

## Original Paper

# The Philosophical Inspiration of Arendt's View of Labor on Digital Labor

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### Abstract

*While introducing Hannah Arendt's attitude towards labor in her works, Christian Fuchs' concept of digital labor is introduced, and Arendt's view of labor is summarized for contemporary labor. The critique of the state, the hidden words behind Arendt's labor thesis, tell people to reflect on the current materialistic and consumer-oriented policy guidance, and to be alert to the hidden danger of laborers who are hidden behind the digital labor under high-tech. At the same time, it expresses as a political philosopher, I have the relentless pursuit of the sublime human nature and the insufficient thoroughness of Marx's thought of overcoming alienated labor. On the basis of acknowledging Marx's labor ontology and labor alienation, drawing on Arendt's labor research results can guide people to pursue a more liberal and ideal world order.*

### Keywords

*arendt, view of labor, digital labor, Marx, political philosophy*

## 1. Introduction and Literature Review

As the global economy has made significant progress and people's living standards have improved significantly, the focus of economic development has shifted from quantitative growth to quality. Domestic conflicts are frequent all over the world, and social instability has intensified. The task of governments has changed to solve the happiness and satisfaction of the people. However, this shift has also been accompanied by the challenge of unbalanced and inadequate development, resulting in slower global economic growth. The deceleration of growth has brought about many social problems such as income inequality, death from overwork, and industry monopoly. In addition, the outbreak of

the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has cast a shadow over global economic growth. Governments around the world are taking a variety of steps to address these challenges and ensure that economic development benefits everyone. An important step is antitrust action aimed at restoring confidence in a world driven primarily by the “logic of capital”. Furthermore, the management of big data in the digital age has become a pressing issue as the consumption of knowledge and culture transforms into additional productive activities. Unfortunately, these activities often involve the exploitation of workers, leading to the emergence of digital labor within the capitalist sphere. The commodification and exploitation of the labor of Internet users has become evident amidst the growing concept of socially free labor. Therefore, what kind of labor concept should we use to understand digital labor, so as to alleviate social conflicts and improve people’s living standards and happiness? This study will start from Marx’s labor theory, integrate Arendt’s research results on labor views, and explore the philosophical significance of Arendt’s labor topic itself and the enlightenment of rationality to today’s digital labor.

Due to the different theoretical constructions of the concept of digital labor, there is still no unified definition in the academic circle. And for Arendt’s “labor” topic, especially Arendt’s understanding of Marx’s labor concept, the academic circles are mostly negatively evaluated and opposed. The literature review of this study is divided into two parts. One is to find a concept applicable to the current research problem by summarizing the research on digital labor in the academic circle; the other is to summarize the comparison between Arendt’s labor view and the labor view of many scholars including Marx in the academic circle, and find that What makes it unique is that it focuses on the study of Arendt’s views on how technological progress means for labor and how it affects human existence.

In the era of digital technology, there are many research results on “digital labor” in the field of communication political economy, mainly focusing on the commercialization of media content, labor and audience. (Note 1) In this study, the concept of “digital labor” is mainly explained under the theory of Marxism. Entering the Internet age, especially after the financial crisis in 2008, Western academic circles used Marxist theory to explain and develop the audience commodity theory, and the research perspective shifted from the “audience commodity” of communication to the criticism of Marxist theory of “digital labor”. (Note 2) Trebor Scholz published a collection of essays “Digital Labor: The Internet as Playground and Factory” in 2012, critically studying the role of Marxist theory in analyzing the labor market from the physical world to the digital workplace in the Internet world. Importance, examines new forms of occupation, exploitation and labor in the digital economy. (Note 3) In 2014, the monograph “Digital Labor and Karl Marx” by Christian Fuchs, a professor at the University of Westminster in the United Kingdom, used Marx’s labor theory of value and ideology to present a relatively complete presentation of Western Marxist digital labor, critical theory. (Note 4) Domestic scholars Zhou Yanyun and Yan Xiurong defined the category of digital labor as unpaid labor that blurs production and life, work and play through combing foreign literature on free labor on the Internet. (Note 5) Domestic scholars Han Wenlong and Liu Lu pointed out that the narrow definition of digital

labor refers to the free and unpaid digital labor of Internet platform users. (Note 6) However, defining the concept of digital labor only as free and unpaid labor that exists on Internet platforms may seriously ignore important developments and changes in the labor process in the development of the digital economy. In fact, researchers on the digital labor process have never limited their research scope to the non-employment free labor process. For example, Fox's case analysis of the digital labor process not only includes the unpaid digital labor of social media users, but also tells the story of supporting digital labor. Multiple labor process representations of African ore mining slave-like labor for economic hardware, labor of digital equipment assemblers in China, software engineers in India and Silicon Valley. (Note 7)

Various perspectives on Arendt's views on labor and their relevance in different contexts. For example, starting from humanism, studying Arendt and George Friedman's description of labor clarifies the scope of labor capacity, social relations, and potentialities realized in labor activities. (Note 8) Delving into the research of Levinas, Arendt, and Marx's conception of labor, it raises questions about the reasons behind the alienation of labor and the rupture between the individual and labor. (Note 9) European scholars have also studied Arendt's view of labor and workers' well-being by taking workers in the transportation sector as examples. (Note 10) By comparing Beauvoir's and Arendt's typology of human activities, scholars believe that labor cannot be used as a justification or evaluation standard for human life. (Note 11) and, placing Arendt's framework of labor, work, and action in the context of the Anthropocene, explores the emergence of collective labor processes and their relationship to Arendt's understanding of action and work in the face of the challenges posed by the Anthropocene Relationship. (Note 12) Some scholars have compared Hegel's view of labor with Arendt's view of labor. It examines the relationship between labor and spirit, Hegel closely linking labor and spirit, while Arendt argued that labor assimilates all human activities and loses spirit, and reveals the danger inherent in the idea of labor. (Note 13) Patchen Markell challenges the commonly held view that Arendt's trinity of labor, work, and action represents a pure distinction. It argues that Arendt's framework involves the interdependence between work and action, illuminates the importance of the production of mundane objects, and explores the resonance between matter and form in Arendt's writing. (Note 14)

For Arendt's view of labor. Ding Ran, a scholar, believes that based on the rational self-discipline in political ontology, Arendt's analysis method of treating labor as a compulsive and enslaving behavior leaves "politics only pure spiritual life". (Note 15) Scholar Li Dianlai pointed out that Arendt was not only unaware of the "breakthrough advancement and revolutionary transformation" of Marx's political philosophy to modern Western philosophy, but also a "superficial" understanding of Marx's labor problem. (Note 16) Scholar Long Jiajie said: Arendt's misunderstanding of Marx is not only a theoretical bias, but also a retrogression of moral universalism. (Note 17) The academic circles mostly understand Arendt's labor thesis from Arendt's misunderstanding of Marx's labor concept, but pay less attention to the political phenomenological significance and rationality of Arendt's labor thesis itself.

The above studies provide different perspectives on Arendt's views on labor and their relevance in

different contexts. They explore the intersections of Arendt's work with Marxist theory, the examination of labor in relation to humanism, and the analysis of labor from various theoretical perspectives. These studies provide valuable insights into Arendt's conceptualization of labor and its implications for understanding contemporary social and economic phenomena. In fact, in the above studies, there is a lack of specific exploration of Arendt's view of labor as it relates to digital labor. These studies mainly focus on Marxist perspectives and other theoretical frameworks when analyzing digital labor, without directly involving Arendt's ideas. Arendt's view of labor contributes to discussions about the changing nature of work in the digital age and its implications for human dignity and meaning. This study aims to bridge the research gap between Arendt's conceptualization of labor and the emerging field of digital labor, exploring the implications of her ideas for understanding the complexities and challenges of labor in the digital age. This study has five parts besides this section. The second and third sections introduce Arendt's concept of labor and Fox's concept of digital labor respectively; the fourth section uses Arendt's concept of labor to launch modernity criticism; the fifth section explains the impact of Arendt's concept of labor on digital The practical significance of labor, and finally a summary.

## **2. Arendt's Concept of Labor**

Arendt transformed the traditional dichotomy of labor and work into a trichotomy of labor, work and action. In her view, the three active activities of labour, work, and action correspond to the life-as-itself, cosmopolitan, multiplicity, and newness aspects of the human condition, while contemplative life corresponds to the mortal aspect of the human condition. (Note 18) Arendt actually believed that man is born among men, and can only live among men, and is free to pursue his own excellence among men, and only in this way can a man be truly worthy of what man is capable of being taught the dignity of being human. On the contrary, if a person lives in this world and only works for a living, then he has actually been living in the bleakness of the private sphere, and has never really lived as a human being.

### *2.1 The Concept of Labor in Arendt's Writings*

Arendt's essay adopts the methodological point of view of observing reality, reflecting on the present, and talking about existence. To be present means to be present in reality, and at the same time it means to reflect on the present moment and the world in which we live. Concerns and reflections on labor issues have always revolved around this methodological position. Arendt explained her understanding of labor based on her own embarrassment of human rights in the 20th century, rooted in the loss of common reality, the world's alienation, and reflections on the tragedy of the world after the fading of transcendence, as well as her own rough schooling process And the deep imprint left by the life experience of the ups and downs.

In *The Human Condition*, Arendt concluded that basic human activities include three states of labor, work, and action. In the phenomenological distinction between them, labor corresponds to the necessity of human life, work corresponds to the artificial or made world, action corresponds to the multiplicity

of human conditions, and is the precondition of politics. Labor and work are utilitarian activities that cannot create a public space for display, only action can create a space for display. (Note 19) Labor is originally an absolutely private possession, a day-to-day relentless repetition subject to pure necessity of life, labor is forced, painful, expendable, and fleeting.

In Arendt's eyes, labor hinders human action and the realization of human reason, and the world presented by labor is precisely worldless, that is, "the only experience with this worldless, or more precisely, in pain The activity that is strictly consistent with the experience of losing the world in life is labor. In labor man is thrown back into himself, in spite of being active, caring for nothing but his own life, completely imprisoned in his relationship with nature. In the metabolism of the human body, it is impossible to even allow itself to transcend or escape the cycle of its own functions" (Note 20).

In order to better reveal the new violence that the world is about to face—consumer society, Arendt further explained that laboring people are enslaved like animals, without thought and worldliness. The worldlessness she is talking about here means that laborers are coerced by their own expanding needs, lose their thinking ability, cannot share and communicate with others, and are passively abandoned by the world. Arendt strives to break free from living in a laboring society, hoping to establish a world with a sense of home. In this world, the real world and life belong to humans (rational, articulate, and actionable), and the authenticity of life can be truly demonstrated (Note 21). However, Arendt did not believe in the logic of labor emancipation. Instead, she worried that labor emancipation would put people in danger again. This was another point of opposition between her and Marx on labor views.

## *2.2 Discrimination between Labor and Work*

Arendt pointed out that from the perspective of etymology, the word "labor" itself contains the meaning of "hard work, toil, torture". In ancient times, labor was always "subject to the needs of life" and was in a despised "slave" status. Ancient societies often overlooked a clear distinction between labor and work. Take craftsmen or handicraftsmen and slaves (including domestic animals, spoils of war) in ancient societies as an example. Their activities have a different focus. The former focuses on working with the hands, while the latter focuses on physical labor. (Note 22) In fact, there is a difference between labor and work. Labor refers to the necessity of maintaining life, while work refers to the purpose or means. In ancient society, people despised labor, and labor was only to meet the minimum needs of life. In the final analysis, labor is "slavish", it belongs to the activity of slaves or livestock, so slavery can exist. Arendt said frankly: "Labor suddenly rose from the lowest and most humble status to the highest and most respected status in all human activities. This change began when Locke discovered that labor was the source of all property, and then Adam Smith The close assertion that labor is the source of all wealth culminates in Marx's 'system of labor', where labor becomes the source of all productive forces and the true expression of humanity." (Note 23) Arendt accepted the demeaning attitude towards labor in ancient society, especially Aristotle's view of labor, that is, labor is essentially servile, and turned to criticize and deny the praise and high status given to labor in modern society, arguing that The view that "labor creates man" cannot be drawn from the various signs of labor. On the contrary, labor makes

people subject to the constraints of life inevitability, and labor cannot confirm the “species existence” characteristic of people’s freedom and self-consciousness. It is also because of this that Arendt launched a critique of Marx’s view of labor.

### 3. Fox’s Concept of Digital Labor

Fox’s digital labor is productive labor, including hardware production, content production and software producers’ labor and productive users’ labor. Its scope not only refers to digital content production, but also includes all modes of digital production, including agriculture, industry and a global production network jointly formed by information labor and other labor forms, this production system ensures the existence and development of digital media. Fox’s digital labor is alienated digital work. By interpreting Marx’s concept of labor, he points out that digital labor in capitalist society is digital work based on the quadruple alienation of human beings.

Fox incorporates digital labor into the global exploitation field of the value chain. The international division of digital labor under the condition of transnational information capitalism requires full-time control and exploitation of labor on a global scale in order to maximize profits. Fox’s digital labor is not only manifested in the field of digital media. The realization of capital accumulation in the global ICT (information and communication technology) industry is based on the exploitation of labor in a large number of industrial and agricultural production fields, therefore, his division of digital labor forms is understood in a broader sense. Fox analyzed various forms of digital labor involved in the global value chain of the ICT industry: including the slave labor of miners in Africa, the labor of Foxconn workers in China, the labor in the software industry in India, the labor of hardware assemblers in Silicon Valley, and the aristocracy of Google engineers. Labor in call centers, service labor in call centers, housewife-style service labor, prosumer users in social media, etc., all forms of exploited labor are considered to be interdependent.

#### 3.1 Theoretical Basis for the Concept of Digital Labor

Fox uses Marx’s labor theory of value and ideology to present a relatively complete Western Marxist theory of digital labor criticism.

As with Arendt’s relationship between labor and work in the previous article, clarifying the two concepts of labor and work from the perspective of etymology is the starting point for Fox’s interpretation of Marx’s concept of labor. Engels already pointed out in the footnotes of Marx’s “Das Kapital”: “English has an advantage that it has two different words to express these two different aspects of labor. Labor that creates use value and is qualitatively defined is called work, as opposed to labor; labor that creates value and is only counted in quantity is called labour, as opposed to work. (Note 24) An etymological examination shows that it is feasible to make a semantic distinction between work and labor. Based on this, based on the original German works of Marx, Fox clarified the two concepts of work and labor in Marx’s eyes: work has two cognitive dimensions of anthropology and history. From the perspective of anthropology, work refers to the human Production activities that meet

the basic needs of nature by consciously transforming and organizing it; historically, the meaning of work has inherent historical characteristics, such as slave labor. Housework, paid work, etc., labor is not so much a synonym for work in a class society as it is an inevitable expression of work in a class society—a form of alienation in which workers do not control and own the tools and results of production. In short, work is the universal essence of the generation and development of human society, and labor is a special description of work in a certain historical development stage of human society. (Note 25)

### *3.2 Digital Work as a Specific Form of Information Work*

From the basic research of digital labor theory, we know that the word labor is used when talking about alienation, and the word work can be directly used when discussing the form of work. Engels deeply analyzed the dialectical relationship between work and language in his book *The Role of Labor in the Transition from Ape to Man*, and believed that work is the ontological premise of language and communication, and language and communication work in reverse. To work, to promote the further development of the work. (Note 26) But the key question of “whether communication is work” was left unanswered. Fox’s argument in response to this question is: as long as it is proved that there is an isomorphic relationship between activities (specifically: cognition, communication, and cooperation) and the work of transforming nature, if all these activities can be traced back to transforming nature. The basic activities of cognition, communication, and cooperation may also create any form of social surplus, and they are also exploited just like traditional jobs.

Digital work, as a specific form of information work, refers to people organizing their own and others’ experiences through social media and brain tools that use digital technology as a terminal, thereby generating new usage values such as symbolic representations, social relationships, artifacts, and communities. Obviously, digital work also includes three elements: cognition, communication, and cooperation. (Note 27)

Take Facebook, WeChat, TikTok, Weibo, or Twitter as an example, at the level of cognitive digital work, Internet users use their brains, eyes and senses, and work tools such as mobile phones and computers to organize their life experiences, which are processed and transformed into articles or short videos that are output to the network field; At the level of communication and digital work, online social platforms and the human brain facilitate the interaction of symbols, which are transformed into communication between two or more subjects and form social relationships; At the level of collaborative digital work, the personal experiences of netizens are presented in the form of text, video, and audio information, which are disseminated and classified through the internet and then gathered again, ultimately creating a new artificial community or social system. The usage value produced in the three specific forms of digital work meets the needs of humans to establish friendship and maintain a sense of belonging in interpersonal relationships.

### *3.3 Digital Labor as an Alienated Form of Digital Work*

Digital labor exists in the form of quadruple alienated digital work. According to Fox's explanation, the four-fold alienation of digital work specifically refers to: the alienation of labor force, the alienation of labor tools, the alienation of labor objects, and the alienation of labor products.

Regarding the alienation of labor force in digital labor, according to classical Marxists, there is a driving force for the alienation of labor force, that is, laborers have nothing but labor force, and they are forced to sell their labor force to capitalists in order to maintain their basic survival needs. Today's digital labor does not seem to be coercive, and people's participation in social media platforms seems to be voluntary and enjoyable. However, human beings not only have natural attributes, but also have social attributes. Fox points out that people need not only to eat but also to engage in social relationships, associations and friendships in order to survive. Isolation from communicative social networks will eventually lead to individual animal-like existence or destruction. (Note 28) In today's information society, digital media has quietly become an important means of communication, and people tend to use social media to communicate and exchange. There are billions of Internet users in the world who participate in online information interaction every day. If they are forced to log out, the lives of almost everyone will be affected. Although they can have enough food, they feel lonely and afraid as if they have entered a "social vacuum". In general, in order to maintain their own sociality, people must exert their own communication power for digital media companies (a new form of labor force under digital labor), although this communicative labor process does not form an employment relationship, that is, it is a non-existent labor relationship. However, they still have to be oppressed and exploited by capitalists, who use their information and data for free to make huge profits.

Regarding the alienation of labor tools in digital labor, the labor tools mentioned here are mainly the brains of netizens and the network platform. The alienation of these two labor tools has brought double economic and political exploitation and oppression. First of all, the Internet platform spreads vulgar entertainment information to attract the attention of the public. In the process, it instills capitalist ideology and makes the Internet platform a free, open and free paradise, covering up its profit rules, such as advertising placement and live broadcast. Bring goods and so on. In addition, fragmented information makes it easy and fast for the public to accept, but knowledge is one-sided and fragmented, which leads to the stagnation of the brain's independent judgment and independent thinking functions, which is the alienation of the brain. Secondly, in terms of politics, although netizens actively speak and make videos on online media, formally they have their own accounts and platform revenue, but netizens do not actually own and control digital media platforms. They do not possess the ownership of the media platform, nor do they have the decision-making power to affect the rules of social platform behavior (such as terms of use, privacy policy, and use of advertisements, etc.), but the wealth they create is controlled and owned by media shareholders.

Regarding the alienation of labor objects in digital labor, the information data and records of netizens on the Internet are labor objects. The premise for netizens to enter social platforms for free and free use



is that they must agree to the privacy policy and terms of use on the platform, which essentially empowers media capitalists to control and legally use netizens' information and their personal information for economic purposes. The right to data also prohibits netizens from controlling their information data and records. For example, even if netizens delete all personal information records, the technical background of the network still has the right to obtain relevant usage records. This means that all activities of users are under the monitoring of social media, and they are not consciously used economically by media capitalists. Therefore, Fox said, the labor objects of Internet users are alienated in the so-called "legally binding agreement".

Regarding the alienation of labor products in digital labor, the text information, pictures, and audio-visual materials updated by netizens, and even chat information with others are all specific behaviors in the process of digital labor assistance, and these can be called labor products in digital labor. However, considering that labor has both abstract and concrete dimensions, that is, value creation and use value. This means that the products created by netizens are not only used to meet the human needs of themselves and others, but also to meet the interests of network platform owners. Internet companies analyze data such as user personal data and user behavior footprints from the massive data of social networks, and transform them into data commodities with users' personal background characteristics and to meet the interests and needs of specific user groups. Company owners control the data commodity with use value, but their interest is limited to its exchange value, so they sell the data commodity to advertisers, and the advertisers obtain another use value of the data commodity through the purchase behavior. That is to say, there is the possibility of presenting targeted advertising information to certain user groups. In this transaction process, media capitalists obtain income by selling the use value of data commodities, and advertisers obtain the use value of data commodities by paying money. For example, on the Internet in China today, behind the emergence of "phenomenal Internet celebrities" and "delivery experts", there is the promotion of the network platform owner United Capital. Internet celebrities have gained huge profits because they produce for themselves and others. In order to achieve the use value, a social relationship between Internet celebrities and the visibility of Internet users has been created. On the other hand, Internet celebrities have also produced value for the capital behind them. Although Internet users, whether they are netizens or Internet celebrities, can use one side of labor products, they also cover up the other side that has actually been alienated from themselves.

#### **4. Arendt Launches Modernity Criticism with Labor**

Arendt understands labor as a passive behavior to maintain life, which denies the initiative of human reason to pursue freedom. She believes that human beings are not only a species of natural life, but also a worldwide existence. The world represents the world created by human beings relying on rational self-discipline, which is completely different from the natural world directly given to us by the earth. At the same time, she attributed the labor behavior of the continuation of life to the private domain, and

attributed the political domain created by human beings to the public domain. Human beings stepping out of the private sphere, entering the public sphere, and participating in political actions are manifestations of human beings' rational self-discipline, and it is precisely because of this ability that humans are different from animals.

#### *4.1 Labor Is only an Act of Creating Material Wealth in the Private Sphere*

People try to earn more money through labor, think about things under the materialistic thinking, everything will become the object of consumption, people can only face the exploitation of the consumer society alone and alone, and eventually people will be driven by material interests to destroy itself. Arendt believes that in the private space, the wealth created by labor is to better participate in political actions in the public sphere. If labor (the condition for creating a superior life) is mistaken for nobility, it will cancel people's pursuit of freedom. Superiority. Therefore, she said that "labor has become an act of devouring human superiority in pursuit of freedom."

#### *4.2 Actions Can Restore Human Superiority*

Arendt believed that labor pushed society into an irrational state and became an "anti-political" behavior, so the power of action is needed to restore political freedom. Action is a concept introduced by Arendt as opposed to the concept of labor. Action is a kind of behavior of the thinking subject. The subject is in its rational self-discipline. Self-discipline means to think twice before acting, and to make the best choice among the given options. Good choice. But the premise of making a choice is that people have the ability to "critically think" about political events. (Note 29) Arendt believed that labor pushed society into an irrational state and became an "anti-political" behavior, so the power of action is needed to restore political freedom. Action is a concept introduced by Arendt as opposed to the concept of labor. Action is a kind of behavior of the thinking subject. The subject is in its rational self-discipline. Self-discipline means to think twice before acting, and to make the best choice among the given options. Good choice. But the premise of making a choice is that people have the ability to "critically think" about political events. (Note 30) And Arendt wants to praise the other part of their counterparts, who dares to take responsibility, sure to surpass themselves, resolutely pursue freedom, and possess contemplation, criticism and courage. They deduce another kind of action life, that is, political life. (Note 31)

### **5. The Practical Significance of Arendt's Concept of Labor to Digital Labor**

Different from the common view that the progress of science and technology brings about the development of productive forces and thus social development, and people's lives will benefit from this, Arendt believes that even if technology advances, laborers are forced to work for survival, lose their ability to communicate and think, and thus The tragic situation of losing cosmopolitanity and being abandoned by the world has not been overcome, and the traditional ideal of eliminating private ownership and labor alienation is far away. Arendt puts forward her own ideals for an orderly world and ideals through her summary of the nature of labor. The vision of social construction also points to a

different way of overcoming the alienation of labor than Marx.

### *5.1 Realize the Construction of an Ideal Society*

In her view, an ideal society is one in which labor, production and action each maintains their own state. The state of human life includes two aspects of active life and contemplative life. Labor, making and doing work together to build an active life, and all three are indispensable. Here, labor is at the bottom of active life, and it serves only to meet the various necessities of life-sustaining activities. In the process of production, human beings get rid of the domination of animal nature, and provide human beings with a stable home by manufacturing permanent living products. As mortal beings, human beings need such a living space. In the production, although people have self-awareness, the individuals participating in the production are still lonely, and they still have not escaped the domination of objects over people. Only in the action of entering the public sphere can the individuality and uniqueness of man be realized. Here, people express themselves and have relationships with others through speech, and actions embody the meaning of human beings. (Note 32)

Arendt pointed out in “The Human Condition” that laborers engaged in active life, workers engaged in production, and citizens participating in action each play their own roles to realize an ideal society, and let laborers hold their own boundaries and get rid of Desire directly defines the individual and reveals itself to the maker of a lasting world event. Only on the basis that the production activity maintains itself can the actors who enter the public sphere be able to act. This action not only removes the limitations of laborers dominated by desires, but also gets rid of the defects of workers restricted by loneliness. It is a combination that shows the existence of “kind” of human beings through words and deeds. (Note 33) In this union, every individual is equal and can communicate and understand each other; at the same time, every individual is unique and irreplaceable. Equality makes possible actions that give meaning to the world, and necessitates actions that uniquely enable men to give meaning to the world.

Digital labor is a typical representative of knowledge as a factor of production. Only when the productivity is raised to a sufficient degree can the exploration of the free and comprehensive development of human beings be freed from utopian research. Therefore, under the current social production relations, more considerations should be given to the practical significance of digital labor for human development and liberation. Digital labor is mostly information interaction. During this process, workers have more opportunities to come into contact with self-realizing industries and ideals, and find out their “production goals” and “direction of action”. But at the same time, the Internet is a double-edged sword. It will push people’s desire for material to a limit, making it more difficult for ordinary workers to get rid of the consumption trap and fall into the cage of material pursuit. Therefore, what we need to do is to strengthen government supervision to prevent covert ideological invasion. For example, self-media for digital labor can only be more popular if it releases products that are more in line with the needs of the public, and the natural revolutionary function of laborers is disintegrated. The digital labor products of individuality, independence and ontology are gradually declining. Internet

users have been immersed in the Internet culture with neoliberal ideology for a long time, and it is difficult to escape the consequences of assimilation in the end. Losing fighting spirit and accepting the fate of being a mediocre laborer, the ideal society of mankind will never come.

### *5.2 Overcoming the Alienated State of Labor*

Laborers are caught in the quagmire of devouring and destructive consumption desires governed by the inevitability of life. Those who enter the public sphere need to have the courage to overcome this unlimited desire to satisfy consumption. Labor is therefore a hidden, sheltered activity that should not enter the public domain. Once entering the public sphere, entering the public political space that must have the pluralism of people (people lose their thinking ability and thus lose their individuality), the former public space will be in danger of being replaced by society. The society here refers to the economic organization of many families. Into a super family model. It is neither public nor private, blurring the original boundary between public and private domains in a collective way. The emerging society turned all modern communities into groups of laborers and wage earners.

This kind of collective labor only covers up but does not eliminate the loneliness of laborers, because the process of labor is completely dominated by individual needs, the individual existence of laborers disappears in labor, and he has no chance to communicate with other laborers. A private sexual activity without a world. At the same time, Arendt pointed out that blindly pursuing the goal of satisfying desires has led modern society to fall into a black hole of unlimited desire to accumulate wealth. Involved in the desire to consume and completely lose freedom, consumption has become the only way for people to express themselves. What people will face is a society of laborers without labor, that is to say, where labor is the only activity left to them.

Arendt believes that labor should only be limited to activities limited by physical desires. Since all activities are attributed to labor, modern people are in a deeper alienation and in a state of non-thinking. Therefore, having thoughts and being able to think is the prerequisite for people to overcome alienation. Thoughts make people distinguish between the labor of satisfying the needs of individual life and the persistent production of the world and participation in actions in the public sphere. Only in this way can we truly overcome alienation, the destructive blow of mediocre evil to human beings, and the destruction of the human living homeland by consumerism.

Digital labor is often realized with the help of the Internet. In this process, people need to communicate with each other, which creates a lot of thinking space, and these thinking spaces need to be occupied by us. However, unlike the ideological high ground, in overcoming labor when alienating, the spread of this kind of thinking is internal, while the offensive and defensive ideology is often external. Arouse the key role of the brain in digital labor, rather than just seeing mental labor as an alternative physical labor that uses the brain. With the convenience of the Internet, the whole society is called to think, and the whole network is promoted to curb digital capital. As Arendt said, thinking is the premise of getting rid of alienation, and it is also a good way to get rid of Internet fetishism and save money first and a world full of consumer violence. In this process, the bottom-level laborers who pursue an active life are often

passive and need someone to lead them to open their minds and learn to think. The digital age also makes all this easier to achieve than in the era of Marx and Arendt.

## 6. Conclusion

Arendt believes that freedom exists on the basis of being a thoughtful being, allowing labor, work, and action to maintain their own boundaries. Therefore, Arendt interpreted Marx's labor theory and believed that Marx's thought of overcoming alienated labor was not thorough enough, which enriched Marx's theory of transforming the world. However, the traditional Marxist method of overcoming alienation currently appears to be extremely difficult to achieve and requires long-term planning. Arendt, on the other hand, provides an effective way of thinking to break free from alienation and denies the analytical path that everything can be "laborized". He believes that labor should be concentrated in the private sector rather than spreading to the entire society, and that everyone has their own role in the process of creating a world, Personal labor, production or action, participation in political life, all of which require thinking, liberation of the mind and communication with people, making the world a "thoughtful" world.

By introducing Fox's concept of digital labor into the study, this paper no longer repeatedly discusses the critique of Arendt's view of labor on Marx's view of labor, but combines Arendt's view of labor with Fox's use of Marx's labor theory of value and ideology. In order to get Arendt's enlightenment on how to overcome the alienation of digital labor, we will correlate it with the digital labor summarized in the theory. Finally, this study believes that on the basis of the guidance of Marx's labor theory and by referring to Arendt's research results, the ideal social form can be better constructed.

## Notes

Note 1. Audience commodity refers to a point of view aimed at the media audience in the process of media commercialization, which emphasizes an interaction of interests and a bond of coexistence among the media, audiences, and advertisers. In this linear relationship, the audience of the mass media is a unique "commodity" "produced" by the media. This "commodity" has a certain exchange value. The carrier "audience commodity" was handed over to the advertiser.

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