give one a sense of working for oneself, and that in a system of excessive bureaucratization, whether under a system of private property or socialist property, workers are made to feel they are just cogs in a huge machine moved from above. In this situation, the worker is a mere instrument rather than a true subject of his own work, with initiative and autonomy.

The encyclical, *Laborem exercens*, contains the concept that man asserts himself through his work, an idea espoused by Hegel, Marx, and Arendt. The Pope states that "Everyone becomes a human being through, among other things work".²¹⁶ His Holiness states that because man combines his deepest human identity with membership in a nation or a community, through his work he comes to understand his obligation and service to his own people, and in addition, his service to all people on earth. Like Saint Paul, Pope John Paul II views work as an obligation of the society and the community. Thus, as each person has the moral obligation to

²¹⁴John Paul II., *Laborem Exercens: Encyclical Letter*. Paulist Press, New York, 1982. p.3.

²¹⁵ *ibid.* p. 121-125.

²¹⁶ *ibid.* p. 113.

work, each person has fundamental rights both as a person and as a worker. For Pope John Paul II, work is the foundation for individual respect and freedom, as well as the support of the community, if it is organized in such a way that humans become the subjects of their own work, and if labour takes priority over capital.

So the work of which John Paul II speaks is very different from an all too commonly held idea of work. In his vision, work possesses the property of community building: to the world it seems often to be source of strife.

Work, says the Pope is a fundamental dimension of man's life on earth; work says the world is an activity which becomes less and necessary. By echoing the Bible, His Holiness emphasized that man is born to work as well as called to it, that work is for man and that it is a lifelong activity which man must pursue; the wisdom of the world is that man's aim is leisure. ²¹⁷

2.1.1. The Shaping of Karol Wojtyla's Thoughts on Work: Theory of Participation

The way one thinks in life is affected mostly by the experiences he has in life. As a person he is an object and lives surrounded by different objects some of which are also subjects as he is. He interacts with these objects surrounds him as he journeys and develops in life. For him to be fulfilled he needs actively to interact with the world around him since it is through this interaction that the world that he does certain acts which help form him as a person.

Karol Wojtyla's works centres on man as a personal being and this being exists and performs actions in a certain way that points to his real end. One notices the influence of Thomas Aquinas and Max Scheler in his thought. In his study of the person, he tried through his thought to connect the objective and the subjective making sure he did not favour one against the other.

Most of his works is a reflection of his personalist philosophy, and with it he tries to solve the problem of alienation. Traced to Karl Marx, alienation is seen as pulling apart of two things that belong together. Simply put, alienation means separated from something that one has a right to own. For instance, one may be alienated from his private property because of some existing law or event. Karol Wojtyla then sees alienation as a problem because it hinders a

²¹⁷Kirwan, J., op. cit., p. iii.

person's fulfilment through his actions. Hence alienation threatens man not as human being but threatens him as a person.

He responded to alienation with his theory of participation which is seen as a property of the person and also the ability to share in the humanity of others. This confirms that man exist and acts in union with others. He is a member of a community living and relating with others. Therefore one has the obligation to seek and find answers that has to do with one's personhood and the world in which he lives is a task facing a person and also the entire community where he lives.

2.1. 2. The Person and Community

For Karol Wojtyla the richness of a person cannot be put in words instead in what he calls *The Experience of Man*. So the experience of existing and performing actions together with others is the beginning of the analysis of the person. In the experience of a man he is the object as well as the subject, he also experiences others as subjects. The experience of man is made up of an "inner" and "outer" aspect. The inner aspect is the experience of the person within, and therefore unique to him in the sense that it cannot be transferred. The out refers to the other persons who are the objects of experience.

Boethius defined a person as an individual substance of rational nature. But for Wojtyla, this definition did not go down well as he cautions against possibility of stepping into the cosmological understanding of the human person. The situation that reduced the human person to a simple being a part of the world, thereby making man an object, he then becomes an object alongside other objects. Wojtyla strongly believes that the real thing that separates a person from other creatures in the world is his spirituality.

He writes: "A person differs from a thing in structure and in degree of perfection. To the structure of the person belongs an "interior", in which we find the elements of spiritual life, and it is this that compels us to acknowledge the spiritual nature of human soul, and the peculiar perfectibility of the human person. This determines the value of the person. A person must not be put on the same level as a thing: the person possesses spiritual perfectibility, and is by way of being an (embodied) spirit, not merely a 'body' magnificently endowed with life.

Between the psyche of an animal and the spirituality of a man, there is an enormous distance, an uncrossable gulf.”²¹⁸

He sees this experience as man’s actions, he a person perform an action. When a person performs an act, he does that deliberately because he has master over himself and the thing he do. In acting therefore, the person experiences the “moment of efficacy”. This is to have the experience of being the actor.²¹⁹

Human action has two dimensions mainly the reflective as well as reflexive character. It has a reflective character in the sense that it is a way by which a person is reflected by his actions. In other ways, through his action he reveals himself to himself and to those around him.

“For human action reveals the person and we look at the person through his action. For it lies in the nature of the correlation inherent in experience, in the very nature of man’s acting, that action constitutes the specific moment whereby the person is revealed. Action gives us the best insight into the inherent essence of the person and allows us to understand the person most fully.”²²⁰

Knowing that human actions reflect the person, human actions also go back to him because these actions always have a moral and existential modality in them. There is an intrinsic quality in human actions which can be charged positively or negatively and this depends on the action itself. One does not only have the time of looking for the result but one also experiences the moral and existential quality of one’s actions. There is need to pay attention here because moral values do not only determine the inner quality of human actions, but they also never enter into a dynamic imprint of human actions without leaving a mark whereby man as a person, owing to his actions that may be good or evil, himself becomes either good or evil.²²¹

Therefore to understand human person very well, human actions are very important because it is through human actions that the truth about the person is known as well as the means by which he attains his fulfilment. Human action is the source that reveals the truth about the person. It is in acting that one becomes aware of himself and acting gives him a deeper vision of himself and his actions. This lets him know that these actions come from within him. In

²¹⁸Karol Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, trans. By H.T. Willets, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993, p. 121.

²¹⁹Karol Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, trans. By Andrej Potocki, Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979, p. 66.

²²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 11.

²²¹ *ibid.*, p. 13.

order to appreciate this, one must have the ability to experience himself as the agent and origin of the act as well as experience the value of the act. Also one must have the ability to experience the fulfilment of the act – not only in the sense that he can see the act reach its *terminus* but he must also be able to experience the act reaching its *telos*. Fulfilling oneself is not the same thing as fulfilling an action, but depends on the moral value of that action.²²² A person fulfils himself not by the mere fact of fulfilling or finishing an action, but that he becomes good when an act is morally good. Only in this two-fold experience of fulfilment can a person truly appreciate the value and worth of himself and his actions.

2.1. 3. The Acting Person as an Inter-Subjective Person

According to Karol Wojtyła, the experience of man which is the first step when we try to gain deeper knowledge into the human person is never achieved in isolation or opposition to others, because a person experiences himself existing together with others. When we say community, we mean a community of persons, a group of “I”s existing together with one another. The experience of man also incorporates the experience of others. The relationship involving “I” and “You” affirms the subjectivity of both groups.

Left alone, one person cannot move forward without having to do with others. It is in community life and in reaching out to others that man affirms himself and even more. These according to him are relationships in which human beings mutually reveal themselves to one another in their personal human subjectivity and in all that help makeup this subjectivity.²²³ The “I”- “Thou” relationship is a mutual relation of two subjects and it takes on meaning but at the same time also becomes an authentic subjective community. In a real community where persons interact with one another, persons reveal themselves and relate to one another as acting persons. They reveal themselves in their deepest structure of self-possession and self-governance. They also reveal themselves to one another striving for fulfilment, which culminating in acts of conscience, testifies to the transcendence proper to the human being as a person.²²⁴ The interpersonal community is a coming together of persons who are responsible for themselves and others. The responsibility here is a reflection of conscience and of the transcendence that for both the “I” and the “Thou” constitute the path to self-fulfilment, and at

²²²Karol, Wojtyła, „The Person: Subject and Community“, in *Person and Community: Selected Essays*. New York: Peter Lang, 1993, p. 235.

²²³ *ibid.*, p. 245.

²²⁴ *ibid.*,

the same time, characterizes the proper, authentically personal dimension of the community.²²⁵

So starting with the “I” – “You” relationship, the person enters into a “We” relationship. Then from the interpersonal dimension of the community one enters into the social dimension. The social dimension is seen in the pronoun “We”. Then the “I – You” relationship which sees persons as apart from each other now becomes a relationship wherein the parties involved are united as a group. The “we” relation does not dissolve the existence of individual persons but binds the multiplicity of “I” towards a common end.

“A *we* is many human being, many subjects, who in some way exist and act together. Acting “together” (i.e. “in common”) does not mean engaging in a number of activities that somehow go along side by side. Rather it means that these activities, along with the existence of those many I’s are related to a single value, which therefore deserves to be called the common good.”²²⁶

So people who are in a *we* relationship experience themselves existing and acting together with others but they experience this in a new dimension. In the *we* relation people do not lose themselves instead they experience a change in their direction and the common good determines this change. Not only do they experience their co-existence and co-acting but also experience their unity. The community of persons in the *we* relationship gain personal subjectivity and its own subjectivity. The formation of the *we* relationship is not simple or by chance, instead it happens as result of self-determined actions of the persons realizing that he is not alone in his pursuit of fulfilment. It comes through the recognition of the common humanity shared by persons. Through the *we* relationship, a person is able to form a new kind of relationship with others and also is able to experience his humanity as well as the humanity of others more fully.

2.1. 4. Karol Wojtyla on Evil of Alienation

In a simple expression, alienation is an act of being dissociated from something that by right belongs to oneself. Wojtyla writes: “The concept of alienation, which was introduced into philosophy in the 19th century and adopted by Marx, seems to be making a great comeback

²²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 246.

²²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 247.

today....According to Marx's philosophy, human beings are alienated by their products: their economic and political systems, their property, and their work."²²⁷ For him, alienation negates the person of a subject.²²⁸ It poses an obstacle for the person to experience a person as another "I". Alienation shows that a man is deprived of the personalistic value of his action.²²⁹ The other person is not seen as a neighbour but as a stranger or even an enemy.²³⁰ Alienation distorts the "I" – other relationship, and weakens the ability to experience the another human being as another "I", and inhabits the possibility of friendship and the spontaneous powers of community.²³¹ It is essentially a personalistic problem. Alienation encourages and creates circumstance for in which people are in some way deprived the possibility of fulfilling themselves in the community, either in the social community or a *we* or in interpersonal community.²³² Alienation handles the person as an outsider – i.e. someone who does not belong to the community. It deprives the person his right and the ability to associate with others to form an interpersonal community. Alienation poses a real threat not because it dehumanizes the human being as an individual member of a group of humans but because it poses a threat to the person as a subject. And this is the one of the greatest danger posed by alienation. That it reduces or refuses to affirm the person as a personal subject, capable of fulfilling and transcending himself.

In a society where alienation is practiced persons are lead to isolate one another. Persons not only lose the wealth of experience gained by entering into interpersonal community, they also miss the property to participate in the achievement and the benefits of the common good. Alienation restricts the person in his search for self-fulfilment since it did not let him to go beyond himself to reach out to others and by doing so reach out to himself. Alienation does not give room for the *we* relationship. In alienation, the person is denied of the experience of the value and fulfilment of his actions. According to Wojtyla, we cannot say this or that causes alienation the origin of alienation instead there are many factors that could bring about alienating a person from others and from their actions. In the first instance actions must be performed not only because it is only then that the question of an ethical value be attached or be raised, but because the person has basic and "natural" rights to perform actions and to be fulfilled in them.²³³ A person can be the cause of alienation to himself or the society can be

²²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 25.

²²⁸ Rolyn, B. F., Karol Wojtyla's Theory of Participation. Makati: St Paul's, 1995, p. 76.

²²⁹ Simpson P., On Karol Wojtyla. Australia: Wadsworth, 2001, p. 45.

²³⁰ *ibid.*

²³¹ Wojtyla, K., Person and Community Selected Essays, 206.

²³² *ibid.*, p. 255- 256.

²³³ Wojtyla, K., The Acting Person. *op. cit.*, p. 272.

the cause of his being alienated or even it could be the combination of both. Wojtyla in his analysis gave two generally known systems that encourage alienation.

2.1. 5. Individualism a System that foster Alienation

This is a system that places more emphasis on the interest of the individual persons above that of the community. Individualism arises as a result of a lack in the person. According to Wojtyla, individualism sees in the individual the supreme and fundamental good to which all interests of the community or society have to be subordinated.²³⁴ It isolates the person from others as an individual who concentrates on himself and on his own good.²³⁵ Individualism places priority to individual goods and considers community goods as a threat to the individual. In this system other people are seen as sources of limitation and ultimately present conflict. The only thing that exists is merely individuals who are acting on their own apart from others. In this arrangement, there is no sense of fulfilment to found the very reason of forming a community where people can experience themselves acting together with others. People are seen as egoistic because the only thing they care for is their own good. The community is not seen as been there to help him instead it is seen as an obstacle for him to get what he wants. The mind with which the individualist sees the world and himself is narrow and short. Individualism distances the person from the community and sees him solely as an individual whose main concern is to go after his own individual good. And the primary individual goods are self-preservation and self-defence. Wojtyla says; “From the point of view of individualism, to act “together with others,” just as to exist “together with others,” is a necessity that the individual must submit to, a necessity that corresponds to none of his very features or positive properties; neither does the acting and existing with others serve or develop any individual constituents.”²³⁶ The individual finds nothing good in working with others except for his own personal advantage. In such a system, it is difficult to achieve community activities and even if accomplished it is always by force or imposition by authorities. He accepts these as a “necessary evils” so as to be in a position to pursue his individual goals.

²³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 273.

²³⁵ *ibid.*, 273-274.

²³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 274.

2.1. 6. Totalism as a System that encourages Alienation

Totalism is the opposite of individualism. In this system, the individual is seen as a threat to the good of the community. The major trait of totalism may be characterized as the need to find protection from the individual, who is seen as the chief enemy of the society and the common good.²³⁷ Being the opposite of individualism, it operates assuming that all the goods that the individual is seeking are only individual goods and thereby seen as standing by the way of the common good. For the sake of the common good, the good of the individual should be put aside. That it is only by limiting the individual good that the common good could be achieved. To get at this therefore a certain amount of force is required which will restrict the individual from choosing and pursuing his own goods. Individual and common goods always do not go together. There is also tendency in totalism for the use of force to make the persons contribute to the achievement of the common good. For this very reason, it is likely that any group that practices totalism will always violate the basic rights of human being as persons. Individual growth is not allowed because such will not bring any contribution to the social group. The weakness of individualism and totalism lies in the fact that they have a false understanding of the human person. Both of these systems alienate the person from his ability to enter into a community of persons as well as to fulfil himself in his actions. For Wojtyla both systems are “Impersonalistic” or “antipersonalistic.” Both systems hinder a person from entering into a community. Wojtyla’s argument is that man has the right, even within a community to total freedom of acting. A person even as a part of a community has the freedom to determine himself towards his goals. This freedom of action within a community he says is not to be understood as absolute freedom instead, as conditioned by the truth and the good.

While individualism holds that the common good is a threat to oneself, totalism on the other hand maintains that any individual good is a threat to the common good. The concept of person in alienation denies the capability of the person to enter a community where he can experience himself existing and acting together with others towards a common good.²³⁸ “The real common good is something that fulfils or creates opportunities to fulfil himself as well as the community. Alienation then deprives the person from the ability to transcend and fulfil

²³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 24.

²³⁸ Mejos, E. A., *Against Alienation: Karol Wojtyla’s Theory of Participation*, article in http://www.Kritike.org/journal/issue_1mejoes_june2007. 12:06:2013.

himself in his action since it restricts the kinds of relationships he can form. Both systems compromise and deny persons their ability to fulfil themselves in their actions.²³⁹

For Wojtyla, that ability to participate must be cultivated and developed to its fullest maturity.²⁴⁰ Alienation denies the person of his natural right and ability to participate. Alienation restricts the person by not allowing him to maximize everything in his ability to full experience himself as a person. It is un-natural to the person since it goes against his natural ability to associate and relate with other persons. The experience of existing and acting together is not only natural but it is also necessary for the person to fulfil himself and this is possible through the experience of a community. When a person is denied of something that is naturally his, it means that his freedom to determine himself towards his end is taken away from him. But every being (must) have the right to act, which means “freedom in action,” so that the person can fulfil himself in performing the action.²⁴¹ The exercises of man’s freedom in his self-determined action gives him personal fulfilment, And fulfilment does not take place by mere performance of actions but instead in performance of good actions, therefore good actions fulfil and those that fail to fulfil are called evil hence alienation which deprives of his ability to fulfil himself is ultimately an evil in the society, to the person and to the community of persons.²⁴² It therefore poses a threat to the person individually and to the community of persons.

2.1. 7. Karol Wojtyla’s Theory of Participation

Every action by a person has a personal value before a moral value. An act has a personalistic value in the sense that the action is performed and in it the person realizes himself according to the structure which is proper to him.²⁴³ A person exists and does things in a specific manner, along with others. Wojtyla uses the word Participation to show the way in which a person in common action protects the personalistic value of his own action and participates together in the realization of common action and its outcomes.²⁴⁴ Participation refers to the ability of the person to live and act together with others without losing oneself as he moves

²³⁹ *ibid.*

²⁴⁰ Rolyn, B.F., Karol Wojtyla’s Theory of Participation. *op. cit.*, 79.

²⁴¹ Wojtyla, K., The Acting Person, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

²⁴² Mejos, E. A., Against Alienation: Karol Wojtyla’s Theory of Participation. *op. cit.*

²⁴³ Buttiglione, R., Karol Wojtyla The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II. Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997, p. 168.

²⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p. 169.

towards his self-fulfilment. Participation has meanings, first it is a property of the person which is expressed in the ability to give a personalistic dimension to his own existence and action while existing and acting together with others and it is also the ability to share in the humanity of others.²⁴⁵

This is how Wojtyla articulates his theory of participation. "... Participation basically serves to express the property by virtue of which we as persons exist and act together with others, while not ceasing to be ourselves or to fulfil ourselves in action, in our own acts. Also ...the ability to exist and act together with others in such a way that in this existing and acting we remain ourselves and actualize ourselves, which means our own I's."²⁴⁶ Participation therefore is a positive thing, in the sense that it allows the individual to experience himself as unique existing and acting along others. Participation helps the person to realize oneself and also helps the community to realize itself. That he is able to participate goes points to the fact that a person can enter into relationship involving persons and at the same time fulfil himself in his actions. As opposed to alienation, participation allows the person to fully experience himself as well as the humanity of other persons. Participation shows that human beings (also) tend toward self-fulfilment and fulfil themselves by existing and acting together with others.²⁴⁷ In participation the common good and the individual good meet in the person and he pursues them not alone but together with other persons. It is very important to note that participation does not take place by the mere fact that people come together because people can come together but still pursue their individual goals and remain in isolation. But participation indicates that the person positively recognizes the common good. It does not happen just that way instead it happens as a result of a person's conscious striving for fulfilment and the consciousness that he cannot do it alone but must seek it along with others. "In participation, a person does not wish for his good alone but also wishes the good of those that are around him. It allows him to open up himself to others and also allows others to share their humanity with him. In a sense, participation allows the person to become more human."²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ Rolyn, F. B., Karol Wojtyla's Theory of Participation. op. cit., p. 44.

²⁴⁶ Wojtyla, Person and Community Selected Essays, op. cit., p. 200.

²⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p. 254.

²⁴⁸ Mejos, E. A., Against Alienation: Karol Wojtyla's Theory of Participation. op. cit.

2. 2. Personalism

This is a philosophical orientation that stresses the value and dignity of each individual human person, the importance of dialogue (the- I-thou relationship), and the notion of human solidarity. It is the central for the Lublin school of philosophy, with which Pope John Paul II was once associated and whose philosophical orientation continues to influence his thinking and writing, especially his 1981 encyclical *Laborem Exercens* (On Human Work).²⁴⁹

The Council Fathers see the human person as a concept which includes a defence of human rights, but as something befitting the dignity of a child of God; it attributes the fullest liberty, freed from sin itself by Christ, the most exalted destiny, which is the definitive and total possession of God Himself, through love. It establishes the strictest possible relationship of solidarity among all persons, through mutual love and in an ecclesial community. It calls for the fullest development of all that is human, because we have been made masters of the world by its creator. Finally, it proposes Christ, Incarnate Son of God and perfect Man, as both model and means; to imitate Him is, for all men and women, the inexhaustible source of personal and communal perfection.²⁵⁰

2. 3. The Principle of Personality

Going by the Evolution theory, man came to be as a result of certain development in nature. He is a phase in the maturation process of fossils.²⁵¹ According to Teilhard de Chardin and his followers, man is the end point of creation. He is the highest level of organism as such, greater than all plants and animals through his endowment with reason and freedom which places him above all material things.²⁵² From the Sociological school of thought, man is seen as a product of the society and he is free to the extent he conforms to the norms and conventions of the society. Still from the point of view of historicity man is portrayed as always in the process of becoming, he is history.²⁵³ Friedrich Engel, discussing about the humanization of Apes – *Menschwerdung des Affen* – traces the emanation of man from work the very thing that distinguishes him from other beings. We see certain elements of truth in

²⁴⁹ Richard P. McBrien editor, *Encyclopedia of Catholicism*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995, p. 988.

²⁵⁰ Vatican II Council, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*. No. 18.

²⁵¹ Rauscher, A., *Personalität, Solidarität, Subsidiarität*, Kath. Soziallehre in Text und Kommentar, Heft, 1 Köln, 1975, p.7.

²⁵² *ibid.*

²⁵³ *ibid.*

some of these theories though not the complete truth. Man as we know is connected with natural things and unfolds himself in the society, lives in history and shapes the world through work.²⁵⁴

2. 4. The Transcendental Nature of Man

According to Pius XI, “Man is personality, equipped by God with wonderful gifts of body and soul. He is a true microcosm according to the sayings of old, a small world of his own, whose values outstrides that of the immense and un-lived world.”²⁵⁵ The Christian tradition talks of the unity of body and soul, which means the different aspects of man. Then this bodily vitality and spirit is not strictly material. “The spiritual life-principle which builds a unity with material ensures the independence, founds the authenticity and the personality of man, which is not part of nature, not part of the other, also not an anonymous element of the society, but rather a self.”²⁵⁶ This self-identity is very important if we are to understand man truly. The spiritual life principle is an attribute of which is innate in man and which cannot be taken away from him. It goes a long way in defining man as a person. With the help of this, one can speak of man as a sensible, thinking/rational, conscious and moral person.²⁵⁷ Clearly the society has influence on the awareness of man but not quite in the Marxist proposition. In their view, it is the society that determines the self-awareness of man. But it is because man is aware of himself that he identifies himself with the society in which he lives. Man is a transcendent being, credit to his rationality that helps go beyond the normal reality and asks about the meaning of life as a whole.²⁵⁸ For this very reason he is a free and responsible being.

2. 5. Man a Free and Responsible Being

Man’s self-awareness and identity has much to do with freedom and responsibility and these are part of the attributes of man. Personality implies freedom, and freedom means being capable of making decision without external pressure when faced with options.²⁵⁹ “Man’s

²⁵⁴ Onaga, C. V. C., op. cit., p.53.

²⁵⁵ Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris*. 192.

²⁵⁶ Rauscher, A., *Personalität, Solidarität, Subsidiarität*, Kath. Soziallehre in Text und Kommentar, Heft 1, Köln, 1975.

²⁵⁷ *ibid.*

²⁵⁸ *ibid.*

²⁵⁹ Roos, L., *Das Christliche Menschenbild*, in: Eiter, R & Roos, L. (eds.). *Der Mensch im Betrieb* –

dignity therefore requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint.”²⁶⁰ This kind of freedom requires responsibility because it is only what one has control of he can only account for. We know very well that in moral philosophy, one is held responsible only for his so called “human acts” and for the “acts of man”, he is not responsible. This means that only a free man can assume responsibility for his deeds. The very fact that there is possibility of choice in man’s life ties him to the reality of responsibility. And this responsibility seems to be a kind of restriction as indicated by Jean Jacque Rousseau in his formulation “man is born free but everywhere in chains”.

Freedom and responsibility therefore accord man his dignity, rights and duties. Reason and freedom make for authenticity. Dignity of man implies that man is not grouped along or below external things or made an instrument or object of exploitation for another person or society; meaning that a person is considered as such in his own rights and duties. Every human being is a world of his own and has to be respected, be it as a result of sex, special gifts, capabilities, origin, family status and racial ties, profession, values, convictions, personal history and fate.²⁶¹ These are the things that make a person different from the other person. Notwithstanding, every person is unique in his person and has to be respected in his individuality.

Man is the only being that is created in the image and likeness of his creator (God). He carries a dignified and glorified image, “Imago Dei”. For this reason, the dignity, value, rights and duties of all human persons are inviolable.

Pius XII used the expression Person severally in reference to the social ethics of the society. The situation in the national socialistic period of the Nazi regime in Germany made him to speak out strongly while defending the dignity of the human person.²⁶² According to Pius XII, the creative work of God culminated in man as the image of God. This is so because God endowed man with supernatural talents and qualities. These qualities on the other hand guarantee man of eternal and indescribable happiness.²⁶³ Each man in the society therefore has right over his individuality. Human dignity requires that each person be treated and respected as an individual knowing well that each individual depends on the other in and

Arbeit- Verantwortung-Lebenssinn, pp 89-90.

²⁶⁰ Gaudium et spes No. 17.

²⁶¹ Rauscher, A., Personalität, Solidarität und Subsidiarität, cited by Onaga, C. V. C., “Civilization of Work” op. cit., p. 55.

²⁶² Brüggermann, E., Die menschliche Person als Subjekt der Arbeit, in Civilization of Work. op.cit., p.55.

²⁶³ Pius XII, Summi Pontificatus. Nr. 27, also Gaudium et Spes Nr. 12.

together they complement and support each other. We know very well that human beings are not equal in terms of endowment and other qualities, but all have equal values. The glaring inequalities among human beings has its root in attributes like talent, ability etc. Since all human beings share the same origin and purpose, they are of the same value. “The academician is not more than the street sweeper, the director of a company is not more valuable than the last worker; the clever and hard worker is not more than the handicapped or the work-incapacitated, the president not more valuable than the nurse, the Germans not superior to the Brazilians, the white not better than the black and the young people not better than old people. In their dignity all persons have an essential equality.”²⁶⁴ There should be no barrier among people instead toleration is encouraged. Every human being has rights and duties which are natural to his person. And these rights and duties come from God the creator. These rights and duties are recognized by institutions like Church, United Nations and Government etc.

2. 6. A Being Born to Work

We learnt from the scriptures that man is created in the image and likeness of God.²⁶⁵ God made all things by creating them. By creating, God himself worked. He worked for six days and on the seventh day, He rested.²⁶⁶ So the image of God presented to us in the book of Genesis, is that of a worker. When God who is a worker par excellence created also a being onto his likeness, it follows then that man is created to work and by so doing continuing the creative action of God His creator. “The Church finds in the very pages of the book of Genesis the source of her conviction that work is a fundamental dimension of human existence on earth. An analysis of these texts makes us aware that they express-sometimes in an archaic way of manifesting thought-the fundamental truths about man, in the context of the mystery of creation itself. These truths are decisive for man from the very beginning, and at the same time they trace out the main lines of his earthly existence...”²⁶⁷ When man, who had been created in the image of God, male and female, hears the words: " Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it" ²⁶⁸. In the words of the Pope, by these words man hears what does not refer immediately and explicitly to work but beyond any doubt indicates

²⁶⁴ Rauscher, A., op. cit., p. 11,

²⁶⁵ Genesis 1:27.

²⁶⁶ Genesis 2:2.

²⁶⁷ Laborem exercens op. cit., p. 7.

²⁶⁸ *ibid.*

it indirectly as a kind of lifelong activity which he must pursue in the world. Indeed, the words reveal the hidden essence of work. One of the ways in which man is made in God's image is that he has been given by his creator the mandate to subdue, to dominate, the earth. When he performs this task, man and every man, so acts as to reveal in what he does the action of the Creator of the universe himself.²⁶⁹ Through man God continues His creative activities in the world. Man created in the image and likeness of God alone is capable of working in the real sense of the usage of the word. Other living creatures through activities sustain their life but could not be called work. From his very nature, man is called to undertake the duty of working. And in working man fulfils his life on earth. Work bears man's signature, the distinctive mark of his human nature, the mark of a person who is acting within a community of persons, a mark which reveals him as he truly is and constitutes to a certain extent his very nature.

The life of Jesus Christ proves this point right. He is the revelation of God. Jesus is God and man. He revealed to us what God is like and at the same time give us example how our life should be.

In the Old Testament we see many references to the individual professions exercised by men: doctor and pharmacist; craftsmen and artist; blacksmith. Also in the parables on the Kingdom of God Jesus Christ constantly refers to human occupations; fisherman; merchant; labourer. He compares the apostolate to the manual work of harvesters and or fishermen. He refers to the work of scholars, too.²⁷⁰

Christ teaching on work which was primarily based on his own life on earth during his years in Nazareth was also seen in the teaching of the Apostle Paul. Paul, who probably was a tent maker boasted of working at his trade and said that it enabled him even as an Apostle to earn his own bread. ²⁷¹ Nor did we ever have our meals at any one's table without paying for them; he remarked, now we worked night and day, starving and straining, so as not to be a burden on any of you. His instructions are in the form of exhortation and command, on the subject of work: In the Lord Jesus Christ, he writes to the Thessalonians “we order and call on people of this kind (those who neglect there natural obligation to work) to go on quietly working and caring for the food that they eat”. In fact noting that some are living in idleness, doing no work themselves, the Apostle does not hesitate to say in the same context: If anyone will not

²⁶⁹ *ibid.*

²⁷⁰ *ibid.*

²⁷¹ Acts 18, 3:20, 34ff.

work, let him not eat.²⁷² He also encouraged the Colossians: Whatever your work is, put your heart into it as if it were for the Lord and not for men, knowing that the Lord will repay you by making you his heirs²⁷³

Work then from the point of view of the Apostle Paul becomes a natural necessity that everyone has to be part of. The very fact of preaching the Gospel could not exonerate them laying their hands also onto what could put food on their table and at the same time be of good help to their brothers and sisters. In the modern Society today, we are confronted as well this same life of Idleness in the name of believe in God, the situation where people gather together in the so called prayer houses, refuse to work, still expecting miracle of the multiplication of loaves. Through such attitude of laziness they discomfort the society at large by robbing her of their own contribution to the development and at the time a serious burden to the people who have dedicated their time and energy by working and earning their wages. People of this sort resort to false prophesy and miracles. That someone preaches the word of God does not rule out any other form of work.

Naturally, man is born and called to work. So laziness is so to speak against man's nature and disobedience to God who instructed man to rule and improve creation and by working, perfect himself.

The fathers of the second Vatican Council expressed it in these words: ``as human activities proceeds from man, so is it ordered towards man. When a man works it is not so much objects and affairs that he changes, as himself that he perfects. He learns much he cultivates his resources he goes outside himself and beyond himself. Rightly understood, this kind of growth is worth more than any external riches that can be garnered.... Hence, the test of human activity is this; that it should be consistent with the genuine good of the human race according to what Gods plans and wills, and should allow people whether as individuals or as members of society to seek after and attain the fullness of their vocation.``²⁷⁴

²⁷² 2 Thessalonica 3: 8-12.

²⁷³ Colossians 3, 23ff.

²⁷⁴ Gaudium et Spes No. 35.

2.7. A Being Called to Work

The image of work as a call and an obligation constitute the central message of John Paul II in his famous Encyclical on human work. He writes; man is born to work as well as called to it; that work is for man a lifelong activity which man must pursue. ²⁷⁵

Martin Luther was the first to connect work with a call or vocation. He came to this while proving that religious life is not greater than activity in the world. There is just one best way to serve God; he said to do most perfectly the work of one's profession.

So long as work is done in a spirit of obedience to God and of love for one's neighbour every variety of labour has equal spiritual dignity, each is the service of God on earth. All profession he continued are needful to the common life of mankind. He felt that if activity-activity of all kinds- is divine, there is no basis for making distinction between the service of God and man's everyday work.

It was with Luther that the German word meaning profession (Beruf) took on a religious colour which it was never to lose, and which from German passed into all the analogous words of Protestant countries. Profession and vocation or calling became synonymous. From his hands work came forth endowed with religious dignity. The gate which give upon modernity was from his time on, definitely open. ²⁷⁶

Gregory Pence also trying to put a theory of work writes: the highest kind of activity involving work is a calling. As the name implies, callings exist when individuals find intrinsic pleasure in their work and when they “identify” themselves with their work. In a calling, one believes that one’s unique abilities “call” one to a certain kind of work. Although the word “calling” has a religious etymology he said, the concept here is secular. A naturally gifted musician who enjoys music may feel that music is a calling for him based solely on his assessment of his abilities and pleasures`. More than any other condition, however, calling have the sense that one's work has a higher purpose than earning money. One's work directed towards accomplishing goals which tie in with larger goals in the community and world. ²⁷⁷

When God created man, He did not leave him empty handed. God bestowed to humanity the necessary things that will enable him rule the earth. These gifts, he did not restrict to certain

²⁷⁵ Kirwan, J., op. cit., p. iii.

²⁷⁶ Tilgher, A., op. cit., p. 18.

²⁷⁷ Schaff, K., op. cit., p. 94.

individuals, instead were shared out. Everyone received according to his ability. This gift is what is referred to as call or vocation. It is a call because God bestows it to a particular individual. He created every individually uniquely. Of all the people who can do the thing to which God called you, you are the most qualified. Only you can do it the best way that it could be done. Others may try in their own ways but the person who is called to this particular work is the one who can bring out the best. Gifts come along side birth, but needs to be guided and developed responsibly. No one is left out in this call.

Pope Paul VI in his Encyclical letter wrote, "In the design of God, every life is vocation. At birth, everyone is granted, in germ, a set of aptitudes and qualities for him to bring to fruition. Their coming to maturity, which will be the result of education received from the environment and the personal efforts, will allow each man to direct himself towards the destiny intended for him by his creator. Endowed with intelligence and freedom, he is responsible for his fulfilment as he is for his salvation. He is aided, or sometimes impeded, by those who educate him and those with whom he lives, but each one remains, whatever be these influences affecting him, the principal agent of his own intelligence and his will, each man grow in humanity, can enhance his personal worth, can become more a person."²⁷⁸

The creator intends by these endowments, that they be developed by careful guidance and be eventually put into use in form of work. All directed for the common good of the society and self-realization of the possessor. No individual has the monopoly of the talents. Instead, members of a particular society have individually what she requires for development. It could happen that some talents may be mismanaged along line of the development stage, because of the mistakes from the part of parents and educators who from the early stage of growth are entrusted with the responsibility of children. In some cases also, it could be as a result of selfishness of the individual person himself who is endowed with this gift. Granted that all these abilities and calls do not look alike but in a sense they are directed towards the same goal, the fulfilment of the person and the renewal of the earth.

Gregory Pence used the classification of labour, workmanship and calling in trying to improve our thinking about work. He remarked: we are all acquainted with the fact that some work activities are more pleasant than others. Some work activities are very unpleasant for the worker. Let us call them labour he said. Paradigms of labour are tilling a field for weeds, occupying a position on an assembly line, and picking up trash along the side of a highway.

²⁷⁸ Pope Paul VI., *Populorum Progressio* Art. 15.

Labouring is generally (a) repetitions (b) not intrinsically satisfying, (c) done out of necessity; labour also involves (d) few higher human faculties, and (e) little choice about how and when the work is done. Together these conditions are sufficient to define labour according to the thought pattern of Gregory Pence.²⁷⁹

For him workmanship differs from labour in many ways: Workmanship generally is more satisfying for the worker than labour. Paradigms of workmanship are professional occupation like dentistry and engineering, as well as traditional craftsmanship jobs like carpentry, leather-working, etc. The general conditions differentiating workmanship from labour include the following (i) use of higher human faculties (ii) some intrinsic satisfaction in the activity itself (iii) some degree of choice about when work is done and how (iv) pride of the worker in the products of his work.

Pence named Socrates and many other famous individuals as examples of callings. In many ways, one has a calling in the sense in which a person defines his most intimate goals in life through his work. There is no bad faith in a calling, for one obtains self-realization through the goals of one's work.

Callings for him is better than workmanship, and workmanship is better than labour. He gave the conditions to judge that one kind of work is better than another as follows (1) development and exercise of unique personal qualities (2) intrinsic satisfaction in the activity, (3) personal choice in accepting the job in the first place. The basic assumption is that the more people work in workmanship and callings, the more they will be tied to the larger community for social good. He suggested that a rational person with normal desires would want to avoid the evil of labour in his life-plans and would want to live a calling in his work. It must be pointed out that social stereotypes of callings, workmanship, and labour are not equivalent to what is meant here. If a physician regards his job as boring, repetitious and without intrinsic satisfaction, then he is labouring. In contrast, a gardener might regard his work as a calling, despite the fact that outsiders would see his work as labour. Thus, the important perspective is the view of the worker. One man's labour is another's calling.

²⁷⁹ Schaff, K., *op. cit.*, p. 93.

2. 8. Why is Work Meaningful?

The first question that comes to mind is this; what actually is that which makes work worth doing. We know that work offers one an opportunity of making a living. It also keeps one busy when it comes to what to do with his time, creating room to satisfied achievement. But the answer to why work is worth doing goes beyond these reasons. The best experience to get by working is that it adds value to people's life and is an important part of a communal life in an ideal society. Work is enjoyable and it also provides a desirable sense of challenge in people by making use of their strength. Work adds to the health and right judgment of a society or community. Because it is that which distinguishes man from the rest of creature, by working man unfolds, realizes him-self and becomes more a human being.

2. 9. Humanization of Work

Today we hear people complain bitterly in their work places about the demand and challenges confronting them. How they are expected to increase the production even when that is done, more increase is still expected. This type of experience leads to a situation we call burnout in work that is becoming more suitable for machines than human beings. In the face of these facts, people say often, "I cannot find any real meaning in what I do or I feel I am losing my soul.

The introduction of machine technology in the western world apart from bringing increase in production also brought gradual de – humanizing capitalism. Workers especially in the more developed world work under much greater stress than they used to, in what could be described as work that is more benefitting mechanically or technologically than human beings.

People die easily doing this type of work. When compare with the reasons for using machines to work, our attitude is on the contrary negative. It could be described as an unexpected by-product of the Industrial Age. Workers are demanded to do more and more with less and less. The reason is that it works with the machines but the question is Why not human beings?

In such system, workers are seen as objects, even the supposed human resources are turned to things such as tools that are manipulated belonging to the organization.

In the face of all these conditions imposed on work through the introduction of machine the question then is how do we restore work to its glory and create working conditions where workers by working become more human and get self-fulfilment.

Man is at the centre of the whole discussion. “He who is the image of the invisible God, is himself the perfect man who has restored in the Children of Adam that likeness to God which had been disfigured ever since the first sin.”²⁸⁰ The Redeemer of the world by taken the image of man has elevated the dignity of man. For “Human nature, by the very fact that it was assumed, not absorbed, in him, has been raised in us also to a dignity beyond compare. For, by his Incarnation, he, the son of God, in a certain way united himself with each man. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin”²⁸¹

Man that is referred here represents the whole of human race. Man as it is God’s will, and chosen from eternity and called, destined for grace and glory-this is each man, the most concrete man, the most real; this is man in all the fullness of the mystery in which he has become a sharer in Jesus Christ, the mystery in which each one of the four thousand million human beings living on our planet has become a sharer from the moment he is conceived beneath the heart of his mother²⁸².

Man is destined for greatness and in order to reach his destination, the Church see the need not to abandon him to faith because from his election, that means his calling, birth, death, salvation or perdition, he is linked with Christ.²⁸³

It is by working that man accomplishes his mission on earth, the earth that the Creator gave to the first man, saying to the man and woman: “subdue it and have dominion”²⁸⁴.

²⁸⁰ Redemptor hominis No. 9.

²⁸¹ *ibid.* No. 8.

²⁸² *ibid.* No.13.

²⁸³ *ibid.* No 14.

²⁸⁴ Genesis. 1: 28.

2. 10. Ways of giving Work a more Human Face

1. Understanding well the full meaning of Work

Work we know has comprehensive meaning such as political, social and spiritual. Therefore it is important here to draw our attention to the Encyclical *Laborem Exercens*, where the purpose of work was given at the beginning as follows: earning of daily bread, contribution to the continual advance of science and technology, and elevation of the cultural and moral level in the society.

It is part of nature human and dignity to make effort, work and participate in creation. In the ideal sense, work for each person should be what brings fulfilment and gives meaning and direction to daily life. Employment and work should benefit not only the individual, but also the human community²⁸⁵

In the book of Genesis, work is seen as part of the natural order of human society, as personal fulfilment in cooperation with the natural world, and an important aspect of human well-being. Work therefore can offer opportunities for the expression of personal ability, creativity and taking initiative. For through work, man achieves fulfilment as a human being.²⁸⁶

2. The Worker should be seen as Subject and not Object

John Paul II made it very clear that: “The sources of the dignity of work are to be sought primarily in the subjective dimension, not in the objective one” as opposed to the radical claim in the materialistic age. The Pope was aware of this threat to the right order of values in all forms of economic principles that reduce human beings to economic arithmetic. This was experienced in rigid profit oriented systems and in the state socialist systems whereby human beings are placed on the same level as the material means of production, treated and handled as mere instruments. Such treatment originally pushed workers to revolt helped labour to organize in an effort to fight against the degradation and relegation of man as a subject of work. The essence of work is for the human dignity and it makes family life possible. In today’s world we notice, the nature and pressure of work, the lost notion of a just wage or

²⁸⁵ Kan, G., “Creating Opportunities for More Human Work”, *Work as Key to the Social Question*. op. cit., p. 182.

²⁸⁶ *ibid.*

living wage, implies that, family life will be more difficult in a cultural surrounding places the highest form of human pleasure and enjoyment on buying, getting and acquiring.²⁸⁷

That which work means to the subject and for the subject is thereby distorted: instead of helping the subject to sustain community, even in the family where work is understood as acquiring, striving, and competition pits the individual worker, male and female, against the needs of those fragile human persons who need them most – their own children – even as they comfort themselves with the conviction that they are providing what their children want. But in real sense, what the children want most is much of their time, more guidance and direction. They pressure and demands from work make adults to abandon their families and children leaving them to their own faith and the children mostly feel lost.²⁸⁸ So work should be organized so as to help the worker to meet his responsibility as a human person.

3. Self-fulfilment and Development of a Human Being

For work to have a human face, it should be able to help the individual worker to attain to self-fulfilment and development to which he is destined to. This is his vocation on earth as was expressed by Pope Paul VI who says: “In the design of God, every man is called upon to develop and fulfil himself, for every life is a vocation. At birth, everyone is granted, in germ, a set of aptitudes and qualities for him to bring to fruition. Their coming to maturity, which will be the result of education received from the environment and personal efforts, will allow each man to direct himself toward the destiny intended for him by his Creator. Endowed with intelligence and freedom, he is responsible for his fulfilment as he is for his salvation. He is aided, or sometimes impeded, by those who educate him and those with whom he lives, but each one remains, whatever be these influences affecting him, the principal agent of his own success or failure. By the unaided effort of his own intelligence and his will each man can grow in humanity, can enhance his personal worth, can become more a person”²⁸⁹

A worker is also endowed with these aptitudes which he has to develop and it is in his work that he is going to achieve it. His working environment and condition should be able to assist him in doing this. It is for this reason we emphasize human working conditions. The worker needs to be active participant and not passive in his work.

²⁸⁷ Elshain J. B., “Catholic Social teaching and the Meaning of Work”, *Work as Key to the Social Question*. op. cit., p. 33.

²⁸⁸ *ibid.*

²⁸⁹ Pope Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*. op. cit., p. 238.

The self-fulfilment says the Pope is not optional. In the same way the whole creation is ordained to its Creator, so also the spiritual being should on their own channel their lives towards God who is the first truth and supreme good. For the human fulfilment constitutes a summary of our duties.

Each man is a member of the society and a part of the whole of mankind. It is all men and not just individuals who are called to this fullness of development. Civilizations come, develop and go; humanity on the contrary advances along the path of history. We have inherited from the past generations, also benefited from the work of our contemporaries: based on this, we have therefore obligations to also clear the way for the coming generation and by doing so enlarge the human family. The reality of human solidarity, which is a benefit for us, also imposes a sense of duty²⁹⁰.

We have an obligation of making sure that the human race keeps going and work is a duty we have to do in response to this challenge. If man refuse to work, let him not eat says St. Paul. Again through work man acquires temporal goods that he needs which could also lead to greed. Possession is good since man needs them to satisfy his wants but it should not be the ultimate goal of a nation or individual. It is essential for man to develop as man, but it can also imprison man and restricts his vision if he sees it as a supreme good. Possession has the power of causing disunity, oppositions and tearing people apart, hardening hearts and making minds close, turning men enemies of each other. The exclusive pursuit of possession can become “an obstacle to individual fulfilment and to man’s true greatness”²⁹¹.

In case development requires work of more and more technicians, even more necessary is the deep thought and reflection of wise men in search of a new humanism which will enable modern man to find himself anew by embracing the higher values of love and friendship,...This is what will permit the fullness of authentic development, a development which is for each and all the transition from less human conditions to those which are more human.²⁹²

Apart from the steps already mentioned, it is also important that the following actions to be taken by various bodies so that their contributions can more efficiently lead to a greater humanization of work.

²⁹⁰ *ibid.* p. 244.

²⁹¹ *ibid.*

²⁹² *ibid.*

2. 10. 1. The Role of the Government

- (a) The government is to make sure that a set of laws and regulations which cover workers welfare are provided and that the workers also have representatives in the government.
- (b) They should encourage union activity and training of workers and they do this by granting financial support to the organizations that unite workers and employers.
- (c) They should map out strategies and promote a national poverty eradication program or policy.
- (d) Effort should be made to encourage and develop social dialogue.
- (e) To see that adequate provision of social security for the workers making sure that those working in non-official areas are covered.
- (f) Training capable hands in the various sections of the labour ministry or department so ensure that they are effectively able to respect labour laws and regulations.

2. 10. 2. On the part of Workers

- (a) Workers should organize an education and training also enlightenment programs for the members of the union, so that they can learn about the basic principles and rights to work.
- (b) Putting up an education and training strategy for grass-roots members of the union, to help them learn about the basic principles and rights to work.
- (c) Workers should help the leaders of union organizations to get the means of sensitization and education concerning workers' rights and duties.

2. 10. 3. On the part of Employers

- (a) Employers should sensitize the members of their organizations on how to respect and strengthen social legislation.
- (b) It is their work also to educate members of their organizations to place ever greater value on the work of their employees.

2. 10. 4. The Role of International Labour Organization

- (a) The International Labour Organization should help to promote and articulate the basic principles and rights to work.
- (b) They should help bring about growth in the opportunities for decent employment for both men and women.
- (c) They should help extend the benefits and functionality of social security.
- (d) They should help in boosting link among other parties and encourage social dialogue.

2. 10. 5. The Role to be played by the Church

- (a) It is the duty of the Church, through her message to increase the moral awareness of the citizens and the actors in the labour world especially, so that each person will know his or her rights and duties in order to be more committed in exercising them. Work in this regard should allow the fulfilment of the person, helping him develop his physical, intellectual and moral faculties so that he can satisfy his material and moral needs. Work must help the city to develop, give individual fulfilment and provide for the needs of the people and community. It is important for all to help make work achieve this purpose. Also the challenges of Globalization require new morality and ethics that must underlie the new relations between man and work and those of the nations.
- (b) The Church has an important and meaningful role to play in that she is the custodian of truth and faith which the Church arouses through her preaching can go a long way in touching and changing the hearts of people. Then faith has ethical and spiritual powers that can offer a fundamental sense of trust, ultimate standards and a spiritual home.
- (c) Christian entrepreneurs in the face of economic and work demands also practice their faith and know that their vocation is to follow Christ in their job. They are confronted regularly with the tensions between hard economic reality and the call of the gospel. Their faith helps them to have a clear specific vision of humanity where work is not the end of one's life. One finds meaning in justice, equity and respect for others beyond competition and even success. Through their actions, they join in building new values through their example win their fellow employers to add more meaning to

workers lives. They should provide structures for their employees to do the same and the church should support and help both the entrepreneurs and employees to achieve this objective.

- (d) Companies need to play an important role in the communities and surrounding where they built their factories or office around the world. They should go beyond offering jobs and help to support education, sport and cultural infrastructures and other activities that help to improve the quality of life for their employees their families, friends and neighbours.

2. 11. Self-fulfilment and Self-realization According to Karol Wojtyla

Before we start this inquiry, it will be necessary to point out that Karol Wojtyla whose thought is about to be discussed was greatly influenced by a great philosopher and theologian of the medieval period Thomas Aquinas who in turn was a disciple of Aristotle. Simply put Thomas Aquinas christinized the thoughts of Aristotle and the influence is what we see in Karol Wojtyla's concept of self realization and self fulfilment.

In the metaphysic of Aristotle, the knowledge of a thing is at the same time the knowledge of its causes. And by the causes he meant: the material cause, the formal cause, the efficient cause and the final cause. To know a thing through its causes is simply, to know it through its essence. According to its form, each thing is a substance of a particular nature, ordered to some appropriate good as an end. Indeed to know the essence of a thing was not only to know its form, but to know its end, its operation and its dependence on an efficient cause as well. To have successfully known the essence of a thing means that the entire science of that thing would be implicitly contained in the definition expressing this essence.²⁹³

For Aristotle, all things are involved in processes of change and that each thing possesses the power to become what its form has set as its end. There is in all things a dynamic power of striving toward their "end"²⁹⁴ Also he saw in nature different levels of being and from there he was led to the notion of a being that is pure actuality, without any potentiality, at the highest level of being. Because change is a kind of motion, Aristotle saw the visible world as one made up of things in motion. But motion as a mode of change he reasons, involves

²⁹³ Colleston, F. (S.J.), A History of Philosophy, Vol. 1, Part II. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1962, pp. 23-24.

²⁹⁴ Stumpf, S. E., Socrates to Sartre, History of Philosophy. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975, p.98.

potentiality. Then things are potentially in motion and must be moved by something that is actually in motion. In order to explain motion ultimately led Aristotle to speak of the Unmoved Mover.²⁹⁵

Then Aristotle's Unmoved Mover became especially at the hands of Aquinas in the thirteenth century, the philosophical description of the God of Christianity.

In *Summa Theologiae*, a theological work which focuses on God "who is the origin and end of all things". It begins with the discussion of God and ends with Christ, who brings back all things to God as their end. All things flow from God as their Source (or first and exemplary cause) and return to him as their ultimate end (or final cause).²⁹⁶

Human being himself is ordered directly to God as to an end. Indeed as a rational creature he is directly so related. Material things are ordered to God through human beings. Furthermore, if as Aristotle suggests, everything is named from its end, then the human person is best named from his relationship with God.

Aquinas continuing said that the human being is, by nature, ordered to a last end. The name of this last end, which one necessarily desires, is happiness.²⁹⁷ "Ultimus autem finis hominis... felicitas sive beatitudo nominatur."²⁹⁸

2.11.1. What then is Happiness?

Thomas Aquinas defined this last end (Happiness) as follows: "Nothing else is understood to be meant by the term 'happiness' than the perfect good of an intellectual nature, which is capable of knowing that it has a sufficiency of the good which it possesses and to which it belongs that good or ill may befall, and which can control its own actions."²⁹⁹

By the name happiness (*beatitudo*) is understood the ultimate perfection of rational or intellectual nature.³⁰⁰ The perfection of the rational beings is called happiness. This does not mean that happiness is the best thing for the rational creature, but that the happy rational is the

²⁹⁵ *ibid.* p. 99.

²⁹⁶ Reimers A. J., *An Analysis of the Concepts of Self-fulfillment and Self-realization in the Thought of Karol Wojtyła, Pope John Paul II.* New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001, p. 25.

²⁹⁷ Reimers, A. J., *op. cit.* p. 28.

²⁹⁸ Aquinas T., S. C. G. III 25, 14.

²⁹⁹ Aquinas, T., S. T. 1a 26, 1co.

³⁰⁰ Aquinas, T., S. T. 1a 62, 1co., S. C. G. III 26, 3.

best that it can be. When the rational creature is as good as it can be, then it is, by definition happy.³⁰¹

According to Wojtyła, happiness has to do with the human being's acting and not simply with what happens in him.³⁰² Happiness is something that one does in virtue of his own natural capacities. It is not an utterly foreign state imposed from without, overwhelming his nature and its powers. He speaks of happiness in terms of the structure of the person's self-realization. "In the notion of 'felicity' there is something akin to fulfilment, to the fulfilment of self through action. But to fulfil oneself is almost synonymous with felicity, with being happy. But to fulfil oneself is the same thing as to realize the good whereby man as the person becomes and is good himself."³⁰³ It is precisely by his integrated transcendence towards the good that the person fulfils or realizes himself as a person and attains felicity.

For Wojtyła, a decisive element in the self-realization of the person is his integration. He characterizes this integration as the realization of totality and unity on the background of complexity.³⁰⁴ This integration is the complement of the person's transcendence in the act, and without it his transcendence hangs in a structural vacuum. The function of this integration is to enable one to cross the boundary from "happening" to "acting".³⁰⁵ "What happens in a human being" is that of which he is not – as such - the master. To draw what "happens" into a meaningful unity as one acts is integration.³⁰⁶

The act of subsuming one's actual, received values under a transcendent value of drawing his habits into a meaningful coherence is the accomplishment of integration. The values that he may recognize with his mind will be different than those to which his "natural" habits or instincts may be ordered to. By this integration in terms of the transcendent value he passes from being the locus of happenings to the author of acts. "It is the one ultimate end or purpose which gives direction to all the others and gives meaning to the totality of human existence.

This implies that the person is a creative centre in the world, in a sense, a kind of creator. The human person is a metaphysical being and by his habits of action and understanding, constitutes a view of the world for himself. He carries within his understanding a view of how the world is and of how it ought to be, and acts on the basis of this.

³⁰¹ Reimers, A. J., op. Cit., p. 29.

³⁰² The Acting Person, pp. 174 – 175.

³⁰³ Wojtyła, K., The Acting Person. p. 174 in Reimers, A. J., op. cit p. 109.

³⁰⁴ Wojtyła, K., The Acting Person. P.201 in Reimers, A. J., op cit. p. 76.

³⁰⁵ *ibid.*

³⁰⁶ Reimers, A. J., op. cit., p. 76.

That means, a person acts to realize a world that is ideal; he is striving to bring about a new world, one which – to some extent and after a fashion – exists in his own mind. Karol Wojtyla observes that human reflection is creative, that “man, by nature, is a creator and not only a consumer. He finds in this an express likeness of man to God. The person in his integration becomes a principle of unity underlying causal interactions with the world. His own inner principle of unity, according to which he is integrated, is ordered transcendently to the ideal or the good, and according to this ideal, he becomes an agent for the self realization of that good in the world. He becomes a principle of good, according to the value he has adopted as his highest good.”³⁰⁷

2.11.2 Happiness and Participation If true happiness is the vision of and communion with God, then communion with another human being, which imitates or models communion with God, would be a kind happiness. Work participates in God’s creative activity; indeed, it can accurately be called a kind of ‘working with God’. And as such it is a kind of happiness.

2.11.3. Happiness and Work

The human person as an intelligent and efficacious agent in the world finds happiness in work. It is true that work has been portrayed as an evil, suffering, drudgery etc to be endured in order to earn money for one’s leisure, but universal human experience shows that happiness is intimately related to work. One finds his place in the society largely in the virtue of work. A good example of this we find in certain surnames that are derived from trades like Smith, Carpenter, Fowler, Baumann, Ezeji etc. We see people struggling to go back to work after vacation or illness. This experience is something normal. A person who has no work feels bored and begins to look for an activity that will add meaning to his or her life or indulges in sense pleasures and stimulation that may fill up his or her time. Work is part of life. “In all cultures men and women enter into work. They sing it, they identify with it, and they often find it pleasurable.”³⁰⁸

Regarding success and meaning, the importance of work is very clear. Work is rationally directed activity to change the environment, adapting it to human life and purposes. For this

³⁰⁷ *ibid.* Pp. 76 – 77.

³⁰⁸ Reimers A. J., *op.cit.*, p.183.

reason the worker can enjoy the satisfaction of seeing the world yield to his efforts, acquiring new form and goods for human use. To some extent, work has to do with the happiness of success. No matter how difficult or unpleasant the task may be, the worker is known to take pride in the finished product.³⁰⁹

Work is co-creation, which means working together with the creator as John Paul II expresses it. Then if God has created the world fit for human to live in, the person adapts it according to his culture and individual personality, reworking his environment, using the resources for the sake of his own life and purposes. If God is Creator, it follows then that by working, the human person participates in the thought and activity of the Creator God.³¹⁰

Work by structuring the human environment also structures his time. According to Reimers, “Work is the unfolding of one’s significance as an agent. The habits by which the human personality and character are structured are realized in action.”³¹¹ That is to say, a habit exists only to the extent that it can find expression in concrete acts. The realization of values toward which the person is oriented takes place in time. When one is staying idle, he does nothing in relation to realizing his ideals and goals. But the natural impulse is to use that time to realize oneself by action in the world. This is experienced in those circumstances whereby the outcome of an action of another is required before a goal is attained. In such situation, there is always an irresistible urge to do something. Idle time is seen as wasted, useless. Here we see that compelling evidence that the human being does not exist as a pure self inside an organic mechanism. Man is a spiritual being and the spiritual being that is the person must express himself through work in time. The spiritual nature of man is evidenced in the impulse to work, even when the circumstances to sheer survival do not demand it. And when freed from necessary work, the human being finds other work – leisure or part time work – to refresh himself: sport, exercise, searching for comets, portrait painting, and so on.³¹²

Work is important because it explains the world by unfolding its possibilities. Work discovers the intelligibility of creation and expresses this in creative reworking. The cook by adding herbs to the boiling meat discover the characteristics of things and combine them anew to bring forth something new and good. The worker finds meaning in his understanding and in its fruit; by his interpretive activity he has brought new significance into being. Also through

³⁰⁹ *ibid.*

³¹⁰ *ibid.*

³¹¹ *ibid.* p. 184.

³¹² *ibid.*

his meaningful activity and efficacy he develops himself as a significant part of creation. He defines, in part his own significance.³¹³

Again, through his work the person finds social significance. Each human worker finds himself in a tradition of work. The farmer builds his barn together with his neighbours, and the young married woman cooks a meal the way her mother did. One's forebears and contemporaries incorporate the tradition within which one work. The worker interprets this tradition perhaps innovatively, perhaps conservatively and passes it on; "this is how we do things". This tradition formed his habits and serves to develop it. His habits make up part of social habits that constitute the tradition. The worker who finds himself alone outside his own tradition will experience isolation and alienation. For this reason, those working outside their culture sometimes gather to celebrate ethnic festivals that help to preserve their crafts and art. Therefore "In the world of work, the person finds a meaningful place in creation and society. Work is meaningful, and therefore it constitutes an essential element of happiness."³¹⁴

³¹³ *ibid.* p. 185.

³¹⁴ *ibid.*

Chapter Three

The Necessity and the Right to Work

3.1. Why do People Work?

People usually work to get the things that they need to live. The most basic needs are food, clothing, and shelter. In some places, people grow their own food, make their own clothes, and build their own shelters, living much as their ancestors have for thousands of years. In other places people earn money to buy those things. Work in industrialized, or developed, nations frequently takes place in office buildings or factories, while some people still make their livings as farmers. The economies of such countries are based on advanced technologies and large-scale manufacturing, which create products and services that earn workers more money than people can make in the less industrial, or developing, countries of the world, where farming is the main industry (and most farmers can barely grow enough food for their own families). People who live in industrialized nations-like the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, and many countries in Europe-are able to buy far more than the basic things they need to live. They are able to make their lives easier and safer by paying for clean water, Electricity, good medical care, reliable transportation, and much more. Those who live in developing countries, located mainly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, still struggle to acquire the most basic necessities. It may be hard to believe, but it is nonetheless true that half of the world's population are malnourished (don't have enough of the right foods to be healthy) and 80 percent live in substandard housing (homes that are not clean and safe).

When you ask people why they work, a lot of them will say they are 'only in it for the money'. When you work for money, you can be financially independent and provide yourself with the basic needs of life for those living in yet to develop countries, and have some control over your life.

Sometimes money truly *is* the only reason a person works. But most people have more substantial reasons for working. For example:

- Most people like to spend their days doing something they are good at.
- They like being productive.
- Other people need their skills, and they feel obliged to supply them.

- Some like to work because it imposes a time structure on the day.
- It enlarges the scope of social relations beyond the often emotionally charged ones of family and neighbours.
- Work gives one a feeling of purpose and achievement through task involvement in a group setting.
- It assigns social status and clarifies personal identity.
- It requires one to engage in regular activity.

Adriano Tilgher testifies to the joy that accompany some people when they work as he writes: “The joy of work is the joy of feeling something becoming ours which at first was obstinately hostile to our will”³¹⁵. It is true that work demands a lot of energy and time and for this reason may not be desirable by many but the fruit of man`s labour gives him joy and smiles the face to compared to that of a woman who forgets the sorrows and rigours of giving birth after seeing the marvellous work in the newly born child. But since we can only feel this joy if we care about this something-to-be-mastered, Adriano continues, it is plain that work puts us in the state of dependence on the external world, condemns us never to be independent of it. This causes the pain of the worker who sees the fruit of his labour scattered and even keener suffering of the worker prevented by men or circumstances from doing the work for which he was born.

On the other hand, work gives a man the joy of victorious forces, bestows on him the harsh pleasure of feeling his personality triumphant. It tends to make a man feel that in himself alone is the source of all pleasure and all joy. The more completely successful work makes a personality self-sufficing and self-governing, the more this personality tends to find its pride and joy in itself alone, in the consciousness of its own force and its own ability. It is no longer by accomplishing such-and-such a definite piece of work that the spirit finds peace; it is through work in general, any kind of work, the very act of entering into combat and conquering. Thus work tends little by little to change itself into a game in which the important thing is not the goal, but the skill of the player. But an activity which is separated only by a few degrees from games and sports sends down no deep tap-roots to the subsoil of human nature. It is a growth quickly laid low by the first high wind.³¹⁶

³¹⁵ Tilgher, A., “Work through the Ages”; Nosow, S & Form H.W (ed.) Man, Work and Society. W.H. New York. Basic Books, inc., W.H. New York, 1962. p. 23- 24.

³¹⁶ *ibid.*

Going by the working definition of work, which was given earlier by the course of this project where we stated that “Work is a human activity which takes existing conditions and transforms them so that the new conditions more completely satisfy our needs and desires”. It is important then to note that it is not all about making money in order to meet the daily needs that man submits himself to the toil and stress of work but also; by working, the human being remakes the world in terms of some desired end, so that that end can be realised. If, for example, I am hungry, I desired food. But unfortunately, I live at a place and a time where there is little fruit to be picked, where it is difficult to catch game, and where, in general, there is no food naturally available. If I were an animal, it is likely that I would die. Being human, however, I transform the natural environment by planting seeds where there naturally are seeds, bringing water to where there is no water, pulling up other plants for which I have no use. In short, I satisfy my natural desire for food by becoming a farmer. My work is the activity of changing the world so that I can use it. The product of my work is a humanly produced object or state that fulfils my requirements. Therefore, I work in order to live.

In achieving this, there is intimate relations and co-operation among work. “Very few of us directly produce the means of his subsistence Mark Okrent observes. Rather, society as a whole works together in an incredibly complex and interrelated fashion”³¹⁷.

Bent over a material that resists his efforts, Pope Paul VI writes a man by his work gives his imprint to it, acquiring, as he does so, perseverance, skill, and a spirit of invention. Further, when work is done in common, when hope, hardship, ambition, and joy are shared, it brings together and firmly unites the wills, minds, and hearts of men; in its accomplishment, men find themselves to be brothers³¹⁸.

Anton Stres, commenting on *Laborem exercens* says; “The purpose of work in the first place is not to increase wealth, whether individual or collective. The purpose of human work is to fulfil man’s fundamental vocation, which is in the order of “being” and not in that of “having”. This means that man has a vocation that he is called to discover and not to invent, a vocation that is given to him in order that he might fulfil it. It is this that provides the fundamental and principal meaning for man and his work, as well as for his leisure activity and free time”³¹⁹. For him therefore, work is not an ultimate end in itself, we do not work for

³¹⁷ Okrent, M: „Work, Play and Technology“ in *Philosophy and the Problems of work*. Schaff, K. ed., New York Rowman & Littlefield Publishers inc., 1974, p. 72.

³¹⁸ Pope Paul VI: „*Populorum Progressio*“ in *Catholic Social Thought*. O’ Brien, D.J & Shannon, T.A ed., New York. Orbis Books, 2005, p. 246.

³¹⁹ Stres, A. (C.M.), *Laborem exercens and Human Work*, in *Work as Key to the Social Question: The*

the sake of working; work is not a game. We work in order to achieve a result. That is why work is placed in the order of means and does not pass to that of an end. Although man cannot do without work, he has not been made for work. Consequently, work is not his proper end, it does not have ultimate meaning in itself as such. It needs therefore to be made meaningful.³²⁰

3.2. Work as Means of Livelihood and Existence

It is necessary that man work and by doing so solidifies his existence, assures a livelihood and sustains family life and helps the working person earn some wages to satisfy his material needs. The Pope has always acknowledged this fact. Work assures man's life and health, either directly, whereby man grows his own food as a farmer or indirectly, whereby man does some job which earns him money to buy his needs. Man's life, personality and development are shaped and dignified by work. The nature of work changes with human progress, says the Pope and that is why new problems must be constantly faced. The present age is faced by the problems of automation and new technologies. It is faced, too, by the rising cost of raw materials and by a concern for the limited resources of the earth. Work therefore as a human issue, is at very centre of the "Social Question". Thus John Paul II says: It is probably the essential key to the whole social question, if we try to see that question really from the point of view of man's good... making life more human"³²¹.

Since through work, man earns his daily bread, it is therefore as the Pope suggests, the church's conviction that work represents "a fundamental dimension of man's existence on earth"³²², not only because the practical life of man shows this daily and the various sciences have confirmed it, but also because the revealed word of God suggests it as the Bible records: "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread". A new and extremely important feature of the social question which has come to the fore only in the second half of the twentieth century is the plight of the poor and hungry in some of the so called "Third World Countries". These groups constitute the larger number of the world population. So while the small group of the human family enjoys a high standard of living, most of the human family battle for a precarious existence and mostly children die each day from starvation. Pope Paul VI noted

Great Social and Economic Transformations and the Subjective Dimension of Work. Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 2002, p. 23.

³²⁰ *ibid.* p. 25.

³²¹ John Paul II., LE, N. 3,2

³²² *ibid.* N. 4,1

this same fact in 1967, in the great Encyclical letter: "Populorum Progressio". There he wrote: "Today, the major fact that everyone must grasp is that the social question has become worldwide in character... Today the peoples in hunger are making a dramatic appeal to the peoples blessed with abundance. The Church shudders at this cry of anguish and calls each one to give a loving response of charity to this bother's cry for help"³²³.

John Paul II brings the attention of the world to the fundamental reality which for him is mankind as he writes: " The world economic crisis, with its repercussions throughout the globe, compels us to recognize that the horizon of the problems is increasingly a world horizon. The hundreds of millions of starving or undernourished human beings, who also have the right to rise up out of their poverty, should make us realize that the fundamental reality today is mankind as a whole. There is a common good which can no longer be confined to a more or less satisfactory compromise between sectional demands or between purely economic requirements. New ethical choices are necessary"³²⁴.

A new attitude to work has to be developed for it will transform unjust structures into just ones, and make possible the dream of the church's Social Teaching a reality, namely, the realization of justice and peace on earth, and the removal of the foundations of hatred, selfishness and injustice, which have too often been erected into ideological principles or as a vital law of life in society. The Pope admits that this will not be an easy task; admitting that while it is true that man eats this daily by the "sweat of his face, that is to say only by personal effort and toil but also in the midst of many tensions, conflicts and crises, which, in relationship with the reality of work, disturb the life of individual societies and also of all humanity³²⁵.

This sweat, effort, and toil that associated with work is something that is universally known, for it is universally experienced. It is familiar to those doing physical work under sometimes exceptionally conditions, to farmers who spend long days working the land; to workers at the mines and quarries; to steel workers at their blast furnace; to those who work in builders' yards and in construction work, often in danger of injury and death. Toil is familiar likewise to on intellectual work; to scientists and to all those who bear the burden of grave

³²³ Paul VI., *Populorum Progressio*., 26th March 1967, N. 3.

³²⁴ John Paul II., *The Way of Solidarity*, p.287.

³²⁵ John Paul II., *LE*, N. 1, 2.

responsibility for decisions affecting society. Toil is familiar to all workers, and as the Pope says "since work is universal calling, it is familiar to everyone"³²⁶.

3.3. Work adds Meaning to Human life and Existence on Earth

Without work to go to human life will be boring. For this reason unemployment is seen as one the greatest threat to human happiness and existence. We notice that people who are not employed many a time develop spiritual and psychological problems. This is because the very essence of man is involved. Work reveals to man the true meaning of his existence. "The problem of work has a very profound link with that of the meaning of human life. Because of this link, work becomes and indeed is a problem of man's spiritual nature.,³²⁷.

"Man's dignity is an elevated one therefore, because of the saving work of Christ and so also is man's work. For not only does work bear the imprint of man, but it reveals to man the true meaning of his existence – work considered as human activity regardless of its concrete content and circumstances. Work is endowed with „basic dimension of human existence“, through which man's life is built up every day³²⁸.

Work is a fundamental dimension of man's existence on earth' and the reason for this belief is because the Church 'believes in man. He maintains that this observation enables us to set human work, in whatever way it is performed by man, within man himself, in other words, in his innermost being, in the essence of his nature, in what makes him a man and therefore destined to work. „ The conviction that there is an essential link between the work of every man and the overall meaning of human existence is the whole foundation of the Christian doctrine of work – one might say the foundation of the „gospel of work”³²⁹.

The establishment of link between work and the very meaning of human existence shows that work should not be against man instead should add to his welfare. „Never again will work be against the worker; but always work will be in the service of man. If work must always serve man and his welfare, if the programme of progress can only be carried out through work, then there is a fundamental right to judge progress in accordance with the following criterion: does

³²⁶ *ibid.* N. 9, 2.

³²⁷ John Paul., *The Way of Solidarity.* op., cit. p. 283.

³²⁸ John Paul II., *The way of Solidarity.* op., cit. p. 281.

³²⁹ *ibid.* 283.

the work really serve man? Is it compatible with his dignity? Through it, does human life achieve fulfilment in all its riches and diversity?³³⁰

Then responding to these questions, John II confirmed that work has become the ally of man and humanity, which helps him to live in truth and freedom in a freedom built on truth, and which enables him to lead, in all its fullness, a life more worthy of man.³³¹ For his Holiness, that which gives a real meaning to the life of the worker is right and good work.

We have the right and duty to consider man not according to whether or not he is useful in his work, but to consider work in its relation to man, to each man, to consider work according to whether or not it is useful to man. We have the right and duty to take account, in our approach to work, of the various needs of man, in the spheres of both the spirit and the body, and to take this approach to human work in each society and in each system, in areas where well-being prevails, and even more so, in areas where destitution is widespread. We have the right and duty to take this approach to work in its relation to man – and not the reverse – as a fundamental criterion for assessing progress itself... In a word, one must constantly ask oneself whether the work helps to fulfil the meaning of human existence....³³²

Without work, man is unfulfilled. Since work is 'any activity by man, whether manual or intellectual', it follows that to lead a realised and fully human life different from that of vegetative animals, man must work. From the beginning, 'man is called to work'³³³ and all work is hence not only a necessity, but a duty and a task. It is man's vocation to work and thereby to " contribute to the continual advance of science and technology, and above all, to elevating unceasingly the cultural and moral level of the society within which he lives in community with those who belong to the same family"³³⁴

³³⁰ *ibid.* 284.

³³¹ *ibid.* 285.

³³² *ibid.* 284.

³³³ Genesis 3:19., 1:28

³³⁴ John Paul II., *Laborem Execerns*, op., cit. p. 3.

3.4. Who then has Right to Work?

In article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations states: “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.”³³⁵ The Vatican II Council writes: “Moreover, we believe by faith that through the homage of work offered to God man is associated with the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, whose labour with his hands at Nazareth greatly ennobled the dignity of work. This is the source of every man’s duty to work loyally as well as his right to work....³³⁶

When we posed the question who should work? We aim to find out whether there are specified group of people who should exercise this duty in the society or must every human work. The command we got from God to work referred to all without exception. The human nature that is created in the image and likeness of God bestows all that carry it the right to work.

John Paul II calls it an obligation, that is to say, a duty on the part of man. Man must work both because the creator has commanded it and because of his own humanity, which requires work in order to be maintained and developed. It is necessary for him to work for those closest to him, expressly his own family; but there is also the wider range of the society to which he belongs, the nation which is his mother and the whole human family of which he is a member, and for these too he must work. He must work as one who is at the same time heir to the work of past generations, and co-operator in the work being done by the present generation to improve the conditions of life of generations yet to come. All this constitutes the moral obligation to work, understood in its widest sense. Consequently, when we have to consider the moral rights which work gives every man and which correspond fully with his obligation regarding it, we must always keep before our eyes the vast range of conditions and circumstances in which the work of each and every man who labours is to be discovered.³³⁷

³³⁵ United Nations., Universal Declaration on Human Rights. On December 10, 1948, article 23.

³³⁶ *Gaudium et spes*, n. 67.

³³⁷ Pope John Paul II., *Laborem exercens*, n.16.

3.5. Work and Family

Having thus established and confirmed the right to work by every human being, we then go on to relate it to family life where every human being is a member.

God after creating man, put him in the garden of Eden to till and keep it, noticed that he was lonely and that animals, trees and plants around him could not solve his problem of loneliness and God said: “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him”³³⁸ ... “So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man”³³⁹.

The man’s exclamation when he saw his partner and the words of the author thereafter is the first biblical and generally orthodox account of the history of man in the universe. It is as such the origin of the family, which has continued into the Judaic-Christian tradition.³⁴⁰ “Then the man said: This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man”³⁴¹. And the scripture concludes thus: “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves on his wife, and they become one flesh”³⁴² With the injunction given to man and woman by God, He completed the creation of human family. “God blessed them and said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it”.³⁴³

As the first man and woman fell into temptation by disobeying God’s command to them, the received as consequence of their fall, they must work all their lives: “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread”³⁴⁴. This command marks a great big connection between work and family.

John Paul II sees work constituting a foundation for the formation of family life, which is a natural right and something that man is called to.³⁴⁵ In other words, because there is work to go to, there must be one who works and therefore the existence of family who work and by working fulfil the divine command to conquer the earth and transform it. And the existence of

³³⁸ Genesis 2: 18.

³³⁹ Genesis 2: 21-22.

³⁴⁰ Ike Obiora., Value, Meaning and Social Structure of Human Work. Frankfurt: Verlag Peter Lang GmbH, 1986, p. 235.

³⁴¹ Genesis 2: 23.

³⁴² Genesis 2:25.

³⁴³ Genesis 1: 28.

³⁴⁴ Genesis 3: 19.

³⁴⁵ Laborem exercens: n. 10.

family implies work, since this family must look for a way of sustaining itself by way of food, shelter and clothing. All these the family acquires by going to work. The Pope points out that even though work is necessary for the family's existence, it should not be reduced to the level of simple animalistic instincts or to work from purely utilitarian purposes. Instead, work should be a means of our humanization and there belongs to the fulfilment of our potentials in the family. Hence he writes: "Man works to support himself and his family. If to work is to care of one's being, co-operating in the creative work of God, this general principle becomes evident and existentially concrete for the greater part of men in the fact that by working man takes care of his loved ones. If it is certainly true that man, as all the animals, feel the instinct for self-preservation, it is also true that it is not right to posit as the principle of work an intention that is only utilitarian and selfish. Even the instinct for self-preservation exists in man in a specifically human, personalistic form as the will to exist as a person, as the will to safeguard the value of the person in himself and in others, beginning with his loved ones. This fact defines the limit of every utilitarian and economic interpretation of human work"³⁴⁶. He goes further to say that these two spheres of values – one linked to work and the other consequent on the family nature of human life - must be properly permeate each other. In a way, work is a condition for making it possible to found a family, since the family requires the means of subsistence which man normally gains through work. Work and industriousness says the Pope also has a pervasive influence on the process of education which goes on within the family, precisely because work is one of the ways by which everyone 'becomes a human being' and 'becoming a human being' is the pre-eminent purpose of all educational activity. It is obvious that the two aspects of work in a sense come into play here: the one making family life and its upkeep possible, and the other making possible the achievement of the purposes of the family, especially education. Nevertheless, these two aspects of work are linked to one another and are mutually complementary in various points.³⁴⁷

Meanwhile, it must be remembered and asserted positively that the family constitutes one of the most important terms of reference for social ethics of human work. And the teaching of the Church has always given special attention to this question says the Pope. The truth is that the family is simultaneously a community made possible by work and everyone's first domestic school.

³⁴⁶ John Paul II., Extracts from the Pope's Address on 29th August to young people attending the 1982 meeting for friendship among the People's in Rimini; Published in *The Pope Teaches*, 1982/9, CTS, (Address and Homilies of John Paul II, London), pp. 347 – 348.

³⁴⁷ *Laborem Exercens*. n. 10.

Work therefore must help man as an individual and a group to become better and more mature spiritually in order to achieve his vocation on earth as a unique person and in community constituted by the family. By joining together in this very community, whose character was established by the Creator himself from the beginning, a man and a woman give life to new human beings. Work must make it possible for this human community, the family, to find the means necessary for its formation and maintenance.³⁴⁸

3.6. Should Women be Involved in Active Work?

Till this point in our discussion, we have been able to establish the fact that everyone has the right to work and by working fulfil God's command; who after creating man in His own image and likeness, instructed man to subdue, conquer and rule the earth. Man here refers to human race which include women and children. God saw how incomplete the man he created was, made woman to support him and by doing so indicated the special role of women in the world. So the world of work will be incomplete without the special role of women.

Work if properly understood as exercise of different functions that enable the society to grow and develop, is what each one has to be involved. It may not necessarily be paid employment but also exercise of different special roles. In both senses woman are indispensable.

“During the Roman period, women shared in their husband's work, particularly in the finer crafts, luxury trades, perfumery, and tailored clothing. The mother of Emperor Marcus Aurelius was prominent in the brick manufacturing business. Women worked in service occupations like nursing and midwifery, where there were opportunities to achieve distinction. The social role of women was predominant in the home and in the upbringing of children. Roman attitude toward mothers was generally positive, intense, and emotional”³⁴⁹.

The Church believes that a woman should devote herself to taking care of her children and educating them in accordance with their needs, which vary with age. “Having to abandon these tasks in order to take up paid work outside the home is wrong from the point of view of the good of society and of the family when it contradicts or hinders these primary goals of the mission of a mother”.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁸ Obiora Ike., op. cit., p. 240 – 241.

³⁴⁹ Applebaum, H., op. cit. p. 51.

³⁵⁰ Laborem Exercens: n. 19.

The primary work of women is to be good mothers, educating and training good citizens for the society. But in our modern society, sometimes the increasing pressure and needs of the family which in some case men fail to supply have forced women to combine the work of family management to embrace paid Jobs. However the Pope admonishes that on a more general level the whole labour process must be organized and adapted in such a way as to respect the requirement of the person and his or her forms of life, above all life in the home, taking into account the individual's age and sex.³⁵¹

In some societies and cultures, women because of economic and financial constrains do some heavy works that are above their nature. The Pope observes. "It is a fact that in many societies women work in nearly every sector of life. But it is fitting that they should be able to fulfil their tasks in accordance with their own nature without being discriminated against and without being excluded from jobs for which they are capable, but also without lack of respect for their family aspirations and for their specific role in contributing, together with men, to the good of society. The true advancement of women requires that labour should be structured in such a way that women do not have to pay for their advancement by abandoning what is specific to them and at the expense of the family, in which women as mothers have an irreplaceable role"³⁵².

He emphasized family life as a natural right and vocation of the human person, and thereby considers under it the role of women and mothers, without whom a family cannot be possible.

In a sermon he delivered in his native Poland on his first official visit as Pope, he mentioned the role of motherhood as essential for women. "The reason for the family is one of the fundamental factors determining the economy and policy of work. These keep their ethical character when they take into consideration the needs and the rights of the family. Through work, the adult human being must earn the means needed to maintain his family. Motherhood must be treated in work policy and economy as a great end and a great task in itself...giving birth, feeding and rearing, and no one can take her place in the home. True respect for work brings with it due esteem for motherhood. It cannot be otherwise. The moral health of the whole of society depends on that"³⁵³.

³⁵¹ *ibid.*

³⁵² *ibid.*

³⁵³ John Paul II., Homily at mass for workers at Jasna Gora,(Poland), 6 June 1979; *L'osservatore Romano*, English edition, 16.7.1979. No. 29, pp. 3 – 4.

Following the teaching of his predecessors, Pius XII and Paul VI, and the Vatican II, John Paul II confirms that it is the Church's glory to have highlighted the equal dignity of man and woman, both as human beings and his children of God; to have liberated women from a state of degrading slavery contrary to nature; and to have reaffirmed the right and duty of both man and woman to contribute to the economy of the common welfare. On many occasions, he exhorts the spouse, mother and woman at work in her multiple activities in the family, industry and agriculture.³⁵⁴

Pius XII wrote "Woman has to contribute with man to the good of the "civitas", in which she is in dignity equal with him. Either sex must take the part that belongs to it according to its nature, characteristics, physical, intellectual and moral capabilities. Both have the right and duty to cooperate for the total good of society. However it is clear that if man is by temperament more inclined to deal with exterior affairs, public activities, woman has, generally speaking, greater insight and finer tact to know and solve the delicate problems of domestic and family life, the basic of all social life, which does not prevent some women showing great skill also in every field of public activity"³⁵⁵.

Pope Leo XIII in His famous encyclical *Rerum Novarum* spoke more directly on the issue of women and work as he says: "Women, again, are not suited for certain occupations; a woman is by nature fitted for home- work, and it is that which is best adapted at once to preserve her modesty and to promote the good bringing up of children and the well-being of the family"³⁵⁶.

John Paul II knowing that such argument on the part of the Church authorities has led to many discussions and criticisms from feminists movement, points out that this demand made of women is a "sacrifice, a humble and monotonous work, but a heroic too". It is however not enough consolation for women who have emerged in our century as emancipated people, equal to men in all competitive levels, and no more prepared to play the domestic role which men assigned to them earlier, calling it like Leo XIII did, "a natural order".

³⁵⁴ Ike Obiora., op., cit. p. 375.

³⁵⁵ Pius XII., Address of 21 October 1945; Quoted in vol. 5 of "The Social Teaching of John Paul II, Pontifical Commission "Iustitia et Pax", Vol. 5, Vatican City, 1982, p.25 (Cf. Paul VI, AAS, 67 (1975) refers to the passage to the Interventions for the international Year of Women)

³⁵⁶ Leo XIII., *Rerum Novarum*. N.42.

3.7. What then is the Role of Children in Work?

The question that should be asked here concerning the sub-heading that is about to be discussed has been, whether children should work? Going by our working definition of work by Pope John Paul II, who sees it as “...any human activity...” It is obvious then that every human being who is capable of working must work including children. Our concern instead should be what type of work should the children do? Work does not make man less human instead makes him to be fully human. When God commanded man to till the earth, He means every human being. Domestic work in the families is also Work.

The Church has always been very careful in matters concerning women and children. So Pope Leo XIII admonishes; “... work which quite suitable for a strong man cannot rightly be required from a woman or a child. And, in regard to children, great care should be taken not to place them in workshops and factories until their bodies and minds are sufficiently developed. For, just as very rough weather destroys the buds of spring, so does too early an experience of life’s hard toil blight the young promise of a child’s faculties, and render any true education impossible”³⁵⁷.

3.8. Should there be Work also For the Handicapped?

Work is one of the characteristics that distinguished man from the rest of creatures, whose activity for sustaining their lives cannot be called work. Only man is capable of work, and only man works, at the same time by work occupying his existence on earth. Thus work bears a particular mark of man and of humanity writes the Pope.³⁵⁸ With this statement there is no doubt that the disabled belong to the human family whose work is a distinctive mark.

John Paul II therefore called attention of those concerned in the organization of work pointing out the complex problem the disabled create for the labour world. They too he says are fully human and possessed of innate, sacred and inviolable rights. The sufferings which afflict their bodies and the limitations put upon their faculties bring into better relief the greatness of their human dignity.³⁵⁹

³⁵⁷ Leo XIII., *Rerum Novarum*. N. 42.

³⁵⁸ *Laborem Exercens*. (Introduction)

³⁵⁹ *ibid.* N.22.

It is a fact that some members of the human family men and women through wars, accidents, natural deformities and catastrophes of different types are considered as handicapped but who are in the world of work capable of production, but who because of their deformities, are sometimes neglected, degraded and rejected as capable of competing in the field of labour. This attitude toward the less privileged was condemned by the Pope who insists that since disabled people are subjects with all their rights, they should be helped to participate in the life of society in all its aspects and at all the levels accessible to their capacities. The disabled person is part of the society and participates fully in the same humanity that we possess. It would be radically unworthy of man; and a denial of our common humanity if we admit to the life of the community, and to the life of work, only those who are fully functional. To do so, would be to practice a serious form of discrimination, that of the strong and healthy against the weak and sick. Work in the objective sense should be subordinate, in this circumstance too, to the dignity of man, to the subject of work and not to economic advantage.³⁶⁰

The Pope therefore calls on the various bodies national and international responsible for work and employment to find out new avenues of lifting up their dignity, making sure that the disabled in our society, who cannot do normal duties, but who can still do other things are engaged. And those responsible for work should find jobs appropriate to their conditions. Also create avenues to make their burdens lighter by making them feel needed, giving them opportunities to be productive, and aiding them to be fully human beings, in spite of all deformation. Adequate measures should also be taken to foster the right of disabled to professional training and work. He also called on the disabled themselves to pool their ideas and resources to the attainment of this goal.

The reason for the political body is to create a world where no man is an island, and where each takes care of the other. The state has its legitimacy in so far as it works towards the good of all in the community. And the Church can claim to be on the right path, if like its founder, it reckons and identifies with the various problems of the different parts of the human community – giving to each, within its limits, what it can.

Jesus Christ identified with the poor, the disabled, the blind and hungry, the lame and even the dead. It is therefore a challenge not only to the Church but also to the State and to various Organizations to take into consideration the situation of the disabled in the society.

³⁶⁰ *ibid.*

During the Second World War, Hitler eliminated those who were sick, imbecile, deformed or weak, in his idea to create the “ideal man”. Such tragedy should not be allowed to befall mankind the second time³⁶¹. Man is man, whether sick or not, whether deformed or healthy; whether man or woman. All those responsible in the body politics must therefore find time, money, energy and legal covering to protect the weak and disabled in their society. The Pope recommends that each community be able to set up suitable structures for finding or creating jobs for such people both in the usual public or private enterprises, by offering them ordinary or suitably adapted jobs, and in what are called “protected” enterprises and surroundings³⁶².

In doing this, the Pope directs that attention be given to physical as well as the psychological working conditions of the disabled people – as in the case with all workers assuring that they are justly remunerated in their wages, promoted according to their possibilities helping them to feel that they are not cut off from the working world or dependent upon society, but that they full-scale subject of work, useful, appreciated and respected and called to contribute to the progress and welfare of their families and of the community according to their capacities.

3.9. The Effects of Emigration on Work

This refers to an act of living one’s home or country for the permanent or temporary residence elsewhere. It is an age-old phenomenon Pope John Paul II noted: which nevertheless continues to be repeated and is still today very widespread as a result of the complexities of modern life.³⁶³

The Pope’s sensitivity to the problem and his special care for workers identified with those who migrate to different parts of the globe in search of greener pastures. This was shown in an address he delivered in Mexico during his visit.

“We cannot close our eyes to the situation of millions of men, who, in their search for work and livelihood have to leave their country and often their family. They have to cope with the difficulties of a new environment that is not always pleasant and welcoming, an unknown language, and general conditions that plunge them into solitude and, sometimes, social exclusion for themselves and for their wives and children, even when advantage is not taken

³⁶¹ Ike Obiora., op. cit., p. 418.

³⁶² Laborem Exercens. N. 22.

³⁶³ Laborem Exercens. N. 23.

of these circumstances to offer lower wages, to reduce social insurance and welfare benefits, and to give housing conditions unworthy of a human being”³⁶⁴.

As the Pope pointed out, it is always done with a very big risk. One leaving his home to an unknown destination, the difficulties is always big and requires courage. Sometimes many difficult conditions await the Migrant who in the midst of many problems of adaptation, culture, language and many others is seen by others (owners of the land) as an intruder who has come to reap where he did not sown. His Holiness being aware of this discriminating factor wrote: “Man has the right to leave his native land for various motives – and also the right to return – in order to seek better conditions of life in another country”³⁶⁵.

John Paul II describes emigration as an evil, considering the loss on the part of the country which the emigrant left behind. A man forsakes his membership of a great community which is united by history, tradition and culture to start a new in another society which is bound together by different culture and often also by a different language. Here, the human person is involved the subject of work, one who by his skills and bodily strength could contribute to the common good of his own people, offering them instead to another society which in a sense has less right to these services than the fatherland which reared him.³⁶⁶

Migration apart from being a loss to the country of origin; it exposes the migrant to many dangers for instance he may suffer uncountable psychological damages. To put into consideration are also the children of the migrants who born in other countries have to face cultural oppositions. They have to live between two different worlds, that of their parents and that of the land in which their parents settled. Sometimes if the need comes and these people have to leave the host country back to their fatherland, the dangers that these children face are uncountable.

As regards working rights it is most important that leaves his native land to work elsewhere the Pope says, whether permanently or temporarily, should not be placed at the disadvantage to other workers there. Immigrants should have the same working conditions as have all other workers in the land to which they go. He insists that there must be the same rate of pay for the job, irrespective of differences in origin, religion or race. So much the greater is the wickedness of making perverse use of the constraints in which a migrant may be caught.

³⁶⁴ John Paul., Address to Workers at Monterrey, Mexico, 31. January 1979, (L’osservatore Romano, english edition, 19:2:1979. No. 8, pp. 6-7).

³⁶⁵ Laborem Exercens. N.23.

³⁶⁶ *ibid.*

Regard being had, of course, to the special qualities of workers, everything connected with these things must give way unconditionally to the principal value of work, which is bound up with the dignity of the human person. Once again the fundamental principle must be repeated: the hierarchy of values and the profound meaning of work itself require that capital should be at the service of labour and not labour at the service of the capital.

He warns that: “emigration in search of work must in no way become an opportunity for financial or social exploitation”³⁶⁷.

3.10. Employment

The word employ refers to the act of giving someone a task, occupation, job or work taking into consideration paying him wages or salary in return for services.

The catholic Bishops of the United States see employment as a basic right, a right which protects the freedom of all to participate in the economic life of society. “It is a right which flows from the principles of justice.... Corresponding to this right is the duty on the part of society to ensure that the right is protected. The importance of this right is evident in the fact that for most people employment is crucial to self-realization and essential to the fulfilment of material needs. Since so few in our economy own productive property they continued, employment also forms the first line of defence against poverty. Jobs benefit society as well as workers, for they enable more to contribute to the common good and to the productivity required for a healthy economy”³⁶⁸

Then human work, whether exercised independently or in subordination to another, proceeds from the human person, who as it were impresses his seal on the things of nature and reduces them to his will. By his work a man ordinarily provides for himself and his family, associates with others as his brothers, and renders them service; he can exercise genuine charity and be a partner in the work of bringing divine creation to perfection. Our faith helps us believe that through the homage of work offered to God man is associated with the redemptive work of

³⁶⁷ *ibid.*

³⁶⁸ Catholic Bishops US., „Economic Justice For All“, O’Brien David. J & Shannon, Thomas. A. (ed.), Catholic Social Thought: Documentry heritage. Orbis Books, New York, 2005, Art. 137.

Jesus Christ, whose labour with his hands at Nazareth greatly ennobled the dignity of work. This is then the source of every man's duty to work loyally as well as his right to work.³⁶⁹

Employment offers an individual the opportunity of exercising as well as developing his talents. The person feels fulfilled when he is useful to the society and is disappointed and feels wasting away when eventually there is no opportunity to assert his existence. The society and individual persons must work hard and cooperate with another to make sure that employment opportunities are created and made available for those who are ready to work. The government and the society to which one is a member owe it as a duty to the citizenry to provide employment opportunities as the council fathers pointed out. "It is the duty of the society to see to it that, according to the prevailing circumstances, all citizens have the opportunity of finding employment".³⁷⁰

It must be observed that the population of the world and more especially of the underdeveloped and developing countries is increasing everyday thereby making difficult for the government of those countries whose sole responsibility it is to create employment opportunity to meet up with the demands by a great number of people seeking to be employed.

This project also creates awareness and encourages young people to value work because it honourable. They can help and get themselves employed especially when the state create opportunities. This could be done first by believing in them-selves secondly by sticking to the talents and natural endowments with which they were created, putting interest in them and try to develop them by channelling their career in life towards this end. After education for those who have the opportunity and learning of hand work for those that may not have the opportunity to go to higher schools of learning, they can employ themselves.

³⁶⁹ Gaudium et spes, N. 67.

³⁷⁰ *ibid.*

3.11. Unemployment

In many countries around the world today, a very large number of people are facing the reality of unemployment. They have no other alternative but to look at work from outside instead of taking part. It is never the case that they have no interest but they are unemployed. The world is experiencing the worst economic crises since the great depression. Many big companies and industries have closed up, long lines of workers queuing up waiting to be called up for employment. The greatest number of victims are the young people who are searching for their first job and the old who are worried about securing a new job after losing the last one. One computer doing the job of many workers thereby raises fear of unemployment. Almost every country in Europe has record of the highest number of youth unemployment. This is really a matter of great concern. Most of the unemployed youths are leaving their countries to search for work in another and such experience leads to what is called brain draining.

With increasing rate of unemployment and earlier retirement, many are threatened with the loss of purpose in life. Indeed, we may all wonder what we would do if all the things that keep us busy were suddenly to be taken away. Would that not constitute a serious identity crisis for us?

Work rightly put should be the greatest pleasure that mankind can ever think of. His money is not going to do him much good. Through work he contributes to the development of the society, keeps himself busy and feels fulfilled at the end of work. By working man sees himself as relevant to the society in which he lives and becomes happy. Though he goes through burden and stress that is characteristic of work, notwithstanding he enjoys it because his services are needed and he sees himself as relevant. The more he works, the more he exercises his body and intellect and he leaves on. It is always easy to single out people who are indeed working from those who are retired or unemployed. The feeling of frustration, always go along with unemployment and to some extent early retirement.

John Paul II defined unemployment as “lack of work for people who are physically fit for it”.³⁷¹

There is nothing worse than being fit to work but due to scarcity of working opportunities one is jobless and in his idleness, wastes away. This is really serious and calls for urgent attention as the zeal and energy meant to build may be converted to evil and destruction at last.

³⁷¹ Laborem Exercens, n. 18.

Involuntary unemployment is something which is always bad and can become so widespread as to constitute a real social disaster as John Paul II points out. The difficulty is most acute he continues, when the greatest sufferers are young people who are culturally, technically and professionally qualified and want to work, yet cannot find work and sadly frustrated in their desire to take their share of responsibility in the economic and social development of the community.³⁷²

T. J Watson also remarked that the experience of being unemployed in a society in which there is a work ethic which puts considerable value on being 'in a job' and where a reasonable level of income can come from most people only from employment is likely to be both psychologically and materially distressing. Fineman writes of 'an experiential gap that can exasperate the jobless in the face of 'the sheer force of the effect of no longer being creditworthy in a society that builds so many of its transactions, in one way or another, on cash'.³⁷³

Therefore, to provide against the danger of such unwelcome unemployment and the disastrous consequences, the agents defined as the indirect employer ought to provide for the general planning of opportunities for the different kinds of work which form not only the economic but also the cultural life of every society. This task falls in the first instance upon the state the Pope insists, but this must not entail a great concentration of duties in the hands of the public authorities. On the contrary, the need is for a just and reasonable joint or coordinated arrangement within which the free initiative of individuals, freely constituted groups, local businesses and local enterprises is to be safeguarded. ³⁷⁴

³⁷² *ibid.*

³⁷³ Watson., T.J., *op. cit.*, p. 165.

³⁷⁴ *Laborem Exercens*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

3.11.1. Types of Unemployment

1. **Involuntary:** This is the most common and it is a situation where someone cannot gain employment even though they are trying. There are numerous causes of this, here a few:

1. Lack of skills
2. Lack of available jobs
3. Lack of entrepreneurship
4. Geographical (unable to reach available geographical locations with available work)
5. Unemployable (usually the long-term unemployed, have not worked for so long no one will take them on)

2. **Voluntary unemployment:** In this case, someone chooses not to work: Why?

1. The benefit system in place is too generous (i.e. no incentive to return to work)
2. Too wealthy to need to work
3. Criminal behaviour and also criminal record
4. **Transient** means that they are currently between jobs and will have a month or two off between one job and the next. This is sometimes referred to as the 'natural' rate of unemployment.

3.11.2. Analysis of the Causes of Unemployment

In many parts of the world, the level of unemployment is increasing drastically. Why is this so, and is there any way it could be avoided? Those who are permanently unemployed have no income, and many choose the alternative of income by resorting to crime. Would you rather live in a country with no unemployment? It's hard to live a normal healthy life without a job and money. There are many reasons why people are unemployed, but in turn this state of unemployment can cause one to experience financial, emotional, and personal problems. This crisis has no single cause nor quick and evident remedy.

John Paul II addressing the International Labour Organisation in Geneva notes that the causes of unemployment are indeed many and varied. "One of these causes may lie in the improvement in the instruments of production which progressively curtails the direct share of

man in the production process. This involves us a new antinomy which may well set human labour against "capital." ³⁷⁵

The main reason for the high level of unemployment is technological progress. Let us not get it wrong; progress is good and it makes life easier. But if every year we produce the same amount of goods with fewer people -- in a few years far less working hours are needed to produce all the goods that are required. The historical trend has been to use less and less working hours per week. If we do not continue this trend, the supply of working hours is greater than the demand. An oversupply of working hours means they are worth less, wages and salaries get reduced. Also many persons are out of work; their working hours are no longer needed. Those that are out of work have no income and therefore the demand for goods goes down. With fewer sales, less gets produced, more persons are laid off. This is a vicious circle that accelerates unemployment and produces crime; because some will turn to crime to obtain income.

Modern technique rightly observed creates a whole set of new problems and sometimes produces unemployment, but we should not forget that technology has also its positive sides as John Paul II pointed out. For him, "it opens great possibilities that ask of the worker increasing qualifications, as also the contribution of his human capacities and his creative imagination" ³⁷⁶

Technology without doubt create new jobs: people have to make, sell, service new machines and operate them, and other have to sell their houses, food, stocks and bonds. However, the full impact of technology is still to be really assessed. No one can say for sure where technology is leading or how it will be applied in the future. As far back as 1970, for example, no forecaster could have predicted the impact of microprocessor: it had not been invented as Obiora Ike observed. And it is to be added however, that even if technology does create jobs today, as well as it removes, though more, there is no assurance that the future will be right as far as technology and human labour is concerned. If history is any indication, technology will eventually open up new industries that no one has ever dreamed of yet. But as long as machines are applied to jobs currently performed by human beings, people will inevitably lose their jobs. ³⁷⁷

³⁷⁵ John Paul II., Address to International Labour Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland, Tuesday, 15 June 1982, (Ref. The Pope teaches, CTS, London, p. 288.

³⁷⁶ John Paul II., Address to workers at Jalisco stadium, Mexico, 30.1.1979, L'osservatore Romano, English edition 12.2.1979, No. 7, p.11.

³⁷⁷ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 433.

The most common causes of unemployment are getting fired and laid off for specific reasons. People might get laid off if a company is going out of business or maybe if there are positions in the company that are no longer needed. It's difficult to find a job right away after being fired. Companies don't want to hire someone who has just been fired for reasons such as failure to do a sufficient job, not showing up to work, stealing, etc. It's also hard to find a job instantly after being laid off. In some cases the economy is down and it is hard to find any work in general.

Some people can't get hired because they don't have an education and they are not qualified to do the work required. Most companies call a person's references and if they don't have a good work record they are not likely to get hired. Employees will always hire the most qualified person based on their resume, or brief account of one's education and professional experience.

Other people can't find jobs because of disabilities or health problems. If someone gets into a car accident and gets physically injured long-term or becomes disabled, it becomes difficult to do many types of jobs.

3.12. Work and Wages

A wage is a pledge or payment of usually monetary remuneration by an employer especially for labour or services etc. according to contract and on an hourly, daily, or piecework basis and often including bonuses, commissions, and amounts paid by the employer for insurance, pension, hospitalization, and other benefits; especially such as remuneration paid to a skilled or unskilled labourer.....³⁷⁸ Or a financial compensation received by workers in exchange for their labour.

Compensation in terms of wages is given to workers and compensation in terms of salary is given to employees. Compensation is a monetary benefit given to employees in return for the services provided by them.

In Marxist terminology, wage is defined as the "mode of production where the worker sells their labour power as a commodity"

³⁷⁸ Babcock, P. G. (ed) Webster's Third New International Dictionary. Germany: Könnemann Verlagsgesellschaft MBH, 1993. p. 2568.

It should not be understood as if for the purpose of wages man work, man work primarily for self- fulfilment in accordance with the biblical injunction in the book of Genesis where he as the master of creation is to “subdue and renew” the earth. He works not only for self-realization but also as a member of the human family where he has responsibilities both in the family and in the society. For this purpose he exchanges his services for money in form of compensation.

In wages man looks for a means of sustaining himself since he cannot alone provide all the necessities required for his survival as a human being. He has the obligation from nature to preserve this being created in the image and likeness of God.

“The preservation of life is bounden duty of each and all, and to fail therein is a crime. It follows that each one has a right to procure what is required in order to live; and the poor can procure it in no other way than by work and wages”³⁷⁹.

In his famous encyclical on human work, Pope Leo XII gave the reason why the worker has to exchange wages for his services. To labour he says is to exert one’s self for the sake of procuring what is necessary for the purposes of life, and most of all for self-preservation. “In the sweat of thy brow thou shall eat bread”³⁸⁰. Therefore, a man’s labour has two notes or characters. First of all, it is personal; for the exertion of individual power belongs to the individual who puts it forth, employing this power for that personal profit for which it was given. Secondly, a man’s labour is necessary; for without the results of labour a man cannot live; and self-conservation is a law of nature, which it is wrong to disobey. Now, if we were to consider labour merely so far as it is personal, doubtless it would be within the workman’s right to accept any rate of wages whatever; for in the same way as he is free to work or not, so he is free to accept a small remuneration or even none at all.³⁸¹

The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council decreed: “Wages must be paid which will give adequate scope for living, materially, socially culturally and spiritually, considering each man’s job, his productivity and the general welfare”³⁸².

Since we have been able to establish the reason to charge remuneration for services done, let us now turn to another important area that sometimes poses the key problem of social ethics and that is the relationship between the employer and worker. Many theorists on this issue

³⁷⁹ Pope Leo XIII., *Rerum Novarum*. N. 34.

³⁸⁰ Genesis 3:1.

³⁸¹ Pope Leo XIII., *Rerum Novarum*. N. 34.

³⁸² Vatican II., *Gaudium et Spes*., par. 67 (Cf. Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, ASS,23, 1890-1, p.649, 662 Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, AAS,23, 1931, p. 200; Pius XII, Christmas Broadcast, 1942, AAS, 35, (1943)p. 20.

agree on a point that in determining the Wages to be charged for labour, the worker and the employer have to go into negotiation. All has to be done under the rule of justice which protects the interest of both parties. For this Pope Leo XIII says: “Wages, we are told, are fixed by free consent; and, therefore, the employer when he pays what was agreed upon has done his part, and is not called upon for anything further. The only way, it is said, in which injustice could happen would be if the master refused to pay the whole of the wages, or the workman would not complete the work undertaken; when this happens the state should intervene, to see that each obtains his own, but not under any other circumstances”³⁸³.

3.12.1. Wages and Other Social Benefits

We have been able to establish the reasons why wages are exchanged for the services of a worker. Let us now look more closely at these rights, which are embodied chiefly in the bond uniting worker and direct employer. In discussing the relationship that exists between the employer and the worker, we touch the key problem of social ethics which is equitable payment for work done.

In the relationship between the employer and the employed, payment for work has more important role to play than anything else in today’s world.

The wage, the just remuneration is the determining factor in determining this relationship irrespective of the system in oppression under which production is accomplished.

Pope John Paul II is therefore of the view that the justice of any kind of social economy and of its function is judged finally by the way in which provision is made for equitable payment for work done.

“In every case, a just wage is the concrete means of verifying the justice of the whole socioeconomic system and, in any case, of checking that it is functioning justly. It is not the only means of checking, but it is a particularly important one and in a sense the key means”³⁸⁴.

In other words, wages is the only means that offers a large number of people an opportunity to use those goods which are intended for the general use. These goods include both the goods of nature and the goods that are manufactured. It is by wage which he gets as a reward for his work he has access to both goods.

³⁸³ *ibid.*

³⁸⁴John Paul II., *Laborem Exercens*, N. 19

3.12.2. Test of a Just Wage

Pope John XXII observes with great dismay a large number of workers who receive unjust remuneration for work and remarks: “Our heart is filled with profound sadness when we observe, as it were, with our own eyes a wretched spectacle indeed- great masses of workers who, in not a few nations, and even in whole continents, receive too small a return from their labour. Hence, they and their families must live in conditions completely out of accord with human dignity”³⁸⁵. The question is how then is a just wage determined?

John Paul II here uses the picture of a family up-keep to determine a wage that can be seen as just. That is to say a worker with a family responsibility. The possibility of his remuneration to sustain his family is the key element in judging when a wage is Just or Unjust. He writes: “Just remuneration for the work of an adult who is responsible for a family means remuneration which will suffice for establishing and properly maintaining a family and for providing security for its future. Such remuneration can be given either through what is called a family wage – that is, a single salary given to the head of the family for his work, sufficient for the needs of the family without the spouse having to take up gainful employment outside the home....”³⁸⁶.

The Holy Father also proposed other measures that will help to achieve the ideal wage system and ensure the life and health of the worker and his family, these includes social measures. He says that; “through other social measures such as family allowances or grants to mothers devoting themselves exclusively to their families. These grants should correspond to the actual needs, that is, to the number of dependents for as long as they are not in a position to assume proper responsibility for their own lives”³⁸⁷.

Other social benefits to workers that will take care of the expenses involved in health care, especially in the case of accidents at work are recommended by the Pope. He directs that medical assistance to be readily available for workers at as low price as possible or even free of charge.

Many Western Countries including Europe and America have acted positively towards this direction. “Western Countries like Austria and Germany and even Sweden have policies which guarantee “social aid” to families, but often, this social aid, is given not within the

³⁸⁵Pope John XXII., *Mater et magistra*. N. 68.

³⁸⁶ *ibid.*

³⁸⁷ *ibid.*

wage-contract system, but as State direct aid to the so called “Kinderreiche Familien”, or “Children-rich families” in literal translation”³⁸⁸.

3.12.3. Rest as Right and Benefit

Pope John XXIII in his encyclical letter says: “It is right and necessary for man to cease for a time from labour, not merely to relax his body from daily work and likewise to refresh himself with decent recreation, but also to foster family unity, for this requires that all its members preserve a community of life and peaceful harmony”³⁸⁹.

Apart from relaxation of the body and fostering of family unity, His Holiness Pope John Paul II saw it as belonging to social benefits which should be given to a worker. Another aspect of benefits regards the right to rest. Most import is a regular weekly rest at least on Sunday, plus a longer annual vacation or possibly several shorter holidays taken in the course of the year. Within the sphere of these principal rights there also flourishes a range of particular rights which, together with payment for work, determine the correct relationship between worker and employer.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁸ Ike, Obiora, F., op. cit., p.341.

³⁸⁹ Pope John XXIII., *Mater et Magistra*. N.250.

³⁹⁰ *Laborem exercens*. N. 19.

Chapter Four

Work in Traditional African Society

Till this point in this discussion, I have been able to go through the western concept of work by going through different centuries of history and we have seen the diverse views different thinkers had about work.

Africa therefore is not left out in the search for the meaning and value of work as will be rightly observed that before the coming of the Europeans into Africa, the then Africans that is to say the forefathers have known and lived life that was guided by a sound philosophy of life properly known as the philosophy of hard-work. It is therefore my intention here to bring to light the pre-colonial, colonial and the post-colonial African concept of work. It is adequate here since this project has the present-day Nigerian society as a target, it will be reasonable also to examine the role work played in the life of the forefathers. The difficulty involved in such a research has to be noted because literary documents are not much; notwithstanding it will help the reader to appreciate and to understand better the background, world view and other aspects of African life before the European intrusions of the twentieth century.

The inquiry into the traditional society has as its main objective the creation of consciousness among many modern Nigerians, as well as other African societies to reconsider and take seriously their heritage and ancient tradition, rediscover those noble and high values of morality and order inherent in their religious, cultural and philosophical past many of which are today gradually disappearing in the face of the ``new lifestyle``, and to re-evaluate these values by re-integrating them into the new ``African world``.³⁹¹

Again, the knowledge of the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era will help the reader to appreciate the enormous African cultural values and how they suddenly disappeared after the cultural contact with Britain and other foreign elements.

Contrary to the imaginations of many miss-informed people from Europe, America and other parts of the world who always think and have referred directly or indirectly Africa as a country or even a village, based on this it becomes necessary here to point out that Africa is a continent with over 57 countries. So a research attempting to touch them one after another

³⁹¹ Ike, O, F., op. cit., p.1.

will be a very difficult one. So what I intend to do here is to concentrate on Nigeria experience which gives one an advantage of exploring all other African countries because Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with uncountable ethnic groups and multiplicity of cultures many of which could be traced back to different parts of Africa.

4.1. Nigeria – Brief Description

Nigeria is located on the western part of Africa. Africa's most populous nation with about 170,003,542 persons embraces about 250 ethnic groups. Nigerian peoples have a rich cultural heritage tracing back 2,000 years. English is the official language. Nigeria has as her major industrial products crude oil, Tin and coal with rubber, Palm oil, cocoa, rice, peanuts and millets as the main agricultural produce. The British ruled from the 1860s to 1960. After independence ethnic tensions increased, deepened by the rift between the poor (predominantly Muslim) north and the more prosperous (predominantly Christian and Traditional faiths) south. Civil war raged from 1967 to 1970, when the Ibos fought unsuccessfully for autonomy as the Republic of Biafra. The establishment of 30 separate states has helped to some extent to accommodate diverse peoples.

Nigeria was born out of the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates and this was in 1960. Since I intend in this work to examine the Nigerian attitude to work in the pre-colonial era, it would then be reasonable to look into the life of the ethnic groups and a kind of value they attached to work before the intrusion of the Europeans and latter then the outcome of the colonization which is the birth of the country Nigeria. It must be observed today that when the issues of culture and traditions come to question in Nigeria the only option is to go back to different tribes where the past can be traced.

It is for this very reason then that I would like to refer to Igboland. This is not because the researcher of this work comes from Igboland but because Igbo is the famous tribe with a rich culture that cuts across other African nations among other tribes in Nigerian. It will be observed that what is said here of Igboland, is to some extent applicable to many of the various ethnic groups inhabiting Nigeria today. A few examples according to Ike Obiora “are the Efik, Ijaw, Ogoja, Yoruba, Benin, Tiv, Nupe and Kalabari tribes, among others. Outside Nigeria, many other African societies share some of the described characteristics including

the Nuer, Tallensi, Zulu, Nuba, Lozi (Barotse), Bantu and Azande tribes, to mention only a few.”³⁹²

4.2. A Brief description of Igbo People

The Igbo here refer to the name of the land, people and geographical area occupied by the Igbos in Africa-on the Western Coast of Africa, and existing today within the large country of Nigeria, politically carved out by the British at the height of its colonial might. The Igbo territory is inhabited by a branch of Negro race -the dark-skinned people whose origin according to some writers and scholars had been traced back to the East. According to the speculations, Igbo were either one of the last “tribes” of Israel and that for some inexplicable circumstances, they left the East and wandered across until they finally came to their present abode. The exponents of this theory found similarity of culture between that of the Igbo and some of the Eastern people. Circumcision, system and manner of naming children, religion and ritual symbols, love of adventure and enterprise were used to explain derivation from the East. “There are certain customs which rather point to Levitic influence at a more or less remote period. This is suggested in the underlying ideas concerning sacrifice and the practice of circumcision. The language also bears several interesting parallels with Hebrew idiom”.³⁹³

Igbo people distinguish themselves from other ethnic groups in many forms and matters, Art being one of them. Their Art shares the same characteristic patterns or form, never embodies or presents suspense, essentially offers its music, artifacts, poetry, drama, folk tales, proverbs and sculpture in such a way as to vividly establish equilibrium and to show harmony. Igbo Art often portrayed society and its guiding philosophical preoccupation has been illustrated in terms of Force.³⁹⁴

Art points to religion in the context of Igboland. Every work of Art says to the beholder: “Look beneath and beyond me for what I represent and say is more than what you see”; Igbo Art is modest, yet deeply expressive and it concerns itself with life, in faces and figures

³⁹² *ibid.*, p. 2.

³⁹³ Basden, G., *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*, 1966, p.31.

³⁹⁴ Ike, O., *op.*, *cit.*, p.3.

showing man in his nature and activities, in the stages of his ancestry; Igbo Art depicts the fundamental dimensions of man's existence, namely, birth, life, death, power and mystery.³⁹⁵

Religion also plays a vital role in the life of the Igbo people. "One exists in an Igbo group through active participation in the Art, Religion and Philosophy of the community. The Igbo has no demarcation between a strictly material, sensual world and a purely spiritual world. Both are united in a complete world view which sees entire life as an entity, whether alive or dead to join the ancestors of the clan. The sharing, especially of food becomes the landmark of Igbo religion, life and practice.³⁹⁶

4.3. Work in Traditional Igbo Society

By traditional Igbo society, we mean the period before the British Colony entered Igboland. It must be observed that some of the trends mentioned here disappeared with the culture contact with the West.

Human work was understood in traditional society as a fundamental dimension of man's existence here on earth, because, through work, man was able to change, reorganise, and restructure his society. Work was therefore regarded as a creative activity. Man built his house, built up his family, the village assembly, the village square and the places of worship – all through work. The arts and sculptures of traditional Igbo society are all products of work, so that work in the first place guaranteed this creativity of man, as no other level of organic living beings, such as animals could reach this stage.³⁹⁷

The Igbos saw work as a means by which a man feeds himself, his family and kindred. Work in this sense was regarded as a natural necessity to keep both body and soul together, without which, the society would cease to exist.

There were two main reasons that drive people to work, namely;

- (a) To provide basic foodstuff for the family and the kindred, and

³⁹⁵ *ibid.* p. 4.

³⁹⁶ *ibid.*

³⁹⁷ *ibid.* p. 7.

(b) To provide shelter for the family.³⁹⁸

They also understood work as a corporate activity, performed by all members of the community and family. Through work a man, his wife or wives, and children were able to engage themselves in a united and concerted action to complement each other and fulfil their basic needs. Painful, though it was, work was regarded as a normal human activity in traditional society.³⁹⁹ In the words of Cardinal Arinze, it was part of life. “Nobody was called a worker because everybody was a worker. It was taken for granted that everyone did some useful work, and most of it was rural”.⁴⁰⁰

As regards what we observed when we were treating different epochs and their views on work, we noticed among some early Greek thinkers like Homer who said that it was because the gods hated mankind and out of spite condemned men to toil. Most Greek thinkers as we saw grudgingly accepted agriculture which they saw as not worthy of a citizen. Some of the Roman thinkers like Cicero criticised manual and agricultural work. Totally contrary to this attitude was the early Igbo traditional view of work, which considered one kind of labour, namely, that of the farmer, as a noble activity. Praises were lavished on the successful yam farmer, and he had a noble status in the society.⁴⁰¹ To portray the nobility of work, W.T. Morrill is quoted by Smock to have noted of the Igbo: “No work is ‘beneath’ an Igbo man’s dignity. Only sloth is”.⁴⁰²

It was also observed that the traditional Igbo gave their work their finest expression of skill and talent to impress the neighbours and to avoid being seen as lazy. Personal effort such as growing big farm land was rewarded in the society. Successful farmers were honoured with traditional titles of the village such as: “Di Ji”, “Eze Ji”, “Ogbuefi”, “Ozo”, “Okaa Omee”, “Ugo di na mba” and “Ome mgbe oji”. But extravagant and unnecessary accumulation of wealth was discouraged. Work was thus an activity to satisfy the basic demands of life.⁴⁰³

³⁹⁸ Basden, G.T., *Niger Ibos*, op. cit., p.299.

³⁹⁹ Ike, Obiora, F., op. cit., p. 8.

⁴⁰⁰ Arinze, A.F., *The Encyclical labore Exercens in the African Context.*, (Paper at Symposium: ‘From Rerum Novarum to labore Exercens- Towards the year 2000’., Rome, 3-5th April, 1982; Pontifical Commission “Iustitia et Pax”, p. 208.

⁴⁰¹ Ike, Obiora, F., op. cit., p. 9.

⁴⁰² Smock, D and Smock, A., *Cultural and Political Aspects of Rural Transformation: A case study of Eastern Nigeria*, Praeger Publ., New York, 1972, p.5.

⁴⁰³ Ike, Obiora, F., op. cit., p.10.

4.4. Reasons for This Approach to Work

The favourable climate was one of the reasons that contributed immensely towards shaping the attitude to work in the traditional Igbo society. Average temperature ranged annually to about 80°f or 27°c. The rainfall decreases from south to north and is annually about 70 inches falling heavily from the months of April to October with a pause in August called August break.

This points that there are only two clear seasons: the rainy season and the dry season, which takes place from November to March annually. This clear weather division into rainy and dry seasons; makes it imperative for the Igbo to work and plant in the rainy season; and to harvest and rest for the greater part of the dry season. Nature thus played an important role in determining work tempo.⁴⁰⁴

Another reason for such an attitude to work Obiora Ike argued that: the material needs in traditional society were not generally flamboyant. People had just the minimum for existence, as a strong sense of materialism, unnecessary amassing or accumulation of wealth was generally absent. There are many reasons for this, firstly, such large wealth was not there, and secondly, people in traditional society did not have much money to buy themselves whatever they wanted. Contrasted with today's Igboland, one would almost be ashamed of the irresponsible and unnecessary consumerism practiced to show-off by the have-s against the have-nots.⁴⁰⁵ In traditional society, little property was enough: "cooking-and water-pots, a few implements, some grass mats, completed the list of necessary property. Whatever accrued beyond these counted as 'luxury'".⁴⁰⁶

Lastly, their basic needs of life and for the family were easily satisfied. For instance, the farms supplied practically all the food needed for daily consumption – yams, cassava, vegetables and fruits. Meat was available through hunters' activities, and its consumption was often modest. Igboland is geographically located within five friendly agricultural or vegetational belts, derived savana and guinea zones.⁴⁰⁷ In addition to this, was the modest implements such

⁴⁰⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁰⁵ *ibid.* p.11.

⁴⁰⁶ Basden, G.T., *Niger Ibos*, op. cit., p.299.

⁴⁰⁷ Nwabara, N.S: *Iboland – A century of contact with Britain – 1860.*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1977, p.15.

as hoes, matchets and cutlass used for farm work, which made cultivation reduced barely at the minimum and necessary.⁴⁰⁸

4.5. The Igbos and Hard Work

The Igbos like the Jews are known for hard work, innovation, love of fellow Igbos, respect for elders, daring and relentless fighting. Among many values which are seen and identified with the Igbos is the virtue of hard work. The Elders often spurred their youth with the admonitions to hard work, as observed by Green: “Property, money, honesty are constantly recurring motifs. Together with emphasis on loyalty between kinsmen, they are prominent in the only long statement I collected about the qualities or subjects that would be stressed in the upbringing of children”.⁴⁰⁹ Writing further she says: “A girl who is considered to make a good wife is one who is not shy of work, who will go for water and firewood, who will not cook and go to market”⁴¹⁰, to come back and discover that the food and pot is burnt to ashes.

The exhibition of the virtue of hard work is praised against its lack. This “Igbo society placed a high premium on hard work, and so, not only valued the hard – worker but held him up for admiration. He provided the theme for edifying songs and tales, while the lazy man was the subject of ribald songs and jokes”.⁴¹¹ A lazy worker, was, if found out harshly dealt with, strongly criticised, and ran the risk of having a bad reputation in the village – the worst thing that could befall an Igbo man in traditional society. In his famous work “Things Fall Apart”, Chinua Achebe used both characters of Unoka (father) and Okonkwo (son) to depict hard work and laziness in Igbo traditional society. Although Okonkwo’s father was a lazy drunk and a deadbeat man who received no titles in his village and died with huge debts, Okonkwo was a great man in his home of Umuofia. Okonkwo despises his father and does everything he can to be nothing like him. As a young man, Okonkwo began building his social status by defeating a great wrestler, propelling him into society's eye. He is hard-working and shows no weakness – emotional or otherwise – to anyone. Although brusque with his family and

⁴⁰⁸Ike, Obiora, F., op. cit., p. 11.

⁴⁰⁹Green, M. M., *Igbo Village Affairs*, Frank Cass, Ltd., London, 1964. p.89.

⁴¹⁰ *ibid.* p. 90.

⁴¹¹ *ibid.* P.31.

neighbours, he is wealthy, courageous, and powerful among the people of his village. He is a leader of his village, and his place in that society is what he has striven for his entire life.⁴¹²

The Igbos love a good name: “Ahamefuna” – “May my name not be lost”, and so one was encouraged to strive through work to achieve independence for oneself and one’s family. A lazy man was a burden to others and this was a sign of weakness, just as idleness during the working season was not admired. People suspected an idler who had land but chose to be lazy to be a thief in potency, and therefore a threat to the community. One of the Igbo proverbs points to the fact that laziness is a bad thing. “Ngala kpue ute aguu ekpughe ya” – meaning that “Hunger teaches an idle man that he has to work hard”.⁴¹³

Professor Afigbo also proved that hard workers merited respect, honour and title in the community. The “Eze Ji” title (King of Yams) was open to any freeborn Igbo who through hard work had been able to cultivate several barns of yams, not only to feed himself and family, but when necessary, to call a feast of entire kindred at his own expense. Members of the “Eze Ji” title served as experts in yam cultivation, and their opinions were generally sought in disputes over yam and farming land, and young men in the farming business contacted them for advice or for a loan of yams – counted in quantities of four hundred seeds or Nnu.⁴¹⁴

4.6. Attitude to Wealth and Property

Standard of living in the traditional Igbo Society was a simple one. This does not mean that the people do not like good things. The Igbos work hard to acquire wealth and property like every other man but the difference lies in the purpose or intention. We have already pointed out that communal life is inherent in the life of people. So the attitude to wealth and property was not that of accumulation, but that of using basic wealth to keep one’s family together and feed them, and using the same wealth to help the less fortunate members of the community. Greatness was merited through sharing and giving out what one has to others.

Obiora Ike points to this practice and wrote: the rich have an obligation towards the poorer members of the village. No selfish ownership of property was encouraged, as this would

⁴¹²Achebe, C., *Things Fall Apart*. London: Heinemann, (African Writers Series), 1958, p.3-5.

⁴¹³Ike, Obiora., *op. cit.*, p.30.

⁴¹⁴Afigbo, E.A., *Economic Foundations of Pre-colonial Igbo Society* (Publ. in Nigerian Economic and Social History). Ile Ife, Nigeria: University of Ife press, 1978. p.5.

betray the communitarian spirit of traditional society which like St. Paul would say, express that no one lives for himself. To get social recognition in the society, a wealthy individual must dispose his wealth to the less privileged, by lending out to them, or sharing with them his food, crops and so on. The primary function of property for the traditional Igbo was that of supplying community needs as well as those of the individual. The attitude of sharing with the community that which one possesses and has exclusive control and right over, determined the spirit behind all ownership.⁴¹⁵

Since wealth in the present understanding was absent, food accumulation and land acquisition the major sign of wealth were rather means to build up a large following of dependants, as noted by Gluckman where he said: "Reputation is accordingly enhanced not by accumulating possessions in order to use them oneself, but by giving them away"⁴¹⁶. There is virtue in giving aid and in dispensing hospitality and men in these societies are moved by virtue as well as self-interest he remarked. But virtuous performance does build up one's reputation, not only as an upright man, but also as one who cares for others. They become his dependants, since a man can win away the allegiance of kinsfolk from their common senior kinsman, in order to raise his own prestige⁴¹⁷.

Women compose songs of praise for him. Children are trained earlier in life to share their food or presents with others. Besides, the child is taught quite early that there are certain relatives who have a right to expect goods from him and an obligation to give to them. Contrasted with the European upbringing of children, the Igbo attitude lays emphasis on sharing, whereas the Western child is encouraged to individual initiative and to take pride in their personal possessions. For the Igbo child however, "The pride here is in having to share and in being prepared to share one's goods with others... and this situation continues into adult life and even beyond it... ancestral spirits expect to share in the goods of their descendants which must constantly be offered to them"⁴¹⁸.

Among the Igbos, kinsmen are free to pluck and eat certain fruits and crops growing in the farmyard of another and it would not be seen as stealing.

After the harvest of crops from the farm, the less privileged and the lazy ones go in search of the left-over and they are free to collect whatever that was left and it would not be seen as

⁴¹⁵ Ike, Obiora., op. cit., p.68.

⁴¹⁶ Gluckman,M., op. cit., p.51.

⁴¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 58.

⁴¹⁸ Richards, I.A., Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia, London, Oxford University Press for the International African Inst, 1939.

theft. Sometimes the rich farmer purposely leaves some crops behind for such people who will come after them. And through this way they support the less privileged. And the poor man who has to leave his house and go into another man's farm after harvest of the crops has by so doing done some work. The left-overs do not come to him instead he must leave his house and go in search of them. Work was therefore highly recognized in Igbo society whose belief is in line with the teachings of St. Paul: "he who does not work should not eat".

This attitude to wealth cannot however be separated from the real economic situation in which the Igbo found himself. Women were conditioned to reciprocal sharing of food, crops, and other goods with their fellow women. A woman after cooking would send some of it through her child to another woman to enhance sharing, and this was correspondingly reciprocated. Rather than accumulate, she extended her individual responsibility outside her own household. The limitations to wealth and accumulation made the Igbo look out to others.⁴¹⁹

Gluckman remarked that: "The more sumptuous the presents giving away to others, the greater the prestige of the person involved, and a competitor who saw his rival give out presents lavishly, would, to recover his face and regain prestige, give out also presents in return to the rival, and prepare a greater feast whereby he boasted of his family's prestige, rights over property and greatness"⁴²⁰.

Through this, property or its distribution led to competition for power, influence and prestige. The competition is caused too by the desire to acquire dependants or partners in exchange who would regard him as a "big man" or "Ogaranya". An additional wife in an agricultural society expressed this bigness, since it brought in more children, more agricultural produce, and more goods to be shared out during feast, either to show-off, or to obtain community recognition.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁹ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 70.

⁴²⁰ Gluckman, M., op. cit., p. 60.

⁴²¹ Ike, Obiora., op. cit., p. 72.

4.7. Absence of the Class Struggle between the Rich and the Poor

In the traditional Igbo society there was no noticeable sign of the class struggle that normally exist in the societies of the western world. The standard of living was very minimal. The people have all the primary goods, and hardly any luxuries, for their farm products had to be practically consumed within a short period of time. The means of storage was very simple and could only allow a small quantity for a short time. For these reason, foods which remains for a long time got easily rotten, roasted or even consumed by insects and moths.

There were no sign of luxury in what they put on since the clothes they wear were mostly made of animal skin or barkcloth or other material relatively simple. People lived, not in palaces or in feudal houses like in middle-ages Europe, but in mud and grass houses, skin tents and so forth. In this situation, a rich man could not easily arise who would use his wealth to raise his own standard of living or those of his neighbours. Chiefs and titled men had no palaces and no costly robes. The little changes that were noticed in the houses of certain kingdoms took place as soon as they had cultural contact with Europe or other Arabian and upper kingdoms. A man with a thousand head of cattle could not consume all the milk produced alone, nor their meat and skins. He could only use them, as it happened among nomadic tribes, attract and support dependants and thus acquire power over people.⁴²²

In the traditional Igbo society, there was a marked absence of rich and poor classes as the situation then could hardly permit one to acquire and keep a massive wealth. People were generally farmers and they grew their own food. Since most of them cultivate the same type of food crops, it turned out that their diet would be almost identical. There was a technological limitation to what wealth could bring about to cause a class system among the people as Obiora Ike noted. He quoted Max Gluckman who confirmed this as he wrote: “With available tools – axe, hoe and adze, spear and trap, bows and arrows, dugouts or canoes and fishing- nets, each man can produce little beyond what he himself can consume. Hence though the poor might work for those who have more, they cannot be employed to give the rich an elaborate level of life above their own”⁴²³.

It is therefore evident that under such condition, a glaring difference hardly be noticed. The rich could not get richer in their production and acquisition as the possibilities for storage were limited. So balance was always there.

⁴²² Ike, Obiora., *op. cit.*, p. 27.

⁴²³ Gluckman, M., *Politics, Law and Ritual in Tribal Societies*. Blackwell, Oxford, 1977, p. 13- 14.

To be rich was to possess a vast number of lands and economic trees and having many wives and children who could look after these possessions. Mrs. Green wrote: “Another relevant economic fact is the absence of marked differences of wealth between one individual and another... There are of course variations: some people have more land than others, and more trees of economic value than others. Some are better off in respect of more wives and children than others. A few people own several cows, but as there is little opportunity for the accumulation of capital, no well-defined wealthy class emerged”⁴²⁴.

In the traditional Igbo society, the factors that create social class difference were not there because of the people way of life which was the same for everyone. Max Gluckman points this out as he writes: “the possession of wealth in the Solomon Islands, as amongst ourselves (Europeans) ensures prestige. But in a native community, the same scale of comforts – or lack of them – is available for all; everyone has to spend several hours of the day at the same kind of work, all eat the same kind of food prepared in the same utensils from similar raw foods, all sleep on the same kinds of mats or beds. The house of wealthy man may be larger it is true, and better built than that of one who is insignificant, and he may have several wives, but the difference is otherwise negligible. Reputation is accordingly enhanced not by accumulating in order to use them oneself, but by giving them away”⁴²⁵.

This does not mean that the Igbos are not competitive. Of course they are as we have already noted earlier that Igbos are hard working group. And the level of achievements is not the same. This is shown in the title they take. People work hard to be enrolled and recognize as titled man. But the difference is that emphasis is made to the community contribution rather than private. Those who made achievements use them in helping people rather than creating social difference. For this reason the Igbo believe so much in community strength in other words Solidarity.

⁴²⁴ Green, M.M., op. cit., p. 43- 44.

⁴²⁵ Gluckman, M., op. cit., p. 43-44.

4.8. Agriculture: Basic Economy of Traditional Igbo Society

One of the basic economic activities of traditional Igbo society was agriculture. Subsistence farming characterizes agriculture among traditional Igbo people. The chief agricultural products include yams and cassava. Other important subsidiary crops include cocoyams, plantains, maize, melons, okra, pumpkins, peppers, and beans. Palm products are the main cash crops. The principal exports include palm oil and, to a lesser extent, palm kernels. Trading, local crafts, and wage labour are also important in the Igbo economy.

Talking about development in Third World Foundation for Social and Economic Studies in London Altaf Gauhar noted: In tropical Africa, agricultural production was and is the main source of subsistence for the rural and urban populations. Through agriculture also, key commodities for the foreign trade that brings in the much – needed technology and industrial goods that foster growth were provided. It is therefore no surprise that the increasing failure of growth in the agricultural sector has kept many African nations in a continuous state of development, as modern development studies show.⁴²⁶

In pre-colonial Igbo society, agriculture “was important economic activity with regard to both the number of people engaged in it either in full or in part time basis and to the prestige it carried”.⁴²⁷ Farming was the most famous among many other economic activities. The most successful members of the society were mainly farmers and the youth look up to them as role models. “Igbo society wrote M.M. Green existed mainly on subsistence agriculture. This agriculture could keep the people going because of the multiple ties holding the agricultural family together, the joint work done with primitive mechanization such as hoes and machetes and knives...⁴²⁸

Almost every work was done in Igbo traditional society through man power. The Igbos know little or less about the use of animals like donkeys to till ground as they did not grow such animals. The farmers till the ground with the hands, sow seeds, crops, harvest the produce also with the hands. They climbed Palm trees to cut down the fruits which supplied palm oil and palm kernel, one of the major Exports of the then Nigerian society.

⁴²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴²⁷ Afigbo, E.A., *op. cit.*, p.2.

⁴²⁸ Green, M.M., *op. cit.*, p.32ff.

Professor J.E. Flint sees the pre-colonial Igbo agriculture as very efficient, and perhaps the most efficient in Africa, and he thinks, this was largely responsible for a big population in these areas, for the Igbo “developed a density per acre only matched in Africa by that of the Nile valley”⁴²⁹. Such an efficiency can be seen in the manner Igbo’s used and manipulated tools such as hoes, cutlasses, machets to reduce their environment, original, a tropical-rain-forest and mangrove region to either grassland or palm-bush vegetation. It may be said that Professor Afigbo got it right when he maintains that “Igbo agriculture had by the first millennium A.D. become so advanced that it could support the civilization with which Ukwu archaeological excavations have been associated.”⁴³⁰

Agriculture is as old as the Igbo society for every able bodied man or woman was more or less a farmer, either as main occupation as in most cases, or as secondary occupation for those who were predominantly traders or artists. Families produced staple food to feed themselves, some of which included yams, coco-yams, cassava, maize, vegetables, palm products, fruits of all sorts and nuts. The larger the family, the bigger the produce of agriculture, as many hands worked together to raise the quantity of production. It was accepted that the practice of marrying many wives and getting many children as practiced in the traditional Igbo society has economic advantage since it provided labour as well as increased the agricultural produce.⁴³¹

4.9. Division / Sources of Labour

The family as the basic institution played an important role in the traditional Igbo society. It provided the primary source of labour in the society. Since the main reason for work was first to sustain the members of the family who therefore did not relent in contributing for the upkeep of everyone.

M.M. Green wrote: “Labour is provided entirely by the family – the household made up of a man, his wife or wives and children – and these cooperated as the basic unit for the production of food crops, although a certain amount of outside help may be sought”⁴³². Family with a large number of people was seen as advantageous because such family need not

⁴²⁹ Flint, E.J., *Nigeria and Ghana*. New Jersey, 1966, p.63.

⁴³⁰ Ike, O., *op. cit.*, p.13.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.* p. 14.

⁴³² Green, M.M., *Igbo village Affairs*, *op.cit.*, p.35.

to hire labour for work in the farms. A man, who wanted to prosper as a farmer, had to marry so many wives and beget many children, as these would also help to increase the production of goods in the farm⁴³³. This practiced encouraged polygamy in the traditional society as many children were as blessing from Chukwu while childlessness was seen as a curse. Some men sent home their wives due to childlessness and marry another who will help them and also answer their names and continue the work in the inherited ancestral farms. Since agriculture was the fundamental and most general type of work in Igboland, work on the family land assumed a great importance. The men who grew large quantity of yams were confirmed with the traditional title of Eze-Ji or Di-JI (successful grower of yams). These men were the pride of the society and the youths look onto them as role models. Women dream of having such men as their suitors as they will be able to feed them, their children and even their parents and relatives in the time of need. This encouraged agriculture in the society as laziness is not welcomed. Labour is a family responsibility and therefore is shared among every member according to one's ability.

(i) The Men

The men are the strong sex and going by the culture of the Igbos, they protect the women and children from enemies. The man is the head of the family and according to Igbo tradition should provide for his family upkeep. It is their duty to do hard works like clearing of bushes, digging holes for the planting of yam seeds, putting sticks to its tendrils and attending to it till the harvest. Besides, only the men tap palm wine and climb trees to cut down the palm oil nuts. Also building the house was solely the responsibility of the men. They also maintain peaceful co-existence among the family members and neighbours.

The man shared out land for farming to his wives and helped them clear the bush on it, he will make that his children also got their own share of the family land where they could cultivate and farm in due course and through this maintain the family heritage. It is the function of the man to pour libation to the god of the land and to the ancestors of the family before planting and harvest of crops.

⁴³³ Ike, Obiora., op. cit., p. 15.

(ii) **The Women**

The Igbo traditional society paid much attention to women and children. They are protected by men and were not allowed to do certain hard works. It was the specified work of women to plant certain crops such as coco-yams, cassava and vegetables, and men were generally kept off from these crops. A man is ridiculed who plants food crops specially controlled by the women.

The women also did the work of weeding grass during planting season from the farms. When the men worked in the yam plantation, she cooked food for the family, so that, it is even the work of the woman to feed the household, look after the children, and organize the internal affairs of the family, together with her husband. When the men had cut the palm nuts, the women process them into palm oil. Spinning of cotton and weaving thread into cloth was also a woman's job in the traditional Igbo societies, manufacture of baskets and earthenware for cooking and water pots.⁴³⁴

After living so many years on close and intimate terms amongst the Ibos of Nigeria G. T. Basden articulated the work of women as follows: "The women take their full share in farm-work, assisting in turning the soil and moulding up the yam beds. After the yam seed has been set they hoe up the weeds and keep the farm in order. They tend their children, trade in the markets, prepare palm-oil, and manage all domestic affairs. Hence, in one way and another, the women find sufficient work to keep them well occupied, but it is very seldom that they show the slightest disposition to hurry over anything; they take life very leisurely, and what is not done is quietly left undone"⁴³⁵. "In connection with trade, farm-work and the water supply, women are called upon to carry heavy loads. They are borne upon the head except at times when the hair has been specially dressed ... in which case the burden is carried on the shoulders. ...the women on the whole are strong and stardy"⁴³⁶.

⁴³⁴ *ibid.* p. 17.

⁴³⁵ Basden, G. T., *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*. London. University Publishers co., 1983, p. 93.

⁴³⁶ *ibid.* p. 96.

(ii) **The Children**

In the traditional Igbo society, children are taken to farm at the early age, about seven years old. Those that will become industrious in the future usually show the sign from the early age. The boys received yam seeds from their fathers to plant for themselves and by doing so learn to feed themselves and their families when they are of age. G. T. Basden confirmed this practice among the Ibos and wrote: “In the season, boys accompany their elders to the farms, and get an insight into the business of raising produce, the amount of work actually done by them varying according to the disposition and circumstances of the parents. They are also called upon to help in building operations; the task usually allotted them being to carry the lumps of puddled clay from the pit to the builders. They become useful whilst still extraordinarily young, assimilating a wonderful stock of practical knowledge. They become familiar with certain aspects of bird, animal and plant life, but cannot be characterised as observant of things unconnected with their own personal affairs”⁴³⁷.

The girls join their mothers in weeding of the farms. They fetched water, washed the plates, fetched firewood together with their brothers and kept the house tidy. G.T. Basden also remarked that “...girls take a share in the household duties. They begin by carrying water, collecting firewood, rubbing floors, assisting in the preparation of food, and then, later on, accompanying their elders to the markets where they are initiated into the technicalities of trade”⁴³⁸.

Talbot expressed this practice in “The peoples of Southern Nigeria, Vol. II: “Children are taken to farm by their mothers from the earliest age, and begin to work as soon as they are able to weed or to wield a machet – say from six to ten years old, while girls begin to fetch water at the same age and both sexes to carry small loads from the farm to the house”⁴³⁹.

⁴³⁷ *ibid.* p. 66.

⁴³⁸ *ibid.*

⁴³⁹ Talbot., *The Peoples of the Southern Nigeria*, Vol. II, p. 389.

4.10. Igbo Solidarity Through Work

The concept of “Team work” or “Communal Solidarity” otherwise known as “Igwe bu Ike” or “Igbo Kwenu” in the traditional Igboland plays an important role in unifying the people. It is seen in every aspect of the life of the Igbo people even in work. Chinua Achebe in 1958 in his novel “Things fall Apart” introduced Umuofia Kwenu, yaa! Kwenu yaa! Kwezue nu, yaaaa. In like manner, this cultural heritage is everywhere in Igboland heard as it reverberates when prompted since the Igbo settled in Igboland. As such, we hear in a public gathering or in a village square or Community Centre, kindred meetings, and so on the cheering up when it is called upon: Igbo kwenu! And it stands for determination, imagination, originality, mobilization, resources, and effort, solidarity and contribution to one’s society.

This communal or team spirit, provided a big source of labour in traditional Igbo society. The Igbos held firm to the philosophy of life which upholds united we stand and divided we fall. With this view they approach issues even work. Through this belief aid were given to those in need. The main social investment available to a man was investment in personal relationships with others. For this purpose extended family system was so much cherished. “Each family under subsistence conditions is too small to support itself, and it cannot depend simply on a sort of impersonal network. It needed a large kit and kin, distantly and proximately related kindred, descendants of recently living common ancestors and in-laws”⁴⁴⁰.

The Igbo man values human resources and channels his resources towards achieving it hence the Igbo saying. “Onye nwere madu ka onye nwere ego” or “Nwakaego” which implies; “He who has people and relations is richer and stronger than he who has money”. In other word, a child worth more than money or wealth because a child may grow up and make money or acquire wealth. This confirms the reasons we gave earlier why the traditional Igbo society encouraged Polygamy and raising many children.

Max Gluckman wrote: “Men acquire their rights to call on the services of others by putting them under obligations of reciprocity, by helping them with goods and services, and usually they do so through established kinship relations, or by entering into marriage alliances with them. Even trading relations are converted into quasi-kinship relationships”⁴⁴¹. These relations of Kinship and quasi-kinship enable an man to mobilize labour to assist him in major

⁴⁴⁰ Ike Obiora., op. cit., p. 18.

⁴⁴¹ Gluckman, M., Politics, Law and Ritual in Tribal Society. Blackwell, Oxford, 1977, p.13-14.

tasks and they are also insurance against disaster and shortage since he can call on his kin and in-laws to help him when he is in need.

It happens in Igboland that when a man wished to build a house or hut, or even to farm a very large area of land, it is generally certain that his brothers, age-grade or other kinsmen would help him in his project. No monetary cash needed to be paid, he need only to prepare food and provide the traditional palm- wine for the co-workers at the end of the day as a sign of gratitude. And when it his friends need his help also in their work he does not hesitate instead returns this gesture.

Cardinal Arinze confirmed this practice among the Igbos: “Work had a community aspect. People as members of the family, clan, village, age-grade or other group... It also happens that a farmer obtains help for some days in his farm work from young men or women, or from his age-grade and companions. In this last case, he has to return the compliment to another period”⁴⁴²

Likewise G.T. Basden saw this co-operation among the Igbos as a good thing. And wrote as follows: “When a man plans to build a house, he relies on the co-operation of his relatives and friends. That is a good feature; it brings out the better qualities of their nature, especially in the willingness shown to help each other. No wages are paid, but the workers are mollified with supplies of food and drink”⁴⁴³.

4.11. Clientage as Source of Labour

Clients as Obiora Ike described it were those who enjoyed the protection and patronage of a rich farmer for whom they worked for. In traditional Igbo society, clientage was another source of labour for the farm workers.

The rich farmer who cultivated large barns of yams needed many hands to help him out in his farm work. Thus, his clients were people who had taken yams or money on loan from other people and could not pay back at the appointed time. In other words, they were debtors of different categories who could no longer pay back their debts. Therefore, the rich farmer made them work for him on stated days of the week for a given period, after which, if the loan

⁴⁴² Arinze, A. F., *op. cit.*, p. 208.

⁴⁴³ Basden, G.T., *op. cit.*, (Niger Ibos), p. 312.

was taken from the 'Di Ji' himself (grower of yam) as he is popularly called, it was regarded as settled, but if from other people, he either paid those workers to yet pay back, or paid it back himself.⁴⁴⁴

In "Things Fall Apart" Chinua Achebe gave a typical example of such a rich farmer in the character of Nwakibe and wrote: "There was a wealthy man in Okonkwo's village who had three huge barns, nine wives and thirty children. His name was Nwakibe and had taken the highest but one title which a man could take in the clan. It was for this man that Okonkwo worked to earn his first seed yams..." And Okonkwo as he was presented in the chapter asked for his help when he said: "I have come to you for help. ... I have cleared a farm but have no yams to sow. I know what it is to ask a man to trust another with his yams, especially these days when young men are afraid to hard work... If you give me some seed yams I shall not fail you".⁴⁴⁵

Okonkwo's request was granted by Nwakibe who hopes that Okonkwo managed well to build up for himself and his family – some reasonable means of livelihood. Hence Nwakibe remarked: "it pleases me to see a young man like you these days when our youth have gone so soft. Many young men have come to beg for yams but I refused because I knew they would dump them in the earth and leave them to be choked by weeds... I have learnt to be stingy with my yams. But I can trust you. I know it as I look at you... I shall give you twice four hundred yams. Go ahead and prepare your farm"⁴⁴⁶.

The writer Chinua Achebe here did not present Okonkwo as having worked for Nwakibe before acquiring the seed yams. He was instead portrayed as a borrower of seed yams. Notwithstanding in some other circumstances, people like Nwakibe agreed to give yams to young farmers, on the condition that they had worked for him for a considerable time. Thus, labour was guaranteed in the farm work in traditional society.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁴ Ike, O., op. cit., p.22.

⁴⁴⁵ Achebe, C., Things Fall Apart., op. cit., chapter 3. Pp. 12-18.

⁴⁴⁶ ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Ike. O., op. cit., p. 23.

4.12. Slaves as Means of Labour

Slave labour was another means of labour in traditional African society. It happened that slaves who were captured during wars were kept by the villages who captured them. Eventually these slaves were engaged by individuals or community in farm work. Though slaves were used as labourers, it would be noticed that the rich farmer could not allow his precious crops to be managed by a foreigner. Since a slave could damage these crops. The Igbos generally say; “He is foolish who abandons the fate of his yams to slaves”⁴⁴⁸.

Slave labour therefore should be understood as a mere supplement to farm work, rather than it supplanted the labour of the free born in their farm land. One could therefore not force a slave to work as one wanted because he could destroy the owners farms by bad job, and nothing could be done about it. Negotiation was thence called for. And this negotiation was carried out by another group of workers called “Ndi Oru- ngo” “hired labourers” who went from place to place seeking job. They were mostly young people, went from place to place mostly in dry and some also in planting season to do some farm work for others in the districts or far away villages for money. They were normally housed in their new places of work and paid some money. They lived there, fed there together with the owner of farm and jointly negotiated the price. In other words, the “Ana m acho Oru” as Obiora Ike remarked, they had the upper hand in the negotiation. “He stated his condition of service to the farm- owner, and refused to work if his condition was not met. This is contrary to the capitalist mode of employing labourers, which, in its roughest forms, dictated the price for the employee who had no other alternative but to accept the job. One could therefore contrast Igbo job takers against labours in capitalist mode of production. For whereas the Igbo worker decided the conditions of work, and the master had no choice but to accept, the nineteenth century capitalist and its modern followers decided the price of work and the conditions of work, and the labourer has no alternative but to accept”⁴⁴⁹.

⁴⁴⁸ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 23.

⁴⁴⁹ *ibid.*

4.13. Economic Activities in Traditional Igbo Society

4.13.1. Trade

By "Trade" we mean everything that is connected directly with buying and selling, and more especially the functions of marketing⁴⁵⁰. A look at the Igbo people of the present day Nigeria, one is marvelled how a typically agricultural people have, within a very short period of the colonial and post-colonial experience, become powerful masters in the art of trade and marketing, for Igbo traders are seen all over Nigeria and around the world as successful businessmen and traders.⁴⁵¹ Then Igbos among other tribes in Nigerian are well known for their trading. "Trading is a distinct profession and as such practically fills up the lives of many Ibos"⁴⁵².

Until recently, G. T. Basden pointed out that all the business of buying and selling was transacted in the open. The idea of a shop or a room allocated definitely for the sale of commodities had not been entertained. It is different now. Shops, and stalls in the markets, are becoming popular, and the Ibos are responding keenly to the attractions and advantages of the new fashion. It has led, among other innovations, to great numbers of young men "setting up in trade" for themselves, where, before, they had no interest in buying or selling. Now, they proudly advertise the fact that they are "traders" by profession.⁴⁵³

Seldom, in the old days, did men concern themselves with market affairs; they were regarded as pertaining to women rather than to men. The goods offered for sale were mostly connected with the domestic side of the household, and the wives were chiefly responsible for this. A man who purchased foodstuff was generally one who had no women-folk to minister to his needs. Here and there, a man might assist by carrying a load to market, but it was not a common practice⁴⁵⁴.

⁴⁵⁰ Basen, G.T., *Among the Igbos of Nigeria*. p.194.

⁴⁵¹ Ike, O., *op. Cit.*, p. 81.

⁴⁵² Basen, G.T., *op. cit.*, p. 194.

⁴⁵³ Basden, G. T., *Niger Ibos*. *Op. cit.*, p. 334.

⁴⁵⁴ *ibid.*

4.13.2. Home or Domestic Trade

The Igbo calendar is divided into thirteen lunar months of 28 days or seven weeks. A week was made up of four days, called "Izu nta" (small week), and the days are named - 'Eke', 'Orie', 'Afo' and 'Nkwo'. Two four days period of eight days the 'Izu ukwu' (or great week)⁴⁵⁵.

Each village had a market square or gathering place. Markets are held in every town and village. They are named after the days on which they are held, according to the four days of the Ibo week, viz. Eke, Afor, Orie and Nkwo. Occasionally for Eke and Nkwo, instead of every fourth day, the market is held every eighth day, and they are then designated as Eke Uku and Nkwo Uku.⁴⁵⁶ Formerly, the market places contained no buildings and all trading activities took place under the shade of trees, or in the open village square, or near the shrine to whom the market was dedicated, or on any other suitable plain field central to the community to which the market belonged. Describing the nature of this market, G. T. Basden wrote, "In former times there were no booths or stalls or any equivalent to them; the only semblance of a building was the small, ill-kept hut of the patron-deity of the market, and possibly the rude shelter covering the town ekwe (tom-tom)"⁴⁵⁷.

Goods sent to the market were basically agricultural products and every other thing the people with the hand produced bearing in mind the standard of living and the needs of the society. "Everything that is at all saleable finds its way to the market, irrespective of quantity or quality. Food-stuff naturally takes precedence of all other goods, yam, dried fish, palm oil, ground nuts, beans, and so on"⁴⁵⁸. Other items include mats, baskets and other art works, spoons, chairs, bed frames from bamboo, animals, salt, pots, foodstuff, etc.

Commenting on the activities of buying and selling in this home market arena, Basden writes: Other than where the "odu" system is customary, (a reserved sections allocated for a particular item or to a particular individual), The usual practice is for the first arrivals to select their pitches where and as they please. They dump their wares on the ground before them and leave late-comers to squeeze themselves in where they can. These do not ask for much space; so long as a woman can find sufficient room to wriggle down with her basket she will, somehow, manage. It comes about, that very little space is left for the buyers to move round, and it is

⁴⁵⁵ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 82.

⁴⁵⁶ Basden, G. T., Among the Ibo of Nigeria. p. 195.

⁴⁵⁷ *ibid.* p. 196.

⁴⁵⁸ *ibid.* p. 197.

necessary to pick one's way carefully when perambulating a native market. The crowds meander round slowly, inspecting the wares that are displayed. Some of these are placed in shallow wicker baskets, some on banana leaves, whilst most are spread on the bare ground. The goods are left to advertise themselves; there is no attempt on the part of the vendors to advocate their qualities⁴⁵⁹.

“In the open market there are no fixed quotations for goods; on the one hand the seller strives to make the highest price, and on the other the buyer is just as keen to drive the closest bargain for herself, hence the outrageous haggling over prices.

The goods are handled and re-handled, commented upon and rejected by a critical crowd, before an actual buyer appears. Then ensues a wordy contest, both buyer and seller exerting themselves to the uttermost and hurling personal epithets at one another in no uncertain fashion. When the bout has run its course the goods change hands, and the parties are immediately on amicable terms once more”⁴⁶⁰.

As already pointed out, the home domestic trade was primarily a woman's affair as they dominated it. Basden says: “To such an extent do women dominate the situation, that it could be said with a fair measure of truth that trade in the Ibo country was in the hands of women”⁴⁶¹.

Although local and native, the home market has leaders mostly women who set rules, regulations and also sanctions for defaulters that gave room for peace and order. “The government of these interior markets is managed by a number of privileged women who dictate the rules and regulations that apply to the particular market. All questions that arise are referred to this committee”⁴⁶². One of their number is chosen as president of the council or, as she is acknowledged, the “Omu” (queen). This council prescribes the rate of cowrie exchange, what markets shall be associated with them, and it exercises its authority in other directions as demands arise. Also, it decrees what articles are forbidden entrance to the market under taboo law, if any⁴⁶³.

⁴⁵⁹ Basden, T. G., Niger Ibos. p. 336.

⁴⁶⁰ *ibid.*

⁴⁶¹ Basden, T. G., Niger Ibos. *op. cit.*, p. 335.

⁴⁶² *ibid.*

⁴⁶³ *ibid.*

Apart from buying and selling of goods M. Green noted other important roles market plays in the life of the Igbos. “Markets are one of the main features of their lives. They provide a meeting point for the discussion of common business and for the dissemination of news; they are a social event where the spice of gossip, the recreation of dancing and the test of bargain relieve the almost continuing toil of hoeing, planting weeding and harvesting throughout the year... Trading is the breath of fire, particularly to the women among the Ibo, and the vigour with which bargaining and haggling are conducted is evidence of the prestige attaching to successful commercial enterprise”⁴⁶⁴.

In Igbo Land, market served also as a meeting point of friends and relations, sons of the soil and foreigners. When a man or woman was tired of work at home, he or she went to the market, normally attended in good attire, to share the latest news, to socialize, to get entertained and drink wine with colleagues, and above all the market offered some sort of relaxation from work whenever it came up every fourth day in the village.⁴⁶⁵ The women normally go in group of friends discoursing and gossiping as they go. Hence Basden remarks: “A woman will visit the market if she can, whether she wants to buy or sell, or not, because it is the one sphere of entertainment in the ordinary life of the village. There she will meet her friends; there she can learn the latest news, and share in the gossip of the hour. To be deprived of this privilege is a hardship”⁴⁶⁶.

4.13.3. Monetary Transactions

Money as Robertson defines it; “is anything which is widely accepted in payment for goods or in discharge of other kinds of business obligation”⁴⁶⁷.

Studies show that values for products were measured in Igboland by a means of exchange which is as yet impossible to trace its origin. By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, much of the commercial transactions in Igboland were done in money⁴⁶⁸. This argument goes a long way in clearing the assertion that suggested trade by barter as means of exchange in the pre-colonial Igbo society. Basden testifies to the existence of currency and writes: “All goods are

⁴⁶⁴ Green, T. G., op. cit., p. 37.

⁴⁶⁵ Ike, O., op. cit., P. 84.

⁴⁶⁶ Basden, T. G., Niger Ibos. p. 335.

⁴⁶⁷ Robertson, D. H., Money, London, Nisbet, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1922, p. 2.

⁴⁶⁸ Afigbo, E. A., Pre-colonial Links between S.E. Nigeria and the Benue Valley., Nsukka, University of Nigeria, unpublished paper, pp. 1- 29.

sold in the terms of the local currency; there is no bartering of commodities in exchange for other commodities”⁴⁶⁹

An Igbo ex-slave Olaudah Equiano argues that monetary transactions were already established in the eighteenth century, the time of his writing. He says that in his village there were “small pieces of coin made from something like an anchor⁴⁷⁰.

Here most probably, Equiano was referring to the Manilla currency which was in use during the pre-colonial time and of which Basden writes: “Before the introduction of English coinage a local currency was in use. In the more southern and eastern districts there was a strong demand for manillas and brass rods; in the northern and western parts cowries were, and still are, the most popular form of currency. In all the country south of the prohibition line, trade gin is a recognised medium of exchange. In the northern parts the manilla is not current, and the brass rods are wanted solely for the sake of being converted into "nza" (leg-rings for girls). At Onitsha, and on the western side of the river, the large cowrie shells are used, whereas in the eastern hinterland the small type only are acceptable, these smaller being reckoned at double the value of the larger”⁴⁷¹.

From the gathered information of the earlier part of this century, Igbo traders and peoples were using various articles to serve as currency including salt, Umumu, cowry shells, manilas, brass rods, and copper wires⁴⁷². They all served as money, were means of exchange and were valid says Afigbo, “the usage of salt as currency is a phenomenon found in many communities the world over. And it is quite possible that salt was oldest currency in use in Igboland. The salt which came in earthen jars from Uburu was ground into fine powder and moulded into cones of different sizes and used in exchange transactions”⁴⁷³.

Salt in pre-colonial Igbo society was not an easy or cheap commodity to purchase. First of all, there were not many salt producing areas, and few existing ones were not open to everybody. The distance to Ubulu was very far, dangerous and the regulations guiding the extraction of salt from Ubulu lake were very stringent; Still people needed salt as well to cook food- It is therefore understandable that this scarce commodity, which was portable, divisible into sizes

⁴⁶⁹ Basden, T. G., *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*. op. cit., p. 196.

⁴⁷⁰ Equiano, O., *The Interesting narrative of the life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa*. Edited by Norwich, London, 1794, p. 12.

⁴⁷¹ Basden, T. G., *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*. op. cit., p. 198.

⁴⁷² Afigbo, E. A., op. cit., p. 14.

⁴⁷³ *ibid.*

of big and small cones, and desired, would be legal tender in transactions between traders, for everyone needed salt to eat.⁴⁷⁴

The next currency after salt in later times was the iron money known as Umumu, which was perhaps minted on the regions around the northern Igbo plateau.⁴⁷⁵ Basden was referring to this currency found between Enugu and Awka where he says: “this unique currency is formed of tiny pieces of thin flat iron, half an inch in length, with one end barbed, resembling a miniature arrow head. These Umumu have the advantage of being very compact as compared with cowries but are easily lost. Awka people used the Umumu in the purchase of slaves and titled men always carried Umumu along. The value in cash was at the time one Umumu to two cowries, or compared to British money 1920, forty-five Umumu to one penny.⁴⁷⁶

Another currency that gained widely acceptance was the Cowrie. It is to be found in West African Countries. As Obiora Ike suggests, it is possible that they came into existence as considerable external trade with Europe and the Mediterranean littoral of Africa has been in existence for many centuries, and markets are considerably developed in the internal economy of the region.⁴⁷⁷

Basden accepted the fact of himself not been acquainted with the history of the cowrie to offer any suggestion as to how and why the cowrie gained its position and popularity as a medium of exchange. He says: “They have all been imported, chiefly from the islands of the Indian Archipelago, I believe, and the number must be literally as the sand on the seashore. I have been in some treasure houses where the store of cowries has reminded me of heaps of newly threshed corn. The shell when clean—a rare condition—is of light colour and has a corrugated top and edges; very often the top is chipped off to make a hole so that it can be threaded on string. It is amusing to see the neat way a spurious shell is flicked out from the heap by the counter. A native may have a false shell passed upon him if he accepts a quantity as counted, i.e. without checking the amount on the spot, but no native would pass such a shell when actually counting, even if he were blindfolded. A cowrie shell, even though its value is only one ninetieth part of a penny (or, of the larger sort, the one hundred and eightieth part of a penny), is seldom wasted”⁴⁷⁸.

⁴⁷⁴ Ike. O: op. cit., p. 93.

⁴⁷⁵ *ibid.*

⁴⁷⁶ Basden, T. G., *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*, op. cit., p. 201.

⁴⁷⁷ Ike. O: op. cit., p. 93.

⁴⁷⁸ Basden, T. G., *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*, op. cit., p. 199.

He described the currency; affirmed its use and how people valued it. “Cowrie shells appear to be in use over a large part of tropical Africa, and the Ibo country shares in the widespread distribution. Up to a few years ago, it was possible to see large heaps of shells in the houses of the wealthier men; they could be measured by the bushel. A clean shell is whitish and light brown in colour. The back and lip edges are crumpled. A hole is usually broken through the crown. This enables the shell to be threaded on a string, though this was seldom done in practice. Occasionally, other species of shells, bearing a close resemblance to the true cowries, are found mingled with the mass. A native counting shells, will not fail to notice a spurious-shell and, as he counts, he deftly flicks the intruder to one side. A single cowrie shell is of the merest trifle in value, yet one is never wantonly wasted. An odd shell, dropped on the pathway, if noticed, is gathered up by the next person following. The women, especially, are quick to observe a stray shell. She may be hampered with a load upon her head, and find it inconvenient to stoop. Instead, she picks up the shell with her toes and, thence, transfers it to her hand”⁴⁷⁹.

Afigbo also established that there is enough evidence to suggest that cowries were in use in Igboland before the advent of the Portuguese. These three means of exchange namely, salt, Umumu and Cowrie Shell were available in small units in pre-colonial Igboland and were used in small purchases in the local markets.

Currencies of the post-colonial period included the brass rod, manila and copper wire. He points out that “the brass rod, manilla and copper wire came with the Europeans and were useful for large purchases, as their exchange rates were much higher than those of the pre-European currencies”⁴⁸⁰.

The smallness and simplicity of these currencies made them easier to be carried around, stored or preserved. The people resorted to local means of banking and preserving these currencies. “It is a commonly accepted theory that money is hoarded, and this is indeed a fact. In evidence given before the Liquor Traffic Commission mention was made of the practice of purchasing gin to hold as a treasure. This may be the case in some parts.... But money—either in cowries or silver coins—is banked extensively, native fashion. I have seen hundreds of pounds in silver and immense stores of cowries in a man's possession. Then how is it banked? Some say it is buried...⁴⁸¹”.

⁴⁷⁹ Basden, T.G., *Niger Ibos*, op. cit., p. 339.

⁴⁸⁰ Afigbo, E. A., op. cit., p. 14.

⁴⁸¹ Basden, T. G., *Among the Ibos of Nigeria*. p. 200.

These currencies were generally regarded as money and also accepted in the entire Igboland, even though, that manilas and brass rods were used in the more southern and eastern districts, whereas cowries were popular for generations in the northern and western parts.⁴⁸²

4.14. Manufacture – Art and Craft

The traditional Igbo man apart from being an agriculturist is as well much talented. Like in every other society the Igbo man learnt to face challenges posed by the environment. A man had to struggle hard so that he can survive with his fellows in a harsh environment. Brave warriors, enterprising workers, gifted and artistic fellows, all these gained in influence and status by their industriousness. M. A. Onwuejeogwu confirms this writes: “The Igbo are traditionally predominantly farmers and traders. They exploit the palm produce in the equatorial forest and cultivate yams, coco-yams, maize and cassava. Domestic technology in bronze-casting, ironwork and pottery dates back to the ninth century ad, as indicated by the Igbo-Ukwu archaeological finds. Excellent craftsmanship still exists in wood and ivory carving, ironwork and pottery”⁴⁸³.

The art of manufacturing goods by art and craftwork became recognized profession in this typically agricultural milieu. Through industry and manufacture, the natives involved were offered some relief to the more strenuous farm jobs available. They also supplied the much needed technological base of Igbo society, and provided some of the items required by the demands of social, ritual and political life. Manufacture requires some sort of specialization, ranging from the exercise of skills and talents to a few trades such as smithing which require long training. In many parts of Igboland, manufacturers formed guilds of artisans for their trade with rules and regulations to guide and protect.⁴⁸⁴

Afigbo points out that: “The Igbos manufactured a wide range of items – agricultural tools, war implements, various kinds of baskets, cloths, earthen jars, household furniture... some of the crafts which produced these wares could be, and were, practiced by anybody, but some were practiced only by selected communities, either because only they had the necessary raw

⁴⁸² Ike, O., op. cit., p. 95.

⁴⁸³ Onwuejeogwu, M. A., *The Social Anthropology of Africa: II Settlement Patterns and Demographic Circulation; the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria*. London. Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1975, p. 178.

⁴⁸⁴ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 109.

materials, or because the craft demanded so much time and expertise that they could not be easily be combined with full-scale farming. But by and large it could be said that no region of Igboland lacked specialists in at least one particular craft”⁴⁸⁵.

Obiora Ike identifies the existence of workers Guild and Union in Igboland and writes: “The members of various crafts and industries sometimes formed guilds or associations to protect their rights, solidify their trade and to solidarise and encourage one another. Some of the many guilds available include: Metal workers, Blacksmiths otherwise known as Smith’s union; carvers of sacred objects (artists); clay and pottery makers; herbalists and diviners; circumcisers; music instrument artists; the mid-wives guilds. These guilds were powerful and had power as a pressure group to influence policy in traditional society”⁴⁸⁶.

4.14.1. Blacksmith

Apart from the agriculturist, the blacksmiths have more scope for their activities than any other craftsmen. They produced the hoes, knives, cutlasses, hooks for fishing, dane guns and other weapon, iron pots and other metallic equipment. It was a sound money-making business before so much foreign ironmongery was imported. It is still a good profession, for farming implements are always in demand. The trade is controlled by the councils of the smiths in the different villages. No man may go forth to practice until sanction has been granted by the council under whose auspices he serves. Ceremonies have to be observed and areas assigned to those who are authorized to work as journeymen in different parts of the country.⁴⁸⁷ The blacksmiths were highly respected in the traditional society, and their profession was hailed as sacred.

Although this profession is practiced by many towns in Igboland notwithstanding some communities are notable in smithery. Basden writes: “There are some towns which practically monopolize certain specialized professions. For example, Awka, Nkwerre and a few other places manufacture nearly all the metal work produced in the Ibo country”⁴⁸⁸.

⁴⁸⁵ Afigbo, A.E., op. cit., p.15

⁴⁸⁶ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 110.

⁴⁸⁷ Basden, T. G., Niger Ibos. p. 318

⁴⁸⁸ *ibid.*

The iron they used for their work were mainly supplied by the Agbaja people of Udi division and Nsukka people who smelted the ore partly to meet their own needs and partly for export. Basden related the activities at blacksmith's workplace. He writes: Considering the few tools they possess, and the inadequacy of their plant, these blacksmiths produce wrought-iron work of very fair quality. The workshop is quickly erected wherever they make their temporary quarters. Four light corner-poles, standing about four feet above ground-level, support a light framework, which is thatched with a few leaf mats. The anvil is a piece of round iron fixed firmly upright in a block of wood. This, in turn, is buried with the top of it level with the floor, thus securing rigidity.

The hammer is a similar piece of round iron, about a foot long, two inches in diameter, with one end tapered down to form a handle. No coal is available: charcoal is used instead. This is prepared from a shrub called "icheku" or "araba": hence the word for charcoal is also "icheku". This makes a good furnace under draught from the primitive bellows. These consist of a skin bag to the top of which two light sticks are strongly bound. The smith's boy pumps air by quick up-and-down movements by each hand rising and falling alternately. The outfit is completed with a clay nozzle attached at one end to the bag, the other, and tapered end, extends to the centre of the fire. It is a simple affair nevertheless it is capable of generating intense heat.⁴⁸⁹ Also Isichei writes in his missionary observation; "I paid a visit to a blacksmith's shop. It was most interesting. With exceedingly primitive tools and very meager materials, these native smiths turn out some very neat work. While I was waiting he made a needle out of a piece of old knife. The eye and point all complete without being filled or ground..."⁴⁹⁰

According to Basden, "The Ibo blacksmiths appear to have anticipated the trade Union Movement. In former days, the rules and regulations governing the craft were rigidly enforced... On the whole, the members respect the instructions issued by their councils, compliance with the general principles of the institution as they apply in the different towns, is all that is now demanded... But there is freedom from arbitrary restrictions..."⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁰ Isichei, E., *A History of the Igbo People*, *op. cit.*, p. 30, 19.

⁴⁹¹ Basden, T.G., *op. cit.*, p. 321.

Chapter Five

Work in the Colonial and Post-Colonial Nigeria

5.1. Work in Colonial Time

It is not my intention here to start narrating the history of Nigeria and what transpired in Berlin Conference of 1885 that led to the official “scramble and partition of Africa by European powers. The simple fact remains that in 1897, Lord Lugard Frederick, a seasoned British soldier and colonial servant of her Majesty was sent by his Home Government`s Colonial Office to experiment in the newly conquered zone. He needed one year to push out the French influence and although war with France was threatened, the Anglo-French agreement of June 1898 established the basis of the new territory`s borders. Beside Lugard spent three years subduing the North of Nigeria, conquering with his tiny force one emirate after another. Having subdued the sultan`s firepower, Lugard began the conquest of the southern hinterland with the Aro-wars which led to the annexation of Igboland.⁴⁹²

As part of administrative convenience strategy, Lugard amalgamated the North and South Protectorates in 1914, and imposed “Indirect Rule” as a system of governance on the Natives.⁴⁹³

Britain was interested in exploiting from its new colony whatever it could as British born writer Frederick Forsyth writes: “Britain had gained a colony. It had not been conquered, it hadn`t really been explored. It had no name, so later Lord`s girlfriend gave it one - NIGERIA”.⁴⁹⁴

Britain`s colonial policy remained exploitative and orthodox: “maintain law and order, stimulate the production of raw materials, create demand for British exports, and raise taxes to pay for colonial rule”⁴⁹⁵. This policy lasted until 1960 when Nigeria became independent.

⁴⁹² Ike, O., op. cit., p. 149-151.

⁴⁹³ *ibid.* 149-151.

⁴⁹⁴ Forsyth, F., Biafran Civil War: ‘The making of an African Legend: The Biafra Story’. London, 1969, pp. 14-15.

⁴⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 20.

5.2. Nigeria at Independence – 1960

Forsyth testifies: “Nigeria at the time of the colonial lordship had never been more than the amalgamation of peoples wielded together in the interest and for the benefit of a European Power”. Nigerian elites fought without violence for the independence of the colony from Britain, and on 1 October 1960, Nigeria became an independent and Federal Republic, with a British – styled Constitution, and was admitted within the United Nations. Nigeria enjoyed this period only too shortly, just sixty three months, before the tiny veneer that hid the basic disunity burst into a tribal war between the predominantly Hausa-Fulani north with the support of the Western Yorubas, against the predominantly Igbo eastern region. The war to subdue and retain Biafra within the context of a colonially carved out Nigeria lasted from July 1967 till January 1970, with a balance of over two million people dead, fourteen million homeless and three million wounded in battle or otherwise, besides loss of property, poverty, psychological terror and societal disorder.⁴⁹⁶ In search of what may have caused the war Forsyth writes: “although the immediate cause of the war had been the political, the fundamental spark had been the tribal hostility embedded in this enormous and artificial nation... for Nigeria was essentially a British, not a Nigerian experiment”⁴⁹⁷.

In fact, it is held by many political scientists, that one main problem of African nations today has its root in the creation of artificial boundaries which the Berlin Conference legitimized during Europe’s Colonial might and expansionist trauma. This artificial creation of boundaries, the indiscriminate division of peoples, cultures and clansmen into different spheres of influence, just for the benefit of the colonialist countries concerned, has constituted a major obstacle to the economic, political, social development and well-being of many African countries today⁴⁹⁸.

⁴⁹⁶ Ike, O., op cit., p. 153.

⁴⁹⁷ Forsyth, F., op. cit. p. 34.

⁴⁹⁸ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 154.

5.3. Colonial Heritage and the Crisis of Values / Work

We have already pointed out in this project that the traditional society valued work and it was almost the basic source of life and pride. This is in line with the image of work as presented by John Paul II in his *Laborem Execerns*. It is very sad to point out that such value is rapidly disappearing, following the intrusion of foreign powers into the political, cultural and social life of the natives.

In fact, Nigeria today is undergoing a massive change in all spheres of life, be it economic, social, political, religious or otherwise, and this situation has to a very large extent also changed the original attitude to work in the traditional society; it has changed the organization of work, as well as the type of work done.

For many Nigerians, work is ceasing to be rural or subsistent and is becoming urban and white collar jobs. Instead of hoes and machetes, people today work with paper and bics, dressed in French or British suits to match.⁴⁹⁹ And Cardinal Francis Arinze observes: “The changes have been sudden in Africa. What took about centuries in Europe in the pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial eras are being cramped into one century in Africa. Changes that took several generations in the west are being witnessed by one person within his lifetime in Africa. In the same community, some people may be living a simple and rather primitive form of existence, while others are in steady contact with the products of the post-industrial western revolution”⁵⁰⁰.

The results of all these very fast and hurried changes are unthinkable. There is a very big confusion as regards to values, and there is a big crisis in digesting the new colonial heritage. Chinua Achebe has written two books: In his “*Things Fall Apart*”, he portrays that the old order has changed giving place to the new, and in “*No longer at ease*”, he shows the internal situation in which the people today find themselves. Of course, this difficulty in adjusting to the massive pressure of the space age, the moon age, the technological and computer age, for people who are still unable to read and write, who live in huts in the villages and are still harassed by the vicissitude of life in traditional society has brought much discontent and disarray.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁹ *ibid.* p. 157.

⁵⁰⁰ Arinze, F., *op. cit.*, p. 210.

⁵⁰¹ Ike, O., *op. cit.*, p. 157.

It was this situation that Pope Paul VI referred to in his Encyclical Letter “*Populorum Progressio*”, and wrote:

“The conflicts between traditional civilizations and the new elements of industrial civilizations break down structures which do not adapt themselves to new conditions. Their framework, sometimes rigid, was the indispensable prop to personal and family life; older people remain attached to it, the young escape from it, as from a useless barrier, to turn eagerly to new forms of life in society. The conflict of the generations is made more serious by a tragic dilemma: whether to retain ancestral institutions and convictions renounce progress, or to admit techniques and civilization from outside and reject along with it, the traditions of the past and all their human richness. In effect, the moral, spiritual and religious supports of the past too often give way without securing in return any guarantee of a place in the new world.

In this confusion, the temptation becomes stronger to risk being swept away towards types of messianism which give promises but create illusions. The resulting dangers are patent – violent population reactions, agitation towards insurrection, and a drifting towards totalitarian ideologies. That is the situation. It’s seriousness is evident to all”⁵⁰².

The Pope described in this way, the transition mood which characterizes the situation of many nations of the developing world in its reaction to new technologies from outside.

Obiora Ike sees Nigeria and particularly Igboland as clear example of this case. And laments over where such changes has landed the nation. “Such a difficulty in adjusting to new changes in the Nigerian world has affected work, families, national development, labour relations and productivity. It has affected the world views of the Nigerians as many people today read and write English, think English, French, German, American or anything exotic, but have practically forgotten the traditions of their own native soil. So we can say today that the area of culture is existing in a sort of “culture bazaar”⁵⁰³.

A wide variety of ideas and values drawn from different civilizations, compete for the attention of potential Nigerian buyers. This marketing has brought Nigeria the infamous name of a nation of ‘consumers’.

⁵⁰² *Populorum Progressio*, N.10-11.

⁵⁰³ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 159.

The impact of this neo-colonial exploitation remains as strong as ever especially as it has developed a hydra-head- with local people changing places with or collaborating actively with former exploiters, whether from the western world or from the Arabian world.⁵⁰⁴

An Igbo author comments on this cultural conflict and writes: “any people who have been controlled or ruled by a colonial system have a hard time re-establishing themselves. The systematic repression of original ideas through many hidden and open facets, and the gradual influence such repression has on the man and his children and society, lead the person toward self- condemnation and produce complexities and confusions not easily noticed or analyzed”⁵⁰⁵.

The issue of values in general, and particularly that of cultural and socio-political values has become a central issue in treating any topic related to the solution of the Nigerian societal chaos.

Majority of those in power since independence were, as employees of the British in pre-independence days, antagonistic to the people’s interests because of the private gains.

Chinua Achebe writes: “When you went into a university to read in those days, it was not really very much related to your interest (or to your people). If you were lucky, the two might coincide, but you were simply looking for the shortest, the quickest avenue into the “senior service”...colonialism meant: a loss of initiative in one’s own history just have no say in who you were, your own self-development”⁵⁰⁶.

Colonialism in Nigeria from all that has been said so far left terrible psychological and political woes on the colonized. Not only that the amalgamation of varied peoples with different culture, religion and language and different thought pattern into one nation (Nigeria) without consultation, it succeeded in brainwashing the colonized into rejecting their own skin, their own culture, their own relations, and in replacing for all these – the eccentric, the new values from Europe. No doubt, many Nigerians bought over this manipulation under which the country now suffers and have themselves become colonialists to their own people. It is common knowledge that the developing nations suffer from internal colonialism. A small

⁵⁰⁴ *ibid.*

⁵⁰⁵ Njaka, N.E., *Igbo Political Culture*, Evanston, North Western University Press, 1974., p .xii.

⁵⁰⁶ Achebe, C., Interview in „West Africa“ Magazine, London, 5. 11. 1984, ed. Kaye Whiteman., p.2211.

group of rich and powerful people maintain its power and wealth at the expense of the misery of millions of population.⁵⁰⁷

5.4. Attitude to Work in Nigeria Today and the Reasons

What has been said so far, points to the fact that Nigeria's history is one of colonialism and extended economic exploration, both from outside and from inside. Because of the colonial economic system with foreign firms such as BP, Shell, John Holt, Royal Niger Company, National African Company, all operating within the territory and carting away its raw materials to Europe, "independent Nigeria inherited an economy that was in 1960 structurally engineered to be dependent on and manipulable by the International Money markets of Western Europe. This dependence and the vulnerability attendant to it, made many young Nigerians see in Government work, even after the colonial era service to a bourgeois institution that does not merit it."⁵⁰⁸

Therefore government work is seen as a source for "getting one's share of the national Cake", and therefore many people are prone to look at what is government's as "no man's land" and no man's property", with this kind of thought, people render unsatisfactory service to it. There is strong negative "utilitarianism" in people's attitude towards national service and government work. The reasons are clear, and in the historical situation understandable.⁵⁰⁹

Commenting on this type of attitude Cardinal Arinze writes: "The colonial power was not loved and was served with less than total dedication. Government business was regarded as nobody's business. Government funds were considered to be limitless. This mentality had a damaging effect on work attitudes"⁵¹⁰.

Along this line of thought is the understanding that work serves the good of a foreign power primarily, and not for the benefit of the workers. For this reason, work was done half-hazardly. After the British arrived to Nigeria, certain things changed in the agricultural world of the Nigerian farmers:

- (i) Cotton, a basic crop grown in the Northern Nigeria, was no longer to be grown exclusively for home use and manufacture but primarily for export.

⁵⁰⁷ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 162.

⁵⁰⁸ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 170.

⁵⁰⁹ *ibid.*

⁵¹⁰ Arinze, F., op. cit., p. 211.

- (ii) Export crops were being emphasized in every part of Nigeria such as groundnuts, cocoa, beans, cashew and peanuts.
- (iii) New roads, railways and transport facilities were constructed in a way that disregarded the old links in traditional communication system. Instead, new systems of transportation and waterways were brought into existence so that the Nigerian economy could easily be directed into channels directly leading to Europe. These roads connected only the areas where there were raw materials for Europeans markets. A look into the old maps of Nigeria testifies to this fact.⁵¹¹

The consequences for the natives were that new classes of people gradually came into existence with nothing to sell other than their labour. Surely, they did not like this labour and would easily neglect it, but for the fact that their daily bread depends on it.

The hired labourers were fired anytime, badly paid, sometimes beaten by the colonial masters, and they have bad reminiscences of these times. National work was therefore looked upon with suspicion; as work for the foreign body. This attitude however is gradually being corrected today through many appeals to patriotism by the post- colonial governments, but it is still taken time. The famous slogan “o ga e me m pay” (will it be to my gain) that is often heard in post- colonial Igboland is a product of this situation. When attitude to work remains only utilitarian, only to get daily bread, but not to become more, not to help in nation building, not to build up a corporate body, that is, a community of workers, not to get even spiritual fulfilment; when work is considered simply as a task to be done and get quick money, then we are far away from the mark.⁵¹²

⁵¹¹ *ibid.* p. 172.

⁵¹² *ibid.*

5.5. The Nature of Nigerian Economy

The geographical and political entity called Nigeria occupies about 925,000 hectares of land. It is located on the Atlantic coast in West Africa. Nigeria is bordered by Benin on the West, Niger and Chad on the North, and Cameroon on the East.

The economy of Nigeria historically was based on agriculture, and about 70% of the workforce is still engaged in farming (largely of a subsistence type). The chief crops are cocoa, peanuts, palm oil, corn, rice, sorghum, millet, soybeans, cassava, yams, and rubber. In addition, cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs are raised.

Petroleum is the leading mineral produced in Nigeria and provides about 90% of foreign exchange earnings and the majority of government revenues. It is found in the Niger delta and in the bights of Benin and Biafra. Petroleum production on an appreciable scale began in the late 1950s, and by the early 1970s it was by far the leading earner of foreign exchange. The growing oil industry attracted many to urban centres, to the detriment of the agricultural sector. In the 1980s a decline in world oil prices prompted the government to bolster the agricultural sector. Nonetheless, both refinery capacity and agriculture have not kept pace with population growth, forcing the nation to import refined petroleum products and food. Other minerals extracted include tin, iron ore, coal, limestone, columbite, lead, zinc, and gold.

Industry in Nigeria includes the processing of agricultural products and minerals, and the manufacture of textiles, construction materials, footwear, chemicals, fertilizer, and steel. Fishing and forestry are also important to the economy, and there is small commercial shipbuilding and repair sector. In addition, traditional woven goods, pottery, metal objects, and carved wood and ivory are produced. Nigeria's road and rail systems are constructed basically along north-south lines; the country's chief seaports are Lagos, Warri, Port Harcourt, and Calabar.

Except when oil prices are low, Nigeria generally earns more from exports than it spends on imports. Other important exports include cocoa, rubber, and palm products. The main imports are machinery, chemicals, transportation equipment, manufactured goods, food, and live

animals. The United States is by far the largest trading partner, followed by China, Brazil, Spain, and Great Britain.⁵¹³

5.6. Oil: the bedrock of Nigeria Economy and its Effect on Work

Nigeria is one of the largest oil producers in Africa, and the sixth largest in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Oil for the past three decades has provided 90 percent of the foreign exchange earnings of Nigeria, financing 80 percent of total government revenue. The first discovery of commercial quantities of oil in Nigeria was in 1956, with reserves estimated from sixteen to twenty-two billion barrels mostly found in various fields in the coastal regions of the Niger Delta.⁵¹⁴ After Nigeria's independence in 1960, oil production for export had risen dramatically as British and American oil corporations recognized increased investment opportunities. When the Mineral Act of 1914, vesting all land and minerals in the Nigerian State, was changed into the Petroleum Act of 1969, the government consolidated its new commitment to the growth of the oil industry. ⁵¹⁵ With limited capital and technical resources, however, the state was unable to transform the Nigerian economy into a major petroleum exporter overnight. Increased flows of investment from multinational firms made this transition possible. Through a series of contracts and new laws, Nigeria remodeled its domestic market to become more attractive to foreign investors. Indeed, many oil companies responded favourably to the new amendments, competing to take part in joint venture agreements with the Nigerian state. By 1975, Nigeria had the fifth largest stock of foreign direct investment in the developing world.⁵¹⁶

According to the Nigerian constitution, all minerals, oil, and gas are formerly considered the property of the federal government, which negotiates the terms of oil production with the private firm. Most exploration and production activities are carried out exclusively by multinationals, but they operate under joint venture contracts whereby the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), the state oil company, contributes to 55-60 percent of production contracts and claims the same ratio of total revenues. Many European and American MNCs entered into joint venture agreements with the Nigerian government. The companies of Shell BP, Mobil, Chevron, Elf, Agip and Texaco are all currently operating in Nigeria, although the Shell joint venture is clearly the most dominant operation, producing

⁵¹³ The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th ed., 2007, Columbia University Press.

⁵¹⁴ Human Rights Watch, *The Price of Oil*. New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999., p.6.

⁵¹⁵ Daniel Omoweh, "Shell and Land Crisis in Rural Nigeria: A Case Study of the Isoko Oil Areas" in the *Scandinavian Journal of Development Alternatives and Area Studies* (Vol. 17), 1998., p.20.

⁵¹⁶ Joseph LaPalombara et.al. *Multinational Corporations and Developing Countries*. The Conference Board, 1979., p.45.

over half of Nigeria's crude oil production.⁵¹⁷ It is important to note, however, that Shell's monopolistic presence in Nigeria is a historical one, dating back to 1937 when the Colonial Mineral Ordinance granted the company the entire onshore and offshore oil exploration and prospecting rights.⁵¹⁸ Leases for exploration by the company were most often provided for a minimum term of 99 years. The new terms for oil exploration as outlined in the Petroleum Act meant that new foreign companies could bid for contracts in joint operation with the NNPC.

The new contracts set up between the NNPC and foreign firms were in the spirit of improving Nigeria's control of the oil industry, forcing multinationals to sell up to 60 percent of their equities to the state. However, this objective has been severely thwarted by domestic economic crisis, international pressures for privatization, and political instability. But it is necessary to mention here that oil production in Nigeria is still largely under foreign control, and the country as a whole has benefitted very little from the current government contracts. For example, Daniel Omoweh points out that the agreement between the state and Shell cannot be properly considered a joint venture since there is no equity participation involved, and Shell is still 100 percent owned by the parent company. The state has been, for the most part, unable to contribute the financial and technical cooperation that, in theory, recognizes Shell only as a partner. Thus Shell is, in practice, the sole technical operator of oil production, covering the entire costs. These costs are then calculated in terms of quantities of crude oil and its equivalent is subtracted from total revenues. Whatever is left is then shared in the agreed ratio.⁵¹⁹ In another article Omoweh writes:

“Though the Nigerian state owns the oil and gas sector, it lacks the technical capacity to operate, making its control of the oil companies difficult. Incapacitated by a weak technological base, and lack of energy and mining policies, the state has only intervened into the petroleum industry largely to collect rents”.⁵²⁰

More recent contracts relating to oil production have been “production sharing contracts” which, due to the incapacity of the state to contribute to the capital intensive industry, does not recognize the government as a formal partner. The firm covers the entire costs of production and thereby absorbs most of the oil revenues, having only to pay the tax or “rent” on corporate profits.

⁵¹⁷ Human Rights Watch, *op. cit.*, p.7.

⁵¹⁸ Onoh, J.k., *The Nigerian Oil Community: From Prosperity to Glut*. New York: St. Martins Press, 1983, p.19.

⁵¹⁹ Omoweh, D.A., “Shell, Environmental Pollution, and Health in Nigeria” in *Afrika Spectrum* (vol.30). 1995., p.125.

⁵²⁰ Omoweh, D., “Shell and Land Crisis in Rural Nigeria: A Case Study of the Isoko Oil Areas” in the *Scandinavian Journal of Development Alternatives and Area Studies* (Vol. 17), 1998., p.23.

The control over the operating costs of production has been repeatedly expressed as the key determinant in the high profits accrued by foreign oil companies, even during times of economic downturn. While production sharing contracts do not require the government's investment in oil exploration and production, the state forgoes a considerable portion of revenue, accruing as little as 20 percent of corporate profits.⁵²¹ What is significant is that Nigeria remains one of the poorest countries in the world in terms of the standard of living. But in terms of natural resources and nature's endowment, the country is one of the most blessed.

⁵²¹ Jędrzej Fyrnas., "Political Instability and Business: Focus on Shell" in *Third World Quarterly* (Vol.19 no.3) 1998., p.468.

Chapter Six

Reasons for a Declined Interest / Attitude to Work and Remedies

6.1. Neglect of Agriculture

Agriculture is concerned basically with the husbandry of crops and animals for food and other purposes. It is the foundation upon which the development of stable human communities such as rural and urban communities has depended in many parts of the world.

Before the discovery of oil by the British colonial government in Nigeria, agriculture was the mainstream of Nigeria's economy. In the pre-colonial period, more than ninety percent of the populace engaged in agriculture such as farming, cattle rearing, hunting, fishing etc.

The contribution of the agricultural sector to the Gross Domestic product (GDP) surpassed every other sector in the economy. On attainment of political independence in 1960, the trend was still very much the same. During 1964-1965, agriculture accounted for 55% of GDP and employed 70% of the adult work force. In 1970, agricultural export crops like cocoa, groundnut, cotton, rubber, palm oil, palm kernel, etc, account for an average of between 65-75% of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings and provide the most important source of revenue for the federal as well as state governments through export product and sales taxes.

However, the 1967-70 Civil War in Nigeria coincided with the oil boom era, which resulted in extensive exploration and export of petroleum and its products. This led Nigeria to neglect its strong agriculture and light manufacturing bases in favour of an unhealthy dependence on oil for more than 97% of export earning and 80% federal revenue. Oil dependency and the allure generated great wealth through government contracts, but the increased foreign exchange earnings of the country since 1970 has had some adverse effects on Nigeria's potential earning from non-oil export trade. It has discouraged the production of a number of export items, which are the traditional source of Nigeria's export earnings before the advent of oil.⁵²²

Many reasons have been listed as being responsible for the declining role of agriculture in the economy of Nigeria. The post-colonial era ushered in Nigerians who wanted to be civilized as fast as possible and going to school was a condition for being civilized and for this reason many young people left their villages to the big cities in search of "the things" from Europe. A massive move from rural to cities dwellers had a negative effect on agricultural productivity in Nigeria. The effect was the young people abandoned their villages and old

⁵²² Central Bank of Nigeria, Annual Report and statement of Account (Various issues) and Statistical Bulletin (2002).

parents for the attractions of the towns, leaving behind their aging parents as the only agricultural work force. New agricultural work- force has been resisted, new trades have developed (and almost every other is a business man or trader) and mismanagement of funds given out for agriculture development became rampant.

The problem of technology played a vital role. It would be observed that in the industrial sector, Nigeria recorded a low state of development in technology, notwithstanding the knowledge and managerial skill could not produce the most basic tools and machinery necessary for agriculture.

6.1.1. What must be done!

It is necessary to create awareness and organize enlightenment programmes educating the masses on the importance of agriculture for developing nation such as Nigeria and the dangers of much dependence on Oil economy. Nothing lasts forever, the Oil wells would one day dry up. Nigerians should be told about the impending danger of not taking the agricultural sector serious. Many of our citizens have forgotten the fact that foods are produced by human beings and would one day be scarce if we all should neglect food production.

Also, farmers should be given due respect and honour. It is painful to observe the discriminating act shown to farmers in Nigeria. While young graduating students of agriculture should be supported and encouraged to invest in this field.

“The government of Nigeria and her economic planners must realize that the time has come when the country must be placed back on the path of agricultural independence. Small farmers must therefore be supported, as well as the big farmers. If the small farmers are supported, they can adequately feed their families and the excess goes to the community. This will minimize the rate of unemployment as many more people may find joy and satisfaction in farm work- since it will become a rewarding job, and the fruits of the earth will be maximized to the extent that neighbouring countries with poor climate can benefit from Nigeria.”⁵²³

An agricultural expert, Dr Anthony Ekanem, advised the country to take a cue from Malaysia and other countries that revolutionized their agriculture. “Malaysia came to Nigeria in the early 70s to obtain palm seedlings from us which, today has become a major exporter of the

⁵²³ Ike, O., op. cit., p. 507.

product, while Nigeria is still groping in the dark,” he said. Ekanem says that the country faces grave challenges, mostly that of eradication of poverty and fostering socio-economic development. “The current food crisis and the poverty level in the country could be overcome only if government would encourage every Nigerian to embrace farming, articulate research findings and assist farmers through subsidies and loans,”⁵²⁴ he stated.

“By reversing all those negative influences which impede the progress of agricultural work, and thereby allowing the workers through education, financial support, encouragement and incentives to form co-operative unions, made up of a group of farmers with all rights, privileges and responsibilities.”⁵²⁵

The Nigeria government should therefore promote agriculture through:

(a) Provision of accessible roads and good transport system.

The availability of accessible road and transport system is a necessity for agriculture to thrive in Nigeria. Many farmers get discouraged when they remember the stress that they will have to go through before bringing their farm produce to the end users (consumers).

The prices of the products are usually outrageous when they eventually hit the market.

(b) Provision of loans to farmers and fertilizer

(c) Provision of agricultural latest technology

(d) Ban importation of certain food / farm produce

(e) Embarking on rural electrification projects that will help in preservation of farm produce.

(f) Provision of pest control and other useful agriculture chemicals.

(g) Grant of government subsidy- not only in petroleum.

(h) Provision of agric insurance and social security.

“There is a lack of forms of legal protection for the agricultural workers themselves and for their families in case of old age, sickness or unemployment... Legal titles to possessions of small portions of land that someone has personally cultivated for years are disregarded or they

⁵²⁴ The Nigerian Observer Newspaper Art. By David Glory: „Restoring the Glory of Nigerian Agriculture“ May, 1968.

⁵²⁵ Ike, O., op. cit., p.509.

are left defenceless before the ‘Landlord and land hungry’ more powerful individuals and groups”⁵²⁶

(i) Eradication / reduction of corruption in ministry of agriculture.

Corruption, especially in the federal ministry of agriculture has been one of the major causes of the appalling state of agriculture in Nigeria. Until corruption is put under check, agriculture and other sectors of the Nigerian economy will not be healed of this ‘life threatening sickness of our dear country.’

(j) Support of large and small scale irrigation schemes.

Availability of functional irrigation system will ensure that farm produce are available from time to time. Seasonal problems that characterized Nigeria’s food production will be effectively controlled if good irrigation scheme project is commissioned and executed in Nigeria.

Agriculture in Nigeria was a major employment sector before the discovery of crude oil in Nigeria. Until then, jobs were available for the poor citizens of Nigeria. Then, graduates were nurtured to think in the area of being self-employed rather than depend on the jobs that are not available. The agricultural sector of Nigeria if revived will absorb more than half of the unemployed youths in this country.

6.2. Educational System and poor Output

The importance of education to human beings cannot be overemphasized. Education is a human right that should be accorded to all human beings solely by reason of being human. There are a lot of international human rights instruments that provide for education as a fundamental human right. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (1981). The relationship between education and development is well established such that education is a key index of development. It has been documented that schooling improves productivity, health and reduces negative features of life such as crime and bring about empowerment.⁵²⁷

Gloria Kann pointed out the central role of education in the life and well-being of societies. For her, a nation`s progress is intricately linked to the vitality and impact of its education

⁵²⁶ John Paul II., LE, n. 21.

⁵²⁷ EFA Global Monitoring Report (2002), Education for All: Is the World on Track. Paris, UNESCO.

system. And it is by no means the only or magical door to opportunity and remains one of the principal ways to achieve fuller human development and thus to reduce poverty and exclusion⁵²⁸

Fafunwa defines education as “the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or adult develops the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour which are of positive value to the society in which he lives, that is to say, it is a process of disseminating knowledge either to ensure social control or to guarantee rational direction of the society or both.”⁵²⁹ Around the 1970s the quality of Nigerian education was the pride of the black race, the envy of many developing and developed nations of the world. After about three decades of systematic mismanagement by both military and civilian rulers, the Nigerian education has so plummeted that what we have today is a mere shadow of its past glory. Criteria such as the curriculum of study, the state of infrastructural facilities, the quality of students, the quality and quantity of staff, the competence of leadership, the level of funding and the direction and consistency of policy has been posited for assessing any educational system. In the area of curriculum and policy, the main problem is not with formulation as such but implementation. The implementation of laudable policies has often been hampered by incessant change of government, unstable academic calendars, poor and inadequate facilities, lack of motivation for staff, insecurity of life and property and the unwillingness of the products to make positive contribution to society. As a result of all these, the National Policy on Education which aimed at inculcating positive values has rather turned out to produce morally decadent and intellectually incompetent child who is a threat to both parents and society. The Nigerian youth are yet to imbibe the right type of values and attitudes. Rather, Nigerian schools and campuses have become breeding grounds for cultism, ritual killing, kidnapping, hooliganism, armed robbery, sexual promiscuity, examination malpractices, and a host of other vices. Instead of producing pragmatic and altruistic students, the Nigerian educational system has produced students who are egoistic, individualistic and escapists who are not interested in solving society's problems.

⁵²⁸ Kann, G., *Creating Opportunities for Humane Work: Work as Key to the Social Question; The great social and economic transformations and the subjective dimension of work.* Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2002. p. 184.

⁵²⁹ Odia, L.O., (Universal Welfare Sustainable Community Development Center, Benin City, Nigeria) and S.I Omofonmwan (Department of Geography and Planning, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Nigeria: *Educational System in Nigeria Problems and Prospects*” 2007.

6.2.1. The Need for Education Reform in Nigeria

The Nigerian University education, patterned after the “gold standard” of British colonial universities remains the main highway to white collar jobs and social security for millions of young Nigerians. The greatest challenge faced by the Nigerian university in the years after independence from Britain was whether to retain its British legacy the gold standard of Lord Ashby of Brandon or open itself to other influences as is the case with universities all over the world and gradually evolve a distinct character of its own.⁵³⁰

The desire to retain the British framework predominated quite simply because the Nigerian labour market, civil service, private sector and the industries have not developed a system of assessing prospective employees except through their education and examination outcomes. And since the entire employment superstructure is based on British patterns, retaining British educational framework had the comfortable currency of predictability. An almost paternally condescending relationship between Nigeria and Britain also helps to retain Nigeria within the British ambit for a considerable period after independence.⁵³¹

Therefore, Ajayi, J.F. Ade observed and pointed out that “...education in African schools, particularly in Nigerian grammar schools, was still "too literary; ... not practical, not adapted to the needs of a developing agricultural nation." This type of academic education only "tends to produce proud, lazy people who dislike manual labour and prefer white-collar jobs.”⁵³²

S.J. Cookey, the then Federal Adviser on education, expressed the view that the purpose of Nigerian education should be reviewed with a view to relating the curriculum to the needs and aspirations of the society. And currently the Nigerian National Policy on Education emphasizes the need to relate school curricula to national man-power needs.⁵³³

⁵³⁰ Prof. Abdalla Uba Adamu (Department of Education) “Education Reforms, Innovations and the Challenges for Higher Education in Nigeria” Bayero University, Kano, NIGERIA) p .5 , 6.

⁵³¹ *ibid.*

⁵³² Ajayi, J.F. Ade., “The development of Secondary grammar-school education in Nigeria”. *Journal of The Historical Society of Nigeria.* 2(3) 1963, p. 517-535.

⁵³³ Cookey, S.J ., “The need to review the purpose of education in present-day Nigeria”. *Journal of Education*, 1970, 14.

6.2.2. The Need for Research Development

In order to enhance quality education in Nigeria, there is an urgent need to encourage and finance research programmes and inventions as a way of discouraging prospective students from indulging in any form of academic irregularities, who may not have seen anything good or meaningful on the part of those who have been hardworking and creative, research and invention wise in terms of reward for their effort. Unfortunately research interest by the government at all levels and corporate organization is nothing to write home about.

Many who have distinguished themselves in this area of human endeavour got frustrated and discouraged due to lack of assistance and encouragement resulting in brain drain to other parts of the world, where such innovations are well recognized and encouraged. Despite the amount of knowledge and experience claimed to have been acquired or possessed by some scholars, they have always ended up being frustrated by the government and those concerned.⁵³⁴

Such research programmes which have the basis for the socio economic, political, scientific and technological advancement of our most admired developed nations of the world today unfortunately has no place in Nigeria. Therefore, conscious effort towards qualitative and durable educational system need to be put in place for posterity in Nigeria, and for the numbers of its people, their level of skills, attitudes to work and desire for self-improvement.⁵³⁵

6.3. The Influence of Colonialism

The coming together of two cultures always has the positive and negative effects. The influence of British colonization of Nigeria is still felt till present. Just as Peter Fryer observes, “Just as British capitalism distorted India’s economy in order to obtain the highest possible amount of wealth, so Britain in common with other European powers distorted African economy for the same purpose. This distortion began long before the era of colonial rule. By the time Africa entered the colonial era its unequal trading relation with Europe had already led to stagnation of African technology.”⁵³⁶ Due to the challenges posed by the Industrial Revolution, Britain desperately needed raw material, manpower and consumers from Africa. European industry needed from Africa cotton, rubber, palm oil etc. Until about

⁵³⁴ Odiya, L. O., op. cit.

⁵³⁵ Aina, A.T. & A. T. Salau., The challenge of sustainable Development in Nigeria. Nigerian Environment Study/Action Team (NEST). An NGO report prepared for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, 1992, p. 8.

⁵³⁶ Fryer, P., Black People in the British Empire – An Introduction. London: 1988, p.33.

1875 this need could be satisfied by carving Africa up into informal spheres of influence. As the natives resisted and they could not contend with what they got from Africa on ordinary partnership in trade, they felt it unavoidable to use force / colonial domination. The British took from Nigeria palm oil, cocoa, groundnut, pepper, hides and skin, etc. and later the draining of petroleum. These paralysed the normal African way of sustaining his existence.

The colonial power according to Chiaka Ralph C. “destroyed the cultural pattern of production and exchange by which traditional societies in the “Third world” previously had met the need of people. Many pre-colonial social structures while dominated by few exploitative elites had evolved a system of mutual obligations among the classes that help to ensure at least a minimal diet for all. But when the colonial power was “enthroned”, agriculture was viewed in the “conquered” land as primitive and backward.”⁵³⁷

The colonial masters introduced a wage labour in Nigeria and this on the other hand distorted the African concept of work. In traditional African society people do not charge money for work instead the person who hired others usually cook food for the workers. Work had always strengthens togetherness, charity, love and unity. This is how Bussia of Ghana described it. “As has been noted, the tradition of joint ownership of land and co-operative work on the land exists in many African communities. This traditionally corporate life has emphasized group solidarity rather than individualism. Individualism is a new phenomenon, one of the indices of the social changes resulting from impact of technology, commerce, industry and new ideas”⁵³⁸

The aftermath of such economic innovation in the African society include:

1. A hectic and unfair land speculation generating a cut throat competition for the purchase of landed properties at exorbitant and forbidden prices.
2. Great difficulties in the release and acquisition of land for necessary developments and residential purposes
3. Naked materialism without the traditional African consideration for ethics, social justice and human values
4. Sharp business practices and unhealthy profit motives without due consideration for the welfare of the people ⁵³⁹

⁵³⁷ Chiaka, R. C., *Development Aid To The third World- Amoral question*. Ibandan, Nigeria: 1989. p.47.

⁵³⁸ Iwe, N. S., *Christianity, Culture and Colonialism in Africa*. Nigeria: p.214.

⁵³⁹ *ibid.*

This last point actually distorted the work culture among Africans but especially in Nigeria. Today every Nigerian wants to get rich without working for it and at the expense of the common good.

What we are saying here does not mean that there was no development in terms of structures brought by the colonial masters. It is evident that they brought development such as road construction, railways, electricity, pipe-born water etc. But many authors observed with dismay that most of those structures again were put in place at the interest of the colonial economy. One notices that in Nigeria roads and railways were constructed to link trade routes sea ports. This explains why most of these railways and roads were located in places that do not touch the heart of the population. A good example will be the railway from northern Nigeria to Port Harcourt in southern Nigeria passed Enugu running through unreachable farmlands and cutting off Enugu main town itself. The reason was that the railway was built with attention on carrying coal from Enugu and rarely it carried passengers the purpose of which the colonial lords did not have at heart. Hence Pius Okigbo writes: "The growth of transportation in West Africa followed the inspiration that was oriented toward the movement of raw produce from the vast hinterland to the coast. The railway system in Nigeria is monumental example of the way in which the design of a railway is calculated merely to aid the movement of particular resources of the interior. The result is that West Africa evolves a railway system that runs only North to South with no direct connection between East and West."⁵⁴⁰

The teaching method of using cane adopted by the colonial authorities has marked the Africans with a strong sentiment of aversion for work. Indeed, this has developed in the African mentality a passive attitude towards work. The injustices and the bad treatments caused by the phenomenon of forced labour have made the colonized, "lazy" and "cunning". The colonial authorities adopted a means of none wage forced labour in dealing with the natives. The people were forced against their will to work on roads and railway lines and all these were without reward. Such treatment in some circumstance pushed the people to revolt as it happened in Udi in 1914. "The Chief of Obinagu was killed and the celebrated Chief Chukwuani of Nkanu, who led the government troops to Akagbe, came within an ace of losing his life there. It was a protest against forced labour on the roads (one informant brought

⁵⁴⁰ Okigbo. P., *Essays in the public philosophy of development*. Vol. 2 *Change and Crisis in the management of the Nigeria Economy* cited by Onaga, C.V.C., op. cit. p. 138-139.

me a stout cudgel, to show how labourers were flogged) where the unpaid workers, who were expected to feed themselves, often went hungry, sometimes they used to eat leaves.”⁵⁴¹

Work becomes for them a "burden" and is regarded as something done for the White. In fact, in many tribes in Nigeria, one finds local expressions such as "the work of the White", "the work of the Governor", meaning, work done against remuneration. For in the African traditional contexts, salary or remuneration was ignored and people worked for their subsistence or for their survival, and not at all to make some profit whatsoever. Another local saying: « The work of the white man or of the Governor does not get finished », meaning by this, that one does not need to put a lot of effort in such work, in one's job. Such conception of work has therefore negative consequences such as absenteeism and lack of punctuality at one's place of work, lack of duty or professional consciousness, irresponsibility, commitment etc.⁵⁴²

Forced Labour

This is another means used by the colonial masters to achieve their purpose of exploiting the natives but at the end it has only helped in destroying the attitude to work among Nigerians than promoting it. By forced labour we mean “work or service” carried out by any person under the threat of any penalty and of which the person in question has not offered himself voluntarily.⁵⁴³ Though strange it may sound but it was a common practice during the colonial rule in Nigeria. People were dragged to work in railways and motorways against their will and without payment. And moreover the natives were equally bitter for seeing their agricultural products and natural resources been taken away without reward or payment through the same rails and roads they were forced to construct with payment. The people saw it as sheer exploitation and as such it did a lot of damages to the spirit of work by which African are known community assistance and solidarity. As pointed out earlier in this project, Africans practiced the co-operative farming system. A situation whereby members of the group worked in each other farmland in rotation till everyone has taken his turn. There was also a form of communal farming whereby all members of the village, including the village chief worked together to cultivate farm lands.⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴¹ Isichei., op. cit p. 134.

⁵⁴² *ibid.*

⁵⁴³ Olaniyan, B., Economic History of West Africa, Education Research Institute of West Africa, Ibadan, Nigeria: 1971. p. 155.

⁵⁴⁴ Gudrun, L-E., New religious Movements and society in Nigeria. Beyreuth: African Series 17, 1995, p. 45.

Another attitude worth noting is the forms of work done by the Whites in their colonies: their occupations were often either administrative work in the office, or intellectual work. As far as physical or manual labour is concerned, they exercised the function of control over the work which was executed by the Blacks. This attitude strengthens the traditional conception of work that manual labour means slavery. Work in an office, as a civil servant, is therefore regarded by most Africans as a noble person with more dignity. This explains why many parents and even many youth themselves prefer, even nowadays, comprehensive schools to the technical ones. For they hope to get, later on after school, an office job instead of an industrial or agricultural work in a factory or in a farm. This colonial heritage still has a lot of influence in many African societies today. ⁵⁴⁵

6.4. Effect of Bad Government and Corruption

When it comes to leadership and administration, Nigeria has been unlucky. Many woes that have befallen the Nation have been traced back to the problem of bad leadership. In the words of Chinua Achebe; “The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenges of personal example which are the hallmark of true leadership”.⁵⁴⁶ Nigeria has only witnessed good leadership for about six years (1960-1966) after independence. Since then it has been series of military interventions that have not only laid eggs that hatched into bad and corrupt leaders but also destroyed the traditional values. In an interview with Mbazulike Amaechi (Minister in the first Republic) by Daily Sun Newspaper, he traced the derailment of the nation to the military coup of 1966. As he pointed out; “There was absolutely no cause for that he says. It was a most unpatriotic treason that was committed in 1966. There was a country only six years old...and when we came in, our greatest problem was manpower to run the country, and that was why the priority was given to the founding of universities. Zik founded the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Obafemi Awolowo founded the University of Ife, and Ahmadu Bello founded Bello University. The minister of education Dr. Jaja Wachukwu was instructed to concentrate on warding massive scholarships to Nigeria students to study anywhere in the world. The few

⁵⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁴⁶ Achebe, C., *The trouble with Nigeria*. Heinemann Publishers, Johannesburg, 1983, p.1.

industries we set up from the proceeds then, palm produce from the East, cocoa from the West, groundnuts from the north, were being managed until the unpatriotic military took over in 1966.”⁵⁴⁷

The military led the country for 38 years. So at the time they were handing over in 1979, there were a few remnants of the original nationalists that fought for independence. But by the time they came back again in 1983 and stayed on till 1999, there were no longer politicians who were active in the struggle for independence.

Some of them had grown old, some had died, so the only people that took over in 1999 were the surrogate of the military, the collaborators of the military. People who joined the military in looting and stealing, these were the people who were rich enough to win elections to control the senate and the national assembly, and to form the government in 1999. If there had been tutelage, if the nationalists had been in power and their successors were coming up, there would have been tutelage and handing over.

They would have learnt the history of the country. But because of 38 years gap created by the military, there was no handing over. So, the people who are in government now are the people who were either not yet born or were too young when the journey started. So they don't know the history of the struggle. And they don't want to know the history of the struggle. And they don't want to know because the people who helped them to come to power are people who believed in money. That is why there is so much corruption in the country, so much rottenness in the country that is why it will be too difficult to clean up the stable.⁵⁴⁸

Chinua Achebe therefore by way of offering solutions calls on all thoughtful Nigerians to rise up today and reject those habits which cripple the national aspiration and inhibit the chances of becoming a modern and attractive country. Nigeria has many thoughtful men and women of conscience, a large number of talented people. Why is it then that all these patriots make so little impact on the life of our nation? “Why is it that our corruption, gross inequities, our noisy vulgarity, our selfishness, our ineptitude seem so much stronger than the good influences at work in the society? Why do the good among us

⁵⁴⁷ Daily Sun Newspaper, Secrets of the Nigeria Civil war, Interview with Mbazulike Amaechi, Written by Chidi Obineche. Monday, May 7, 2012.

⁵⁴⁸ *ibid.*

seem so helpless while the worst are full of vile energy?”⁵⁴⁹

He believes that Nigeria is a nation favoured by Providence. And there are individuals as well as nations who, on account of peculiar gifts and circumstances, are commandeered by history to facilitate mankind’s advancement. Nigeria he believes is such a nation. The vast human and material wealth with which she is endowed bestows on her a role in Africa and the world which no one else can assume or fulfil. The fear that should nightly haunt Nigerian leaders (but it does not) is that they may already have betrayed irretrievably Nigeria’s high destiny. “The countless billions that a generous Providence poured into our national coffers over the years would have been enough to launch the nation into the middle-rank of developed nations and transformed the lives of the poor and needy. But what happened to it? Stolen and salted away by people in power and their accomplices. Squandered in uncontrolled importation of all kinds of useless consumer merchandise from every corner of the globe and embezzled through inflated contracts to an increasing army of party loyalists who have neither the desire nor the competence to execute their contracts; consumed in the escalating salaries of a grossly overstaffed and unproductive public service”.⁵⁵⁰

6.5. Lack of Spirit of Patriotism

A patriot, according to Chinua Achebe is a person who loves his country.⁵⁵¹ He is not a person who says he loves his country, not even a person who shouts or swears or recites or sings his love of his country, instead he is the one who cares deeply about the happiness and well-being of his country and its people. Patriotism is an emotion of love directed by a critical intelligence. A true patriot will always demand the highest standards of his country and accept nothing but the best for and from his people. He will be outspoken in condemnation of their short-comings without giving way to superiority, despair or cynicism.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁵⁰ Achebe, C., *The Trouble with Nigeria*, *op. cit.*, p.2-3.

⁵⁵¹ *ibid.* P.15.

⁵⁵² *ibid.* P.16.

Then going by this definition; “Nigerians for him are among the world’s most unpatriotic people.”⁵⁵³ This is not because Nigerians are particularly evil or wicked; in fact they are not. It is rather because patriotism, being part of an unwritten social contract between a citizen and the state, cannot exist where the state reneges on the agreement. The state undertakes to organize society in such a way that the citizens can enjoy peace and justice, and the citizens in return agrees to perform his patriotic duties.

Quite clearly patriotism he argues is not going to be easy or comfortable in a country as badly run as Nigeria is.⁵⁵⁴

So many people are fade up by the way in which their leaders run the country and instead of developing love for their land the opposite becomes the case. For Alhaji Bamanga Tukur: “Patriotism involves the love for one’s country and the readiness or preparedness to defend it at all cost. Many Nigerians are not well-disposed to rendering services free-of-charge in the interest of the nation.

There are Nigerians, who strongly believe the country is not worth living for. It is interesting or amazing to know that reasons adduced for their nonchalant attitude is genuine.”⁵⁵⁵

How for instance, he argues would a country, so blessed with natural resources as Nigeria, have her citizen wallow in abject poverty. Nigerians get to hear their leaders talk about the quantum of revenue generated from the black “gold”, yet the people live in misery, because the revenue is being used for selfish ends.

Majority of the citizens do not believe that the government is set up to achieve the good of the society. Government, most people argue is established as an agency or institution of the state to achieve the wish of very few people.⁵⁵⁶ Citizens read in the media how corruption is carried out massively by officials. It is easy to conclude that even when prosecution commences, on fraudulent cases involving top-shots of the government, there may not be diligent prosecution.

How do you expect Nigerians to be patriotic under this circumstance? Governments need

⁵⁵³ *ibid.* P.15.

⁵⁵⁴ *ibid.*

⁵⁵⁵ Tukur, B Alhaji., „Why Nigerians are not Patriotic”, *Osun Defender*(Nigeriannewspaper) Friday, May 25, 2012.

⁵⁵⁶ *ibid.*

to do more to affect the lives of citizens positively. Sincerity, equity and fairness are the ingredients we need in the running of the country to give everybody the sense of belonging. He therefore believes and argues that Nigerians can be patriotic if there are good examples to learn from the leadership. Objectivity, sincerity and hard-work should be our signpost. Sentiments and nepotism tend to dominate our sense of reasoning. Our citizens can be patriots if the system encourages and enhances sense of belonging and fairness. The country, as it is today, does not encourage patriotism and nationalism.⁵⁵⁷

Most people think of what they can benefit from the system, rather than what they can put in. With time and change in orientation, Nigerians can change their attitude to work.

6.6. The German Work Culture a Lesson for Nigeria

Germany is renowned for its excellent work culture and the German economy bears witness to this truth. Just recently in the television debate before the election to the highest office (Councillor) in the German government holding on 27th September 2013 involving the incumbent councillor Angela Merkel and Peer Steinbrück her challenger, Angela Merkel in the midst of global economic crises insisted that the economy of Germany is strong. And she is correct when compared to what has happened recently to many countries around the world. One will observe that German economy has remained unshakable, instead of losing, they even profited from the global economic crises. They are even the ones bailing out many countries in the European Union, Greece, Spain, Italy, France, etc those economies of which melted down. Even the President of the United States, in one of his re-election campaign visit to Germany in 2012, said that the United States of America respect Germany for her “Strong Machine Technology”. Other people refer to it as German Machine. She is one of the countries in the world where social inequality is highly minimized. We are not saying here that all is perfect in Germany but it is very clear that the average working German is better than his or her counterparts in other parts of the world. This is the reason why youths in other parts of European Union are flocking into Germany for greener pastures.

What I intend to do here is to establish the foundation of this strong economy and work culture. The aim is to exploit the aspects of German work culture that could help Nigeria

⁵⁵⁷ *ibid.*

to rediscover the value of work for a better strong economy for the good of her citizens.

The industrial relations system of the Federal Republic of Germany presents an interesting contrast to models of other countries. One of the key characteristics of the German system is the close integration of formal education and training with human resource practices with firms.

Education and Training

The starting point of human resource practices in Germany firms is her highly structured education and apprentice-training system. In Germany, tracking begins at age of 10, when a small percentage of the most academically talented students (most of whom do not come from working-class families) enter a college preparatory program and later go on to obtain university degrees and jobs in their chosen profession. About 70 percent of German students are tracked into a vocational education and training system. At the age of 15 those in this track begin a three-year apprenticeship program in which they spend part of their time participating in on-the job training in German companies and part of their time in classroom instruction. Upon completion of this apprenticeship they are given certificates in their trade. Further occupational mobility at later stages of a worker's career depends in large part on receiving additional training and professional certification. This system therefore provides considerable general training that is transferable to other enterprises and thus makes it possible for workers to move from one firm to another.

The emphasis on professional and merit-based promotional policies in German firms is matched by relatively few status or other distinctions between blue and white-collar workers and few rules or boundaries that separate occupations or job titles. The high degree of skill training combined with a strong work ethics reduces the need for close supervision. Studies have shown that German firms tend to have fewer supervisors than are typically found when compared with other countries of Europe and America. Again, the heavy role that business enterprises play in the training and socialization of their workers helps explain why surveys have found German workers to be deeply committed to their jobs and exhibit strong allegiance to their organizations.⁵⁵⁸

A German worker has an enduring spirit and it is this working spirit that has made workers and nation famous around the world. Workers persevere more when they

⁵⁵⁸ Encyclopaedia Britannica Fifteenth Edition, Chicago U.S:A: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. 1997.

convinced that their welfare is well covered. This explains why many institutions with German worker try to hold this trust so as to get the best services out of these workers. “The German worker, whether factory, hand or pieceworker at home, had great powers of physical endurance; he only resisted when he felt that those who were in authority over him had ceased to care”⁵⁵⁹

Another factor worth noting is the working hours. In the 19th century Germany, the working hours were too long and the workers hardly had a free day in the week. At a point, the observance of “Blauer Montag” meaning (Holiday on Monday) only for workers was introduced. Normally, the working hours in a day were from 10 hours and some workers worked till midnight on Saturday. There was nothing like payment for “over-time” nor was there anything like annual holidays. It was only between 1900 and 1905 that a standardized working hour was introduced and even then it was only pegged at ten hours. Industrialists like Robert Bosch, founder of the famous Bosch electrical company, introduced eight hours per day and were thought to be ultra-modern. They were disliked by their fellow industrialists who wanted that their employees work more than eight hours a day. Bosch was given the nickname ‘Red Bosch’ because of this. It must also be pointed out that the working condition in factories at this time in Germany was not encouraging. They were no ventilation and sanitation in factories. In spite of all these, the workers worked very hard for a very meager wage.⁵⁶⁰

Commitment to work is another area worth notice in the German work culture. The words Arbeit und Zeit meaning “work and time” play an important role in the life of a German worker. The German worker is committed to his or her work and would not like to play with his time. He is focused and knows that it is from his work he makes his living so he goes about it with every amount of commitment. He knows what is within the area of his specialization and tries to discharge his work honestly and simply turns what is not within his limitation. As we pointed out earlier, supervision or monitoring is irrelevant and unnecessary because a German worker accepts work and delivers. The most interesting aspect is honest approach to work. I can do this and sorry I cannot do this. And that which I accept that I can do, I do it well under or without supervision. I suppose this is one of the reasons behind the solidity of German technology. Germany is not known for sub-standard products and the credit goes to the German workers. Vocational Schools as well

⁵⁵⁹ Sagarra, E., An Introduction to 19th Century Germany. Harlow, Essex, 1980, p.69.

⁵⁶⁰ Sagarra, E., An Introduction to 19th Century Germany. Harlow, Essex: 1980, p. 65.

as other higher institutes of practical learning are rated high and Parents invest more at the early stage of the children helping them to discover and develop their talents. Many engage professionals and specialist to help their children to develop their talents and these help a lot in a later stage of life. Apart from a chosen carrier or job, many Germans learn handwork. This explains why they do a lot of things for themselves. It does not matter ones status in life, many derive joy doing handwork. Most women and young girls weave pullovers, hand gloves, window cottons etc with their hands at their private times.

Such attitude to work would be of very much help to Nigeria if only they could swallow their pride. Nigerians attach much value to Certificates and Degrees. And for this reason every child wants to go to the University with or without sponsor. Attention is no longer given to the Vocational schools und Schools of Technology. Therefore efforts should be made by the Nigerian Government, big firms and private establishments so as to assure fair play through emphasizing on merit and performance rather than on paper certificates.

It is the work of any government to ensure that her citizens get fair opportunity to contribute to the needs of the society and also to see that they get fair remuneration for their contribution. In doing this the principles of work as it concerns man as subject and the goal of work and individual contribution towards the achievement of the national international common good is realized.

Another lesson for Nigeria is that the citizens must not always wait for the government before building a strong economy. It is true that democracy in Nigeria is still at a trial stage and corruption is at the climax notwithstanding, a strong economy can be built not minding the bad government. Individuals are expected to join hands in building up the economy as is the case in Germany. Germans believe so much that Germany is for Germans and they hold firm to this saying by working hard for the growth of Germany. Also the person of the worker should be respected and appreciated and by doing so help is promoting the value of work. Rich Nigerians should be encouraged to invest in the country by building industries and factories that can provide jobs for many young men and women. Presently, only a small number of the among the rich do invest in Nigeria, while other especially the present and past leaders after looting the public fund travel outside the country to invest them or dump huge amount in foreign banks. It will not be easy but with a change of attitude which is actually the aim of this project Nigeria can provide work for numerous young men and women who are jobless and the reason for

which there is increase in crime rate.

6.7. Hope Rises as Nigeria is seen as a Future Economic Giant

Irrespective of numerous problems facing the country since her independence in 1960 which include bad leadership, corruption, ethnic and religious conflict, security challenges etc. Nigeria is country with ample opportunities. The country has what it takes to one of the leading world economy. In recent times the world largest economic rating is shifting from the so called super powers to the third world countries. Who would have thought that China will overtake bigger countries like Germany, Britain and France to become second largest economy in the world. Other third world countries who also have come up are India and Brazil. Today, attention is turning to Africa as the future economic giant and Nigeria as the giant of Africa is at the centre of the discussion. Claire Furphy in an article points out that the leading financial consulting firms McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) and Boston Consulting Group (BCG) agree that Africa is now the most profitable place to invest not only does Africa provide the best growth rates, but analysis also show that investments in Africa in recent years yielded the highest profits world – wide.⁵⁶¹

Just recently, the United States of America described Nigeria as the next economic success story. This was not as a result of her numerous natural resources; Nigeria has a teeming young and dynamic population made up of mostly middle class. “Think about it – over 60 percent of Africans are under 35 years old.”⁵⁶² And the attraction of the international business community is mainly on this middle class who constitute a very huge market.

⁵⁶¹ Furphy Claire, *Becoming Economic Power: Africa’s People hold the key to Success*. 16.08.2009/2010 in <http://www.consultancyafrica.com> 5.08.2013.

⁵⁶² President Barak Obama’s Speech at University of Cape Town’s Jameson Hall, South Africa. 10:15am July 2. 2013.

6.7.1. Telecommunication

The amount of success and growth recorded by telecom operators in Nigeria since its introduction few years back is a clear evidence of this fact. Nigeria's economy has recorded massive growth at 6-7 per cent in the last few years under irregular power supply, if eventually the country gets the regular power equation supply, the economy will spring up. According to the report of Internet World Statistics, Nigeria is one of the biggest and fastest growing telecom markets in Africa, attracting huge amounts of foreign investment, and is yet standing at very low levels of market penetration. Nigeria has a triple-digit growth rates almost every single since 2001. It has passed Egypt and Morocco in 2004 to become the continent's second largest mobile market after South Africa. And yet it has only reached about one quarter of its estimated ultimate market potential.⁵⁶³

6.7.2. Assessment

President of the United States Barack Obama described Nigeria as the world's next economic success story, pointing out that it was one of the major reasons why his government was determined to help the country build strong democratic institutions and remove constraints to trade and investment through the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

He made this declaration at the US-Nigeria Trade and Investment Forum, an event organised by the Nigerians in Diaspora in Washington DC, the President of the United States who was represented by Ambassador Eunice Reddick, said that United States expanded opportunities for Nigeria to effectively access markets and diversify its economy beyond a narrow reliance on natural resources. "As we support these efforts, the Diaspora can play an important role in contributing to a strong, vibrant and economically prosperous Nigeria" he noted.⁵⁶⁴

Eunice Reddick, in a keynote address revealed that Nigeria's bilateral trade with the U S in 2011 stood at \$38.5 billion up by nearly 12 per cent from 2010. US exports to Nigeria,

⁵⁶³ Telecommunications, ICT and Internet Usage in Nigeria. www.internetworldstatistics.com/af/ng.htm 5.08.2013.

⁵⁶⁴ Article by Omoh, G., Nigeria, World's Next Economic Giant. Vanguard Newspaper 1.10.2012 in allafrica.com.

primarily wheat, vehicles and refined petroleum products valued at 4.8 billion dollars in 2011, an 18 per cent increase from 2010 figure.

She declared that America believes that Nigeria could be the world's next major economic success story, "that is why according to her, the United States is committed in helping Nigeria build institutions, remove constraints to trade and investment through the African Growth and Opportunity Act, expand opportunities for Nigeria to effectively access its neighbour's markets and diversify its economy beyond a narrow reliance on natural resources."

That they are also working to see that Nigeria's agricultural sector is strengthened, which offers nearly 70per cent of the country's population employment. And by encouraging improvements in infrastructure that would facilitate agricultural growth, liberalising trade policies to foster regional trade reforming the customs system to bring it in line with global best practices and encouraging policy reforms to enable private investment in agriculture."⁵⁶⁵

The future is Nigeria's Economy has also attracted attention from different parts of the Globe. Goldman Sach in 2004 said that Nigeria will emerge one of the 20 largest economies of the world in 2025. This was the basis of Nigeria's vision 20-2020 started by the then President Obasanjo, He argued that 2025 may be too far and could be achieved in 2020.

In a recent presentation on Nigeria's Debt Capital Markets, Richard Fox, Fitch Rating's Head of Africa/Middle East sovereigns, compared Nigeria's current sovereign debt metrics to those of Emerging Markets (EMs) that have recently made the transition to investment grade (IG) and his conclusion was that Nigeria is on the path of success.

He said: "Since 2004, seven EMs have moved up the rating scale from Nigeria's current 'BB-' level to the lowest investment grade 'BBB-' rating. The most recent was Indonesia in 2011; the others are Azerbaijan (2010), Brazil (2008) and Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Romania and Russia (2004).⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶⁶ *ibid.*

6.7.3. Reasons for This Improvement

Nigeria's stable and robust GDP growth of more than 7 per cent since 2009 compares well with the record of newly IG sovereigns and is even more creditable given its reliance on the non-oil sector.

Also the structural reforms planned in the electricity, oil and agriculture sectors, will be crucial if growth is to be diversified and sustained closer to double digits, in order to close the large gap in per capita income.

"Nigeria's inflation rate is also still on the high side - in low double digits- compared to an average of 7.5 per cent for newly IG sovereigns and a range of five per cent to 12 per cent. Again, Nigeria did much better on the government debt ratio which, despite creeping up, at a little under 20 per cent of GDP, is lower than the 26 per cent average for newly IG sovereigns. Nigeria's ability to finance itself domestically, in its relatively well developed domestic capital market, is also a major strength compared to many newly IG sovereigns."⁵⁶⁷

This has attracted the international community with China on the lead then United States and European Union who would not like to be left out in the competition for massive investment in the opportunities available in the country.

6.7.4. To Achieve This Goal

Nigeria trade relationship with other countries should not end at shipping of finished products, construction and buying of crude Oil, instead Nigeria should engage China to invest in manufacturing here just as many companies in Europe, Asia and America cited their plants in China and today China is an economic success story.

It is the duty of the Nigerian Government to draw out a transformational agenda which will assure strong and non-inflationary growth, and create employment and alleviate poverty. Government should be steady in her program to ensure a steady supply of

⁵⁶⁷ *ibid.*

electricity throughout the country for light is life. President Barack Obama promised to help Nigeria realise this objective. “Access to electricity is fundamental to opportunity in this age. I am proud to announce a new initiative – Power Africa – to double access to power in sub – Sahara Africa, starting with an investment of \$7 billion in US’ government resources”⁵⁶⁸ “It is the light that children study by, the energy that allows an idea to be transformed into a real business.... It is the lifeline for families to meet their most basic needs and it is the connection that is needed to plug Africa into the goal of the global economy”⁵⁶⁹

To achieve value reorientation Nigeria, every Nigerian must live up to expectation. A good atmosphere through good governance has to be created that will ensure security of lives and properties. Measures against corruption must be adopted. Infrastructure and human capital development with the expected outcome of the jobs creation, better resource management, elimination of corruption and sustained economic development. A better attitude to work and work ethic has to be embraced. Nigerians are well talented and physically able bodied. The numbers of youths that attend university and tertiary institutions have gone high. So needed to be done is only a change of attitude in other not to let the opportunity for a better future slip off the hand. Hence the urgency of this research Work.

⁵⁶⁸ Barack Obama’s Speech in CUT. op. cit.

⁵⁶⁹ *ibid.*

Evaluation and Conclusion

A detailed exposition of the meaning and importance of work to humanity with reference to *Laborem Exercens* and the relevance it has on the developing countries especially Nigeria considering her leading role in Africa and the numerous problems facing the country and a possible way out of those problems for the good of her citizenry has been presented in this research. We will try here to bring our points together and offer more solutions by way of evaluation and conclusion.

It is man's duty to work and by doing so he procures his daily bread; by his work that he must contribute to the continuing development of the technical arts and science; by his work – of particular importance, this – that he must help to raise ever higher moral and cultural standards of the society in which he shares his life with the human family. In so far as we fail in realizing this, we frustrate our lives and fail in what we owe the common good, offending against the virtue of social justice which bids us to do habitually whatever is necessary for the common good. Since it is man's duty to work, Nigerians have to change their attitude to work, which since the colonial experience has become exteriorized. Work should not simply mean "Meal thicket", but must be more for a country with the potentialities to elevate Africa. ⁵⁷⁰

Man alone is adapted to work. Indeed, work is one of the signs by which man is distinguished from other living creatures. Although active in sustaining themselves, animals cannot be said to work. Work is therefore a fundamental dimension of man's existence on earth and through work man fulfils his life on earth. Wherefore, work bears man's signature, the distinctive mark of his humanity and nature, the mark of a person who is created in God's image to act within a community of persons. We must keep always before our eyes the subjective nature of work, first man, then the rest. If we do this we shall never neglect or deny the threefold external purpose of work, namely; family, nation and mankind, nor shall we neglect the dignity of the working person and unique individual.

The Encyclical *Laborem exercens* extols the unique worth, value and dignity of man, and asserts that economics must serve man, and not otherwise. Man's special relationship to God his creator and his endowment with reason, faith and an eternal soul make him superior over work itself, the object of work and the tools and equipment used as working

⁵⁷⁰ Ike, O., op. cit., 518.

materials. Such an attitude will help rescue Nigeria and entire Africa from the impending economic secularism or materialism facing modern nations.⁵⁷¹

Africa at large and most especially Nigeria is blessed with numerous human and natural resources. What is needed to harness these resources is only a change of attitude both on the part of the leaders and the citizens. The Pope pointed it out in his speech to Nigerians on visit in 1982 when he said: “Only the united efforts of the citizens under enlightened leadership can overcome difficulties such as Nigeria now has. Only the harnessing of all the forces for the common good, in true respect of the supreme values of the spirit, will make a nation great and happy dwelling place for its people”.⁵⁷²

The Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria rightly observed and wrote: “Many Nigerians have a wrong attitude towards work. They want money in large quantities. But they are not willing to engage in hard work with sustained diligence. Many competent and qualified Nigerians are lazy in their work. They are undisciplined. They lack a sense of humour and joy in their work. They, however, want promotion and quick money by nepotism tribalism, bribery, god-fatherism, Political manoeuvring and sheer embezzlement.

We call on all such Nigerians to change their direction. We call on all of them to help build maintain a peaceful and progressive nation by honest work, diligence, love of our country, and sustained discipline”⁵⁷³.

We want also to say that the worker has rights too. Among these is his right to a just salary paid to him in time. We condemn the delay in the payment of salaries of workers. It is lamentable that in some states in our country, some workers are not paid for more than two months. This is damaging to the morale of workers, to their personal dignity and that of their families, to the moral authority of the employer and to the nation generally. We call on all employers to pay their workers promptly.

In the public sector, there are many workers who are hard-working, diligent and competent. But they are not adequately encouraged or promoted. Rather, workers of lesser

⁵⁷¹ *ibid.*

⁵⁷² John Paul II, in Lagos 1982 (Speech to President).

⁵⁷³ The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria., Pastoral letters and communiqués 1960-2002. The Voice of the voiceless “For Peace and Progress” Rev. Peter Schineller, S.J. Editor daily Graphics Ltd Lagos Nigeria, June 30, 1982, p. 115.

performance are put over them. This is not good for them nor for our nation.⁵⁷⁴

Therefore there is needs for a change of attitude, re-orientation of life style and measures be taken that eventually will promote the culture of work in the entire African continent and most especially in Nigeria.

A Call for the Promotion of a Culture of Work

The promotion of a culture of work in African milieu requires a radical change of mentalities. But for this change to take place; there is a pressing need for education to work at various levels: the family, the school, the State, the Church.

As first teachers, it is the duty of the parents, in the first place, to train their children to work, to inculcate to them the importance of work for man and for humanity as a whole. This education does not mean theoretical lectures to be given to children. It will rather impress them from the concrete examples, that is to say, if the parents themselves spend time to work, if they show a real passion to work.⁵⁷⁵

In some villages in Nigeria, it is current to see adults sitting from morning till evening at the market's place just taking pleasure in chatting, in playing cards or other games, whereas the women go to the farm alone or are busy with the domestic functions. It is the responsibility of the men in our culture to work hard and provide for the family whereas the women assist them but now the reverse is the case. The women overlabour to provide for the family whereas some men lazy around. Such an attitude cannot obviously be an incentive for children to work. From the infancy, it is good to ask the child to accomplish little functions at home, such as helping the parents in the farm, in a carpentry workshop (if it is the father's trade), in the kitchen for the cooking of food, in cleaning the house or its surroundings so as to ensure the well-being of the compound, and so forth.

The school is another adequate environment for the promotion of the culture of work. The teachers and the lecturers, like the parents at home, must also instil the love of work to their pupils and students through personal examples: for instance, by dedicating their time to prepare well their lessons, by respecting the schedule of the lessons, by marking the

⁵⁷⁴ *ibid.*

⁵⁷⁵ Eone Eone, Oscar., "Importance of a culture of work in Africa milieu in the light of the Encyclical *Laborem Exercens*" : Work as Key to the Social Question; The great social and economic transformations and the subjective dimension of work. Libreria Editrice Vaticana. 2002.

examinations copies with duty consciousness with no favouritism, that is to say, not giving high marks to those students who do not deserve them; the attitude of favouritism indeed kills the spirit of effort in the intellectual work. The students are to be encouraged to study hard, and at the same time to be discouraged with sanctions to any form of fraud at the exams. The students should be encouraged by parents and teachers to discover their talents, develop and pursue their goal in life along these natural endowments. Many parents decide against the wishes and interest of their children what they will do in life. And the society suffers at the end.

At school also, physical work or manual labour is to be encouraged in various ways. There are schools which possess big lands (especially in rural areas). They are encouraged to create a school farm where students can learn agricultural work, and the produce of the harvest be sold to add to the income of the school? In some schools (minor and major seminaries for priestly vocations) there is manual labour at least once a week in the training's program ; the students accomplish functions such as cultivating the garden, being florist, cleaning the class and common-rooms, the toilets, and so on. Such a practice can be imitated in the public and private schools. It would not be bad if manual labour is introduced, at the levels of primary and secondary schools, as a discipline to be validated with a mark which is taken into account in the final evaluation to pass over to the higher class.

At the level of the State, it rests with the latter, to create through a better legislation of labour norms which give an incentive to good and profitable work for the individual and the whole society ; having a labour Code which protects the interests both of the worker and the employer, for instance in matter of the respect of the rights of the workers which are principally, according to John Paul II in *Laborem Exercens*, nos. 18 and 19 : the right to have a suitable employment for all who are capable of working. On this point it is left for the State to make provisions for suitable conditions and for an appropriate juridical environment for the creation of employments by the privates or by the agents of the so-called civil society; the right to just remuneration for the work done; the right to health which demands that medical assistance should be easily available to workers; and that as far as possible be cheap or even free of charge; the right to rest, that which involves a regular weekly rest comprising at least Sunday, and also a longer period of rest, namely the holiday or vacation taken once a year or possibly in several shorter periods during the

year ; the right to a pension and to insurance for old age and in case of accidents at work. On the other hand, there should be norms which compel the workers not only to be effectively at work, but also to work efficiently and responsibly for the survival and the progress of the capital of the institution or the enterprise in which they are working. There must be therefore sanctions to inflict to the victims of late coming, absenteeism and laziness. It is not enough however to have a Code of norms, these must be applied. It is observed in Nigeria, for instance that many workers, especially of the public sector, do not bother at all to be on time at their work place, and others for months do not go to work, some even report at their places of work sign their names for attendance and leave for other trade engagements, yet they receive regularly their salaries without any qualm of conscience. But no sanction is undertaken against these workers. For the promotion of the culture of work the State should take serious measures to fight against such bad attitudes. It is the duty of the state to create employment for her citizens, but Nigeria and her leaders have failed in this assignment. For instead of creating employment opportunities, the already existing ones are decaying threatening push many out of job. The population of over 170.000,000 people without concrete plan is threatening. The end of each academic year lunches a high number of youths into the society in search of jobs and not being able to find one they get frustrated and resort to evil means for survival.

We therefore suggest that Government, individual and organizations should help by encouraging and supporting students who did practical courses to start something on their own after graduating instead of carrying their files and roaming the streets looking for jobs. They should not be ashamed or shy away from laying their hands on tools. Many who have braved it by establishing something ended up employing others thereby contributing to the well-being of the society.

It is undeniable that the Church has an important role to play in the sphere of the economic and social development. It is known that Europe owes much to the Benedictine monks, especially for their manual labour and their intelligent industriousness which brought a decisive contribution to the western civilization, that which explains also why Saint Benedict was proclaimed the Patron of Europe.⁵⁷⁶ In Africa, the contribution of the missionaries, both catholic and protestant to the economic and social development is very eloquent. Mission centres were training places of work in all its forms, intellectual and

⁵⁷⁶ *ibid.*

physical: school activities, agricultural activities in big mission farms of cocoa, coffee or bananas etc., joinery and carpentry work, cattle breeding, etc. This missionary heritage is still being carried on nowadays by the Church in various African societies. There exist at the diocesan and parish levels committees for development where people are educated to elaborate and to realize micro-economic projects. Such initiatives are very praiseworthy and pertinent for the promotion of the culture of work. The Church can also educate to work at the theoretical level, namely by her preaching, in season and out of season, of the « Gospel of work » in the sermons, and through seminars and conferences organized for this purpose.

At this juncture, I would like to say, before concluding, that there are nonetheless some Africans who are very much aware that the social and the economic progress of their continent depend on the reality of work. These men and women have been trying to undertake actions for the promotion of the culture of work. There are for instance organized groups of persons at the level of villages in the rural area, or at the level of the quarter in towns, at the level of cultural associations, at the Church level, and so forth, which are effectively committed to work in view of transforming their poor conditions of life. But due to the limited material means, to which these are often confronted, the productivity of their various projects are also very limited and it barely yields some profit. We suggest that such groups should be given financial support by the Government of the state and the church.

It is important also to remark that the state and the church in Africa especially in Nigeria have not liberated themselves from so much dependency on foreign aids. Africa is so much blessed in terms of human and natural resources but instead of harnessing and using these well, we resort to cry for help even to those who are even less privileged than us. And what do we do with those funds? We waste them because we have not laboured before getting them. But they come from sweat of others who value work after labouring several hours of the day and week.

The church in Nigeria should go beyond understanding and restricting their mission and work to only preaching in the church to laying their hands on nature in order to transform it and provide for her population. Jesus Christ after preaching to the people asked his apostles, give them something to eat. The church can invest by acquiring lands that are

laying waste in Nigeria and farm. Palm plantations, cocoa, cassava, yam, vegetables etc belong to so many areas the church can invest in large scale. The church can invest also through acquiring of assets and engaging her trained religious and lay professionals in management of these assets thereby creating employment as it is the case in Europe.

Finally, we say that “work is good for man” and “it is man’s duty to work”. Human dominion over the earth means care-taking of all we are given as the matter of our work. Therefore “the universe is a gift to us, and God the Creator gratuitously made us to be like Him: co-creators of sorts, participating in the unending act of creation. As the original creation is a gratuitous gift, also human work is itself a gift, by analogy.”⁵⁷⁷

All is therefore called to embrace and cherish this gift of work for the good of humanity. We call on every Nigerian, individual, family, groups, politicians, the church to say “No” to laziness and useless waste of our God given Talents and Resources in order to rediscover the true meaning of human work and the virtue of industriousness on which our traditional values rest.

Again, every occupation should be seen as honourable and a means not only to ensure daily bread, but also as a service to society and a means of fulfilling oneself, as vocation. People should be proud of what they do for a living or occupation as it is witnessed in Europe and other parts of the world. Office workers, farmers mechanics, masons, cleaners, carpenters, etc., all are called to witness to love, to help build up humanity through work.

This call is for every Nigerian within and outside the country especially the youths who are mostly wounded, who roam the streets after graduation looking for jobs in a country with a selfish and confused leaders. The love of work and the virtue of hard-work therefore remains the master key to progress. For there is Dignity in labour and wealth acquired without hard-work do not satisfy but hard earned money no matter how little satisfies.

⁵⁷⁷ Beretta, S., “Gratuitousness and Work“ The Priority of Labour over Capital in a Globalized Economy. Article in *Jahrbuch für Christliche Socialwissenschaften: Ethik der Arbeitsgesellschaft. Zur Impulskraft der Enzyklika „Rerum novarum“*, Begründet von Joseph Höffner. Aschendorff Verlag, Münster 2011, p. 126.

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