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# **Arendt's Theory of Judgement**

A thesis submitted to  
the University of Kent at Canterbury  
in the subject of Politics and Government  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Nathiya Ngarmkham

October 2020

## Abstract

The thesis proposes a nuanced interpretation of Arendt's concept of judgement based on the close interpretation of key works from late in her oeuvre. It is argued that this provides a new account of the relationship between Arendt's concepts of judgement, action, forgiveness, and promising that have an impact upon how we understand her late work and its application. The central claims of the thesis rest upon the assumption that Arendt considered judgement to be both a political and an ethical faculty, because she understood ethics within a political framework founded upon her concept of "action".

The thesis begins with an exploration of her ideas about the faculty of judgement and its relations to the idea of morality and politics. After the explanation of Kant's idea of *Geschmacksurteil* or the judgement of taste, the thesis discusses the connection between the two thinkers' concepts of judgement, examines Arendt's reading of Kant and justifies her major interpretive claims. The thesis also examines and discusses her concept of action and her ideas of politics and the political through the term *politeuesthai* which helps not only justify her reading and argument about Kant's theory of judgment but also helps to ground her theory of ethics. The discussion lays a foundation for the debates and arguments about her ideas of ethics in the last chapter.

In the discussion about her ethical thoughts, the thesis explores and reviews some literatures concerning Arendt's theory of judgement and debates with key scholars, Kateb, Benhabib and Buckler, on a range of central issues. It also demonstrates the relationship between judgement and the other two ethical concepts, forgiving and promising. Drawing upon debates with respect to transitional justice, it concludes that Arendt's idea of judgement is more fertile than these two ideas when it comes to understanding the application of her political ethics.

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Every issue raised in this thesis, I pondered not only theoretically but personally. Will I forgive? How can I ask for justice? Will forgiving really work? Will thinking really help? Do we really need morality? How should I judge? I waited until I had my own answer and then I wrote, not through my own voice but Arendt's. This thesis is thus not only my Ph.D. research, it is also all my thought and experience reflecting on the life and politics I have been going through.

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## Introduction

The two decades of conflict between the conservatives (under the name of People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) movement) and pro-democratic groups (under the so-called "red shirt" in many shades) in Thailand has not only reflected the conflicts between one of the most fundamental political dilemmas; order versus freedom and order versus equality, but it has also led to the question about one of the most fundamental questions of political philosophy, the right versus the good. To be more precise, the conflicts between these two "classes" or "groups" of the people does not only show the conflict between an attempt to maintain the status quo of Thai political society of the conservatives and an attempt to "reconstruct" the society to be a "just" one, but also brings back to the discussion about the question of "good citizens" and "good people", too. In other words, during the past twenty years, goodness has become to be a cliché term that can make pride for some groups of Thais and also can be disdained for others and it takes a huge part among Thais to recognize politics and decide to take actions in political scheme.

As the supporters and a part of at least two coup d'états, in 2006 and 2014, PDRC claims for its legitimacy upon the "goodness" in the name of "Khon Dee" or "the good people" who love nation, religion, and the monarch. The pro-democracy movement (Red Shirt), in contrast, contests the moral dogmatism of the PDRC and proposes instead democratic principles based on political rights and freedoms in both official politics and informal/non-official forms of political expression such as demonstrations or civic unrest. The Red Shirt democratic movement values democratic politics over moral issues, and in this way, the word 'morality' became representing or symbolizing Thai conservatives and anti-democratic idea of thought. The two different stand points of the term "goodness" definitely leads to the different attitudes and opinions toward politics. This issue has been a virtually unresolved conundrum. This is a paramount problem for both conservatives and the pro-democracy movement in Thailand. At the heart of this divide is how we understand the role of judgement in relation to morality and democratic politics.

The conflict between morality and democratic politics does not only exist within the national political sphere or amongst politically engaged individuals, politicians, or political activists, it indeed affects everyone in society, including the apathetic who hope to sit out of those conflicts. Even small things, like expressing one's opinion on social media, requires consideration to ensure that one is not inadvertently positioned on one side or the other. This debate between morality and politics and what it means for how we understand judgement affects everyday life, such that even close friends and family could break up or totally stop talking about politics to one another. While generally conservative persons feel cautious and refrain talking about morality, they feel that their deeply held moral principles are shaken by democratic politics. Equally, those of a pro-democracy disposition do not dare express their democratic values to the full, because they are mindful of more conservative family, friends, and colleagues. Social relations, as a result, are extremely tense given this deep conflict surrounding the issues of politics, judgment, and morality.



Contemporary conflicts in Thai politics, therefore, also raise many questions about the reasons for and the history of violence and the hatred that take root in society. Such hatred happens among people standing at opposite sides of the spectrum of ideology, beliefs, goals, lifestyles, and attitudes. Why do family members, close friends, and colleagues who are otherwise kind, generous, and compassionate, become mean and ready to be pleased and satisfied on state violence and death of people with different ideas. Why do people that once were staunch democratic supporters become very people who act against it, disrupt, and attack pro-democracy movement, and voters at the poll? Only because they do not agree with royal nationalist ideology and has different views on politics and economy. Why do state agents agree to act violently with arms on protesters following government order? Why do military personnel shoot protesters who run and hide in the temple and medical tent as they should be exempted according to international humanitarian principle, resulting in many deaths in temple, the “area of forgiveness” in Thai tradition. The guiding question of this thesis is: how do we comprehend and find a solution to such situations?

In this sense, the issues about morality and judgement in politics arise from the researcher’s background so it is research that goes beyond an academic purpose as it largely reflects the real-life politics of a real society. That said, we can see how this relates to a broader set of discussions within political theory. What we mean by judgement comes to be significant both in the sense that it may help give us another tool to understand these conflicts and in the sense that a more refined idea of judgement may help us resolve such conflicts.

The concept of judgement has been playing an important role in politics and political philosophy. For Peter Steinberger, arguments on judgments are the central theme of politics and government, and this can be traced back in the tradition of political theory to ancient Greece since the time of Plato and Aristotle. Steinberger sees political judgement as the mental activity with respect to universals and particulars of a political nature in a political setting.<sup>1</sup> The significance of the judgement seems to raise in political philosophy recently. Albena Azmanova points out that there has been a shift in philosophical enquiry at the end of the twentieth century, from the search for a theory of justice to an account of judgement and judging.<sup>2</sup> Given that Arendt dedicated her late writings to the problem of judgement, it is no surprise that her work has found new favour among political theorists: Linda M. G. Zerilli’s *A Democratic Theory of Judgment* being especially notable in this regard.<sup>3</sup> As such, for all that judgement has been central to discussions within political theory since classical times, it has found a new currency in these discussions and Arendt has become ever more central to how questions of judgement are framed. So, it is not only a matter of contemporary Thai politics, but it is also in this scholarly context that it is important to delve deeply into the idea of judgement and, especially, Arendt’s later writings on this theme.

When she gave an interview about an exhibition on Hannah Arendt at Berlin’s German Historical Museum, Monika Boll reflected on the continuing significance of Arendt’s work: it is not that “we believe that Hannah Arendt is always right” but that her work inspires people

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<sup>1</sup> Peter J. Steinberger, *Political Judgment: An Introduction* (London: Polity, 2018), viii.

<sup>2</sup> Albena Azmanova, *The Scandal of Reason* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2021), 118.

<sup>3</sup> Linda M. G. Zerilli, *A Democratic Theory of Judgment* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016).

to “form their own opinions” and, in particular, to do so in a context of “the breakdown of the ability to show judgement”.<sup>4</sup> It is quite clear that although half a century has passed, Arendt still provokes people to render their opinions, and the question about judgement and morality is one of the key questions of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## Literature Review

As this thesis focusses on a detailed re-examination of Arendt’s theory of judgement, it is important to situate the main arguments within the scholarly literature that has engaged with her work in a similar fashion. The broader significance of this will be outlined in the next section. While one could situate Arendt’s idea of judgement in a variety of different ways there are *two* questions that are discussed as a foundation of this thesis. First, how is Arendt’s idea of judgement formed? Is there any conflict in her concept of judgement and between her concept of judgement and some other ethical concepts? Are there two, possibly inconsistent, models of judgement in Arendt’s work? Secondly, what are the implications of Arendt’s theory of judgement with respect to the status of ethics in her work?

Considering the first of these questions, Ronald Beiner, Richard Bernstein, Peter J. Steinberger and Maurizio Passerin d’Entrèves have argued that Arendt’s concept of judgement was never developed systematically or extensively in relation to her concept of action.<sup>5</sup> Ronald Beiner in his *Hannah Arendt: Lectures on Kant’s political Philosophy* argues that Arendt’s idea of judgment can be seen as having two distinct modes; judgement is treated as the faculty of political actors to act in the public sphere; and judgement understood as the privilege of non-participating spectators.<sup>6</sup> He also notices the movement from the actor point of view to the spectator point of view in the later works of her life. Richard Bernstein makes a similar claim. In his ‘Judging-The Actor and The Spectator’, he notices a shift of interest in her thought from the viewpoint of practical wisdom to a retrospective or contemplative viewpoint; and for him there is a strong conflict between these two.<sup>7</sup> Passerin d’Entrèves, in *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, also follows this line of criticism and argues further that these two models are not only different but in tension, since they come from different philosophical sources; respectively, Aristotle and Kant.<sup>8</sup> In his article ‘Hannah Arendt on Judgment’ Steinberger agrees that these two models of judgement come from Arendt’s appeal to different philosophical background sources and argues that Arendt’s Kantian concept of aesthetics lacks precisely the sort of norms that may serve as foundations or limits for making judgement.<sup>9</sup>

While it may appear to be a settled issue given these interpretations, the first question remains a bone of contention as there is a second set of scholars who do not agree that there are two models of judgement in Arendt’s work. Lawrence J. Biskowski argues, in ‘Practical

<sup>4</sup> Silke Bartlick, “Why Hannah Arendt remains inspiring today”, *DW.com*, June 12, 2022, <https://www.dw.com/en/why-hannah-arendt-remains-inspiring-today/a-53372810>.

<sup>5</sup> Maurizio Passerin d’Entrèves, *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt* (London: Routledge, 1993), 102-3.

<sup>6</sup> Ronald Beiner, “Hannah Arendt on Judging” in *Lectures on Kant’s political Philosophy*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> Richard J. Bernstein, *Philosophical Profiles: Essays in a Pragmatic Mode* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986).

<sup>8</sup> d’Entrèves, *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, 104

<sup>9</sup> Peter J. Steinberger, “Hannah Arendt on Judgment,” *American Journal of Political Science* 34, no. 3 (August 1990): 803–821.

Foundations for Political Judgment: Arendt on Action and World', that the appearance of two models arises from her "preferred method of exposition by distinction", but in fact, these "opposing conceptual archetypes" should be integrated in a single understanding of her concept of judgement.<sup>10</sup> David L. Marshall's 'The Origin and Character of Hannah Arendt's Theory of Judgment' also agrees on the point that it would be a mistake if the account of judgement is taken separately as the judgement of actors and spectators.<sup>11</sup> By offering Arendt's writing and note-taking about an idea of judgement from Hegel and Aristotle in her *Denktagebuch*, Marshall demonstrates that one should not see Arendt's idea of judgement as the two contrasting and incompatible models.

As we can see, it is crucial that we resolve this debate in order to appreciate the role that Arendt's theory of judgement can play in broader scholarly and political contexts. In the following discussion, while I agree that Arendt's works are not systematic and contain internal dynamics and developments in themselves, it is my view that this internal dynamic demonstrates the interrelated elements of her theory of judgement. As will be demonstrated throughout the following discussion, Arendt's idea of judgement should not be read as a shift in perspectives that leads to inconsistency, it should rather be read as a "patch-work" idea that has, nonetheless, been well woven and fabricated. Moreover, this is important for how we address the second core question: what are the implications of Arendt's theory of judgement with respect to the status of ethics in her work?

There are a range of responses to this question in the literature, though they broadly fall into two camps. One of the important aspects of the debate is how the different interpretations employ the distinction between morality and ethics. As we survey the two camps, we will see how this plays out. On one side of the debate, we have those commentators who argue that Arendt lacks a concept of morality to found a normative approach to ethics. George Kateb, for example, makes the case that her idea of judgement does not have moral or ethical status.<sup>12</sup> He argues that Arendt's entire project is to be understood as an aestheticisation of politics. Arendt's project, according to Kateb, is one that encourages passionate engagements, the exhibition of skills and excellence. In this sense, her aim, for Kateb, is more about the perception of excellency than it is guided by the practical, and the true; especially, as she treats the moral as dangerous and unacceptable. So, aesthetics in this sense, is not the philosophy of beauty, but a theory of perception, and Arendt adopts this idea of aesthetics as perception from the Old Greek concept.<sup>13</sup>

Seyla Benhabib, in 'Judgment and the Moral Foundations of Politics in Arendt's Thought', also discussed Arendt's reflections on judgment.<sup>14</sup> In her discussion, Benhabib treats judgment as a moral faculty which Arendt has never made good in theory of ethics. Benhabib argues that Arendt views judgment as "the most political" of all our cognitive faculties.

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<sup>10</sup> Lawrence J. Biskowski, "Practical Foundations for Political Judgment: Arendt on Action and World," *The Journal of Politics* 55, no. 4 (November 1993): 870.

<sup>11</sup> David L. Marshall, "The Origin and Character of Hannah Arendt's Theory of Judgment," *Political Theory* 38, no. 3 (June 2010): 367–393.

<sup>12</sup> George Kateb, "Judgment of Arendt," in *Judgment, Imagination, and Politics: Themes from Kant and Arendt*, eds. Ronald Beiner and Jennifer Nedelsky (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001), 121–138.

<sup>13</sup> Kateb, *Hannah Arendt: Politics, Conscience, Evil*, 39.

<sup>14</sup> Seyla Benhabib, "Judgment and the Moral Foundations of Politics in Arendt's Thought," *Political Theory* 16, no. 1 (February 1988): 29–51.

Although Arendt's concept of action provides us with an illuminating framework for analysis, Benhabib argues that Arendt was misled by a quasi-intuitionist concept of moral conscience and a narrow concept of morality.<sup>15</sup> In other words, Benhabib does not deny that Arendt's idea of judgement contains a concept of ethics or morality but rather that it cannot provide a substantive or normative political ethics.

Marshall, in contrast, states that even though Arendt's theory of judgement does not moralise political discourse, it does contribute to ethical practice. Key to this version of the distinction between morality and ethics is Marshall's view that Arendt's concept of 'judging' makes it clear that judgements are not ends in themselves, "but rather as means to the end of bringing new phenomena into focus."<sup>16</sup> This resonates with the work of Biskowski who, following his argument about the coherent nature of Arendt's concept of judgment, states that Arendt's concept of judgement should be understood in relation to her notion of 'world'. 'World' for Arendt, refers to not only space and orientation, "but also substantive moral content."<sup>17</sup> In this sense, Biskowski argues that the theory of judgement connects to broad phenomenological aspects of her work in ways that do contribute to both a theory of ethics and "substantive moral content".

Last but not least, Steve Buckler in his chapter 'Ethics and the Vocation of Politics' recognises that Arendt does not appear to develop political ethics, and that it can be inferred that Arendt's political theory lacks of credible role for ethical constraint. Nonetheless, Buckler suggests that, while Arendt did not show the development of a political ethics in a conventional sort of way, it is wrong to infer that Arendt's politics are morally barren. According to Buckler, Arendt understands politics as an 'agonal' undertaking, a self-disclosure; it is a model to let one see moral limitations upon action that are obstacles to the realisation of greatness. In this sense, the agonal model Arendt adopts, means that political phenomena are judged by the 'criteria of greatness', and this is what can supply 'ethical constraint' and 'guidance'. Thus, those concepts can be seen as 'ethical constraint' for Arendt, which include forgiving, promising and judging. Furthermore, according to Buckler, Arendt does not give any specific substantive or concrete character to these ethical considerations; they cannot be determined *a priori*.<sup>18</sup> Rather than being treated as ethical in themselves, these concepts are connected to judgement in ways that establish their meaning as non-essential. As such, Buckler contends that Arendt's political ethics is grounded in the specific and distinctive experience of political agency itself, rather than from any other principles or other reference points outside of the agent's mode of experience.<sup>19</sup>

In the discussion that follows it will be demonstrated that Arendt does develop her series of ethical thought without the concept of moral. Arendt definitely includes morality criteria within her concept of judgement and it will be argued that she has developed a certain model of ethics which, despite no ambition to develop it into a full-blown theory, can offer a certain kind of judgement that can claim validity through an idea of "intersubjectivity". Developing this in

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Marshall, *The Origin and Character of Hannah Arendt's Theory of Judgment*.

<sup>17</sup> Biskowski, *Practical Foundations for Political Judgment: Arendt on Action and World*.

<sup>18</sup> Steve Buckler, "Ethics and the Vocation of Politics," in *Action and Appearance: Ethics and the Politics of Writing in Hannah Arendt*, eds. Anna Yeatman, Phillip Hansen, Magdalena Zolko, and Charles Barbour (London: Continuum, 2011), 117.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

relation to Biskowski, it will be argued that Arendt's ethical thought is "inspired by action and ethical foundation for action" in the sense that it is a desire for the love of the world, even though I will reframe this as a desire to preserve human dignity by maintaining the public realm. Moreover, I also agree with Buckler about the connection between judgement and an agonal spirit of action that said and I agree that forgiving, promising and judging are the three ethical concepts developed in Arendt's thought.

These three ethical concepts, however, they are not equally fertile or fruitful. From the end of the twentieth century onward, Arendt's idea of forgiveness has come into interest when it has been utilized by the politicians, scholars and political leaders to promote "justice" during the time of transitional periods.<sup>20</sup> Ruti G. Teitel defines Transitional Justice (TJ) as a concept of justice that associated with periods of political change, characterized by terms of use, legal responses to confront the wrongdoings of repressive predecessor regimes.<sup>21</sup> However, after the cold war period, there is an urgent interest in the concept of reconciliation of politics, thus, a concept of justice in transitional justice has been extended and moved from legal responses to an establishment of trials and truth commissions.<sup>22</sup> Since then, the concept of forgiveness has come into the spotlight and Arendt's concept of forgiveness has become interested by the political theorists and politicians around the world.<sup>23</sup> Despite its popularity and claims for its success, applying forgiveness in political world as a political resolution also receives much of criticism, ranging from justice trade-off a to the practicality of its application. G. Adams and T. Kurtis, in their 'Collective Memory Practices as Tools for Reconciliation: Perspectives from Liberation and Cultural Psychology', for example, has mentioned about the unwillingness of the victims to forgive the perpetrators during the process of reconciliation.<sup>24</sup> Much in the same way that Vladimir Jankelevitch, insist in 'Should We Pardon Them?' that forgiveness is about the feeling of the individual, not politics.<sup>25</sup>

However, unlike Jankelevitch, Adams and Kurtis and their counterparts, Maša Mrovlje does not share the similar view about the relation between forgiveness and politics. Mrovlje insists that forgiveness is 'an indispensable response to the inherently imperfect and tragic nature of political life'.<sup>26</sup> By taking an existential and narrative- inspired point of view, she demonstrates the strong connection between Arendt's concept of judgement and forgiveness. In her 'Forgiveness, Representative Judgement and Love of the World: Exploring the Political Significance of Forgiveness in the Context of Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Debates', she demonstrates that judging sensibility can help us avoid understanding forgiveness in terms of duty or virtue but seeing the significance of forgiveness in a "political" manner which is more reconcile to "worldly reality".<sup>27</sup> In other words, Mrovlje rejects most of the transitional justice concept of forgiveness and argues that forgiveness in the reconciliation context is

<sup>20</sup> Andrew Schaap, "Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice," in Hannah Arendt and international relations: readings across the lines, eds. Anthony F. Lang, Jr. and John Williams (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 64-93.

<sup>21</sup> Ruti G. Teitel, "Transitional Justice Genealogy," *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 16, (2003): 69.

<sup>22</sup> Renée Jefferey and Hun Joon Kim, "Introduction New Horizons: Transitional Justice in the Asia Pacific," in *Transitional Justice in the Asia Pacific*, eds. Renee Jefferey and Hun Joon Kim (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1-31.

<sup>23</sup> Schaap, *Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice*.

<sup>24</sup> Glenn Adams and Tugce Kurtis, "Collective Memory Practices as Tools for Reconciliation: Perspectives from Liberation and Cultural Psychology," *African Conflict & Peace building Review* 2, no. 2 (2012): 5-28.

<sup>25</sup> Vladimir Jankelevitch, "Should We Pardon Them?," *Critical Inquiry* 22, no. 3 (1996): 552-572.

<sup>26</sup> Maša Mrovlje, "Forgiveness, Representative Judgement and Love of the World: Exploring the Political Significance of Forgiveness in the Context of Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Debates," *Philosophia* 44, no. 4 (2016): 1096.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, 1081-1082, 1083-1084.

defined and constructed with a self-centred and rule-based framework which ‘risks in abstracting from historical, situated condition of human political existence’.<sup>28</sup>

The thesis agrees with Buckler that forgiving, promising and judging are three ethical components for Arendt’s political thought, however, it does not find that these components may be as equally fertile or fruitful. Speaking specifically, it sees the faculty of forgiving alone might be quite problematic in its applicability to politics. Meanwhile, it sees that judging plays an extremely vital part in the process of transitional justice including helping to determine about the application of forgiveness into the realm of politics. This will be clarified in the last chapter of this thesis.

### **Thesis Questions, Contribution, and Significance**

From the literature reviews above, the thesis is grounded on the agreement that Arendt’s political theory has ethical components in it and it sees the idea of judgement as her main ethical component in her political thought. Her model of ethics, however, is not a conventional one, thus it contains no concept of traditional concept of morality within it. It does not give any specific substantive guideline when considering about the ethical or moral question, i.e., it cannot be determined a priori. In this sense, the thesis agrees with Buckler that the greatness of action can supply the ethical constraints in Arendt thoughts. Meanwhile, it suggests that among all kinds of action, forgiving and promising are the two “moral actions” in their own sense while judging is an activity that helps supply ethical component into the designated action of the agents, including the actions of forgiving and promising.

In this sense, therefore, I also agree with Mrovlje about the strong relationship between forgiving and judging and do agree that there is a need to shift in the point of focus from moral to a worldly perspective when considering about forgiveness.<sup>29</sup> In addition, I also agree with Mrovlje that the fundamental idea about forgiveness and reconciliation in Transitional justice is problematic<sup>30</sup>. This thesis contends that applying forgiveness in the transitional justice framework can even lead to a much serious problem after applying it into the conflicting society. In other words, in my opinion, forgiveness should not be considered as a pre-determined formula for reconciliation or transitional justice. It had rather be seen as an open option for the society to employ if there is an agreement among the people in the society to build a new shared- reality together upon the practice of forgiveness.

To speak in this way, the thesis agrees with Mrovlje in the sense that judgement plays an extremely significant role in encouraging forgiveness. Certainly, “technical prescription or a clear-cut guideline on whether and when forgiveness should be awarded”<sup>31</sup> should be avoided when it comes to Arendt’s forgiveness. However, in order to reconcile with Arendt’s some other concepts and thought, this thesis suggests some points of consideration when it comes to judge about forgiveness; the connection between forgiveness and political realm, and its

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 1080.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 1087.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 1082, 1084.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 1094.

relation to the faculty of promising. In order to consider all these aspects, the thesis holds tightly on the assumption that Arendt's concept of judgement has an aim to reserve and re-create political realm which in itself vindicates the idea of freedom.

Therefore, the main question of the thesis is how could judgement be defined as the most prominent ethical concept in Arendt's political thought and what is its role in Arendt's political thought and political realm? In order to do so, the thesis tries to revisit and reconstruct the notion of judgment in Arendt's oeuvre, and tries to demonstrate that how judgement is considered as both ethical and political faculties for Hannah Arendt. The thesis will also manifest the relationship among her idea of judgement, action, forgiveness and promising; how might the citizens will employ the faculties of judgement to discern the right from the wrong and may exercise it into action in the sharing world.

Therefore, in order to answer the main questions, this thesis will answer these following sub-questions. Firstly, what is Arendt's concept of judgement? Secondly, how could judgement be defined as ethical and political faculties? And thirdly, how could it, as an ethical faculty, help preserve the realm of politics and the political? In an effort to answer the third question, this thesis will examine the concept of judgement and its relation to forgiveness and promising through the transitional justice ideas and framework. This thesis thus proposes that, judgement is the most fertile ethical concept among the three since it helps exercise both faculties of forgiving and promising in the realm of politics and the political. In this way, the thesis will demonstrate not only how could judgement be significant in Arendt's political thought theoretically but also offer the way to see judgement as an essential concept in the transitional justice politics and in democratisation.

## **Chapter review**

The first chapter of this thesis aims to collate Arendt's ideas so that all the features and characteristics of her theory of judgement can be provided for further analysis. Four pieces of Arendt's writing concerning her theory of judgement are selected and reviewed in order to provide all the features and characteristics of judging that are extant in Arendt's thought. Her *Lecture on Kant's Political Philosophy*, for example, illustrates not only the conditions and attributes of judgement but also gives a clear explanation of its operation and process. This series of lectures, moreover, also creates a direct link between judgement and her concept of 'the political', as distinct from the idea of 'politics'. In other words, it presents a strong connection between the concept of action and judgement. The discussion includes several arguments that support this claim. The main argument, however, concerns Arendt's attempt to propose that the genuine political philosophy of Immanuel Kant could be found not in his *Critique of Practical Reason* but in his *Critique of the faculty of Judgement*, especially in the 'Critique of Taste'. Throughout these lectures, Arendt points out some of the 'political features' of Kant's judgement of taste, including plurality and freedom; neither of which can be found in the *Critique of Practical Reason* or in his concept of action. In fact, this argument about the third Critique is the starting point for her work establishing the connection between politics

and judgment before she then moved to the further claim about the relationship between judgement and ethics.

The ethical or moral aspect of judgment was proposed more explicitly in her ‘Lectures on some Questions of Moral Philosophy’. In this set of lecture notes, it is clear that the significance of Arendt’s views about the life of the mind relate directly to the moral and ethical question. This, therefore, is the very reason why the notes relating to this set of lectures are vital material for this thesis because they demonstrate a strong connection between the idea of ethics and the notion of judgement. However, what is even more interesting in this lecture note is an attempt to propose an inseparable connection between ethics and politics. Arendt’s etymological and philological study claimed that ethics/morality originally sprung up not from religion but from political philosophy. It is only in political conditions – the condition where plurality and freedom are the very ideas of it - that ethics or morality arose. In other words, she would like to state that ethics or morality cannot exist upon any other ground but only a ground of what she called action and politics. Speaking in another way, Arendt starts to state that her ethical thought will only develop from the foundation of her idea of politics, or more specifically, her idea of action.

Reading Arendt’s ‘Lectures on some Questions of Moral Philosophy’ in this way shows how *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* can be combined and how the gap between ‘the two theories’ can be reduced. For Arendt’s readers, the consistence and persistence in defending the world of appearance and politics is clear, and her rejection of philosophy and the contemplative life is undeniable. In *Lecture on Kant’s Political Philosophy*, despite an emphasis on the political aspect of judgment, the discussion in these lectures may be read as a backward movement to the extent that she focuses heavily on the process and operation of judgement as a mental faculty. Coming back to discuss such straightforwardly philosophical matters in the hope of finding an answer for political and moral questions, for some, may reflect Arendt’s failure to defend the *vita activa*, the defeat of an active life and the victory of the quiet world of philosophy. Alternatively, some theorists, such as Ronald Beiner and Majid Yar, do not see this as a triumph of *vita contemplativa*, but rather as evidence of two irreconcilable concepts of judging in her theory. The ‘two theories’ approach rests upon the two characters of judgement in Arendt’s thought; ‘judgement from the actor’ and ‘judgement from the spectator’ points of view, or in other words, judgement in the world of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*.<sup>32</sup> However, the idea of judgement discussed in ‘Lectures on some Questions of Moral Philosophy’ helps demonstrate how Arendt could move from judgement in the world of ‘active’ life to the world of ‘contemplative’ life by not reducing one of them to the other and could possibly merge the two points of view together without a conflict. Furthermore, this four-part set of lectures also created a clear demarcation line between action and mental activities (including the faculty of judgement), which helps us to better understand these concepts and their relationship. Moreover, it also gives important details and an outline of the *vita contemplativa* that she intended to write, i.e., how the three basic mental faculties relate to one another, and how they link with the idea of judgement in Kant’s ‘Critique of Taste’. This outline

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<sup>32</sup> Majid Yar, “From Actor to Spectator: Hannah Arendt’s ‘Two Theories’ of Political Judgment,” *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 26, no. 2 (March 2000): 1–27.



and its attendant details are confirmed again in her *Postscriptum to Thinking*, a very short essay she wrote annexed to the end of ‘Thinking’, the first part of *The Life of the Mind*.

Given that a key purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate that Arendt did not intend to devalue active life and make it subordinate to the world of contemplation but that she did, instead, employ a philosophical discussion to serve the higher aim in politics, the argument throughout, unlike Beiner’s approach, relies on ‘Lectures on some Questions of Moral Philosophy’ as a main resource. Beiner, who analyses the characters of judging, focuses heavily on *Lectures on Kant’s political philosophy*. This thesis, however, follows ‘Lectures on some Questions of Moral Philosophy’ to connect the idea of judging with politics and ethics although still depending on *Lectures on Kant’s political philosophy* when considering the political characters of this faculty.

In chapter two, the connection between Arendt’s, and Kant’s ideas of judgement is examined. The first chapter has already shown that Arendt understands that judging is a political faculty per se and thus Kant’s third Critique is the genuine source of his political philosophy. It is one of the aims of this thesis to clarify Arendt’s claims in this respect. In order to find ‘political characters’ in judging, it is necessary to study the principle and operation of the faculty of judging in detail; and this is the main function of this chapter two. In examining the faculty of judging in detail, Kant’s principle of judgment is a main topic of the study. Kant mainly deals with the idea of judgement in two works; the idea of judgement in general in his *Critique of Pure Reason* and the concept of judgment and aesthetic judgement in *Critique of the Power of Judgement*.

Generally, the term ‘judgement’ is viewed as an ability to make the right decision on a certain matter. In philosophy, it is an ability to define a certain thing as it actually is. These judgements are usually guided by a certain set of rules or guidelines that help make a good or a right decision. To give an example, to decide a certain act as right or wrong, the decision must be decided by following a certain set of rules, whether law or religion precepts. Kant calls these kinds of judgement determinative. However, this kind of judgment is not an interest in this topic. What is actually interesting is what Kant called reflective judgement or the principle of judgement itself. In other words, it is not a ‘judgement’ that Kant had a focus on, but its principle and operation.

Arendt took Kant’s theory of judgement to develop her own idea of judging. In fact, she also employs it as a ground to support her idea of politics and develop her ethical theory. Kant had originally proposed his theory of judgement to be used with his cognitive theory and aesthetics. His “principle of judgement”, which was designed to explain the mechanism of the human mind in acquiring knowledge and discerning the beautiful, plays a crucial role in Arendt’s theory of morality. Considering that it follows the philosophical tradition of the ancient world, this idea of uniting the beauty and goodness is not a new invention. The ability to discern, either aesthetically or ethically, are identical; and this is the groundwork of ethical theory she would like to propose.

The second chapter is thus designed to explain Kant’s theory of judgment in detail and as such, Kant’s writing will be examined from the original text. It will start from explaining Kant’s

principle of judgement in his 'Critique of Taste' and it will continue to discuss Arendt's interpretation of the philosophy of Kant, especially her rendition of Kant's *Critique of the principle of Judgement*. In this way it will demonstrate the "political features" of judgement in Arendt's thought. However, it is not possible to justify the two claims mentioned above until her understanding of politics and political philosophy have been discussed. Thus, the third chapter aims to explicate and define Arendt's understanding of politics and the scope of her political philosophy in order to justify her argument about Kant's theory of judgement discussed in the first and the second chapter. In short, the contents discussed in chapter three will be a theorem for chapter two to help justify the arguments she made about Kant and politics, and also the other arguments that follow in the last chapter.

The third chapter focuses at the concept of action and politics in Arendt's political theory. It explains the terms 'politics' and 'the political' and the difference between the two in her work. Also, it will also define and justify the term 'political philosophy' which Arendt has proposed in her reading of Kant. The chapter starts with the idea that Arendt's 'political thought' is grounded upon her concept of action. Thus, it begins by explaining the concept of action as distinct from work. In fact, the difference between work and action is a significant guide in establishing a borderline between the term 'political' and politics in general. Action is the main idea of Arendt's political theory. Her whole theory and all political writings revolve around this very idea. It is the ground that Arendt used to develop all of her political thought. The concept itself derives from ancient Greek verb, *politeuesthai*. Arendt intentionally chose this term to demonstrate her idea of politics. The chapter continues to define and explore the usages of the ancient Greek terminology, *politeuesthai*, the term mentioned by Arendt in explaining her concept of action. This word has a very specific meaning and understanding it help make a great insight about her concept of action and her whole concept in political thought.

For Arendt, politics has a very specific meaning. It does not mean simply an activity concerning state and government but it is any activity that is comprised of a 'political feature'. In general, readers who are not familiar with Arendt's political theory have difficulty understanding her concept of politics and base criticisms of it on misinterpretation. These misunderstandings and misinterpretations include the comments about the relation between politics and some relating ideas, violence, law, and so forth. This chapter will clarify and define their meanings and employ them to help answer the question about her claim on Kant's political philosophy left from the previous chapter and lay a firm foundation for the discussion about ethics and morality in the fourth chapter.

After defining the meaning of action and politics in the third chapter, the thesis then continues to chapter four where it will discuss Arendt's ethical thought, especially judgement, in particular. The chapter starts with a review of some Arendtian scholars about her ideas of ethics. Despite some criticisms from many scholars that ranges from lacking of morality to failure to develop a theory of ethics, this thesis, however, contends that there are ethical components in Arendt's political thought and she can develop a set of ethical concepts that fits perfectly into her theory of politics. These three components are the concepts of forgiveness, promising and judgement. However, this chapter contends that these three components are not equally fertile and it considers judgement as the most prominent. In this way, the chapter starts

moving through the discussion and debates about the concept of judgement as an ethical thought with the three main scholars; George Kateb, Seyla Benhabib, and Steve Buckler, in order to demonstrate how can judgement be Arendt's ethical faculty and how does it work in Arendt's political thought as a whole.

After that, the thesis then moves to discuss about another two ethical concepts; forgiveness and promising. By discussing about these two, this chapter tries to discuss them not only through concepts and thoughts but also through their practicality in Transitional Justice framework. Transitional Justice, an idea that focus on forgiveness as the key for political reconciliation, boasts its success in many conflict resolutions throughout many countries. However, many criticisms also arise, the application of forgiveness is one of them. Therefore, this chapter will explore forgiveness in the Transitional Justice framework and tries to redefine it with the concept of promising and judgement. At the end of the chapter, it will be shown that how judgement can be considered as the most fertile ethical concepts of Arendt despite the efficacy and competent of another two ethical concepts in Arendt's political thought.

## **Clarifying Terminologies**

### Man VS men VS Human Beings

Instead of using the term 'Human beings' to avoid a gendered language, the thesis employs the term 'men' in keeping with Arendt's terminology and sense. Normally, Arendt emphasized the difference between merely living human beings and human beings as political animals by rendering the latter as 'men in plural' in her theory. For her, when it comes to politics, the human must be understood as the being who lives with others as its condition. Consequently, the thesis normally refers to human being as 'he' and 'they' for 'man' and 'men' for a grammatical purpose, instead of using neutral pronouns like 'it' or 'they' for human and human beings.

The separation between 'man in singular' and 'men in plural' is extremely significant for Arendt. It specifies both the character and uniqueness of the human as a political being. When discussing humanity in the political realm, Arendt used the terms 'men' to highlight the character of plurality and its significance in action. For her, man is described as a singular being who can do an activity alone without any companionship. Thus, a moral being in the Kantian sense, for example, is represented by the term 'man' instead of men because in this instance the human is considered to be an individual who can be separated from others.

The thesis chooses to employ 'men' to retain this connotation due to the fact that most of the time it discusses Arendt's idea of the human as a political being. It intentionally avoids the term human or human beings which, although more neutral, tend toward a sense of 'plurality in number but without distinctness'. When humanity or humankind, or human beings are pronounced in general, they normally express the sense of many individuals as *one* category. Men, in contrast, bestows the meaning of many different individuals who are nonetheless together. It does not show a sense of belongingness to a single group which risks presupposing the sameness of these individuals. In her political theory, Arendt considered the distinctness of

each human as a key condition of the political realm. In short, the term ‘men’ can express and communicate two fundamental characters of human in political society, plurality and uniqueness. This can retain the meaning of politics and the condition of humanity that Arendt tried to propose and use it as a foundation for her political writings, in particular when she discusses her concepts of politics and the political.

### Judging and Judgement

Most of the time, the thesis employs the term ‘judgement’ to indicate a faculty or an ability to discern in general. However, it sometimes uses the term ‘Judging’ to indicate a particular meaning. Arendt herself employed the term judging when she discussed it as a faculty of the mind. It may sound grammatically odd in English but it seems to make more sense when considering the German translation and the meaning Arendt would like to render.

In German, the word for ‘judgement’ can be either ‘*das Urteil*’ or ‘*die Beurteilung*’. Both give the sense of an end or result of a process of judgement itself. The word for the faculty of judgement is ‘*das Urteilsvermoegen*’ which means an ability of the mind to discern. This ability, however, is different from the similar word ‘*Urteilskraft*’, which is translated as ‘the power of judgement’ in English. Kant generally employed this particular term in his third Critique to designate that what he was discussing is not a result of a process of making a judgement but an active process of judgement itself. And this is the reason why Arendt tended to employ the term ‘judging’ instead of judgment in order to maintain the meaning and connotation she aimed to propose.

The term ‘*Urteilskraft*’ signifies the active character of the faculty of judgement. While the term ‘faculty’ indicates a static ability of the mind, the term ‘*Kraft*’ expresses the connotation of an energetic feature of the faculty that is ready to be exercised. In other words, ‘the faculty of judgement’ is an ability to discern that all possess but ‘the power of judgement’ is an ability to discern that is being exercised or about to be exercised. Arendt employed the term ‘judging’ to maintain the active and process character of the faculty. The thesis, thus, follows Arendt by employing this term when discussing the faculty of judgement in a specific condition.

### Morality VS Moral VS Ethical/ Ethics

Even though the terms ethics, moral and morality can and are sometimes used interchangeably, this thesis tends to use them differently when it intends to render specific meanings and characteristics. Morality is used to define a principle concerning the distinction between right and wrong in general. Moral is generally used in the sense that the act of the moral agent is done by following a pre-determined moral rule, whether it was previously set by religions or states, or even the “mores” of the community or society. It bears a sense of Kantian morality or deontological ethics in general, where moral law will have to be followed by the moral agents when doing their actions.

Ethics, on the contrary, is defined broadly as a way to conduct life in this thesis. It gives a sense of an ancient Greek thinking about “ethos”, habit or character that guides the way of living for men to live their lives in the world. This also includes Aristotle’s idea of phronesis, krinein, and prohairesis which character of an agent is in the focus. This is the term that this thesis uses when it discusses about Arendt’s idea of morality in general.

### Politics and The Political

Politics is used to render an activity concerning with government and states in general. The political, implies to the characteristics of “politics” and “action”, that is characteristics of freedom and plurality of that activity. Politics may or may not be the political, since sometimes politics does not bear a sense of action inside.

### **A Note on Methodology**

This study is conducted with closed reading approach aiming to understand and reconstruct various concepts of Arendt as materials to understand Arendt’s thought and Thai politics.

Due to the fact that this thesis focuses mainly on Arendt and Kant, and Arendt herself always explores the political concepts in ancient Greek, the researcher prepared herself to get used to the German mentality in order to approach her works. By doing so, the researcher took further German language courses and went to read original works of Immanuel Kant and Hannah Arendt with the professor at the department of philosophy, University of Heidelberg in Germany. And as Arendt had a unique way of thinking and writing, this research aims to trace back and comprehend Arendt in etymological and philological approach as Arendt herself often adopts. In this way, the researcher took ancient Greek, besides some philosophy courses in the first year of the Ph.D. study and continued the ancient Greek language private lessons in the second year. This helps the researcher to lay groundwork for evidence gathering and interpreting Arendt’s work.

## Chapter I

### Key Texts

It was an observation at the Adolf Eichmann trial held in 1961 that led Hannah Arendt to focus on a new feature of her political theory: the idea of judgement. Following almost one hundred years of turmoil and catastrophe in the world, which arguably reached its peak with the horrors of the Holocaust and ‘the Final Solution’, Arendt witnessed these horrors through the eyes of a single man recounting the administration of the Holocaust in the most ‘banal’ manner. It was a shocking example of how the dreams of reason and progress that shaped the modern world had turned into justifications for the most evil acts. While others, such as Habermas, for example, turned to an interrogation of the nature of reason itself<sup>1</sup>, Arendt turned to the nature of judgement in order to understand what she had observed. From that point on, she put judgement at the centre of her view on philosophy and politics, and did much to bring it to the centre of debate on political theory.

Not only had judgement been long neglected among political theorists but it had been so in the philosophical tradition. In *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, Arendt mentions the difficulty in studying and researching the idea of judgement, and states the cause of this difficulty as a lack of resources and materials in philosophical thought and writings.<sup>2</sup> Charles Larmore seems to be in agreement with Arendt on this matter.<sup>3</sup> He agrees that it is not easy to explain the nature of judgement in moral philosophy since there are very few materials and thought about judgement available. At the same time, the nature of moral philosophy itself is resistant to theoretical analysis.<sup>4</sup> Reason has long been playing a leading role in the modern era and judgement has been considered part of its faculty without its own methodology and modus operandi. Not until the second half of the 20th century did judgement shed its light again as a distinctive and independent faculty and becomes an interesting topic in philosophy when reason alone could not prove itself as a dependable hold for morality and ethical thought.

In her article, ‘Judgement and Politics in Arendt's Thought’, Seyla Benhabib mentions the significance of political and moral judgement in democratic polity and makes a distinction between other kinds of judgement and moral and political judgement. According to Benhabib, moral and political judgements differ from other judgements due to the fact that they do not relate to a special body of knowledge.<sup>5</sup> In this way, the use of moral and political judgement erases the demarcation line between experts and practitioners; it can therefore be practised by anyone and everyone. In democratic polity, citizens are required to be able to judge in at least three aspects: to judge the possible in the system, and desirable from the normative standpoint of virtues; to judge the specific individual and organisation in carrying out their mandates; and to judge the foreseeable consequences of their choice from the standpoint of the past, present

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<sup>1</sup> Jurgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: twelve lectures*, trans. Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge [UK]: Polity Press, 1987).

<sup>2</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's political philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992)

<sup>3</sup> Charles Larmore, "Moral Judgment," *Review of Metaphysics* 35, no. 2 (December 1981): 275-296.

<sup>4</sup> Benhabib, *Judgement and Moral Foundations of Politics in Hannah Arendt's Thought*, 58.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 186.

and future of their polity.<sup>6</sup> In other words, Benhabib reads Arendt's theory of judgement as a combination between moral and political judgement, and despite seeing that Arendt failed to do so, this certain kind of judgement holds some values that agrees well with democratic values and society. In short, she agrees that moral and political judgement share the similar characters and value, and they should reconcile to one another.

It is certain that, for Arendt, morality and politics must reconcile and share the same set of value and characteristics. Forgiving and Promising, the ideas of moral she concerned when she focused on an activity of action, shows how she was intensively wrapped with an idea about the strong connection between politics and morality. And even when she moved her focus from *vita activa* to *vita contemplativa*, her obsession to this connection does not disappear but remain intensive. In fact, judgement became her anticipated moral theory because of its strong connection to politics.

Although it might be true that Arendt, as mentioned at the beginning of *The Life of the Mind*, intended to enquire about and explore mental faculties from the time she had finished writing *The Human Condition*, it was not until the Eichmann trial that she seriously engaged with the nature of *vita contemplativa*. The connections that Arendt established between *vita contemplativa*, the Eichmann trial and moral questions in general can be clearly seen as a result of her increasing 'absorption' into these topics. Arendt's response to the turmoil of the first half of the 20th century, and to the Eichmann trial in particular, was presented in the form of report writing for *The New Yorker* under the title *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. Upon its publication in 1963, this report, containing many remarkable but also disputable comments, sparked controversy. In addition to reporting the trial through the eyes of an observer, it offered some new challenges to our understanding of ourselves. It not only offered a new account of evil; it also paved the way towards an understanding of how we act and judge. After the trial and finishing *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, she began giving lectures on morality and ethics. Arendt, who for so long had focused her political theory on the nature of action (which she regarded as "the oldest concern of political theory"),<sup>7</sup> was brought back to perhaps an even more basic question within the philosophical tradition: simply, the question of 'how to act'. This led her to investigate the nature of mental activities with the hope that she could find a sure connection between 'acting' and 'how to tell right from wrong'; in order, in Arendt's words, "to build half way through the theory of ethics".<sup>8</sup> It is therefore clear that from the very start of Arendt's enquiries into *vita contemplativa* she was guided by the aim of solving ethical or moral problems.

The show of this absorption of her started during 1965 and 1966 when she gave two lectures on moral philosophy: the first is a set of four long lectures presented at the New School for Social Research under the title 'Some Questions of Moral Philosophy'; the second, bearing the title 'Basic Moral Propositions', consists of seventeen sessions prepared for lecturing at the University of Chicago.<sup>9</sup> These two sets of lectures contained more or less the same ideas and details. Detailing the link between mental faculties and the question of morality, both are an

<sup>6</sup> Benhabib, *Judgement and Moral Foundations of Politics in Hannah Arendt's Thought*.

<sup>7</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind* (Sandiego: Harvest, 1981), 6.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 216.

<sup>9</sup> Hannah Arendt, "A note on the text," in *Responsibility and judgment*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken books, 2003), xxxiii.

obvious influence on Arendt's plan for *vita contemplativa*. The lectures show that *Eichmann in Jerusalem* was a turning point for Arendt and illustrate a new direction in her work. In particular, what is shown is how she attempted to move moral questions into the sphere of mental faculties. They indicate not only how significant it is to do so, but also how a possible investigation of our mental faculties could solve the perplexity of such questions. Beiner proposed that these two lectures, in addition to an earlier version of a lecture on Kant, prepared in 1964 for the University of Chicago, were the main materials used by Arendt to help prepare her lecture on Kant's political philosophy in 1970.<sup>10</sup> This lecture, known today as her *Lecture on Kant's Political Philosophy*, was given at the New School for Social Research during the fall semester. According to Beiner, it was supposed to be used again by Arendt when she had been assigned to lecture on Kant's *Critique of Judgement* in spring 1976.<sup>11</sup>

It is also important to note that, in 1971, an article named 'Thinking and Moral Consideration' was published. Despite the fact that Arendt focused her attention on the faculty of thinking and its relation to moral action in this article, it also includes material about judging that gave a clue to readers of the characteristics of the faculty of judgement she was developing. During the two following years, Arendt was occupied with writing *Thinking*. In spring 1973, she delivered 'Thinking' as the first volume of *The Life of the Mind*.<sup>12</sup> This is a publication based on the series of lectures she gave at the University of Aberdeen, when she was invited to give the Gifford lectures during the years 1972 to 1974. 'Willing' was published two years later, while 'Judging' was expected to follow. At the end of 'Thinking', Arendt wrote a postscript to indicate the matters of concern to be included in the second volume of the book. In this 'Postscriptum' to 'Thinking', she reflected on the faculties of willing and judging. And from this, the details of her writing for the "never written piece" can be confirmed since they correspond closely to the details that appeared in the *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* from 1970.

It is well known among Arendtian scholars that she never finished writing *The Life of the Mind*. The last part, 'Judging', was left unfinished with only two epigraphs on the paper. Therefore, all of the readings on her concept of judgement rely on the pieces and fragments of writing that she left and on the imagination of the readers; in the same way that forensic science has to be carried out. Each of her writings from this period can be thought of as a piece of jigsaw that allows readers to try and guess the whole picture of her unfinished theory. Many articles, lectures and notes were collected, edited and published posthumously by her close friends and colleagues. Some political theorists and Arendtian scholars started reading and interpreting her reflections on the faculty of judgement by using these remaining fragmentary materials. The most important edition that gathers together these fragments is Beiner's *Hannah Arendt: Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*. This includes three pieces of writing chosen by Beiner, who tries to put the jigsaw together. These pieces are 'Postscriptum to Thinking', *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* and 'Imagination'. Closing with his long interpretive essay on Arendt's concept of judging, this book is a 'must-read' for all those engaging with Arendt's theory of judgement. However, the selection of texts by Beiner is just a starting point

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<sup>10</sup> Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's political philosophy*, vii.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, viii.

<sup>12</sup> Arendt, *The Life of Mind*, 242.



for further exploration. There are many pieces of writing relating to judging left for readers to study and examine, since Beiner chose only those pieces he considered important.

Beiner presents Arendt's *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* as the benchmark text and makes it the starting point for the puzzle surrounding her concept of judgement. In order to show that *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* contain most of the content Arendt planned to write in the volume on judging, Beiner refers to the content in the 'Postscriptum' in order to show the similarity between these two pieces. Moreover, he explores the seminar notes on 'Imagination', in order to fulfill his understanding of Arendt's idea of judgement. Indeed, these three pieces of writing reflect his proposal, interpretation and point of view as it is the very content of the concept of judgement that Beiner intended to emphasise. His main aim is to explain and 're-tell' Arendt's theory of judgement and use it in his interpretation. This thesis has a different purpose. Its main aim is to consider how well, or not, Arendt's theory of judgement connects to her idea of moral and fits with her political theory. Therefore, my choice of selected core material is slightly different from that of Beiner, since it focuses on the materials that link together Arendt's theory of judgement and her other concepts. In fact, this thesis aims to find a place for her theory of judgement within her political theory as a whole.

In pursuit of this aim, the selection of relevant materials is extremely important in that it needs to suit the assumptions and interpretations guiding this project. After exploring some other texts, the author of the thesis decided to use four pieces as a set of main texts used in the research. These are: 'Lectures on some Questions of Moral Philosophy', *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, 'Thinking and Moral Consideration' and the 'Postscriptum to Thinking'. Of these texts, the thesis has found that 'Lectures on some Questions of Moral Philosophy' is the most suitable piece of work to start with. The four pieces will be reviewed in this first chapter in order to provide an overview of Arendt's idea of judgement. The thesis intends to leave 'Imagination' here; not because of its insignificance, but plan to use it as supporting evidence to explain the process of judging in later chapters. This selection has been done on purpose, as detailed below.

The main discussion of this chapter begins at clarifying the assumption that drives this research project. The research is guided by the idea that Arendt's theory of judgement was founded on an attempt to answer or understand the question of ethics/morality. In this way, the research begins from her very first pieces of writing that explicitly reveal an idea about morality and ethics and that examine the connection between them. An interesting sub-question of this research, therefore, is how do these three mental faculties, thinking, willing, and judging in particular, provide answers to the political problems articulated by Arendt at the beginning of her work. Focusing the literature review primarily on 'Lectures on some Basic Questions of Moral Philosophy' is important because it provides an obvious set of links between *vita contemplativa* and moral issues. Beiner, whose main set of questions do not cover matters of morality, decided to exclude this lecture in his selection. He chose instead to focus his interest on analysing Arendt's theory and characteristics of judgement. He concentrated on the consistency of Arendt's early and late works on judgement in addition to the contradiction between the perspectives of actor and spectator in her theory. His attempt was to make clear

Arendt's concept of judging, and understanding its details. Therefore, it is legitimate for Beiner to examine mainly the *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*.

In addition to the guiding assumption and the selection of texts that it necessitates, it is important to indicate here the order of texts the thesis has chosen to review. In short, the research decides to follow the timeline of publication. When Arendt responded to a question from Gunter Gaus during a television interview for his 1964 programme *Zur Person* about her feelings towards her own writing, she told him that she perceived writing as an integral part of her process of understanding. She said that, due to the fact that she did not have a good enough memory to retain all of her thoughts, writing was a crucial process of thinking that helped her reach and retain understanding.<sup>13</sup> As we know, for Arendt, it is mere understanding that is the only impulse behind her writings and theory. In order to reach such an understanding, she has to write to retain and convey her thoughts. In the same interview, she also added that she would start writing when she knew what to write and then she would type it as fast as possible; and that it would only be typed once. It is not that surprising to the readers, therefore, to find some inconsistency and contradiction when reading her words. Although this style of writing might make her ideas confusing and difficult to work with, at times this thesis found it to be an advantage, at least on one note: it allows the reader to trace her logic and the 'history' of her thought. For this reason, the thesis decided to follow Arendt's timeline of thinking; that is, it will start to explore her ideas consecutively in order to follow her 'train of thought'. Therefore, it will begin the review here with her first piece of writing concerned with judgement: 'Lectures on some Questions of Moral Philosophy'.

### **Section I: Reading 'Some Questions of Moral Philosophy' (1965–1966)**

As already mentioned, unlike Beiner, I have chosen this lecture as one of my core readings and a starting point for my study, since I have found that it provides a very clear picture of not only what Arendt's moral theory and judging are but also the strong direct connection between the two. This set of lecture notes consists of four parts relating to the idea of moral from its origin to the human mental faculties that deal with it. It seems to be a piece that gives us a 'historical perspective' of Arendt's own thought process. Throughout each part of the lecture, every concept and idea has been unpicked, revealed and connected to one another. This not only gives a clear picture of Arendt's morality but also shows the very clear outline of her *vita contemplativa* and *The Life of the Mind*. In my view, this set of lecture notes provides very good evidence to defend the interpretation that Arendt shifted her interest from *vita activa* to *vita contemplativa* without not abolishing either. In fact, instead of doing away with *vita activa* and turning back to the very origin of the form of philosophy such as *vita contemplativa* or reducing *vita contemplativa* under the active form of life, this lecture shows us how Arendt blends them together and allows both of them to go 'hand in hand'.

As with most of Arendt's writing, this set of lecture notes starts with an etymology study: the original meaning of the terms she wanted to discuss. Arendt always went back to the roots of

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<sup>13</sup> Hannah Arendt, "Hannah Arendt Interview (1964) - What Remains? (Zur Person)," interview by Günter Gaus, May 15, 2020, Video, 1:12:15, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfoaHBTafzU>.

words in antiquity in order to define their original meanings and to illustrate their changes in usage over time. Due to this style of research and writing, she could then set the background of the concept and create boundaries for the issues she wanted to debate before moving on to the points she planned to raise. Tracing the history in both philosophical and religious traditions within the western world, Arendt began the lecture by explaining the meaning and connotation of morals and ethics and researching an idea outside the religious realm. Strictly speaking, she went back to ancient Greek and Kant.

Arendt began her first part of the lecture with the questions of why and how the concepts of morality and ethics have been reduced to their original meanings of ‘mores’ and ‘*ethos*’ during the times in which they were needed most. This question is indeed the very same question as the one that had an immediate impact on her after attending the Eichmann trial. How can a single man follow the order to do something wrong without questioning it and his own actions? Why, during the time that the moral should take action and do its duty, did it just disappear and collapse? For Arendt, morality and ethics turned out to be just a set of rules or dogma in the same way as they were during ancient times. Or have morality and ethics, understood in the way in which we define them now, all been just a dream of western civilisation? Are they not real? This is the starting point for Arendt to explore her idea of moral in these lectures.

In ancient times, the two terms ‘morals’ and ‘ethics’ bore only the meaning of ‘habits’ or ‘sets of customs and manners’ in their Latin and ancient Greek origin. There was no implication of goodness within the terms. ‘Ethics’ derives from the word ‘*ethos*’ but simply meant ‘habit’ or ‘custom’ in ancient Greek. This is also the case with ‘moral’, which takes its root from Latin. Both of them were not defined as ‘the few rules and standards’ that ‘men used to tell right from wrong’<sup>14</sup> as they are understood now. Arendt’s question is then asked with the hope of maintaining the present definition of moral and ethics. And in order to do so, she turned to the new connotation of the two terms as they are understood nowadays. She started with Kant.

It might be surprising that Arendt did not begin her investigation of moral and ethics from a religious point of view. She gave two reasons for this: during times when morality was needed the most, religions did not ‘play any role’ at all;<sup>15</sup> though they did exclude the discussion of morality. Arendt added that this is especially true in Hebrew-Christian tradition. Medieval philosophy, under the influence of ‘revealed religions’, was divided into five doctrines. None of them was concerned with moral. Arendt explained that, had the issue of morality or ethics been discussed at all during medieval times, they would have been discussed in the tradition of ‘political philosophy’, which was influenced by the ancient Greek tradition relating to thought. In other words, morality or ethics in religion at their very start were concerned with the conduct of man as a citizen.<sup>16</sup> In short, they focused on the relationship between the citizen (as a subject bound to the state) and the *polis* in order to obtain the ‘good life’. Indeed, the place of morality and ethics was originally in political philosophy; not religion.

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<sup>14</sup> Hannah Arendt, “Some Questions of Moral Philosophy,” in *Responsibility and judgment*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken books, 2003), 50.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 63.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 64.

Arendt's attempt to 'cut the cord' between morality and religion and at the same time create a link between the concept of morality and the realm of political affairs can be seen here. It seems to be clear from this first point that, according to Arendt, morality must have its place within the political realm, affiliated with human affairs and isolated from the 'glorious divine'. In ancient times, morality and ethics concerned politics and men by providing insight into the good life. Found out by men and judged by fellow men, there was no command or obligation forced upon human behaviour in the connotation of moral and ethics.<sup>17</sup> Arendt illustrated that this is explicitly shown in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*, and also by Socrates in Plato's *Euthyphro*. Medieval philosophy, on the other hand, connects morality to the divinity and His commandment and defines goodness as the obligation of subjected man to his divine God. Sin, in this way, was primarily seen as nothing but a lack of obedience to the God.

It was not until Kant's writings that Arendt found this separation between morality and divinity and the connection between morality and man. However, Kant 'left some space' for an unattained knowledge of God and drew morality 'back down to earth'. He defined 'moral command' as 'divine', because there is an 'inward obligation' between man and the moral command; not because it is ordered and obliged to do so by God. In short, Arendt was captivated by Kant's idea and totally agreed that "we can speak of moral philosophy only when morality is strictly human affairs". And it is here that her moral philosophy began to emerge. She pointed out two characteristics of Kant's moral philosophy that makes him the first philosopher to suggest a new connotation of moral and ethics in the modern world: he made morality a form of self-standard; and moral conduct cannot be obedient to any other external law but only to the law of 'oneself'.

According to Arendt, Kant's self-standard of moral can be noticed in many aspects. Firstly, his idea of consistency or non-contradiction pushed the standard of morality from the idea of 'love' into the idea of 'self-respect'. Unlike the religious ethical manner which emphasises the idea of 'love', especially 'love toward others', Kant's morality was based on the idea of human pride (which in one sense strongly contradicts Christian ethics) and he prioritised a 'duty to oneself' over a 'duty to others'. According to Arendt, Kant's morality depends on the intercourse of man with himself and the law of non-contradiction. This law should be applied not only in his thought but also his behaviour. By not making an exception of himself, man will not only be able to discern right from wrong but will also choose to do the right deed and avoid the wrong action. This self-respect puts one's 'self' at the very centre of moral philosophy. In this way, the dignity of man as a self-regulated moral law bearer is now revived after long suppression under the command of God.

Kant's idea of separation between legality and morality also marks the self-regulated character of man as a moral law bearer. Arendt pointed out that, for Kant, legality is morally neutral and therefore only law-abiding citizens, not moral ones, are required in the community in order to sustain political order. With regard to legality, and also in a religious framework, obedience of subjects plays a very central role. Morality, on the other hand, follows merely one's own reason and only self-obedience is permitted. One's own reason can become universal law and valid to all 'rational and intelligible' beings because it is exercised upon the rule of non-contradiction.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 65.

In this way, a moral person is acting as both a moral law bearer and legislator. However, Arendt herself mentioned later that this distinction between legality and morality is not that obvious, since Kant wished his idea of morality to set the foundation to legality and law.

Not only was it Kant who set self as a standard for morality but, if one looks back through time, it can be seen that Socrates did this too. For Kant, one should act “in such a way that I can also will that my maxim should become a universal law.” This kind of non-contradictory law of action implies that the wrongdoer is a person who does not follow the rules; that is, he makes an exception for his own action. Socrates’ maxim, in which he insists that it is “better to suffer wrong than to do wrong”, because one cannot live with himself who is a wrongdoer, has a similar connotation to non-contradiction in the law of action. However, Kant, on the one hand, suggests applying this rule ‘outward’ from self to others, whereas Socrates, on the other hand, asked for ‘inward’ non-contradiction between me/self. Despite this difference in detail, both of them proposed the same thought: they both agreed in the self-standard of morality and non-contradiction law.

In the second part of the lecture, Arendt discussed Socrates’ moral theory by comparing his ideas with Plato’s. Here, Arendt concluded her discussion in the first part of lecture that nowadays we are not dealing with ethics and morality in its original meaning. In fact, we are dealing with morality that contains an absolute distinction between what is right and what is wrong, and this distinction is expected to be applicable to any and every sane person. However, Arendt argued that these claims cannot stand the test of time. In order to explain her argument (and she later proposed her own version of moral theory), she described the distinction between the terms ‘necessity’ and ‘obligation’. She explained that there are two types of validity proof for all propositions or statements. Firstly, if the statement is self-evidently true, no argument or proof is needed for verification. This kind of statement has a coercive nature and is necessary. A good example of this kind of proposition is the law of nature; i.e. people die. Man has to follow this statement. It is necessary, but it does not simply mean that he obeys it. Secondly, if the statement is not self-evident, its validity claim must be done by showing valid proof or demonstration. It seems that Arendt found that moral philosophy fails to verify both types of validity claim. Both Kant and Socrates saw their theory of morality as a self-evident truth. For them, it seems it is a self-evident truth, but for others, it does not seem so. At the same time, both of them cannot clearly explain the relationship between will and reason; that is, why will needs to follow or submit to reason. Because of this, Arendt argued, Kant needed to give his rational proposition an ‘obligatory character’, or categorical imperative. The discussion on Kant and Socrates in the first two parts of the lectures is a ‘pavement’ Arendt built in order to leave moral philosophy formed on the foundation of categorical imperative and the *Critique of Practical Reason*.

It is in the second part of the lecture that Arendt started to relate the idea of morality to the mental faculty of man. Its main discussion focuses on what she was later writing as the faculty of Thinking in *The Life of the Mind*. By distinguishing between the ideas of Plato and Socrates, Arendt showed how she could move from the limited moral theory of Kant and take a further step. Plato, by separating the realm of idea from the realm of appearance, created the moral theory of ‘form’ which turned into a standard of measurement for all moral cases to be used.

Arendt argued that, for Plato, general moral statements are self-evident and it is their compelling nature for those who can perceive them through the ‘eyes of the mind’. Therefore, form cannot be proven or obtained through reason and argument. In this way, for the person who cannot ‘see’ this form of moral truth, coercion and punishment are necessary. For if he can neither see this ideal of moral by himself, nor be convinced by argument, the only way is to ‘force’ him to see as if he can see it by himself.

Socrates, on the other hand, had confidence in human reasoning and *logos*. For him, there is no universal form of an ideal world or “innate voice of conscience” within any single man to follow. Instead, men need dialogue to precede their reasoning in spoken statements in order to reach arguments and obtain opinions at the end of the process. In short, Arendt proposed that Socrates’ morality can only be arrived at from the process of reasoning through *dialegethai* (*διαλεγεσθαι*). However, this process of conversing dialogues can also be done when one is alone with oneself. In *Theaetetus*, Socrates mentioned *dianoesthai* (*διανοεσθαι*) as a form of self-conversing dialogue. Arendt argued that, for Socrates, these two processes of speech reasoning are similar because thought is also a kind of spoken statement. In other words, there is a sameness of conversation between me and myself and the conversation between me and others. In this way, for Socrates, every man talks to himself and, even though he is one, he is a two-in-one. However, the very condition of this self-dialogue is self-non-contradiction. One can disagree with any other person in the world but one cannot disagree with oneself, for one can walk away from others but one cannot walk away from oneself. When one converses with oneself, one asks oneself the questions and finds the answers. The answers of me and myself cannot be contradicted; otherwise one must be living with one’s own enemy. This rule of ‘harmony with the self’ is simple: no one wants to live with a murderer or a thief, even though they prefer doing wrong to suffer wrong for their own benefit. This kind of agreement or disagreement can only be found through the process of self-reasoning or *dianoesthai*.

Therefore, for Socrates, thinking is the process of man talking with the self in order to reach the meaning of reason. Through this process of thinking, man has an opportunity to reach his own conscience if he sticks to the rule of self-non-contradiction. In this way, unlike Plato, thinking is not a mental faculty reserved just for the philosopher but a common mental faculty shared and exercised by everyone. Therefore, for Socrates, man is not just a rational being but is also a thinking being because the faculty of speech distinguishes him from other animals. In addition, if thinking is the very process of morality, and morality arises from the thinking activity, proclaimed Arendt, it is not surprising that morality cannot find its place as a separate ‘section’ in philosophy since moral philosophy is the pre-philosophic condition of philosophy itself.

Socrates’ internal relationship between the issue of moral and the activity of thinking, considered as a two-in-one process of *dianoesthai*, brought Arendt to another crucial step in blending her moral theory with her political one. The character of Socrates as a thinking subject shows the need of man to live in company with others even when he is alone. This reveals the fact about humans on earth: that men exist in the plural and not in the singular.

At the end of Part Two and the beginning of Part Three of her lecture, Arendt pointed out plurality as the very condition of men living on earth. And it is at this point that, despite using

Socrates and Kant as a theoretical framework, she started proposing her own theory on morality and went one or two steps further. In fact, it is clear that Arendt held on tightly to her own theoretical foundation when dealing with and investigating this. She understood morality from the viewpoint of her understanding of politics. As seen at the beginning of the discussion, Arendt strongly intended splitting the morality issue from the realm of religion and to embrace it within the realm of the political. In order to do so, it was necessary for her to show a strong relationship between the two. And so, she had only one direction to move in: she had constructed her own understanding of morality upon the foundation she once used to construct her theory of politics. In short, on this very foundation of theory, plurality, she had built her own understanding and theory not only about politics but also about morality.

To return to the faculty of thinking, because it is the starting point not only of Arendt's understanding of human mental faculties but also of the moral issue. In her lecture, Arendt defined 'thinking' as a "mode of existence present in the silent dialogue between me and myself in solitude." Solitude is not similar to loneliness and isolation, even though they seem to be the same. Despite being alone physically, one lives with another 'mentally' in solitude. One lives with another self and makes conversations. Therefore, solitude has thinking as its corresponding activity. Isolation, on the other hand, is the mode in which one lives neither with one's self nor in the company of others. It is the mode in which man withdraws himself into the silence in order to concentrate on what he is doing. One lives alone physically and mentally. It is a natural condition for doing all kinds of 'work'. Even though these two modes can be transformed into one another, only in the mode of solitude can thinking be arrived at and the moral proposition 'better to suffer wrong than to do wrong' is valid. As a 'thinking being', man knows the limits of his actions because he is rooted in his own thought and remembrances. Man will not forget what he gets through the process of thinking. Man, who is ready to forget everything, is also ready to do anything. Therefore, for Arendt, extreme evil is possible when people do not think because they do not have root in the process of thought.

There is another point which Arendt raises at the start of her lecture: conscience. For her, conscience is very closely linked to thinking for it carries the meaning of 'know thyself'. Again, Arendt argues that conscience did not exist in antiquity. It was understood as a 'voice of God' that told man what to do. The distinction between conscience and consciousness has been blurred until recent times. In fact, Arendt did not deny the existence of conscience or guilt. She saw them as 'unreliable' when indicating what is right and wrong, since they can stem from a conflict between old habits and command. In this way, despite the fact that Arendt defined it as "way of feeling beyond reason and argument" and "the knowing through sentiment what is right and what is wrong", she found it to be a subject of conformity; not morality. The contradiction within conscience can be solved, not by feeling, but only through the process of thinking; a deliberation between me and myself.

Even though thinking might have a function that helps prevent people from doing evil, this kind of function seems insufficient and, in fact, unreliable. Thinking, in itself, is dangerous. It has a distinctive 'destructive character' for it can 'shake all establishments of society'. 'To think' means to question or examine. When thinking is processing, the situation of a 'vacuum of thought' can arise, and, without anything to fill the vacuum, the outcome becomes

unpredictable. This will become even more dangerous if someone has to follow Socrates' way of thinking and does not think for himself.

Due to certain characteristics of thinking, it 'brings itself to the limit' when it has to deal with the issue of moral. As can be seen, firstly, thinking limits itself to a faculty aimed at preventing evil. In other words, the quality of the moral issue that has arisen from thinking is a negative one. Secondly, the thinking process itself is entirely incompatible with other activities of man. When one thinks, one stops doing, and it is true the other way round. In short, there is a tension between thinking and acting. In this sense, thinking cannot encourage or trigger action. Therefore, there must be some other faculties that correspond directly or more closely to action besides thinking.

Arendt then moved on to explore two more faculties in order to support her argument. However, before discussing these faculties, she discussed some issues relating to the connection between thinking and action. Unlike other philosophers, she disagreed that thinking is another kind of action; not even an 'inner action'. According to her, thinking is a certain kind of "activity" and, since activity is not an action, they can never be similar. Thought is a product that corresponds to a mode of human singularity; it is concerned with only 'my own self'. Action, in contrast, focuses on the condition of plurality of men and needs company with many others. In this sense, thought is impotent in its very nature for it cannot bring any power since it does not contain 'others' in its process. Moreover, unlike action, which aims to have an intentional goal, thinking is an activity in itself and aims for no objective result. The product yielded from thinking, i.e. knowledge or morality, is just a 'by-product'. Therefore, according to Arendt, morality cannot spring directly from thinking, and thinking itself can never be a reliable source of morality.

The limitation of the faculty of thinking made Arendt pay attention to "action as distinguished from activity" and to "conduct toward others as distinguished from intercourse with self." In this tradition of thought, Arendt has turned to 'will' because it leads one into action and the "question of the nature of good in an entirely positive sense." She explained that will first appeared in the work of Paul. The appearance of the faculty of willing, as an 'insertion' between 'desire' and 'reason', helped solve any contradiction between the two. In the ancient western world, desire has been understood as a mental faculty attracted and roused by some temptation from outside the self. It is natural and belongs to the animal in man. In order to suppress his own desire, man needs to use his reason. In this sense, desire and reason are on the different side of the continuum and human action is decided and yielded to by either one faculty or another. Acting according to desire and refusing to use reason were then considered to be ignorance or weakness. Willing is thus considered as another mental faculty that intermediates between the action roused by desire and action driven by reason and as an arbitrator which 'adjusts' the relationship between the two faculties to the same level. When one acts with a will, one is no longer tempted by desire nor subsumed under reason. Will is then 'free', and it is totally up to oneself. For, while reason shows the 'common' among men, as desire does among living creatures, will is entirely related to oneself. It is a freedom in a philosophical sense.



Arendt argued that, traditionally, will is considered as *'liberum arbitrium'* or 'free arbitration'. This indicates a certain kind of disinterestness in the same way that a judge does within the legal process. As an unconcerned 'spectator' or 'eyewitness', judge and jury can make their impartial judgements. Freedom of the will is therefore considered to be impartial; not a source of spontaneity that prompts action. She finished her discussion on willing here and then turned to the faculty of judgement, which she defined as "the true arbiter" between right and wrong, beautiful and ugly, true and untrue. She saw that Kant had approached this problem with the question relating to discerning between beautiful and ugly. In short, Arendt saw Kant's 'Critique of Taste' or 'Critique of Judgement' as a place where moral theory dwells. Whether Kant truly approached Taste as an answer to the moral question or not is not the point I would like to discuss here but it can be clearly seen at this point that Arendt herself saw her answer to morality in Taste and it is the *Critique of Judgement* that was the foundation upon which she constructed her moral theory.

Arendt explained that Kant saw judgement as a faculty that deals with particular, and it determined the connection between general and a particular instance. Unlike reason and knowledge, whereby judgement will subsume the particular case into the general principle, aesthetic judgement has no established general rule as a standard for the particular to subsume into. Therefore, there must be a different process relating to its validity claim. According to Arendt, although Kant proposed that all kinds of judgement 'spring' from the cause of the 'common sense', he predominantly focused on aesthetic judgement because it is the only sphere in which neither the 'self-evident' form of validity nor the 'obligatory character' is required. What Arendt proposed in this lecture (and probably in Part Three of *The Life of the Mind*) was to extend this mode of judgement initiated by Kant into the sphere of morality and her theory of politics. In this way, she started from the idea that can be considered to be the very foundation for her idea of human in plural: common sense.

Arendt explained that Kant's term 'common sense' did not intentionally mean a sense that is common to all men; rather, a sense that makes communication among humans possible. It helps make us 'be members' and 'fit into a community' where we live with other fellow men. Common sense is attainable through the support of the faculty of imagination. In this lecture, Arendt regarded imagination and representation as substitutive faculties. She explained imagination as a mental "ability to have an image of something that is not present." In general, when we think of any particular thing or object, two imaginations are made in our mind. The first is a particular object that we have seen before with our physical eyes; in short, a particular object that we remember. The second is an 'abstract object', which she called 'schematic image' of the object. This image of object appears only in our mind and has never been perceived before by our bodily sense. It can be seen later that the 'schemata' became what Arendt compared with 'example', her source of validity claim, in aesthetic judgement.

Despite lacking the objective standards to hold on to, Arendt found example in common sense to be something that the subject can hold on to while exercising judgement of taste. She referred to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* in order to explain what example is. She stated that Kant called the 'representative thought', presented in this type of judgement, 'exemplary thought', and that he saw 'examples' as a 'go-cart' of judgement. Every particular becomes an example

that helps the mind recognise something in a similar way, as a schema does. However, Arendt argued, these two have different qualities. For Arendt, a 'schematic object' is the term used to describe a 'form' or an 'ideal' object that every object in the same category must conform to. An 'abstract object' refers to an image of the object that has been gained from arriving at a minimum quality common to all. On the other hand, the term 'exemplary object' is used when referring to the object that one chooses as being the 'best' and is used as a standard to hold on to when he exercising one's judgement. Arendt explained that this kind of object derives from the process of 'singling out' (*exemere*) a particular instance which now becomes valid for all other particular instances, and that this exemplary object has been used a lot in the context of historical and political science, for example, having the courage of Achilles or having the wisdom of Solomon. Certainly, Arendt saw this kind of example as a go-cart for all judgements, including judgement on morality.

Since common sense and imagination can help one's mind present who and what are absent, aesthetic judgement can claim others' consent from the 'imaginative presentation' while exercising these capabilities. In order to judge the particular, one depends not only on 'true perception' but also on the 'representation' that one makes. Although aesthetic judgement cannot claim its validity through universal law because it has no general rules for the particular to subsume into, aesthetic judgement 'carries a certain generality' within it and claims its validity through this generality. For Kant, claiming that something is beautiful is not similar to stating that something pleases or displeases me. To state "This is beautiful", even though directly relating to a particular object in front of one, contains the 'imaginative others' opinions' within the statement. It attempts to indicate not only the relationship between an object and the judging subject but also the 'possible' feelings of others towards the object. To say 'please' or 'displease', on the other hand, relates only the object to the judging subject.

This 'general validity' is, however, limited to merely a community where common sense makes men 'members', and it can extend only over the sphere of the judging subject. In short, it applies only within the community of people who make their own judgement. The sphere where this general validity is valid is determined by the variety and number of other viewpoints included in the imagination. The more points of view one represents with others, the bigger the sphere of validity claim can be applied. This process was called 'enlarged mentality' by Kant. In this way, Arendt added, Kant reached the community of all mankind because he regarded himself as a citizen of the world.

As imagination can provide only the 'representative opinions' of others, this judgement is not necessarily the same as others' actual points of view. This, in another way, also means that the judging subject does not conform with the judgement of others and can still preserve his 'active' mental capability. However, in this way, the judgement made is no longer 'subjective' either since it also includes others' viewpoints and generality within it. Arendt called this kind of validity claim 'intersubjective' or 'representative' since it is neither universally objective nor subjective validity.

In order to judge according to common sense, communication and intercourse with others is required. In the same way that thought derives from making dialogue with oneself, common sense can only be reached by conversing and interacting with others. The more intercourses

made and the more points of view being represented, the more common sense can be expanded. Arendt saw common sense as ‘a mother of judgement’ and argued that no judgement can be made without this inclusion of others in the representation. In this way, in aesthetic judgement, plurality is key. In order to claim this certain kind of judgement, one needs to try persuading and gaining agreement with others. Egoism is then overcome because it is necessary to include others in the consideration.

Kant’s idea of judgement is therefore contradictory to the non-self-contradiction law of Socrates. It retreats from the self and moves toward others, and it considers ‘men in plural’ as a living community. In other words, it is carried out from the viewpoint of a spectator who has ‘disinterested appreciation’. Here, impartiality plays a role, and is the point where Arendt’s faculty of willing as *liberum arbitrium* can find a link with Kant’s impartial judgement.

## **Section II: *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy* (1970)**

While ‘Lectures on Some Questions of Moral Philosophy’ aim to connect judgement as a mental faculty to morality, *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy* were written to illustrate the connection between the faculty of judgement and the political. This set of lectures provides not only Arendt’s concept of judgement in general but also reasserts how to define and describe her concept of the political. In other words, this text aims to exhibit the political aspect of her concept of judging, and it is evident that Arendt intended to propose judging as a human political faculty here.

Although her ‘Lectures on Some Questions on Moral Philosophy’ can be considered to be the first piece of writing where she presented her ideas relating to mental faculties and morality, they are not the first lectures where she started to focus on Kant and the faculty of judgement. In 1964, just one year before she gave her lectures on morality, Arendt had already presented her first idea of judgement in her lecture on Kant at the University of Chicago. However, this lecture was later edited and the ideas combined in ‘Lectures on Some Questions on Moral Philosophy’. The latter was therefore presented as a better version when Arendt was assigned to give lectures on Kant in 1970. As a result, morality is always in the background of Arendt’s discussion on judgement. Even though the term ‘moral’ does not feature in the title of the new edition and her rejection of Kant’s idea of moral is detailed in the lectures, there is nowhere in her writings that shows Arendt’s dismissal of the idea of morality in general from her theory of judgement. The rewritten version is now known as *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy* among Arendtian scholars. It was chosen, edited and interpreted by Beiner as a ‘guideline version’ for Arendt’s theory of judgement. To avoid repetitive text and detail, I decided to follow Beiner by using this 1970 version as material for my selection of texts. In ‘Lectures on Some Questions on Moral Philosophy’ readers have the opportunity to see Arendt’s thought structure and logic relating to the three mental faculties because they clearly reveal the reasons behind her research on *vita contemplativa* and how the three basic mental faculties relate to one another. In this text, Arendt aimed to emphasise her theory of judgement in more detail through her explanation of Kant’s philosophy. Additionally, it creates a stronger link between judging as a mental faculty and her concept of the political.

Since this set of lecture notes was prepared to be used for the course on Kant's political philosophy, the main aim was to explain Kant's idea of politics. However, for Arendt, it was a chance to explain her own interpretation of Kant and to propose her idea of political theory, too. In this lecture, a bolder claim relating to her reading on Kant can be seen when we compare it to the one in 'Lectures on Some Questions on Moral Philosophy'. Therefore, this lecture not only reveals Arendt's view on politics but also offers an alternative way of reading Kant.

Undoubtedly, there are many sceptics with regard to Arendt's interpretation of Kant. Her 'selective' method of understanding philosophy is always criticised by political theorists. I do not intend debating this with other scholars in this chapter but will discuss it in a later chapter after providing a basic explanation and discussion of the related concepts. In this chapter, I intend to: review Arendt's idea on judging; provide a clearer picture of it; and relate it to other political concepts. Furthermore, I will raise several issues relating to her interpretation in order to identify what she attempted to claim in order to build her political theory.

In the lectures, two claims are proposed by Arendt, after arguing that there is no single work by Kant that can be counted as his political philosophy. Firstly, Arendt claimed that Kant, in later life, became aware of the distinction between 'the political' and 'the social' as "part and parcel of man's condition in the world".<sup>18</sup> Secondly, she made an even bolder claim that *Kritik der Urteilskraft* is, literally, his "missing fourth critique"; in other words, his political philosophy. In her first claim, it can be clearly seen that Arendt interpreted Kant very much in line with her own position in reading political philosophy. This reminds readers of her strong ideas relating to a separation between social and political in *The Human Condition*. In addition to the possibility of proposing the concept of 'action', this gave her the chance to make a separation between the concept of 'politics' and 'the political'. This distinction is, in fact, one of the most outstanding factors in Arendt's theory of politics and helps explain and support her arguments in her second claim, which will be discussed later. It may be enough to state that her second claim is the main claim that she attempted to prove.

Throughout the thirteen lecture sessions, Arendt tries to convince listeners and readers to agree with this claim by illustrating arguments and providing text-based evidence. To begin with, Arendt starts explaining the framework of Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* and its relation to the other critiques. According to Arendt, Kant had two 'left-over' questions towards the end of his life, which appear in his last critique. While the first question, Arendt notes, deals with the 'sociability' of man, the second question deals with the 'purpose' of human existence. Regarding the former, Arendt argues that Kant responded to it in the first part of his third critique. According to her, the interdependence of men in exercising mental faculties confirms the fact that man cannot live outside society or without interaction with others. Arendt also adds that this response in the *Critique of the Aesthetic Judgement* was written as an answer to Kant's 'pre-critical' period question. In order to draw the connection, she depicted some similarities between the *Critique of the Aesthetic Judgement* and his pre-critical writing, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*. She writes:

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<sup>18</sup> Arendt, *Lectures on Kant*, 9.

“That the *Critique of Judgement*, or of Taste, was written in response to a leftover question from the pre-critical period is obvious. Like *Observations*, the Critique again is divided into the Beautiful and the Sublime. And in the earlier work, which read as though it had been written by one of the French Moralists, the question of ‘sociability’, of company, was already, though not in the same extent, a key question.”<sup>19</sup>

The reason why Arendt created similarities between these two writings is obvious. In order to support her main claim, she chose to highlight certain pieces of Kant’s writing. She attempts to illustrate that *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, written at an early age, shares similar issues with *Critique of the Aesthetic Judgement*, written in later life. In order to object to some of Kant’s readers who believed that most of the ‘political writings’ that Kant published in his later years reflected a decline in the mental faculties of an old man, Arendt tries to convince them that Kant’s interest in the ‘social or political matter’ is not just only a play of an idea. Instead, it had been a strong topic of interest for him from a young age.

The second question which deals with the interrogation of a ‘purpose’ of a thing was responded to in the second part of *Kritik der Urteilskraft: Critique of the Teleological Judgement*. Like other Kantian scholars, for example, Pluhar, Arendt realises the connection between an idea of ‘purposiveness’ in the third critique and previous literature. However, what she is interested in here is not the idea of purposiveness itself but the idea of purpose that links to the sociability aspect of man. In order to do so, she argues that this kind of concern reconciles itself with the fourth question that Kant added to his three questions on philosophy. Instead of seeing the idea of purposiveness as a link between the three critiques from a ‘cognitive’ aspect, she turns to the idea of purposiveness in the aspect of ‘sociability of man’, as follows:

“This second question, raised in §67 of the *Critique of Judgement*, reads: ‘Why is it necessary that men should exist at all?’ This question, too, is a kind of leftover concern. You all know the famous three questions whose answer, according to Kant, constituted the proper business of philosophy: What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope? To these three, he used to add a fourth in his lecture courses: What is man? And he explained: ‘One could call them altogether “anthropology” because the first three questions relate to [indicate] the last one’.”<sup>20</sup>

What Arendt attempts to do here is convince readers that the sociability of man is a key feature of *Kritik der Urteilskraft* since it plays a significant role in both parts of the book. Disagreeing with some scholars, Arendt argues that the connection between the two parts is not weak, as it seems to be. In fact, she continues, there are two aspects that the two parts share. Firstly, they both speak of plurality as a condition of man. While the first part discusses ‘men in plural’, the

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 10–11.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 12.

second part deals with ‘human species’ as a whole.<sup>21</sup> Unlike this ‘plurality’ condition of man in the third critique, the other two critiques speak of ‘man in the singular’. Whereas *Critique of Pure Reason* talks about man as a cognitive being, *Critique of Practical Reason* focuses on man in his intelligible aspect. Even though an intelligible being in the *Critique of Practical Reason* may indicate a certain degree of plurality, Arendt proclaims that it focuses more on the ‘selfness’ of an individual being who knows how to use reason, and this ‘intelligible being’ can also apply to all kinds of beings; not limited to human beings only. It is only in the third critique that man can be spoken of as a human race that lives together in the human world. Moreover, she continues, both parts of the book deal with an object as ‘the particular’. In ‘Critique of the Aesthetic Judgement’, the individual object of judgement is the main focus of the theory. The object is interested as “something contingent in respect of the universal.”<sup>22</sup> In the same way, introduced as a ‘teleological principle’ in the second part of the book, it discusses the “impossibility of deriving any particular product of nature from general causes.”<sup>23</sup> In short, Arendt tries to propose that both parts of the *Kritik de Urteilskraft* relate more to the political than any other concept in the other two critiques.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the fact that Arendt claims both sociability and particular to be the two political aspects of Kant’s *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, she then states that she intends not to concern herself with the second part of the book, which focuses heavily on particularity and purpose, since its focal point is not on ‘the judgement of the particular’ but tends to focus on ‘the general’<sup>25</sup>. In other words, she adds, the second part of the book attempts to find a principle of cognition rather than the principle of judgement.<sup>26</sup> It is worth making an observation here that Arendt has made a small remark about Kant’s ‘mechanical cause’ in teleological judgement. She states that Kant’s mechanical cause is opposite to the ‘technical cause’ and contains the meaning of a ‘natural’ cause. While the mechanical or natural cause refers to things which “come into being of themselves”<sup>27</sup>, the technical cause, means an ‘artificial’ cause and refers to things that are ‘fabricated’ for a specific end or purpose.<sup>28</sup> What Arendt tries to explain and propose here is the very same issue relating to the way in which she explains the concept of the ‘purpose’ in the second question. She expounds that, when Kant raises the question of ‘Why?’ relating to the existence of man (or any other thing), it does not indicate inquiry about the ‘cause’ even though it is a ‘why question’ but rather an inquiry about a ‘purpose of what is it for’.<sup>29</sup> In other words, it deals with the query relating to the purpose of the existence of a thing as a means for something higher than itself.<sup>30</sup> Due to the fact that humans cannot use reason to understand a particular, Arendt adds, Kant introduced the teleological principle to deal with the problem about the impossibility of deriving the particular from the general.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 14.

Unlike most political theorists who read Kant's theory of moral as his political philosophy, Arendt rejected the idea that Kant's interest in political and state-related matters had been directed to the conclusion that he intended to solve the problem of politics through his theory of moral. In fact, she claimed that Kant had been fully aware that politically-related issues cannot be solved by the idea of practical reason, as follows:

“And the surprising fact is that he knew that his moral philosophy could not help here. Thus he kept away from all moralizing and understood that the problem was how to force man ‘to be a good citizen even if [he is] not a morally good person’ and that ‘a good constitution is not to be expected from morality, but, conversely, a good moral condition of a people is to be expected under a good constitution’.”<sup>32</sup>

This separation between good person and good citizen may sound similar to Aristotle's pronouncement. However, Arendt contended that Kant went one step further, and quoted from Kant, as follows:

“The problem of organizing a state, however hard as it may seem, can be solved even for the race of devils, if only they are intelligent. The problem is: ‘Given multitude of rational beings requiring universal laws for their preservation, but each of whom is secretly inclined to exempt himself from them, to establish a constitution in such a way that, although their private intentions conflict, they check each other, with the result that their public conduct is the same as if they had no such intentions’.”<sup>33</sup>

Arendt pointed out that, for Aristotle, a good person can be a good citizen only if he is in a good state, but, for Kant, even a bad man can be a good citizen if he is in a good state. In this way, Kant's idea of ‘bad man’ corresponds to his moral philosophy. Arendt further argued that, for Kant, the bad man is the one who makes exception for himself; not the one who wills evil. In other words, for Aristotle, a good state plays an extremely significant role in the ‘practice’ of its citizens. Kant, with a slightly different point of view, believed that, in a state, laws and regulations will prohibit the ‘will for evil’ from exercising into action and will regulate its citizens to follow public conduct. If any bad action is to be done at all, it must be done ‘in secret’. These evil actions cannot be exercised publicly, for they will oppose the ‘common interest’ and create ‘enemies of the people’. Politics, unlike morality, is then fabricated on public conduct from the disclosing appearances. In short, Arendt tried to point out that Kant's political and moral philosophy had been laid on different foundations. Therefore, Kant's moral and political philosophy cannot be intertwined and are not compatible with one another. In summary, according to Arendt, the question of morality, which has been much read in Kant's

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<sup>32</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, 17.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

second critique, cannot be identical to the question of politics. Therefore, it is impossible to find an answer to the political question in Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*.

Arendt tried to support her argument by giving an additional reading of Kant. She suggested that none of the three central questions formulated by Kant concerned man as a political animal. Only his later fourth question, what is man? seems to concern man and politics. In addition, it seems to be a grave mistake to read his second question, 'What ought I to do?', as an answer to his question on politics. While the first critique attempted to answer the question 'What can I know and cannot know?', the second critique dealt with 'What I cannot know but cannot help thinking of'.

"Practical reason", Arendt stated, explains how to think about the existence of God and freedom, as follows:

"Metaphysical questions in Kant deal precisely with what I cannot know. Still I cannot help thinking about what I cannot know, because it concerns what I am most interested in: the existence of God; freedom, without which life would be undignified for man, would be 'bestly'; and immortality of the soul."

And it is here where the second question, 'What ought I to do?', is connected to the third, 'What may I hope?' She continued:

"In Kant's terminology, these are practical questions, and it is practical reason that tells me how to think about them. Even religion exists for men as rational beings 'within the limits of reason alone'. My main interest, what I wish to hope for, is felicity in a future life; and for this I may hope if I am worthy of it. That is, if I conduct myself in the right manner."<sup>34</sup>

It can be clearly seen that, according to Arendt, all three main questions do not have any connection with the matter of politics:

"Kant repeatedly formulated what he held to be the three central questions that make men philosophize and to which his own philosophy tried to give an answer, and none of these questions concerned man as zoon politikon, a political being... It would be a serious error to believe that the second question – What ought I to do? – and its correlate, the idea of freedom, could in any way be relied on to help us in our inquiry."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 19.



And

“The second question does not deal with action at all, and Kant nowhere takes action into account. He spelled out man’s basic ‘sociability’ and enumerated as elements of its communicability the need of men to communicate, and publicity, the public freedom not just to think but to publish..... Thus in Kant the question ‘What ought I to do?’ concerns the conduct of the self in its independence of others...”<sup>36</sup>

It is worth noting here the significant role of action in Arendt’s reading of Kant’s political philosophy. As can be seen, the term ‘action’ has been indicated here when she discussed the ways in which Kant’s political philosophy has been read. For Arendt, action is the most crucial feature of political concern. Only activities which contain this certain characteristic connect to the question of politics. At first glance, this word mentioned here only once or twice does not seem noteworthy. On the contrary, it is key to explaining and ‘patch-working’ Arendt’s concept of morality, politics and judgement. While most philosophers and political theorists have read Kant’s second critique as his political philosophy, Arendt completely rejected this idea and proposed a totally disparate way of reading it. This unorthodox opinion came from the weight she gave to the concept of judgement. This point will be discussed in further detail in the following chapters. They will not only show how and why Arendt’s reading of Kant is different, but will also illustrate how she ‘wove’ all of the political and philosophical concepts together and fabricated her own theory of the political.

While the fourth question does not connect to any of the three critiques, Arendt added, the main question behind the third one, ‘How do I judge?’, also disappeared from the main questions proposed by Kant. Arendt argued that any of these three main philosophical questions, unlike the question about judging, corresponds to the condition of human plurality. Although the second question appears to have a certain level of connection with human plurality, it connects more to the duty toward self and excludes others and all kind of inclinations. In fact, even though Arendt did not say so directly, it can be implied that what she tried to propose is that there is a strong connection between the fourth question and the main question of the third critique. Therefore, the third critique reflects the real political philosophy of Kant.

In order to support her argument of *Critique of Judgement* being Kant’s political philosophy, Arendt moved on to discuss the relationship between politics and philosophy and the attitude of philosophers towards human affairs. She asserted that tension between politics and philosophy has been ongoing in history and that most philosophers do not have high opinions of politics. Generally speaking, in the eyes of philosophers, political life (*bios politikos*) is considered as a means towards philosophy and has been used for the sake of philosophy (*bios theōrētikos*). Plato, for example, viewed a good state and constitution as a means to provide a peaceful life suitable for contemplation and a truth beyond the physical world. He viewed philosophy as a sphere of action in which men can enjoy themselves without the presence of

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

or interaction with others (*δι' αὐτῶν χαίρειν* [enjoyed by or of oneself]), also considered action as an activity that is complete in itself without the relationship with others.<sup>37</sup> In the same way, Spinoza avowed the ultimate aim of his life to be *libertas philosophandi*. And even Hobbes, whom Arendt did not consider a philosopher but a 'political theorist', insisted on peaceful life in society as an aim of political affairs.<sup>38</sup>

There are at least two interesting issues arising here, and it is important to mention them. Firstly, and extremely importantly, Arendt gave us an interesting aspect relating to defining her concept of politics. Secondly, it is interesting to ascertain how Arendt demarcated and categorised political theorists and philosophers. Here, two of the very characteristics of politics have been declared and asserted. It has already been shown that the concept of action plays a central role in Arendt's political theory. Here, however, another characteristic of politics has been highlighted: the concept of plurality. This alarms us if action might have been exercised without consideration for plurality (in the case of Aristotle). On the other hand, plurality might be taken into consideration without taking any action at all (as in the case of Kant's theory of morality). Arendt's debates during the latter part of her life revolved around these ideas and both her moral and political theory have been constructed from them. In the later parts of this thesis, it can be more clearly seen how these concepts are significant, both in Arendt's theory of judgement and the thesis' main question.

However, it is also obvious that, in order to answer the thesis question and further explore Arendt's idea of politics, more detailed discussion relating to the concept of action and its related ideas is required. The following chapter focuses on these discussions relating to the term 'action', including its relation, similarities and dissimilarities to the term 'active'. Arendt often used these two terms interchangeably but this does not mean that they are closely linked. In general, Arendt used the term 'active' to indicate an activity that is vital and without rest, as in political activity, understood as the opposite to philosophy. However, it has also been used as being opposite to 'passive'. Action, however, has a specific meaning; and the thesis will discuss about it thoroughly in the next two chapters.

To sum up, Arendt drew a very clear line segregating the two spheres of philosophy and politics. According to her, philosophy has a similarity to death and to live philosophically is to live a dying life. This is characterised by a simple and quiet life without the presence of others, which leads to a confusing and disquiet life. Arendt argued that, as Romans understood life as 'being among other men' (*inter homines esse*) and death as 'without other men' (*sinere inter homines esse*), it can be understood that politics is a metaphor for life while philosophy is a metaphor for death. Moreover, due to the fact that death ushers in body and soul separation, the philosopher who spends his life fleeing from opinions and pursuing that beyond – physical truth – certainly prefers death to life. In short, Arendt concluded that the "philosopher does not accept the conditions under which life has been given to man."

This hostility to the body and the senses is, not surprisingly, strongly rejected by Arendt. It can be seen in most of her writings that she tried to support and relocate the status of senses and

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 19.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

appearances in the physical world. While most philosophers consider the abstract world and singularity to be prestigious, Arendt glorified the physical world and plurality as being a meaningful condition of men. Later in this chapter, as Arendt's text is further explored, it will be made clear that the world of sense is not just important because it is a condition of physical life but that it is also the very condition of human knowledge and mental life. Kant is regarded as a great philosopher by Arendt because she thought of him as the one who recognises this very condition of man and human knowledge.

Arendt made a further comment that this attitude from philosophers towards life and politics has brought about a contradiction between mortality and the progress of mankind. As hope for progress of the species is constantly interrupted by the death of the old members, life (or at least longer life expectancy) should have been more appreciated and preferable to death. In fact, this contradiction between man's mortality and his progress reveals that human longing in life and the future world are 'going in opposite directions'. In order to have a better life in this world, man needs progress, which might have gone a lot further if there were no human mortality. However, at the same time, man (at least the philosopher) also wants to 'reach a truth', surpassing this present world and wishing for the 'perfect' world beyond. Here, Arendt thought that Kant had an answer that could explain and resolve this contradiction. For Kant, progress is for mankind, the human species as a whole, while moral dignity is for the individual. The idea that morality is of the individual reflects the underlying idea that man is an end in himself. In short, man as an individual is an end in himself and can long for his own goal as an individual. At the same time, being part of the human species, he has to move on to the common goal with others as well. In other words, what Arendt attempted to do here is to 'pave the way' to her later conclusions. She wanted to propose the separation of activities and realms between human plurality and its single private aim.

Before discussing Kant's philosophy and his theory of cognition, Arendt summarised that there are three different perspectives that consider the affairs of men: humankind and its progress; moral being, which is an end in itself; and men in plural and their sociability as their true end. Arendt argued that, to understand Kant, these three perspectives are necessary. These perspectives have been mentioned in different situations by Kant. In fact, what Arendt is trying to do is indicate that Kant wrote his three critiques with different perspectives of man in mind. While the moral being was a 'theme' of man used in both the first and second critiques, humankind and its progress and men in plural and their sociability as their true end were used in the first and the second part of the third critique, respectively. In fact, what Arendt tried to do here is to illustrate the reason why none of Kant's writing has the term 'political philosophy' in its title. According to Arendt, it can be said that all, or at least most, of Kant's works can be considered as his political philosophy in their very nature. She disagreed with most of the theorists who had been searching for Kant's political philosophy from his 'peripheral works' and excluded his major works from consideration. In order to support her claim, she moved on to discuss Kant's attitude towards philosophy and the theory of cognition.

Arendt started by indicating Kant's standpoint on the concept of senses, which diverged from his philosopher counterparts' views. For her, what Kant did was to justify the status of human senses and their relationship to mental faculties in the world of philosophy. Kant's cognitive

theory depends on the merging of senses (experience) and intellect (mind) as a source of knowledge. Unlike most of his predecessor philosophers, for example, Plato, who found 'sense' and the feeling of pleasure and displeasure as a source of a corrupted path towards truth, Kant's notion of truth includes sense and embraces it. There are two consequences follow this new ontological claim. The first consequence is the change in status of philosophers in a human world. Philosophers are no longer a group of 'a few' people who monopolise the notion of truth and live only among their fellow philosophers in the beyond-sensual world. The merging of sense and intellect expands the capability and opportunity to reach for knowledge and truth for all other ordinary men. Philosophers are now just like other ordinary men who live among others in the world of sense and appearance. The second consequence relates to the duty of evaluating pleasure and displeasure. Also, this ability is no longer restricted exclusively to philosophers. Anyone who has 'good sense' and can 'reflect life' can also have his/her own evaluation of pleasure and displeasure.

If the ability to pursue truth and knowledge is no longer restricted to philosophers, the demarcation line that separates the philosopher and ordinary man is now removed. The two spheres that once divided philosophy and politics are now metamorphosing into one. Therefore, political philosophy is no longer needed to be written in order to maintain a peaceful world for philosophy. In fact, politics turns out to be a philosophical problem in itself.

In this way, Arendt came to her conclusion. It can be implied from her writing that Kant did not write any political philosophy piece because he understood this notion well, and in addition, none of his work can be considered as political philosophy in particular but, rather, that his philosophy is political in itself.

It is quite a big claim for Arendt to suggest reading Kant in this way, and it might be an even more complicated issue when the political aspect of philosophy is explained later. In order to support her claim, Arendt examined the term 'critique' and made the first connection between philosophy and the political. She explained that the terminology had been adopted by Kant from the Age of Enlightenment. Since 'enlightenment' has been explained as 'liberation from prejudice and authorities', it contains the notion of 'purifying', 'cleaning' or 'making something pure'. Kant chose to use these terms in his writings and, for Arendt, this reflected very well the notion of the 'negative benefit' of critique in Kant's thoughts. Critique, she explained, therefore tends to mean more than criticism of the predecessor's philosophy; it also includes the connotation of purification of reason. And Kant himself never knew that what he had 'destroyed' was greater than the philosophical schools of his predecessors. He destroyed the deep-rooted 'machinery' of previous centuries through his method of critiquing.

How is the word 'critique' so important in Kant's philosophy and readings? Arendt explained that after the Age of Enlightenment passed and no spirit of criticism remained, Kant's philosophy went out of fashion and became another 'school of dogmatism' in the eyes of subsequent generations. The connotation of limitation and purifying in the term 'critique' faded and was replaced by the notion of 'destruction', which then led to the termination of philosophy. In fact, critical thinking has had an innate connection with philosophy since its very beginning and was reflected in the case of Socrates. Arendt claimed that Kant understood this well and mentioned clearly in his writing that his goal was to "proceed in Socratic tradition"

and to “silence all objectors by the clearest proof of [their] ignorance.” According to Arendt, Kant and Socrates had the same understanding about critical thinking. It was understood as ‘exposing itself to the test of free and open examination’. This free and open test indicates that further participation in the test is preferable. The notion of popularising philosophy as a widely examined process is not common in philosophical tradition. If the Age of Enlightenment was the age of ‘the public use of one’s reason’, Kant’s political freedom is the freedom to speak and publish which requires participation by others. Here, Arendt started connecting the concept of critical thinking with plurality in the world of appearances in order to move to the concept of politics. And from here the critical step was taken.

However, Arendt argued that Kant’s discussion on spectatorship centred on the idea of singularity which, for her, is quite understandable. Firstly, only one pair of eyes of one spectator can witness more than one spectacle and one actor. Discussing one spectator in the singular is always already to take the others into consideration. Moreover, this idea is also common in the philosophical tradition. In Plato, spectatorship had also been considered in the singular, and contemplative life is considered as withdrawal into solitude. In the Parable of the Cave, the spectators were chained and forced to see the shadow in front of them, isolated from the others. Communication among them was not possible, as was any discussion about what they saw. In short, the spectators in the cave were all restricted in isolation. All the knowledge and opinions they formed were completely their own.

This isolation and process of knowledge attainment is also similar to what philosophers believe. Finding the ‘truth’ in the sunlight outside the cave, knowledge is limited to only that person’s experience of the self and this knowledge is not shared with anyone. In fact, according to Plato, neither ‘truths’ nor ‘opinions’ being formed upon the idea of plurality is a condition of man. Both contemplative life and the life of the spectator are considered as a life in solitude: a life apart from others and apart from the active living world. This contrasting of the two worlds dominates philosophical tradition and demarcates politics and philosophy. The one who knows is not the one who acts; the one who acts follows the ‘wise’ man who knows. The man that is fit to rule is not the one who acts but the one who knows and stops acting. The ruler, then, tends to be more secretive rather than open his will to the public. Action and publicity, therefore, are not the characteristics of the wise people who rule.

Arendt suggested that Kant must have disagreed with Plato upon this matter. According to her, publicity is at the very central of Kant’s political philosophy. However, she also commented that Kant’s understanding of publicity was different from ours. The notion of publicity, together with the notion of action understood by Kant, is the result of the socio-political circumstances of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The form of government and political regime that made a clear distinction between rulers and subjects allowed no participation for non-rulers in government. ‘Public action’ is totally restricted to the government and the rulers. Kant’s idea of other forms of ‘legal’ public action is therefore not in the form of voting nor participating in government but in the form of ‘public opinion’. Only the government can act. Kant understood action only in terms of ‘acts of the powers-that-be’ and the only form of alternative action from subjects was conspiratorial activities or *coups d’état*. Kant, who admired the notion of publicity in politics,

did not agree with this idea of secrecy. Arendt proposed that Kant's disfavour with the French Revolution came from the fact that he understood '*coup d'état*' in the form of revolution.

What can be implied here is that Arendt attempted to propose that Kant's notion of action was the total opposite to Plato's. While Plato saw contemplation as a superior activity of the ruler over the action, which is the job of the less-wise and lower ranked, Arendt's Kant tended to consider action as a restricted activity of the ruler, while contemplating and judging are the activities of the subjects and lower classes. To give an opinion in public is the role of the spectator, who watches the spectacle and judges the action of the ruling actors. Here, in fact, Arendt intentionally tried to demonstrate not only the distinction between Plato and Kant but also her own theory. Despite the fact that her political theory relies on Kant's political philosophy and the concept of the spectator, Arendt's interpretation was guided by the development of her own theory. In order to do so, she started by creating a demarcation line between her concept of action and Kant's. She stated what the meaning of action for Kant was and made it clear that it was different from her concept of action that she proposed. From this she continued to demarcate another line by explaining Kant's notion of practice.

Kant, however, had a very particular meaning for 'practice'. While practice is generally understood as an activity of action, and the relationship between theory and practice is normally considered as the relationship between contemplation and action, 'practice' in Kant's terminology had nothing to do with action (at least from Arendt's concept) at all. It has a notion of moral for Kant, concerns individual qua individual and is connected to the 'will', which follows the maxim of reason. In this way, according to Arendt, practice or 'practical' from Kant's point of view is the opposite of speculation; not theory. Kant's practice means 'to act according to the will', which follows the course of reason and is therefore not free but depends on the use of reason.

In fact, what Arendt tried to do here is to recommend that the *Critique of Practical Reason* has nothing to do with politics. She argued that the main concerns of Kant's political theory relate to the perpetual progress of mankind and a federal union of nations. However, the main idea in the *Critique of Practical Reason* has no connection with these two topics at all. Despite this, Arendt convinced people that the *Critique of Practical Reason* cannot represent Kant's political philosophy and again proposed reading *Critique of Judgement* as reflecting Kant's true political philosophy instead.

### **Section III: 'Thinking and Moral Consideration' (1971)**

One year after giving her lecture on Kant's political philosophy, Arendt focused her attention on the faculty of thinking. It seems that she had already had a clear and precise picture in her mind about what she intended to write about in 'Thinking' in *The Life of the Mind* and how could she deal with *vita contemplativa*. In this article, the connection between *vita contemplativa* and the moral question remains straightforward and, even though thinking is the main concept discussed here, the relationship between thinking and judging discussed at the end of the article allows readers to create a link between judging and morality. This piece of

writing affirms to the readers an inherent connection between morality and Arendt's concept of judgement, despite little detail about this mental faculty.

For the reader who is familiar with 'Thinking', the first volume of *The Life of the Mind*, a similarity in content in the two texts is easy to see. In fact, when Arendt was writing this article, she was also in the process of preparing to give lectures at the University of Aberdeen on this topic. Therefore, the article can be seen as a brief version of 'Thinking' especially in 'The Answer of Socrates' and 'The Two-in-One'.

Arendt began 'Thinking and Moral Consideration' by mentioning the thought that captivated her during the time she attended the Eichmann trial. "The absence of thinking", she explained, struck her most and resulted in her creating the term 'banality of evil', or 'to do evil without any motive at all'. Here, she posited the relationship between thinking and conscience as her main inquiry, and determined to explore it in the realm of philosophy and metaphysics. To begin with, she defined man as a thinking being, in the sense that he is different from and goes beyond a knowing being, or a man who quests knowledge. She applauded Kant for his separation of reason and intellect as a measurement to make the distinction between knowing and thinking. Reason, she explained, is to think or to understand and it belongs to the faculty of thinking, whose process produces nothing and leaves nothing behind. Intellect, on the other hand, is a desire for knowledge and belongs to the faculty of knowing, which can be seen as "world building activities". Thinking, for Arendt, is the process of examining and reflecting upon what happens to come to pass. Therefore, it is the faculty that can be found in every single man regardless of his stupidity or knowledge. And, according to Arendt, Kant believed that man needs philosophy, or the exercise of reason, as the faculty of thought that prevents evil. In other words, Arendt maintained, thinking is the faculty that is supposed to belong to everyone. Every single man who has an ability to reflect his own life has a capability to think. Accordingly, every single man could also exercise his use of reason to prevent evil, and this ability is not the privilege of a few wise men. In other words, Arendt tried to propose that, through the use of thinking as a mental faculty, man relates himself to morality and could possibly answer the question of moral.

However, due to the fact that thinking produces none of the product or results as a 'solid axiom', any moral propositions or commandments cannot be expected from this process. Therefore, thinking will never produce any final code of conduct. Furthermore, there is a contradiction between thinking and action since one always interrupts another. Thinking is always considered as 'out of order' in the world of appearance. Due to this reason, thinking is always neglected. Even when it comes to the question of morality, despite the fact that thinking is crucial to philosophy and preventing evil, Arendt argued, the process of thinking itself is hardly found or explained within an investigation. In order to examine thinking, therefore, Arendt tried sorting out a model of the thinker that corresponds to the very character of thinking. Indeed, she turned to Socrates, since he was a philosopher who had never written anything and had left no teaching behind. The three similes which Socrates was given – gadfly, midwife, and electric ray – demonstrate at least two of his characteristics. From roaming around and making conversations with other citizens in the marketplace, he: encouraged people to think and make their opinions known to the public; and, by doing so, he helped people destroy

their prejudices and pre-justified thoughts. Thinking helps people prevent evil because thinking is considered a dialogue between me and myself; man will not want to do evil because it contradicts himself. Moreover, to get through this process of thinking, man cannot easily forget what he did when he thinks and reflects on what he did. In this way, it might be more difficult for him to commit a crime.

In summary, however, thinking retains a marginal position in society in general. Arendt argued that only during an emergency does thinking's political and moral significance come to the fore. Despite the fact that thinking and judging have a small impact on political matters in 'ordinary times', they are always political by definition. The political characteristic of thinking can be seen from its destructive nature since it helps liberate man from prejudice and prepares the mind for the other mental faculty: judgement. Judgement, a mental faculty that judges particulars without subsuming these particulars into general rules, indicates a freedom of the mind to operate. Arendt posited judgement as being the most political mental ability. However, in this text, she spoke very little about this mental faculty in particular but spoke of judging and thinking as being intertwined.

It is necessary to explore more about the faculty of judging in Arendt's other texts. In fact, not until the 'Postscriptum to Thinking' did Arendt discuss judging as a separate autonomous faculty and a hoped-for resolution of the *impasse* she faced when dealing with thinking and willing. Here we move to the last text: 'Postscriptum to Thinking'.

#### **Section IV: 'Postscriptum to Thinking' (1973)**

After exploring the faculty of thinking in the first volume of *The Life of the Mind*, Arendt moved to study two other mental faculties, willing and judging, in the hope that she could understand the mental mechanism that could prevent the human action of evil. Before that, in the *Postscriptum* at the end of *Thinking*, she left a clue of the contents she intended to discuss in the next volume of her book. Due to the fact that the details and matters discussed in both *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* and 'Postscriptum to Thinking' are very similar, Beiner suggests that it is extremely possible that the text relating to the faculty of judgement in the 'Postscriptum' and that supposed to be shown in the last part of *The Life of the Mind* would be very alike. However, it should be noticed here that, at the time when Arendt had finished 'Thinking', she had no intention to separate willing and judging but to include them in the same volume. Not until she had finished 'Willing', did she realise how important and exclusive the faculty of judging is, in the same way that Kant discovered judgement as its own autonomous mental faculty quite late in life.

Despite the fact that Arendt had quite specific detail about the faculty of judgement in mind, as can be seen from her *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, it seems clear from what she had planned to write that, during that time, she considered both faculties to be closely interrelated and probably did not have a clear idea about the faculty of judging. She planned to explore the faculty of willing and judging together, included both faculties in the same volume and usually wrote about both faculties in the same vein. Firstly, she mentioned that, although willing and judging are similar to thinking in the way that they all concern 'matters that are



absent', the first two always deal with particulars and are much closer to the world of appearances while the latter tends to always be generalising. However, while willing deals with matters that are 'not yet', judging deals with matters that are 'no more'. With the help of thinking, the human mind is prepared to be ready for judging and willing. 'The past' becomes the subject of judgement and will therefore become a preparation for willing. For Arendt at that time, it seems to be that these two faculties are inseparable. They both seem to be processed continuously on the time line of looking back to the past and projecting into the future.

In this short piece, Arendt argued that not until Kant had judgement been given serious attention by philosophers. For her, judgement is a distinct capacity of the mind that cannot be approached through the process of deduction or induction. In other words, judgement has its own way of proceeding (*modus operandi*) and will never be able to be reached by logic. Moreover, Arendt also referred to Kant the idea that links judgement to 'taste'. She saw judgement as a 'silent sense' that has been thought of as taste and therefore belongs to the realm of aesthetics. From this given definition and contextual explanation, it is clear that the faculty of judgement Arendt wanted to explore in the *Life of the Mind* is definitely reflective judgement in Kant's sense of the word. Kant divided the faculty of judgement into two different categories: determinative judgement and reflective judgement. Only determinative judgement is processed through the rule of logic. Reflective judgement, on the other hand, cannot be subsumed under any rules or logic but rather as an immediate reflection. While determinative judgement had been discussed and explained in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the idea of reflective judgement was discussed separately in Kant's study of the 'Critique of Taste' in his *Critique of the Power of Judgement*. In other words, it is obvious that reflective judgement, for Kant, has its own *modus operandi* and can be considered as a separate autonomous mental faculty which cannot be operated or controlled by any other mental faculties.

Arendt also believed that judgement has its own *modus operandi*. Moving from thinking in the world of abstract and generality back to the world of appearance and particulars, the human mind needs a new mode or capability to deal with this process transition. Here, Arendt got inspiration from the role of imagination in Kant's concept of schemata in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and hints at what will be discussed relating to the faculty of judgement. Imagination plays a very crucial role in binding abstract rule and concrete reality together. Rules and categories can be learned and realities can be perceived. However, if a human cannot make any connection between what he really perceives relating to the categories, knowledge can never be produced. And here, in the process of relating these two together, Kant, followed by Arendt, saw another mode or capacity of the mind to work upon it, and this is called reflective judgement.

In addition, in this writing, Arendt also indicated her rejection of an idea of moral philosophy and Kant's practical reason, and at the same time denied connecting judgement to the idea of 'conscience'. According to Arendt, conscience does not judge but impels by either reason or God. Therefore, humans can never be a legitimate source of validity or authority of conscience. Judgement, had it been the same as conscience, can never be 'acted' by humans at all.

At the end of the 'Postscriptum', Arendt summed up all the issues mentioned in the 'Postscriptum' (and planned to be discussed in the second volume), in particular that the

problem of theory and practice and the theory of ethics are central to the set of questions relating to modern political theory. In order to look for answers, Arendt posed a question whether she should follow Kant, Hegel or Marx. With regard to Hegel and Marx, these questions have been explored through the perspective of history on the assumption that there is progress for humanity. Success will be the ultimate judge for them, while Kant allowed the autonomy of the human mind to act as a free judge. In order to choose the 'right' way, Arendt traced the origin of the term 'history'. In fact, this term in ancient Greek opens up a facet of understanding Arendt's theory in action and judgement, which will be discussed in a later chapter.

History plays an important role in Arendt's concept of judgement for she viewed the position of the one who judges as the position of a historian. In order to support this claim, she gave the original meaning of the word 'history' in ancient Greek. This word derives from the verb '*historein*' (*ἵστωρειν*), for which she gave the definition as 'to inquire in order to tell how it was'; adding that its origin is from Homer's *histōr* (*ἵστωρ*). She therefore claimed that the Homeric historian is a judge. However, all these definitions do not provide a clue to connect 'history' and 'judge' together. History, as we all understand it, relates to a story in 'the past'. Judgement is different; it gives us a sense of immediate action of the present. How can the term 'history' evolve its meaning from 'a judge' to 'a person who knows about the past'? In reality, the root of the term '*histōr*' is the verb '*eidō*' ('I'), which generally means 'to see' ('I see'). However, when this word is used in the perfect tense, despite it literally meaning 'to have seen', it generally conveys the meaning of 'to know' instead. In this way, we can see the link in ancient Greek thinking between the acts of 'seeing' and 'knowing'. For the ancient Greeks, once a man has seen, he knows. Therefore, 'he' who is already known at the present time is the one who 'saw' or 'looked back' to what has been done in the past. Through this way of thinking, the historian or the judge is then the man who sees the past; inquires into what has been done from the position of the present. In short, in ancient times, there was a very close relationship between 'judging', 'knowing' and 'seeing' (of the past).

With this definition of history, Arendt concluded that judgement of history cannot be absolute. Anyone who deals with the past inquires into it and judges that it can produce a piece of history. Unlike Hegel, Marx and other modern political theorists, the traditional meaning of 'history' secures the independence and the autonomy of every human's mind and allows them to 'judge' the present and the past by themselves. Has it been so, according to Arendt, that men can reclaim 'human dignity' by being the ones who build and judge history? And this 'judgement of history', because it is not absolute, will be endless and ready for repeated inquiry and inspection throughout time.

From the 'Postscriptum' we can now conclude four main characteristics of judgement and issues that Arendt planned to discuss in her 'judging', as follows: judgement would have been seen as a faculty of 'reflective judgement' only; it should have been able to provide the 'theory of ethics' and solve the problem of 'its practicality'; it would have been seen from the viewpoint of 'inspecting the past'; and it should have been free from the laws of reason and moral.

## Conclusion

From the four texts selected above, four aspects of judging have been highlighted as issues for discussion. These points will become guidelines for this thesis and will become the basis for the main points of discussion in later chapters.

Given that Arendt's theory of judgement originated from her approach towards questions of morality, ideas of morality and ethics have their place in the background of her discussions on this topic. However, the idea of morality with which she was concerned is not conventional. She did not mean to explain morality as a set of customs or a set of rules to follow, or simply relate it to any religious beliefs. Her reading of Kant's moral philosophy leads us to three main characteristics of moral theory she rejected and wanted to avoid. Firstly, she rejected the 'singular' characteristic of moral law. She argued that the idea of moral law as conventionally understood is typically thought to originate from one single person and, to this extent, it excludes others in its consideration. Secondly, moral law normally appears in the form of one single axiom or a single set of rules to follow. According to Arendt, this characteristic of moral law is in contradiction to the human world, which comprises 'men in plural'. Thirdly, since moral law normally claims universality, it aims to set a single truth as a moral standard for everyone to follow and, therefore, carries a coercive force that compels the obedience of subjects. Arendt, however, argued that the catastrophic history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has already shown the failure of the universal claim of moral law itself. If the universality of moral law is authentically true, it must be valid whenever it is needed and should never enable evil actions to take place. In summary, the imperative characteristic of moral law has literally shown lack of freedom for man to decide his own deeds and actions.

From these characteristics of morality that Arendt rejected, three basic positive features of moral law can be outlined: it must contain plurality as one of its most significant characteristics and should be constructed upon the condition of men in plural and include others in its consideration; it should not aim to claim universal validity, even though it might expect to be used by every man in general; and it should arise independently from each individual self: that is, people should not be forced to follow moral law by someone or something else. In other words, it should not be imperative by its nature.

Put another way, the main question relating to Arendt's idea of morality is not 'What ought to be done?' or 'What set of moral rules should I follow?' but, rather, 'How can "I" discern right from wrong? In this way, it deals directly with the very 'ability' of individuals' mental faculty to discriminate and, as such, it is little concerned with religion and political philosophy in a conventional sense. In fact, regarding this issue of morality, it is worth making the following observation. Arendt seemed to make a distinction between 'ethics' and 'morality' and intended to employ them in different senses and in different conditions. Although she never made it clear, the way she expressed her reflections on moral philosophy hints at a distinction between these two.

While judging is closely related to morality, the connection between judging and the political is equally vital. To talk about 'the political' in Arendt's terms, two crucial keywords need to be borne in mind: plurality and freedom. These two concepts express core and exclusive

features of the political that Arendt tried to preserve. In fact, readers of Arendt must also be aware of the separation between ‘politics’ and ‘the political’ when reading through her works. The political for Arendt has been defined in a very specific way and cannot be used to replace politics. Therefore, when Arendt mentions that judgement is the most political mental ability, it does not simply mean that it has a close relation to politics but that contains within it the notions of plurality and freedom.

It can also be discerned that Arendt framed her definition of morality and the political in a similar framework and tried to create a link between these two domains in terms of the same set of related ideas. She placed the idea of morality in the sphere of political philosophy and tried to demonstrate how plurality and freedom are necessary for morality. For her, the most basic condition of both morality and the political is the fact of human plurality. In her view, to preserve this most basic condition of both is tremendously significant. Any theory of either moral or political philosophy that does not respect this condition will tend towards reducing both domains into a single set of rules extracted from the idea of a single man. When it comes to judging, she claimed that this faculty is political by its nature and, to this extent, cannot provide hope for an answer to moral questions. It must therefore contain the same basic features and must be operated under the same conditions, at least at some levels. Accordingly, it is not an overclaim at all to conclude that Arendt intended to set her idea of morality, her theory of judgement and her idea of the political upon the same ground, with the intention of constructing her whole political theory as a tool to help preserve the space for man’s action and freedom.

The four selected pieces also demonstrate another issue about judgement that needs to be considered. It seems that Arendt, even until the end of ‘Thinking’, does not draw a clear line between the faculty of thinking and the faculty of judging. Within her writing, it is easy for readers to conclude that thinking is part of judging, or the other way round, and it is further possible to read thinking as a prerequisite to judging. If her works are read in this way, it is difficult to see how she could define judgement as a free and autonomous mental faculty. In actual fact, it is not until the end of ‘Willing’ that Arendt started to conceive of judgement as a distinctive faculty with its own *modus operandi* and characteristics. However, there is at least one moment in her work that shows detachment of these two faculties from the beginning. In ‘Thinking and Moral Consideration’, Arendt put thinking into the realm of reason, which is different from the realm of the intellect. Talking in Kant’s terms, thinking then belongs to the faculty of reasoning, while judgement does not. In this way, judgement has its own *modus operandi* that is different from the use of reason or logic. And because it has a disjunction from the use of reason and logic, it is much closer to freedom and the realm of the political.

Moreover, the capability of thinking in relation to morality seems to be limited due to the fact that the faculty of thinking itself is unreliable and destructive in its nature, according to Arendt. Thinking, with its destructive character, has never produced anything and always leaves nothing behind but perplexity. It leaves the subject with nothing to begin with and provides no guide to give direction. In other words, its duty is to ‘set to zero’ the mind in order to build something new. Judgement, on the other hand, is the faculty that contains a certain kind of guide or criteria within its operation. It is, at least, set by the loose framework of a binary mental system; right or wrong, good or bad, beautiful or ugly. And with the use of exemplars,

judgement has some rough aids to use as markings as it navigates through these binaries. Therefore, judgement, in one sense, seems to be the more reliable source for morality and ethics when compared to thinking, despite the fact that it has no determined rules to follow and the outcome is unpredictable. The unpredictability and autonomous characteristics of both thinking and judging automatically lead readers to see the connection between these two faculties of the mind and action.

The link between *vita contemplativa* and action in Arendt's political theory is direct and obvious but the mental faculties, by their very nature, can never be actioned by themselves. Arendt always described all three basic mental faculties as 'active' and autonomous. However, they are not identical to 'action', which she defined with a very specific meaning. For Arendt, 'active' was set to be the opposite of 'passive', and even though it contains the notion of a lack of oppression and self-initiated character, it cannot be substituted for 'action' in any way.

Compatibility between mental faculties, especially judgement, and action is illustrated throughout Arendt's writing. In addition to freedom and plurality, which are the significant key characteristics that they share in common, natality and communicability are other features that can be seen within this. For Arendt, whatever man does, whether it is a deed, a speech, a thought or a judgement, if it has been done actively, i.e. free from any guide or imperative from others, it provides an opportunity for man to begin something new. The birth of 'something new' does not necessarily mean the 'totally new' that has never been done before. Indeed, it is new in the sense that it is engendered by restarting the process of contemplation and consideration from the beginning. It does not matter whether the results of judging and acting would be similar to or different from the judgements or deeds that have not passed the process of examination. What does matter is the very process itself, such that what one can expect from this kind of process is not a definite answer but rather the chance or opportunity of creating something new. Like action, men judge under the unpredictable circumstances that surround them; no rule or definite guideline is possible. Instead of attempting to lay down rules and solutions that might ensure certain conditions, Arendt urged the maintenance of uncertainty and dismissed the idea that unpredictability should be terminated. Preserving this uncertainty, for Arendt, not only preserves human dignity but also strengthens the condition of 'men in plural'.

The last point, though not the least important, relates to the communicability of humankind. In *vita activa*, in which deeds and words predominate, understanding between humans is possible because they can communicate with each other, and this communication is above all an expression of needs. The public sphere, in particular, is dominated by the use of speech, whether it is a social or political domain. Speech, therefore, is an authoritative medium for humans in the living world. However, communicability is not only limited to speech, but includes some faculties that humans have in common. *Sensus communis*, using the Kantian term, is what Arendt believed enabled humans to share the same faculties and to communicate. Arendt leaned on this idea of *sensus communis* when it came to conveying her hope about revised and renewed approaches to moral questions that do not rest on imperative rules of reason and commanding religious beliefs.

In the following chapter, I would like to explore Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgement* and examine Arendt's reading of it. This will help understand the concept of judgement in

detail and as such bring us to a better understanding of how Arendt's theory of judgement was formed. This exploration of the idea of judgement from both Kant's and Arendt's perspectives will also provide a basis to study, critique and justify Arendt's work in the following chapters.

## Chapter II

### Reading Arendt's Reading of Kant

It has been shown in Chapter I how Hannah Arendt's theory of judgement is highly influenced by Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, especially his idea of the judgement of taste (*Geschmacksurteil*). In addition to the discussion on the connection between the idea of judgement of these two thinkers and the interpretation of what Arendt owed to Kant, Chapter I also demonstrated how Arendt claimed Kant's third critique as a political philosophy. This chapter aims to answer this question and whether or not Arendt's claim that *Critique of the Power of Judgement* is Kant's major work on political philosophy, is legitimate. Why only the critique of taste? and if it is so, how and in what way can it be?

Since this chapter focuses on justification of Arendt's claim, examining the connection between the theories of judgement of the two thinkers is vital. In order to fulfil this aim, this chapter is in two main parts. Part I consists of Kant's concept of reflective judgement and his idea of judgement in general. It includes exploration of his aesthetic judgement and its relation to his other ideas, as well as the position of 'judgement' in his theoretical framework. However, it focuses predominantly on the process and principle of pure aesthetic judgement. Due to the fact that Arendt focuses her discussion mainly on the judgement of taste, this thesis will also explore this topic. This will provide the background for further consideration of Arendt's interpretation. Part II then closely examines the way in which Arendt read, points out the peculiar framing that guided her reading and elucidates the way in which she picked and selected issues in Kant's philosophy. Finally, at the end of the chapter, the main question raised in this chapter will be answered and Arendt's claim analysed and justified. In this part, verification of her reading will be discussed and the reasoning and background to her reading will be shown.

In addition, it is necessary to comment here about the presupposition of this chapter. It is written on the presumption that Arendt had her own way of reading Kant and this does correspond to her political theory in general. Therefore, it presumes that Arendt chose to select and understand Kant in the way she would like the political to be understood or in the way the political should be understood. In other words, some of Kant's content she made reference to has been adjusted, altered and 'reframed'. Her interpretation has been constructed on the underlying conceptual framework that she was first setting up and shows consistency with her other works in her 'political theory project'. This will be discussed in detail in the later parts of the chapter.

The chapter will start from the exploration of Kant's theory of aesthetic judgement, especially the judgement of taste or the 'Analytic of the Beautiful'. This includes an explanation of the characteristics of aesthetic judgement and how it relates to the other concepts in Kant's philosophy.

## Section I: Kant's Critique of Judgement: The Analytic of the Beautiful

It is important to begin this discussion with an account of the primary materials I have used in reading Kant's *Critique of Judgement*. Among the four English-language versions of Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, I decided to use the two most recent editions, translated by Werner S. Pluhar in 1987 and by Paul Guyer in 2000. Both versions are widely used in Kantian scholarship and are considered to be the 'acceptable' English translations. Due to dissimilarities in interpretation and style of reading, however, differences in translation can be regularly observed. In this thesis, I will discuss and clarify only the key terms directly related to the main points discussed in the research. In addition to these two English translations, the original German text version is also used as the main reference. In this case, the *Suhrkamp Taschenbuch* edition has been selected, since it is considered to be the standard version for the university students and also has the advantage that the language has been updated to conform with contemporary usage.

Before reviewing Kant's account, it is important to provide some key definitions and translations of the terms used in the text. First of all, I would like to start with the word '*kraft*'. The title of the book itself, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, is translated differently in the two English-language versions in that Guyer translated the title as *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, whereas Pluhar translated it simply as *Critique of Judgement*. In the German language, *kraft* indicates a certain specific definition of the activity in question. It can be translated as 'power', 'force' or 'energy'. In short, it emphasises the processual or active aspect of it. While '*Urteil*' can simply mean 'judgement' and defines the static aspect of judgement or that which results from the activity of judgement, *Urteilskraft* denotes the sense of a dynamic activity. At the same time, it is also different from *Urteilsvermögen*, the faculty of judging, which indicates only the 'ability' to judge that the subject holds or possesses. Therefore, Guyer transcribes *Urteilskraft* as 'power of judgement' in order to maintain the dynamic and processual sense that Kant would like to express. Pluhar, despite his explanation in the editor's notes, chooses to use the simple term 'judgement' in his text. Throughout the book, Kant selects his terms carefully, and the term '*kraft*' only appears occasionally. With any kind of mental activity, *kraft* adds to it this special, dynamic facet of the meaning of which the reader should be aware. Furthermore, '*Einbildungskraft*', to take another example, should not be perceived simply as 'imagination' but, rather, as the 'activity or process of imagining'. Despite the fact that the term 'power' can include all dimensions of meaning expressed in the German term '*kraft*', I have found that this is misleading sometimes when it comes to the English term 'power'. Therefore, in this thesis, I prefer using the German title *Kritik der Urteilskraft* rather than any English version of the title. In other contexts, however, the terms '*kraft*' and '*vermögen*' will be transcribed as 'the power of' and 'faculty', respectively (with the German term in brackets), so that readers can observe the difference in meaning that the author originally intended to express.

The second term that I would like to clarify is the word 'taste' or '*Geschmack*'. Taste, in general, can be understood with three different but related meanings. Firstly, it refers to a certain kind of 'sensation' (*Empfindung*) perceived by the tongue. The second meaning is understood as a 'feeling' (*Gefühl*), the pleasure or displeasure of having the sensation of



something or an appreciation of a certain kind of thing. These two meanings are defined from the subjective point of view. The last meaning, on the other hand, is defined as apprehension or quality of the object, for example, the sugar is sweet. The sweetness of sugar is considered as a property of the sugar and it is normally expressed with an objective point of views of the speaker. The word ‘taste’ discussed in the judgement of taste by both Kant and Arendt relates mainly to the second meaning. However, sometimes it can also refer to the first meaning in some very specific situations.

The third term to clarify is ‘*Wohlgefallen*’. *Wohlgefallen* has been translated into many words in English and the debate on the ‘right’ or ‘proper’ word has also been mentioned and discussed. While Guyer, in his edition of *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, translates it in English as the word ‘satisfaction’, Pluhar, in his version of the *Critique of Judgement*, translates it as ‘liking’. In general, the term ‘*Wohlgefallen*’ can be translated as ‘pleasure’, ‘satisfaction’, ‘enjoyment’, ‘delight’ or ‘appreciation’. The choice of translation depends on the reader’s interpretation of the context. For example, Hannah Grinsborg, in her book reviews, prefers Pluhar’s ‘liking’ to Guyer’s ‘satisfaction’ because she finds the latter too neutral.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, the thesis would like to leave the term in its original German in order to prevent confusion, since there are still some other terms with meanings very close to *Wohlgefallen* to be discussed and this can easily lead to confusion in the terms used by different translators.

The thesis would also like to create a brief overview to provide some basic background information about the critique of Taste. *Kritik der Urteilskraft* is divided into two main parts: the first part deals with aesthetic judgement while the second part deals with teleological judgement. The first part again divided into two chapters: the ‘Analytic of the Beautiful’ and the ‘Analytic of the sublime’. The judgement of taste, our main interest, is discussed in the ‘Analytic of the Beautiful’, in the first part of the book. Here, Kant defines the judgement of taste (*Geschmacksurteil*) as an ability to discern if something is beautiful or not. In other words, the judgement of taste is the judgement of the beautiful. Throughout the text, Kant uses these two terms interchangeably. When something is judged as ‘beautiful’, there arises a feeling of satisfaction and pleasure within the one who judges, and, according to Kant, this feeling of pleasure (or displeasure) can be shared and communicated. In his text, Kant also proposes that this feeling can even claim validity universally, even though it has neither link to the object nor a concept to follow and subsume. To propose this idea of judgement, Kant starts from its two fundamental ‘qualities’: the judgement of taste is an ‘aesthetic judgement’, and it must be ‘made without any interest’.

#### *‘Subjective’ without interest: its qualities*

Kant begins by proposing that the judgement of taste is *not* a ‘cognitive judgement’ (*Erkenntnisurteil*). In this way, therefore, it is not the kind of judgement that is operated by the use of logic. Cognitive judgement, in general, relates to the representation of the judged object to the existing object through the faculty of ‘intellect’ (*Verstand*).<sup>2</sup> In other words, cognitive

<sup>1</sup> Hannah Ginsborg, “Critique of the Power of Judgment,” *The Philosophical Review* 111, no. 3 (1 July 2002): 429–435.

<sup>2</sup> ‘*Verstand*’ is generally transcribed as ‘understanding’

judgement has ‘an object’ as its determining ground. The judgement of taste, on the other hand, does not take the object as its determining ground; therefore, it is not objective but only ‘subjective’. Kant calls this form of judgement ‘aesthetic’. In an aesthetic judgement, the feeling of the subject does not arise from the quality of an object or its attributes but from the subject itself. In the case of the judgement of taste, which is also one kind of aesthetic judgement, the representation of the object is connected to the subject and its feeling through the ‘power of imagination’ (*Einbildungskraft*) that is combined with the faculty of the intellect. Kant calls the feeling that arises from this relationship between representation and the feeling of the subject ‘the feeling of pleasure or displeasure’ (*das Gefühl der Lust oder Unlust*). The positive side of this kind of feeling, ‘pleasure’ (*Lust*) is one kind of *Wohlgefallen* that the subject can feel from judging the object through the judgement of taste in an aesthetic way.

To state that the judgement of taste is not a cognitive judgement, Kant simply informs the reader that the subject needs to exercise a distinctive *modus operandi*, mode of operation, in order to judge whether or not something is beautiful. This *modus operandi* is different from the judgement used in acquiring knowledge and moral and can be found in a distinctive kind of judgement. In the Introduction of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Kant calls this kind of judgement ‘reflective’ since it has been reached only through the process of reflection of the subject towards a certain object. In the case of cognitive judgement, and also moral judgement, the subject must firstly make a connection between the object and the representation of the object and then find a concept within which this representation can be subsumed. Aesthetic judgement, on the other hand, has no concept or link with an object as determining grounds. Therefore, this kind of judgement is not determined by any rule or principle. In other words, aesthetic judgement is not a determining judgement. Kant explains this *modus operandi* in his ‘Analytic of the Beautiful’ when he tries to propose the principle of pure aesthetic judgement through his idea of the judgement of taste.

Due to the fact that the judgement of taste does not relate to the object itself but only to the representation of the object, there is no direct connection between the subject who judges and the existing object that is judged. In other words, it is not the object as an existing thing that urges the subject to feel. Therefore, Kant suggests that the feeling of pleasure or displeasure that arises from the judgement of taste does not relate to any kind of interest. The pleasure with interest, as he defines it, is the feeling of satisfaction “combined with the representation of the existing object” (*was wir mit der Vorstellung der Existenz eines Gegenstandes verbinden*).<sup>3</sup> In order to understand the judgement of taste more clearly, Kant compares it to the other two kinds of judgement which also generate the feeling of *Wohlgefallen*. Kant differentiates the sources of the feeling that the subject is pleased by the object or representation of the object into three forms: the ‘agreeable’ (*angenehm*), the ‘good’ (*gut*), and the ‘beautiful’ (*schön*). All three kinds of judgement make the subject satisfied. However, they do so in dissimilar ways. The relations between the object or its representation and the feeling of pleasure or displeasure create three different forms of judgement. Among these three, only the *Wohlgefallen* from the judgement of the beautiful has no relation to the interest and therefore no relation to the ‘faculty of desire’ (*Begehrungsvermögen*). It is judged merely in contemplation without any

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<sup>3</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, ed. Wilhelm Wischedel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, 1974), 116.

dependence on the existence of the object. Kant calls this kind of feeling “pure disinterested satisfaction” (*rein uninteressiert Wohlgefallen*).<sup>4</sup> This is what Arendt later brings into her works and treats as an idea of impartiality.

The first kind of *Wohlgefallen* is what Kant calls ‘*angenehm*’. Both Pluhar and Guyer use the term ‘agreeable’ in their translations. Arendt, in her ‘Lectures on some Questions on Moral Philosophy’ sometimes translates it as ‘pleasing’. Due to the fact that the terminologies rendered in English do have very close meaning to one another and that the translators transcribe this term differently, I would like keep using its original term to avoid confusion. *Angenehm* is the feeling of *Wohlgefallen* when the subject is pleased by the sensation (“The agreeable is that which pleases the senses in sensation”).<sup>5</sup> (*Angenehm ist das, was den Sinnen in der Empfindung gefällt*).<sup>6</sup> “I like to wear silk because I am pleased by the feeling on my skin of the texture of the garment”. “I like to see this mountain and it pleases me to do so because it reminds me of my home town”. “I hate the smell of truffles because they smell like a pig”. Kant expounds that something is *angenehm* when it stirs a subject’s desire for the existing object. It is sensual and arousing. In Kant’s words, it not only pleases the subject but also gratifies the subject.<sup>7</sup> In other words, by means of the sensation, the relation between the object’s existence and the subject’s ‘state’ (*Zustand*) is directly connected. Therefore, when the ‘sense’ (*Sinn*) of the subject is pleased by the sensation of the object, that object is ‘not beautiful’ but *angenehm*. This kind of *Wohlgefallen*, Kant explains, is judged by the subject ‘with interest’. The subject likes it because it pleases him or her sensually and physically; it gratifies something for the subject. *Angenehm* includes not only the sense of seeing but also two other forms of the senses: hearing and touching. This kind of *Wohlgefallen* cannot be disputed due to the fact that only the subject who is pleased can express this because the existing object relates directly to the subject’s sense organs and no one else’s.

The second kind of *Wohlgefallen* is what we call ‘good’ (*gut*). According to Kant, “it pleases only by means of reason through the mere concept” (*was gefaellt mittelst der Vernunft, durch den blossen Begriff*).<sup>8</sup> Good, whether good for something or good in itself, always involves the concept of an end<sup>9</sup> or ‘purpose’ (*Zweck*). Therefore, it contains a relationship between reason and willing.<sup>10</sup> In this way, the *Wohlgefallen* in the existence of the object of this kind is always related to interest.<sup>11</sup> To expound on this, Kant states that any object or action can be considered as good only if we know what it is and what the purpose of it is. In other words, the subject judges the object as good by linking it to the determinate concept of the object he has. In this way, the judgement of the good is different from the judgement of the *angenehm*, since the latter does not link to the concept of an object but solely to the subject self. In addition, he also clarifies that the judgement of *gut* and *angenehm* can normally be mixed and confused, even though they are totally disparate. To give an example, smoking might make a person *angenehm*,

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 117.

<sup>5</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, ed. Paul Guyer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 91.

<sup>6</sup> Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 117.

<sup>7</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 92.

<sup>8</sup> Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 119.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 93.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

but with the concept of purpose and a law of deduction to its end or purpose, one finds it is not *gut* (not only to him but to everyone). In short, while *angenehm* arises from a direct link between the subject and the existing object, *gut* is justified by a link between the existing object and the concept of the object within the subject. Despite their similarities, both of them connect the subject to the ‘interest’ in the object. We need to know that an apple is a fruit and that fruit is good for health in general before we can justify that an apple is good for us and we eat it because it is good for our body. Certainly, it is different from loving to eat an apple because of its crispness and sweet smell. However, it can be seen that both the feelings of *Wohlgefallen* are concerned with interest of the subject upon the object, either an object as an existing thing (crispness and sweetness) or an object as a concept’s end (good for health).

Unlike the previous two kinds of judgement, Kant explains that the judgement of taste does not contain any interest within and does not relate to the faculty of desire. The *Wohlgefallen* arises from the judgement of *angenehm* and the judgement of *gut* is determined not only through the representation of the object but also through the represented connection of the subject with the existence of the object.<sup>12</sup> The judgement of taste, in contrast, is indifferent to the existence of the object. In Kant’s term, it is just contemplative.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, it does not point to any concept in particular.<sup>14</sup> By comparing three kinds of *Wohlgefallen*, Kant states that while *angenehm* is used to describe what ‘gratifies’ (*vergnügt*) the subject and can be applied to use with all kinds of animals, *gut* in contrast, is used for what is ‘esteemed’ (*geschätzt*) or ‘approved’ (*gebilligt*) and can be valid for all kinds of rational beings. *Schön*, which is used to describe what merely ‘pleases’ (*gefällt*) the subject, in contrast, is the prerogative of human beings and is the only one kind of *Wohlgefallen* that is free.<sup>15</sup> In other words, Kant adds, the *Wohlgefallen* related to these three cases are mentioned as ‘inclination’ (*Neigung*), ‘respect’ (*Achtung*) and ‘favour’ (*Gunst*), respectively. And only favour is a ‘free’ *Wohlgefallen* (*einzig freie Wohlgefallen*) because it is neither inclined towards nor imposed by anything else.<sup>16</sup>

In summary, *Wohlgefallen* arises from the judgement of taste and does not derive directly from the subject’s sense organs. In other words, the subject does not indulge in an object that one judges. At the same time, the subject does not expect anything from the object for he does not link himself to the object’s purpose. In this way, Kant concludes that ‘taste’ (*Geschmack*) is a ‘judging faculty’ (*Beurteilungsvermögen*) demonstrated through the feeling of *Wohlgefallen* without any interest. And the object of this judgement is called ‘beautiful’ (*schön*). When I say “This is beautiful”, it is beautiful not because it agrees with me or because it is good for me. It is beautiful because it pleases me even though I receive nothing from it. I judge it from a distance and away from its purpose.

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<sup>12</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 92.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

*Communicability and universal validity claim*

After discussing the ‘quality’ of the beautiful, Kant moves to a discussion of what he calls the ‘quantity’. On this matter, he attempts to illustrate that the judgement of taste can claim its validity universally even though it does not contain any concept within. Unlike *angenehm*, which has its ground on the subject’s private feelings, ‘the beautiful’ (*Schön*) is judged on the subjective ground of everyone. The subject judges by liberating himself from the feeling or satisfaction grounded on inclination or favour to the object. He is free from any of his private conditions and judges on the same ground with everyone else. In this way, he can expect a similar feeling from everyone, as if beauty is a property of the object and the judgement is logical. *Angenehm*, on the other hand, links itself to the private feeling of the subject; hence, it is then restricted merely to the one who judges. It is sometimes possible that one single judgement of the *angenehm* can be in unison with all others. However, Kant disagrees that this can be called ‘universal validity’ because it can be understood only comparatively. For him, like all other empirical rules, it is based on merely ‘general rules’ (*generale Regeln*), but never ‘universal rules’ (*universale Regeln*). The direct link between object and subject limits the possibility for the judgement of the *angenehm* to expand its validity beyond a single private validity. However, this is not the case in the judgement of the beautiful.

Kant explains that we can refer to both *angenehm* and *schön* as ‘taste’. The first can be called ‘taste of the senses’ (*Sinnen-Geschmack*) as it makes only private judgement of the object by the subject’s sensual organs, while the latter should be called ‘taste of reflection’ (*Reflexions-Geschmack*) as it supposes to make public (*publike*) or ‘generally accepted’ (*gemeingültig*) valid judgement. In other words, while the judgement of *angenehm* does not contain an ‘aesthetic quantity of universality’, the judgement of the beautiful does. It contains the possibility that it may be regarded as valid for everyone. Again, when I say that something is beautiful, it is beautiful not because it agrees with me or gives me something (other than the feeling of pleasure). Therefore, I expect that everyone else will see it as beautiful in the same way as I do, since I judge it from the ‘general’ point of view of the self and others.

The judgement of the beautiful can claim universal validity because there is no direct link between subject and object within it. However, the process of the judgement of taste is entirely different from the judgement of the *Gut*. To judge whether something is good or bad, concept and regulation are required and logical judgement is processed. The judgement of taste, on the other hand, has no concept as a ground. It can claim its ground only on a ‘universal voice’ (*allgemeine Stimme*) that includes only the ‘idea’ or ‘possible’ judgements of everyone. It does not postulate the accord of all but, rather, only ascribes the agreement to others. The confirmation of the judgement, therefore, does not come from the concepts but from everyone’s consent. Kant refers to this kind of validity as ‘subjectively universal’ (*subjektiv Allegemeingültigkeit*) or ‘common validity’ (*Gemeingültigkeit*) as opposed to ‘objectively universal validity’ (*objektiv Allegemeingültigkeit*), which can be found in the logical quantity of judgement. Kant explains that, in respect of logical quantity, all that the judgement of taste is considered with is a ‘singular judgement’ (*einzelne Urteil*); i.e. it cannot have ‘the quantity of an objective-common valid judgement’ (*die Quantität eines objective-gemeingültigen Urteils*). The judgement of *angenehm* is also an aesthetic and singular judgement, but it is not a

judgement of taste since it does not entail an ‘aesthetic quantity of universality’ (*eine aesthetische Quantität der Allgemeinheit*). In other words, it cannot be valid to everyone in the same way as the judgement of taste can claim to be.

Now the main question about the judgement of taste can be asked: How can this subjective judgement without any concept claim the possibility of universal validity? For Kant, this answer lies in the ‘communicability’ (*Mittelbarkeit*) of judgement. However, this merely raises a second problem for Kant to solve and clarify: How can aesthetic judgement, the judgement that depends on a single subject’s feeling, be communicable since it has no objective determining ground to be a reference point for communication in the same way that cognitive judgement does? Kant states clearly that only ‘cognition’ (*Erkenntnis*) and ‘representation’ (*Vorstellung*), which belongs to cognition, can be ‘universally communicated’ (*allgemein mitgeteilt*) because only these two have a ‘common point of relation’ (*allgemeinen Beziehungspunkt*) in which everyone’s ‘power of representation’ (*Vorstellungskraft*) is ‘compelled to agree’ (*zusammenstimmen*). In the case of subjective judgement, due to the fact that it is not a cognitive judgement, *Vorstellung* is therefore the only ground upon which we can site its communicability.

In general, the ‘power of representation’ (*Vorstellungskraft*) plays a crucial role in all kinds of cognitive faculties. Unlike cognitive judgement, however, the power of representation in the judgement of taste is not set by any designated concept but rather set free between ‘imagination’ (*Einbildungskraft*) and ‘understanding’ (*Verstand*). Kant defines this kind of *Vorstellungskraft* as a state of ‘free play’ (*frei Spiel*) since there is no determinate concept to regulate it to certain rules of cognition. *Frei Spiel*, as defined by Kant, does not simply mean a free use of the power of imagination and understanding; it is the process by which the power of imagination and understanding find their way to create a balance with each other. Thus, it must firstly be set free in order to detect the point of equilibrium and search for a stable position between the two faculties. In the case of cognitive judgement, the power of representation between imagination and understanding will finally meet the attained point with the help of these concepts. The *frei Spiel* in the judgement of taste, on the other hand, cannot find this point of equilibrium. Therefore, the power of imagination and the faculty of understanding can work freely and are always ‘active’. According to Kant, the feeling that arises from judging the beautiful is this unsettled mental state. Therefore, to make a judgement of taste, the subject’s mental faculties are not only deemed to be free but also energetic and active.

Due to the fact that both cognitive judgement and the judgement of taste arise from the very same processes of co-working among three cognitive faculties – imagination, understanding and representation – the judgement of taste can claim universal communicability despite its distinctive *modus operandi*, and it must be as valid for everyone, and in the same way as any of the determinate faculties of cognition. In other words, according to Kant, the very process of judging something beautiful is a certain kind of human faculty that everyone shares in common. In this way, even though this kind of judgement is subjective and does not contain any objective grounds, it is still legitimate to expect that ‘possible’ similar judgements will arise from everyone since there dwells the same mental faculties, operating in the same way, in every subject who judges. Kant also added that the communicability of one’s state of mind

is easily established among men given human beings' natural inclination to 'sociability' (*Geselligkeit*).

In summary, Kant concludes at the end of the 'Second Element' that "the beautiful is what pleases universally without a concept" (*Schön ist das, was ohne Begriff allgemein gefaellt*).<sup>17</sup> In other words, 'beautiful' is what is judged without the use of a 'concept' but can claim its 'universal validity' through the process of the *frei Spiel*, or the interaction among cognitive faculties shared by every single human.

### *Purposiveness and exemplar*

In the 'Third Element' a discussion on the relation of the end, Kant illustrates the relational aspect of the judgement of taste by explaining the object through the relationship between a concept and an end. This relationship, which Kant called '*Zweckmäßigkeit*', in fact plays the most crucial role throughout *Kritik der Urteilskraft* and is seen as a leftover question from the second critique, *Critique of Practical Reason*.<sup>18</sup> Both Guyer and Pluhar transcribe the term 'purposiveness' in their translated versions. However, Kant's explanation of this concept is dubious due to the terminologies used, which are somewhat confusing. Therefore, it is not surprising that both translated versions are even more complex to read, and at the same time can be translated differently due to the different interpretations. Kant starts this part by defining what he calls '*Zweck*', as follows:

"...then an end is the object of a concept insofar as the latter is regarded as the cause of the former (the real ground of its possibility); and the causality of a concept with regard to its object is purposiveness (*forma finalis*)."<sup>19</sup>

To understand the term '*Zweck*', the first disputable term here needs to be clarified. Like the original word transcribed from the German, the word 'object' in English terminology has numerous meanings and rendering the term differently can lead to a misunderstanding of the expression. In order to seek the right meaning behind the word, it is necessary to check the actual term in Kant's original text, as follows:

"...so ist Zweck der Gegenstand eines Begriffs, sofern dieser als die Ursache von jenem(der reale Grund seiner Möglichkeit) angesehen wird; und die Kausalität eines Begriffs in Ansehung seines Objekts ist die Zweckmäßigkeit (*forma finalis*)."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 134.

<sup>18</sup> Immanuel Kant, "Introduction," in *Critique of Judgement*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1987).

<sup>19</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 105.

<sup>20</sup> Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 135.

It is noticeable here that the term ‘object’ used in an English version is in fact translated from two different terms used by Kant: ‘*Gegenstand*’ and ‘*Objekt*’. It seems that even the original version cannot clarify Kant’s intention to convey the definition of *Zweck* here since the terms ‘*Gegenstand*’ and ‘*Objekt*’ are normally used interchangeably in the German language and both terms have somewhat similar meanings. In general, *Gegenstand* is transcribed as an ‘object’ and is normally used in German to refer to a ‘thing’ (*Ding* or *Sache*). In some cases, however, it can also be used as a synonym for an ‘aim’ or ‘purpose’ (*Ziel*). *Objekt*, in a very similar way, also has these two meanings as well as several others.

The choice of rendering the meaning of the terms here leads to a problem in understanding the term ‘*Zweck*’.<sup>21</sup> Looking closely at what Kant explained, he defines *Zweck* as an ‘object’ (*Gegenstand*) of a concept when the ‘concept’ (*Begriff*) is seen as a ‘cause’ or ‘reason’ (*Ursache*) of that object and the relationship between the concept and its ‘object’ (*Objekt*) is called ‘purposiveness’ (*Zweckmäßigkeit*). According to what Kant explains here, it is possible that *Gegenstand* can take both meanings, which may create a totally different understanding of what he intended to describe. Should Kant have intended to render the definition of ‘thing’ here, *Gegenstand* would take the meaning of the ‘physical object’ and *Zweck* would be defined as ‘a(n) (existing) thing of a concept of that object’. On the other hand, if it was intended to be used differently, as a meaning of an aim or a purpose, *Zweck* would be defined as an ‘end’ of the concept (which the object intends to reach).

In fact, the confusion in using the terms ‘*Gegenstand*’ and ‘*Objekt*’ is considered to be one of the major difficulties in reading Kant and is often a topic of debate among Kantian readers when it comes to discussion of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Allison, for example, provides a certain interpretation that is accepted by many scholars in his *Transcendental Idealism* by proposing two different meanings of these two terms. He argues that Kant often used the term ‘*Gegenstand*’ to refer to the objective reality of categories with respect to the object being understood in its applicability to the human experience, while ‘*Objekt*’ refers to the objective validity of the categories with respect to objects in a logical sense.<sup>22</sup> John H. Zammito, despite putting it differently in *The Genesis of Kant’s Critique of Judgement*, seems to follow Allison’s interpretation. He describes *Objekt* as a matter of formal judgement and *Gegenstand* as a matter entailing an existing entity.<sup>23</sup> However, Joan Steigerwald, in *The Ethos of Critique in German Idealism*, objected to Allison’s interpretation.<sup>24</sup> Rousset explains it in a different way. According to Peter Steinberger, Rousset sees *Gegenstand* as an *Objekt* considered in its reality or its present, while *Objekt* is a *Gegenstand* considered in its existence for the subject in its actuality.<sup>25</sup> Steinberger, in *The Politics of Objectivity: An Essay on the Foundations of Political Conflict*, agrees with Rousset that *Gegenstand* and *Objekt* do not designate two distinct entities but merely signify two aspects of the same object.<sup>26</sup> However, he disagrees with the idea of a

<sup>21</sup> To transcribe the term ‘*Zweck*’, Guyer uses the word ‘end’ in his translation while Pluhar decides to use the word ‘purpose’.

<sup>22</sup> Henry E. Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 27–28, 135–136.

<sup>23</sup> John H. Zammito, *The Genesis of Kant’s Critique of Judgement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

<sup>24</sup> Joan Steigerwald, “The Ethos of Critique in German Idealism,” in *Objectivity in Science: New Perspectives from Science and Technology Studies*, eds. Flavia Padovani, Alan Richardson, and Jonathan Y. Tsou (Cham: Springer International Publishing), 82.

<sup>25</sup> Peter J. Steinberger, *The Politics of Objectivity: An Essay on the Foundation of Political Conflict* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 299.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*



formal or phenomenological sense of the *Objekt* and sees it from the logical or structural position with regard to the subject.<sup>27</sup> In other words, Steinberger states an *Objekt* as being an abstract and syntactical in respect of the subject, while *Gegenstand* refers to the concrete item.<sup>28</sup>

The dispute on the differentiation between *Gegenstand* and *Objekt* has not yet been resolved and discussion on this matter is very detailed. Moreover, this discussion does not concern the discussion in the third critique. It seems to be difficult to define the correct meanings of the terms provided, especially when dealing with the issues of purposiveness in the Critique of Taste. Because Steinberger agrees with Allison and Rousset, the consistency of the usage of these two terms is not obvious or clear cut.<sup>29</sup> Correctly defining and differentiating the terms is even more difficult when it comes to defining them in another language. Both Pluhar and Guyer simply use ‘object’ for both terminologies due to the lack of proper terms to use. However, this creates perplexity and ambiguity for the reader to understand the terms. Despite this issue, at least one thing can be known for certain: there is an indubitable distinction between the two terminologies and Kant seems to use them differently.

Even though each of the terms has been interpreted and defined differently by various scholars, the thesis has found that they have one point in common: it seems that *Gegenstand* is used when Kant intends to refer to the thing as perceived ‘intuitively’ or ‘at sight’, or to put it differently, ‘concretely’. *Objekt*, on the other hand, seems to be used to define a thing that is already determined through a concept and its end in an abstract and logical way.

However, when further considering the definition of purposiveness given by Kant, these two terms might not show antithetical meanings and lead to divergent interpretations, as they first appear to do. By examining the idea of purposiveness, the meanings of the terms seem to be easier to be understood and, despite the difference in meaning between the two, this complexity seems not to be a major problem. Kant explains the concept of purposiveness by attaching the Latin term ‘*forma finalis*’. Taken from Aristotle’s theory of causality or ‘the four causes’ explained in his *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, Kant follows Aristotle’s steps relating to the idea of teleology. According to Pluhar, Kant shared the same concerns about the natural sciences with his other counterparts during this period.<sup>30</sup> During Kant’s time, the idea of the ‘final cause’ as the purpose of a thing was already accepted in general. However, the error found in Aristotle’s theory of physics resulted in a decline in popularity of this theory after the Renaissance and created the necessity to provide more accurate explanations relating to Aristotle’s idea of teleology.<sup>31</sup> Kant was also influenced by this question and was trying to investigate it in order to provide a better understanding.<sup>32</sup> According to Aristotle, the final cause is the full realisation or an ideal of a certain thing and can be reached through the ‘change’ in the three other causes: material cause, formal cause and efficient cause.<sup>33</sup> In other words, in order to understand what the thing is, the causes of a thing should be first known and the final cause or the ‘end’ (*τελος*) of a thing will be the ‘object’ of what we know. Kant took the idea of the relation between the

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, lxxii.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, lxxi–ii.

<sup>33</sup> Aristotle, *Physics II 3; Metaphysics V 2*.

cause and the end from Aristotle. For Kant, the object (of knowledge) is a thing that is perceived through its concept and its purpose, where the purpose is considered to be a result of the concept.

Going back to Kant's explanation of 'purposiveness' and *Zweck*, and considering the terms from the teleological point of view, '*Gegenstand*' and '*Objekt*' are defined with related meanings. To use Rousset's words, these two terms designate two aspects of the same object.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, to use *Gegenstand* in the first place might be Kant's intention to emphasise the concrete aspect of the given thing or its appearance. In this way, *Zweck* or 'end' is therefore a 'thing' that is a meld of the manifolds of the concepts of that thing. And once that thing, as a *Gegenstand*, has been perceived through its concepts and also its purpose, then that *Gegenstand* will now be perceived as an *Objekt* since it concludes both an appearance and a purpose of that thing within.

'Purposiveness' (*Zweckmäßigkeit*) is then a concept or principle that defines a thing by relating the concepts of that thing to its 'purpose' or 'end' (*Zweck*). In other words, *Objekt* is a thing that is defined through *Zweckmäßigkeit*. At the same time, an object is also called 'purposive' (*Zweckmäßig*) because it is useful to help attain the end or purpose of a thing. To give an example, when a long, thin wooden stick which contains black lead in the centre has been perceived, it can be judged to be a pencil, due to the fact that it helps attain the purpose of writing. The pencil is then considered to be an object and purposive. It has a certain shape, size and look to help attain the goal of writing well. This manifold of the appearances once perceived by the subject turns into a representation, defined as *Gegenstand*. However, once its concept and end together with its appearance are considered, they are considered to be an *Objekt* (it must contain lead in the centre to make a black mark, it has wood surrounding the lead and it has a certain shape so that it can be held easily in the hand. Therefore, with this appearance and the purpose to have this certain appearance, it can be judged as a pencil because my experience has told me about these certain concepts.)

However, Kant states that an object of judgement (in any form) is also called 'purposive' (*Zweckmäßig*) even if it has no 'end' (*Zweck*) to be judged. This is due to the fact that all kinds of object of judgement can only be explained or perceived through this (assumed) relationship between concept and end, as follows:

“An object or a state of the mind or even an action, however, even if its possibility does not necessarily presuppose the representation of an end, is called purposive merely because its possibility can only be explained and conceived by us insofar as we assume as its ground a causality in accordance with an end...”<sup>35</sup>

In other words, we can only perceive a thing by assuming that it has a relation between its concept and its purpose or end, and the purposiveness of that certain thing does still exist, even

<sup>34</sup> Steinberger, *the Politics of Objectivity*, 24.

<sup>35</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 105.

though there is no end to be considered, or an end is not included when the subject considers. Kant adds:

“Purposiveness can thus exist without an end, insofar as we do not place the causes of this form in a will,<sup>36</sup> but can still make the explanation of its possibility conceivable to ourselves only by deriving it from a will. Now we do not always necessarily need to have insight through reason (concerning its possibility) into what we observe. Thus, we can at least observe a purposiveness concerning form, without basing it in an end...”<sup>37</sup>

In this way, the judgement of the beautiful or the judgement of taste can use this form of purposiveness to judge the object aesthetically, for the object, despite having concept and end, can be judged regardless. A glass, for example, has an end of containing liquid for drinking. However, if the subject judges it by ignoring the end or purpose of it (but still perceives it in its form) and tries to discern whether it is beautiful or not, here he exercises the judgement of taste. This kind of judgement, even though there is a purposiveness, is only subjective since it is the subject who reflects on it. On the other hand, if this object of glass is judged through its function to be a glass, this object is judged upon its end. This kind of judgement is then based on objective purposiveness, since it is an object to which the judgement reflects.

Not only can the objective end not be a determining ground of the judgement of taste, but also the subjective end. Kant explains that, in the case of the judgement of taste, none of an end can be a determining ground of the judgement whether it is objective or subjective. The subjective end, always contained within the interest of the subject, therefore cannot be used as a ground for the pure judgement of taste. The objective end, in a similar way, cannot be a determining ground for the judgement of taste either because there is no concept of good that is able to determine the judgement of taste.

The question now is: How can the judgement of taste claim for its *a priori* principle since the *a priori* causal relation between the feeling of pleasure or displeasure and the representation of the object cannot be established? Kant explains this by comparing the judgement of taste with moral judgement. He explains that the feeling of respect derived from the practical reason in fact does not derive as a result of the idea of moral. Only the determination of the will can derive from it. Therefore, the state of mind of a will determined by something is already in itself a feeling of pleasure.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, this feeling is not an ‘effect’ of the idea of moral. Likewise, with the judgement of taste; it is not an effect of the representation of the object. Kant states:

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<sup>36</sup> Kant defines ‘will’ as ‘a faculty of desire insofar as it is determinable only through concept or to act in accordance with the representation of an end’. See Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 105.

<sup>37</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 105.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 107.

“The consciousness of the merely formal purposiveness in the play of the cognitive powers of the subject in the case of the representation through which an object is given is the pleasure itself, because it contains a determining ground of the activity of the subject with regard to the animation of its cognitive powers, thus an internal causality (which is purposive) with regard to cognition in general, but without being restricted to a particular cognition, hence it contains a mere form of the subjective purposiveness of a representation in an aesthetic judgement.”<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, without both concept and end, the judgement of taste deals merely with the ‘subjective purposiveness’ or ‘form of purposiveness’ in the representation of a given object.

Kant continues to illustrate that the pure judgement of taste must be independent from ‘charm’ (*Reiz*), ‘emotion’ (*Rührung*) and ‘the concept of perfection’ (*der Begriffe der Vollkommenheit*). In the case of charm and emotion, the attachment between *Wohlgefallen* and charm or emotion restrains the possibility of the judgement of taste to claim for universal validity. While the ‘utility’ (*Nuetzlichkeit*) is seen as an external objective purposiveness of an object, the concept of perfection, according to Kant, is defined as an internal one. However, as mentioned before, all kinds of objective purposiveness will relate to the end of an object. Therefore, the pure judgement of taste cannot include or determine the idea of perfection within, whether it is a qualitative perfection or a quantitative perfection.

To define that something is beautiful, Kant concludes, we define it from the feeling of the subject; not from the concept of the object itself. Unlike cognitive judgement, the judgement of taste has no rules for the subject to follow mechanically. Therefore, it is impossible to look for a principle of taste that could provide a universal criterion for judging the beautiful. In addition, Kant adds that the product of the judgement of taste is regarded as ‘exemplary’ (*exemplarisch*), or the example and, by exemplary, it does not mean that taste can be acquired by imitating others.<sup>40</sup> According to Kant, taste must be obtained by one’s own faculty and one must exercise the judgement of taste by oneself; otherwise it will be just an imitation which can be acquired through ‘skill’. In this way, Kant continues, the archetype of taste, or the highest model of taste, is therefore an idea that everyone has to produce by himself. Kant calls this archetype of taste the ‘ideal of beauty’, which is merely an ideal of the imagination since it does not rest on concept but on the presentation which the subject produces.<sup>41</sup> In other words, because it is necessary for Kant that ‘taste’ must be acquired through each subject self, the archetype or the ideal of beauty of each person must also derive from each individual subject as well. And because the judgement of taste does not rest on concept but only on representation of an object, which derives from each subject’s power of imagination, the product of the judgement of taste cannot be an ‘example’ for others to imitate or copy (but can somehow inspire) in order to come to the same judgement even though it can be defined as an example

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 116.

<sup>41</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 117. Kant defines ‘ideal’ as ‘the representation of an individual being as adequate to an idea but not an idea’, which will signify a concept of reason itself

of something beautiful. In short, the judgement which is the product of the *frei Spiel* is therefore a certain kind of example of the ideal of the beautiful; the concept that will never exist.

### *Sensus communis and necessity*

In the 'Forth Element' of the judgement of taste, Kant discusses the necessity and the idea of *sensus communis*. From the discussion in the third element, he proposes that the only kind of necessity that can be thought in an aesthetic judgement is what he calls 'an exemplary'. Due to the fact that this kind of necessity cannot be derived from the determinate concepts, then it is significant to consider whether it is possible to think about the necessity of the judgement of taste. Kant tries to illustrate that it is possible to think about the necessity of the judgement of taste because this is not merely a sensory taste within which it has no principle at all. It is impossible for the judgement of taste to be deduced from the universality of experience because it is nearly impossible for the experiences to provide sufficient evidence and to ground any concept of the necessity of judgement of taste on empirical judgements. Therefore, to consider the necessity of the judgement of taste is possible. However, this certain kind of necessity is a subjective necessity which can be attained by the 'assent' of every other judging person and enunciated only 'conditionally'. In other words, it can be disputable. One can only expect that others are supposed to agree with his claim on the judgement of the beautiful because he and the others share 'the same ground of mental faculty'. There is no obligation for others to make the same judgement and agree without any objection. This same ground of mental faculty, Kant argues, is possible because there is one principle that connects men together. This principle is what he calls *sensus communis* or common sense.

Considering there is no objective principle for the judgement of taste to follow, Kant suggests that there must be a subjective principle to determine it. *Sensus communis* was defined by Kant as 'the effect of the free play of the cognitive powers or understanding' (*die Wirkung aus dem freien Spiel unsrer Erkenntniskräfte, verstehen*). Only under this presupposition of a *sensus communis* can the judgement of taste be possible. It helps determine the *Wohlgefallen* 'merely through feeling' (*nur durch Gefühl*). This *sensus communis*, Kant explains further in the 'Deduction of Pure Aesthetic Judgement', is not identical with the 'common understanding' (*gemeine Menschenverstand*) or 'healthy understanding' (*gesunde Verstand*), which is regarded as the least that can be expected from everyone who claims to be a human being. This common understanding is normally called 'common sense' (*Gemeinsinn*) as well. Therefore, in order to avoid the confusion between Kant's idea of *sensus communis* in the judgement of taste and the idea of common sense in general, this thesis will retain the term *sensus communis* in the discussion to make a clear separation between the two terms.

Kant defines *sensus communis* in his idea of *Geschmacksurteil* as 'the idea of a community sense' (*die Idee eines gemeinschaftlichen Sinnes*), or an idea of 'a faculty of judging' (*eines Beurteilungsvermögens*). In other words, *sensus communis* must be understood as a mental faculty that judges by making a consideration of 'every other's kind of representation' (*die Vorstellungsart jedes andern*) in its reflection. However, it is significant to remark again that these representations must not be actual representations of others but only the 'possible' ones.

These possible representations can be obtained when the one who judges makes his own judgement by abstracting the limitation attached with his own private condition. In summary, he must be judged on the basis of impartiality.

## Section II: Arendt's reading of Kant

As can be seen from Chapter I and Part I of this chapter, Arendt's theory of judgement lays its claim directly on Kant's judgement of taste, and she made an even bigger claim to propose that Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* is his real political philosophy, or specifically, his Critique of Politics. It is obvious that Arendt's theory of judgement was constructed on Kant's idea of reflective judgement and the characteristics of pure judgement of the beautiful. Nevertheless, in order to construct her own theory to fit into her political theory, it is also noticeable that Arendt selected some of Kant's concepts and interpreted them differently from the way in which he might have intended to do. This part of the chapter aims to explore this issue and discuss the legitimisation of Arendt's claims relating to her reading of Kant.

From Part I it can be seen that Kant's judgement of taste (*Geschmacksurteil*) consists of at least three characteristics which Arendt found significant and relating to political philosophy. As Jin-Woo Lee explained in his *Politische Philosophie Des Nihilismus*, Arendt has taken from Kant three aspects of his third critique to form her arguments on political philosophy: reflective judgement, enlarged mentality and disinterested *Wohlgefallen*.<sup>42</sup> This part of the chapter will discuss these three aspects and will also include some other features that the thesis found they are worth considering. They are: the idea of aesthetic judgement, representation, and the 'active' aspects of judgement and its faculty.

### *Reflective judgement: reflective in principle*

One of the most important concepts in *Kritik der Urteilskraft* is the concept of a certain kind of judgement, and Kant realised its significance as mediation between understanding and reason. This kind of judgement is called 'reflective judgement' or 'reflecting judgement' (*die reflektierende Urteilskraft*)<sup>43</sup> by Kant in order to highlight a disparity between determinative or determining judgement. From Chapter I it can be seen that one feature that Arendt uses to define Kant's political philosophy and takes into consideration for her own theory is this very idea of reflective judgement. This section aims to investigate this idea from both thinkers and to justify Arendt's claim regarding this concept.

It is clear that Arendt excludes determinative judgement from her own theory of judgement. By examining her writings on judging and the judgement faculty, she suggests that the characteristic of her 'judgement' demonstrates what Kant calls 'reflecting' or 'reflective

<sup>42</sup> Jin-Woo Lee, *Politische Philosophie des Nihilismus* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1992).

<sup>43</sup> Pluhar uses the term 'reflective' here for the word *reflektierende*, while Guyer chose 'reflecting' due to the reason that it denominates the grammatically correct term. See Paul Guyer, "Introduction," in Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, ed. Paul Guyer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

judgement'. Only reflective judgement is worth considering as a genuine judgement for her. With regard to this, she states the following in *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*:

“The validity of these judgements ever has the validity of cognitive or scientific propositions, which are not judgements, properly speaking.”<sup>44</sup>

In fact, her intention to indicate reflective judgement as the only pure form of judgement has been shown from the very beginning of her set of lectures. Arendt hinted about this when she discussed the separation of moral and beautiful in Kant's philosophy, as follows:

“In other words: it is now more than taste that will decide about the beautiful and the ugly; but the question of right and wrong is to be decided by neither taste nor judgement but by reason alone.”<sup>45</sup>

What can be seen from this is that, according to Arendt, discerning right from wrong is an activity that concerns the realm of reason; not judgement. By indicating that reason is not judgement, it is quite straightforward to imply that her 'judgement' does not include reason: the faculty which engages with the determinative judgement. Therefore, according to Arendt, her judgement has been pronounced strictly as a reflective judgement, which is not 'determined' or 'forced' by any other rules or ends. In the case of Kant, however, judgement includes a broader perspective and form. In *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, he defines a 'power of judgement' (*Urteilskraft*) in general as a faculty or an ability “to think the particular as contained under the universal” (*das Besondere als enthalten unter dem Allgemeinen zu denken*).<sup>46</sup> In this case, the universal principle is given to the subject and the subject exercises the power of judgement by subsuming the particular under it. This *Urteilskraft* is called 'determinative' or 'determining' (*bestimmend*).<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, in the case that only the particular is given and the subject “has to exercise his *Urteilskraft* to find the universal for it by himself” (*Ist aber nur das Besondere gegeben, wozu sie das Allegemeine finden soll*)<sup>48</sup>, this kind of *Urteilskraft* is not a determinative but just reflective or reflecting (*reflektierend*). In other words, while determinative judgement determines object and uses a determinate concept to help in a judging process, reflective judgement has no concept or any object (end) to help operate. According to Kant, however, both kinds of judgement are necessary for cognitive faculties and cognition.

Even though the idea of reflective judgement was not entirely new to Kant because it had already appeared once in the chapter on schematism in *Critique of Pure Reason* (*Kritik der*

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<sup>44</sup> Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, 72.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>46</sup> Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 87.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 87.

*Reinen Vernunft*), not until the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* did he seriously start proposing an idea of reflective judgement as a distinctive mental faculty.<sup>49</sup> To put it more specifically, only after he finished *Critique of Practical Reason (Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft)* did he discover that both the judgement of taste and judgement about the purposiveness of natural objects share the same kind of judgement, and he began to recognise it as another form of cognitive faculty with an *a priori* principle.<sup>50</sup> This discovery of reflective judgement not only allowed him to find an *a priori* principle for the feeling of pleasure or displeasure but also helped him complete the set of critiques that examine all three upper mental faculties; strictly speaking, the three cognitive faculties; Intellects, Judgment and Reason. In other words, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* was designed to examine this certain kind of judgement and its individual forms.

It is now clear that *Kritik der Urteilskraft* has an idea of reflective judgement as a pivotal point, since it aims to discuss two different forms of reflective judgement: aesthetic and teleology. According to the layout of the book, it might be misleading for the reader to understand that there are only two forms of reflective judgement discussed by Kant. Nevertheless, the Introduction informs us that there are three different forms of reflective judgement that Kant investigates and is concerned with. In addition to the ‘aesthetic power of judgement’ (*ästhetischen Urteilskraft*) and the ‘teleological power of judgement’ (*teleologischen Urteilskraft*), which are thoroughly discussed in the first and second part of the book, the ‘principle of judgement’ itself is also discussed and is considered as another form of reflective judgement. However, Kant only explains this form of judgement in the Introduction. Paul Guyer explains this, as follows:

“Although the main body of the Critique of the Power of Judgement is divided into two parts, ...the introductions actually consider not two but three main forms of reflecting judgement. The second to this is aesthetic judgement...; and the third of them is teleological judgement, ...But the first form of reflective judgement that Kant considers, ...is judgement about the systematicity of the body of our scientific concepts and laws itself.”<sup>51</sup>

By the same token, Pluhar shares with Guyer the same explanation for three different kinds of reflective judgement. He states that *Kritik der Urteilskraft* includes three different types of reflective judgement: teleological judgement, aesthetic judgement and the principle of judgement.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, readers have to bear in mind when dealing with the third critique or reflective judgement that there are three forms of reflective judgement to consider. The first one is the principle or the concepts and laws of judgement itself. Pluhar explains that this form of reflective judgement is considered as a special ‘power or faculty’ (*Kraft oder Vermögen*) of

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<sup>49</sup> Werner S. Pluhar, “Translator’s Introduction,” in Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1987).

<sup>50</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, xx–xxi.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, xxiv.

<sup>52</sup> Pluhar, *Translator’s Introduction*.



the human mental faculty.<sup>53</sup> The other two forms, aesthetic judgement and teleological judgement, on the other hand, are not the special power of the mind but use the power of judgement to direct to the beautiful objects in nature and the arts and to organisms and nature, respectively.<sup>54</sup> Regarding these two forms of reflective judgement, Kant regards aesthetic judgement as a faculty of the mind that judges ‘formal purposiveness’ through the feeling of pleasure or displeasure and calls this formal purposiveness ‘subjective purposiveness’.<sup>55</sup> Teleological judgement, in contrast, is a faculty for judging the ‘real’ or ‘objective’ purposiveness of nature through understanding and reason.<sup>56</sup>

With regard to Arendt, her appreciation of reflective judgement is due to her appraisal of a process of judging without a pre-regulated set of rules or concepts. Considering Kant’s point of view, the claim that Arendt makes for herself about reflective judgement in *Lectures on Kant* shows its cogency and does not make an overstated claim. To state that reflective judgement is the only kind of genuine judgement seems to be selective at first. However, it is not. In fact, what Arendt implies when she pronounces the term ‘judgement’ is not a judgement in general but the ‘principle’ of judgement itself. In other words, judgements, whether in the form of determinative or reflective, all share the same ‘principle’ or ‘scientific concept’, which is ‘reflective’ in its character. The focus on the idea of judgement she had is not limited only to the idea of reflective judgement in the third critique but also includes the idea of schema explained in the first critique. In the same year that Arendt gave a lecture on Kant’s political philosophy, she added this topic to her seminar class, and its content, reconciling with the idea of reflective judgement, appeared in her *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*. Therefore, the intention to omit determinative judgement from her consideration on judgement was done without a plausible reason.

In order to further investigate the idea of reflective judgement and Arendt’s reading of Kant, it is necessary to examine some other ideas relating to it. These include the ideas of purposiveness and particular, which are central to all forms of reflective judgement. The next section will deal with these ideas. At the same time, it will also discuss the idea of aesthetic judgement. These ideas will help create an understanding of how this particular kind of judgement plays a crucial role for Arendt, and even for Kant himself.

According to Pluhar, there is a requirement to have some principles that help deal with the particular. This principle, despite its universality and inclusion of the particular within, cannot deal with the particular since the particular is empirical and contingent.<sup>57</sup> Hence, Kant proposes teleological judgement and the idea of purposiveness, so that the particular could be understood. It is worth further exploring this matter since it is central to the idea of reflective judgement, in addition to the fact that it is an idea that Arendt tried to exclude in her explanation on Kant’s political philosophy.

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, xxiv.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 79.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, lxxviii.

*Aesthetic judgement and Arendt's exclusion of Zweckmäßigkeit*

As previously mentioned, one of this thesis' main questions is to justify Arendt's claim relating to the reading of *Kritik der Urteilskraft* as Kant's political philosophy. In order to do so, exploration and examination of each feature concerning the claim is necessary. The previous section discussed the way in which Arendt defines her theory of judgement through Kant's idea of reflective judgement or, strictly speaking, his principle of judgement. We also saw how her claim can be justified by our investigation into Kant. This section will move from the discussion on reflective judgement in general to an investigation of a particular form of reflective judgement that Arendt discusses in her theory of judgement: a judgement about aesthetic. We have already learned from Chapter I that Arendt bases her interpretation of Kant and develops her own theory on this very form of judgement.

To begin with, I would like to discuss the structure of *Kritik der Urteilskraft* and the principle that lay behind it. To do so, we can perceive a clear picture of the position of aesthetic judgement and its significance in Kant's series of critiques and theory of judging from Arendt's perspective.

As mentioned earlier, Kant divides *Kritik der Urteilskraft* into two main parts. The first part, 'Critique of Aesthetic (power of) Judgement', relates to discussion of the judgement of the beautiful and the judgement of the sublime, while the second part, 'Critique of Teleological (power of) Judgement', deals with the teleological judgement of organisms and nature. A first glance, these two parts appear to be independent and discrete from one another because the first part deals with an idea of the beautiful while the latter deals with natural organisms. Guyer highlights this point in his Introduction. Despite this observation, however, Guyer also suggests that these two parts may not be as separate as it may seem. According to Guyer, an impulse that urged Kant to write *Kritik der Urteilskraft* was his discovery about an *a priori* principle that not only helped define the feeling of pleasure or displeasure but also determined the judgement of nature as a whole.<sup>58</sup> This *a priori* principle is therefore the principle shared by both forms of judgement – aesthetic judgement and teleological judgement – that appear in the third critique. In other words, there must be some connection between these two parts of *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. This connection is a principle that is called 'purposiveness' (*Zweckmässigkeit*); an idea which is a principle or 'concept' of both forms of judgement. Therefore, it is now clear that the two parts of the third critique are connected through this idea of an *a priori* principle, in addition to the fact that Kant classified both of them as reflective judgement, which we have already seen in the previous section.

Pluhar shares a similar point to Guyer and sees *Kritik der Urteilskraft* as being 'woven' into this idea of purposiveness.<sup>59</sup> Arendt, despite her comment about the disconnection between the two parts of the book, agrees that both are actually related. However, she defines the connection between these two parts using a different concept. Unlike Guyer and Pluhar, she does not identify purposiveness as a connection between these two forms of reflective judgement but instead states the concepts of the political as being the 'links' within the book, as follows:

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<sup>58</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, xxi.

<sup>59</sup> Pluhar, *Translator's Introduction*.

“...The links between its two parts are weak, but, such as they are – i.e. as they can be assumed to have existed in Kant’s own mind – they are more closely connected with the political than with anything in the other Critiques.”<sup>60</sup>

However, the above statement does not convince Kantian scholars. As we have seen from Kant’s original text, purposiveness (*Zweckmässigkeit*) is an *a priori* principle that joins the two different parts together, and indeed, plays a vital role in explaining these two forms of judgement. It would be quite a peculiar reading, in fact, for any reader to fail to see this clear relationship between the two. To propose sociability and the political feature of men as a shared theme of the third critique, despite it seeming to be implausible and disturbing, needs further discussion and supporting arguments to justify it, but to exclude *Zweckmässigkeit* from the discussion of these issues would be wrong. There is a failure on the part of Arendt to mention *Zweckmässigkeit* as a connection between these two kinds of judgement. In fact, it might be more correct to say that this failure must be intentional by Arendt; i.e. she does it on purpose. The answer to these two questions hides between the lines in her writings and it is not difficult for the readers to notice this. In fact, this interpretation comes at the start of her main claim in *Lectures on Kant* and later becomes central to her theory of judgement. To answer the main question, it is necessary to start from another claim she makes: the claim that aesthetic judgement is a source of analysing Kant’s political philosophy. And it is here that her dismissal of purposiveness began.

To begin with, it is noticeable that Arendt rarely mentioned the idea of *Zweckmässigkeit* in her writings concerning the theory of judgement. Dostal makes a comment in his ‘Judging Human Action: Arendt’s Appropriation of Kant’ that Arendt studiously avoids mentioning this theme throughout her lectures even though it is the only idea that unifies the two parts.<sup>61</sup> In *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*, only once or twice does she mention this idea. It seems that she not only intended to avoid discussion about it but was also aware of this omission and was preparing to defend her claim relating to it. For her, the idea of *Zweckmässigkeit* deals with a question that she did not intend to concern herself with. To understand this, we should go back and start from the idea of *Zweckmässigkeit* itself.

As explained earlier in this chapter, the idea of ‘purposiveness’ (*Zweckmässigkeit*) is the idea that is used to explain a thing through the causal relation between a concept and its object. Even though this very idea is a principle shared by both aesthetic judgement and teleological judgement, the types of purposiveness applied to both faculties are not alike. According to Kant, the aesthetic (power of) judgement is the faculty for judging ‘formal purposiveness’ through the feeling of pleasure or displeasure. Kant calls this kind of purposiveness ‘subjective’. The teleological (power of) judgement, in contrast, is the faculty of judging the ‘real purposiveness’ of nature through understanding and reason. This kind of purposiveness is called ‘objective purposiveness’.<sup>62</sup> Kant explains the difference between these two kinds of

<sup>60</sup> Arendt. *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*, 13.

<sup>61</sup> Robert J. Dostal, “Judging Human Action: Arendt’s Appropriation of Kant,” in *Judgement, Imagination, and Politics: Themes from Kant and Arendt*, eds. Ronald Beiner and Jennifer Nedelsky (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 150.

<sup>62</sup> Kant. *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 79.

purposiveness. The first form of purposiveness rests on an immediate pleasure in the form of an object in mere reflection on it. It relates a form of an object only through the cognitive faculties of the subject; therefore, its concept is not a concept of an object but only a principle of the power of judgement.<sup>63</sup> Objective purposiveness, on the other hand, relates the form of the object to a determinate cognition of the object under a given concept and has nothing to do with a feeling of pleasure or displeasure.<sup>64</sup> In short, judgement made through the idea of objective purposiveness is regarded as a judgement made through the real relation between the concept and the end. Therefore, it is reflected through the purposiveness that is based on a purpose of a thing; in other words, it is a logical judgement.<sup>65</sup>

With Arendt, her abandonment of an idea of purposiveness is accompanied by her focusing on aesthetic judgement as a source of interpretation. She states clearly that her attention will only be on the first part of the book, the ‘Analytic of Aesthetic (power of) Judgement’ and she intended to exclude any discussion about the second part, the ‘Analytic of Teleological (power of) Judgement’, from her analysis, as follows:

“We are not concerned here with this part of Kant’s philosophy (teleological principle); it does not deal with judgement of the particular, strictly speaking, and its topic is nature... Its intention is to find a principle of cognition rather than a principle of judgement.”<sup>66</sup>

The reason for this seems to be clear: she found that teleological judgement is more likely to relate to a cognitive judgement, and it is not a ‘pure’ type of judgement she would like to propose. This is debatable because, for Kant, both aesthetic judgement and teleological judgement are considered to be reflective judgement. Therefore, the choice Arendt made seems to be selective and implausible. If she claims *Kritik der Urteilskraft* to be Kant’s writing on political philosophy, none of any part of the book should be rejected. For the reader, it is easy to think that Arendt found something in the teleological (power of) judgement that contradicted the claim she wanted to propose, or at least, she could not directly relate it to her proposal, so she avoided this particular topic in her discussion. In fact, I found that her intention to reject teleological judgement relates directly to her rejection of the idea of purposiveness, especially an idea of objective purposiveness in Kant’s teleology.

Here, there are two further issues that I would like to discuss: Arendt’s intention to focus on aesthetic judgement; and her rejection of the idea of purposiveness.

In addition to explaining and lecturing on Kant’s idea of judgement, in her *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy* Arendt also aims to form and propose her own judgement theory. In order to do so, she chooses Kant’s aesthetic judgement as her only model of study. In the previous section, I discussed the three forms of reflective judgement, whereby the study indicates that

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 78.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, lxxviii.

<sup>66</sup> Arendt, *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*, 14.

the principle of judgement itself is also a form of reflective judgement. However, it did not discuss Kant's stipulation about the shared form and characteristics of aesthetic judgement and the principle of judgement. In the Introduction, Kant writes:

“In a critique of the power of judgement the part that contains the aesthetic power of judgement is essential, since this alone contains a principle that the power of judgement lays at the basis of its reflection on nature in accordance with its particular (empirical) laws for our faculty of cognition....”<sup>67</sup>

From the above, it can be seen that Kant also indicates the privilege of aesthetic judgement and places this form of reflective judgement in a higher position than its counterpart. Since Kant does not explain directly about the principle of judgement as a form of reflective judgement or give further details, aesthetic judgement, therefore, is the only form of reflective judgement which can be used as a model of ‘pure’ judgement. While teleological judgement proceeds through the objective principle of purposiveness, aesthetic judgement and the scientific concept of the power of judgement itself judge purposiveness without purpose; i.e. subjectively.<sup>68</sup> As Pluhar put it in his translator's notes, “the teleological judgements are logical reflective judgement about the purposiveness that is objective and material.”<sup>69</sup> By this he means that ‘objective’ marks an opposition to ‘subjective’, and ‘material’ refers to the distinction of objective and formal.<sup>70</sup> In this way, aesthetic judgement, similar to the principle of judgement itself, is considered to be a special mental faculty, as follows:

“The aesthetic power of judgement is thus a special faculty for judging things in accordance with a rule but not in accordance with concepts. The teleological power of judgement is not a special faculty, but only the reflecting power of judgement in general, insofar as it proceeds in accordance with a concept....”<sup>71</sup>

Taking the above into consideration, the choice which focuses only on aesthetic judgement that Arendt made is tenable and the exclusion of teleological judgement from her dialogue is far from being criticised as selective. Arendt aims to define judgement as a mental faculty and to find the principle of the power of judgement which is considered to be pure judgement. By its very character, the power of judgement itself is reflective, as is aesthetic judgement. In addition, unlike teleological judgement, aesthetic judgement excludes an idea of objective purposiveness which ties judgement to an end or purpose of a thing through the use of concept. Despite a few changes, Kant inherited his teleological point of view from Aristotle's teleology. For Arendt, in contrast, although her admiration for Aristotelian philosophy has been shown in

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<sup>67</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, 79.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 80

<sup>69</sup> Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, Ixxviii.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, 80.

many aspects, this does not include the idea of *telos*, the absolute end of a thing, and causality. To accept the 'end' as a final stage of a thing and a result of the determinate concepts is to come to accept that human action is meaningless. And if 'action' becomes meaningless, for Arendt, 'the political' is not possible at all.

Arendt intended to base her examination of reflective judgement only on the first part of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft*; i.e. on the critique of taste or the judgement of the beautiful. And it has also illustrated that she did not choose to do this without reason. In the following section, this issue will be discussed in further detail with the aid of an idea of aesthetic judgement and an *a priori* principle of purposiveness.

### *The judgement of the beautiful and the move from the aesthetic to the political*

Justification for Arendt's claim on reflective judgement and aesthetic judgement is now clear. We now look at Arendt's other claim: the judgement of taste. As has already been shown in Part I of this chapter, the judgement of taste (or the judgement of the beautiful) was discussed in the first part of *Kritik der Urteilskraft* along with the judgement of the sublime. However, although some chapters related to the same topic in the deduction of pure aesthetic judgement, only the judgement of taste is interesting for Arendt. The questions to be clarified here relate to her choice concerning the judgement of taste, as follows: Why did Arendt only take this into consideration? How can the judgement of taste, which concerns the question of the beautiful, claim its place in the sphere of politics? How possible it is to use the judgement of taste, which concerns the question of the beautiful, in the area of politics? The following section relates to the first question concerning why the judgement of taste was selected and how important it was for both Kant and Arendt.

As clarified earlier in this chapter, of the two forms of reflective judgement discussed in the *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, only aesthetic (power of) judgement is considered to be a form of judgement which contains the principle of the power of judgement itself. In the 'Analytic of the Beautiful' (*Analytik des Schönen*) does Kant attempt to explain and illustrate the judgement of taste by comparing it to the other two forms of judgement: the judgement of the good and the judgement of the *angenehm*. When added to another form of judgement discussed in 'Analytik des Erhabenen', the judgement of the sublime, there are now four forms of judgement in the discussion. Among these four, the judgement of the good is the only form that is not reflective. It is a logical judgement by its very nature. Kant mentioned and discussed all these judgements and compared and illustrated their differences. However, his main focus is only on the judgement of taste since, according to him, it is the only kind of pure aesthetic judgement that can be used to determine the beautiful and reflects the pure principle of the judgement itself.

Among all the kinds of judgement that Kant categorised, only the judgement of taste is considered to be purely aesthetic and reflective. Unlike the judgement of the *angenehm* and the judgement of the sublime, it is 'uncontaminated' by other feelings or inclination of the subject. This absence of inclination or emotion allows the subject to have the 'common' process of judging like others. In short, in every single subject who makes the judgement of taste, there

lies a certain ‘common form’ of the judging procedure that he can share with everyone. Since it contains only a ‘form’ of the judgement, it is possible for the judgement of taste to claim its universality. In this way, it contrasts with the judgement of the good, which is logical and determinative and where its claim for universality is through the concept and the end. In short, impartiality is a special characteristic of the judgement of taste, which the other kinds of judgement do not share. In this way, the judgement of taste is significant for Kant in two aspects. Besides helping him ‘fill the gap’ and get into the detail of the process of cognitive faculties and the intellect, it also helps him identify an *a priori* principle of the feeling of pleasure or displeasure to use in the field of art and, accordingly, it means that Kant can complete the *a priori* principle for all kinds of upper mental faculties.

Because of the characteristics of the judgement of taste that Kant discusses in *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Arendt chooses to use it as her model of judging politically. Here, the question to be discussed arises: Is it justifiable to use the judgement of taste, maneuvered by Kant to use in his judgement of art, into the world of politics? Regarding this, there are several aspects to be considered. We start with the term ‘the judgement of taste’ in Arendt’s understanding.

Firstly, when reading about the concept of judgement, it is difficult to see a distinct line between Kant’s original idea and the interpretation or the proposal that Arendt made, since both of them are expressly intertwined throughout the texts. However, by further closely examining Kant’s original texts, the distinction can be noticed and Arendt’s own proposal can be highlighted. One confusing issue that readers might have to face when reading Arendt’s lectures relates to the term ‘the judgement of taste’ itself. For example, throughout the text, Arendt seems to use this term and ‘reflective judgement’ synonymously. Despite the rendering of the term as ‘the judgement of taste’, it can be seen that the discussion has been done under the idea of reflective judgement in general. However, as we have already understood from the discussion in previous sections, using these two terms interchangeably can easily be understood. Due to the fact that the judgement of taste is the only kind of judgement that is purely reflective, it is legitimate that Arendt uses these two terms in this way.

In addition, as has been seen, Kant clearly separates many kinds of judgement that seem to be identical in order to find the ‘pure’ form of the judgement of taste. Arendt, on the other hand, does not seem to do so. In fact, there is nowhere that Arendt makes a clear distinction between the four kinds of reflective judgement, especially the distinction between the judgement of the agreeable and the judgement of taste. Sometimes, the definitions of the two kinds of judgement seem to be the same and sometimes they are altered from Kant’s original text and are used with particular and specific meanings. Moreover, in addition to the confusion caused by using the terms in different languages, other ‘opaque’ and confusing explanations can often be found throughout the text. This confusion, in fact, arises from the perplexing nature of Arendt’s explanation of the terms ‘taste’ and ‘the judgement of taste’. After further close examination of the text, however, this confusion does not seem to be as significant as it first appears.

According to Arendt, ‘the judgement of taste’ and ‘taste’ are not similar. The judgement of taste refers to judgement about the beautiful and is perceived as the only kind of judgement that contains the pure principle of judgement. Taste, on the other hand, refers to ‘sense’, and

sometimes specifically refers to one of the five senses. In fact, for Arendt, the judgement of taste derives from the sense of taste which she considers to be subjective in nature, as follows:

“This then led us to ask ourselves why the mental phenomenon of judgement was derived from the sense of taste and not from the more objective senses, especially the most objective of them, the sense of sight.”<sup>72</sup>

And she further argues that the term ‘the judgement of taste’ contains the word ‘taste’, as follows:

“...and the inner sense is discriminatory by definition: it says it-pleases-or-it-displeases. It is called taste because, like taste, it chooses.”<sup>73</sup>

Through an explanation of the relationship between the concept of ‘taste’ as a ‘sense’ and the faculty of judgement, Arendt proposes two reasons that make taste a ‘vehicle’ for judgement. First of all, taste is subjective. Unlike sight, hearing and touch, which deal directly and objectively with objects, taste cannot be communicated through the objects with the other people. Like smell, taste cannot be identifiable, shared with others, and expressed in words.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, it cannot be re-presented and it is private. It is an inner sense.<sup>75</sup> In short, the way that taste pleases does not ‘cling’ to the existing object itself but to the subject who feels. Secondly, taste is a sense which has a discriminatory nature since it relates to ‘the particular qua particular’.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, the characteristics of taste and the feeling from taste are:

“And the it-pleases-or-displeases-me is almost identical with an it-agrees-or-disagrees-with-me. The point of the matter is: I am directly affected. For this very reason, there can be no dispute about right or wrong here. *De gustibus non disputandum est*; there can be no dispute about the matter of taste.”<sup>77</sup>

In other words, taste, even though it shares some similarities with the judgement of taste, it also has some differences. The key difference is being ‘directly affected’ by taste and the ‘disinterestedness’ of the judgement of taste. With the help of the other two mental faculties, imagination and *sensus communis*, the judgement of taste can overcome the problem of being directly affected, which leads to the incommunicability of taste. Arendt describes imagination

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<sup>72</sup> Arendt. *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, 66.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 69.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 64.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 66.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.



as a faculty of making present that which is absent, and explains that this helps transform an object into something that is not directly confronted with the subject.<sup>78</sup> In other words, it creates the condition of impartiality for the subject to judge, as follows:

“...when one is uninvolved, like the spectator who was uninvolved in the actual doings of the French Revolution.... One then speaks of judgement and no longer of taste because, though it still affects one like the matter of taste, one now has, by means of representation, established the proper distance, the remoteness or uninvolvedness or disinterestedness, that is requisite for approbation and disapprobation, for evaluating something at its proper worth. By removing the object, one has established the conditions for impartiality.”<sup>79</sup>

What Arendt tries to explain here is that, by using imagination, we consider the feeling of our pleasure not by sensual organs but by the representation we have in our mental faculty. Therefore, the feeling is now moved from the determining ground of the sensual to one of reflection. And, with the help of *sensus communis*, the faculty that helps the subject to overcome his special subjective conditions into the general condition for the sake of others,<sup>80</sup> the subject is then allowed to communicate his feelings with others. Arendt argues that Kant was aware of this non-subjective feature in taste, which seems to be private and subjective. She calls this non-subjective element in the non-objective senses ‘intersubjectivity’.<sup>81</sup>

By observing the difference between taste and the judgement of taste in this way, it can be seen that ‘taste’ for Arendt is in fact nothing but Kant’s judgement of the *angenehm*, which is a judgement that depends on the sense of the subject that is affected by the object alone. The ‘It-agrees-or-disagrees-with-me’ must be used to render the *Wohlgefallen* that comes from judging the *angenehm* or the agreeable. Unlike when Arendt previously wrote in ‘Some Questions of Moral Philosophy’,<sup>82</sup> the term ‘It-pleases-or-displeases-me’ in the quotation above therefore seems to be transcribed from the term ‘*Lust oder Unlust*’, which was employed by Kant to explain the feeling of *Wohlgefallen* that comes from the *Geschmacksurteil* or the judgement of the beautiful. In other words, Arendt explains Kant’s judgement of the *angenehm* through the concept of taste. It is essential, therefore, to clearly specify the definitions of Kant’s single terms that Arendt used in her writing in order to obtain a sense of what she tried to propose in her argument.

In summary, by eliminating one’s own private condition, one moves to the general condition or the condition of impartiality. And by doing so, one moves from taste to the judgement of taste. According to Arendt, therefore, the connection between taste and the judgement of taste is considered as a movement that one does by eliminating one’s own condition. Kant does not

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 67.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Hannah Arendt, “Some Questions of Moral Philosophy,” in *Responsibility and judgment*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken books, 2003).

mention this kind of connection in his *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. He seems to distinguish between the judgement of the *angenehm* and the judgement of taste. Despite doing so, he also allows for calling both ‘the judgement of taste’. The first must be considered as a ‘taste of sense’ while the latter should be called the ‘taste of reflection’.

Moving from the difference between the judgement of taste and the judgement of the *angenehm* to the difference between the judgement of the good and the judgement of taste, the latter seems to be more problematic and it is difficult to create any distinction between the two. For Kant, it is obvious that the judgement of good and the judgement of the beautiful rarely have something in common. In fact, their grounds, *modus operandi* and subject matter are totally different from one another. Kant’s moral theory has its foundation on the object of judgement and its judgement is seen as determinative. The judgement of taste, on the other hand, has a subjective ground and is considered to be reflective. In her *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*, Arendt does not make this distinction in a very straightforward manner and it is difficult to determine her position on this at first because she always talks about Kant in her own distinctive voice. There is a blurred line between Kant’s philosophy and her interpretation. Sometimes, she seems to differentiate between the judgement of the beautiful and the judgement of moral. For example,

“...behind taste, ...Kant had discovered an entirely new human faculty, namely judgement, but at the same time, he withdrew moral propositions from the competence of this new faculty.”<sup>83</sup>

But when she explains about the judgement of taste, she writes,

“– when one is involved, like the spectator who was uninvolved in the actual doings of the French Revolution – can be judged to be right or wrong, important or irrelevant, beautiful or ugly, or something in between.”<sup>84</sup>

Even when she argues about the *sensus communis*, she writes,

“The most surprising aspect of this business is that common sense, the faculty of judgement and of discriminating between right and wrong, should be based on the sense of taste.”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 67.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 64.

The questions here are: What position does Arendt take relating to the connection between moral and taste? Is discerning right or wrong identical to discerning beautiful or ugly? Is it possible to use the faculty of judgement or the judgement of taste, which is grounded on the taste, in judging moral issues? In fact, these questions concern not only inquiry into the relations between moral and the judgement of taste but also their relation to the political issue. This thesis will discuss these issues in further detail in Chapter IV. However, a short explanation of the relation between the judgement of taste and the judgement of moral follows.

By further exploring ‘Lectures on some Questions of Moral Philosophy’, it is very clear that Arendt suggests a strong connection between the judgement of taste and the idea of moral. In these lectures, even though she praises Kant as the first philosopher to engage with modern terminology relating to moral, it is his third critique, not the second, within which she finds the reasons for this. However, when it comes to her discussion on this in *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*, her original suggestion seems more obscure because the opinions she gives are not as consistent throughout the text. This obscurity, in fact, comes from the fact that Arendt’s own opinion and her explanation of Kant are so interwoven that it is hard to determine the boundaries of her interpretation and the original text. However, it can be noticed that the term ‘discerning right from wrong’ was added to explain judgement when she had already defined the concept of judgement as being separate from taste and described a similar situation relating to the relationship between actor and spectator in political matters and art, as follows:

“Since Kant did not write his political philosophy, the best way to find out what he thought about this matter (relationship between actor and spectator in the matter of history – my own explanation) is to turn to his ‘Critique of Aesthetic Judgement’, where, in discussion the production of art works in their relation to taste, which judges and decides about them, he confronts analogous problems.”<sup>86</sup>

What it implies to the reader here is that, once Arendt has confirmed her intention to find the answer to the political in the third critique, she also started to convey the matter of moral along with her explanation of the judgement of taste. In other words, after proposing and proving that Kant’s idea of the political was to be found in his third critique, Arendt started including her idea of judgement of taste, even though, in Kant’s terms, with her own concepts of the political and moral. In this way, her judgement of taste has become connected to ‘the judgement of the good’ in her own sense. This, in turn, affirms her different position on matters of morality from that of Kant. In short, the judgement of the good or the idea of moral for her and for Kant must be founded upon a different ground. Furthermore, it must be able to be judged in the same way as aesthetic judgement.

To conclude whether Arendt ‘fused’ the judgement of the beautiful or the judgement of taste with other forms of judgement and was selective when reading Kant’s views on this it is necessary to return to the beginning of this discussion in Part II of this chapter. In one sense,

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 61.

Arendt and Kant share the same attempt to find the principle of judgement through discussion of the judgement of taste. Therefore, one thing to be kept in mind while reading Arendt's writings on this is that the term 'the judgement of taste' has been often used interchangeably with the principle of judgement in general. And from this, Arendt starts to use 'judgement' in the sense of the principle of judgement, which has reflective and aesthetic characteristics, and then uses it in other fields. In other words, she did not deal with aesthetic judgement for the aesthetic or for the sake of politics but to find its principle in order to later make her claim on the condition of the political. Certainly, there are many fields that Arendt found should be judged reflectively but this does not agree with Kant's writing. However, the question to pose here is not about the justification relating to the fusion between the judgement of taste and the other forms, but the justification of exercising the judgement of taste – as a principle of judgement – outside the aesthetic realm. This justification and further explanation are discussed in the last chapter of this thesis.

## Conclusion

After exploring and examining thoroughly Kant's principle of judgement in this chapter, we can see more clearly the deliberative reading of Arendt on Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. Kant, by proposing an a priori principle of judgement, offered a way to understand the mental faculty which helps to decide and discern the beauty of an object. With some characteristics of this particular faculty, Arendt found it close to the idea of sociability and saw it as a human capability to do politics. In other words, Arendt regarded judgement as a political faculty and thus proposed to read *Kritik der Urteilskraft* as a "Critique of Politics".

However, the alternative style of reading she proposed was unconventional and her explanation of Kant's idea of aesthetic judgement sounds somewhat problematic. The aim of this chapter is to clarify Kant's theory of judgement and provide a background for justifying Arendt's reading of it, especially, her claim about reading Judgement as a political faculty. Therefore, the chapter was divided into two main parts. The first part focused at giving a background information about Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, especially critique of taste and the principle of judgement, in details. The second part discussed Arendt's reading on Kant's theory of judgment, it also clarified and justified some of the claims Arendt made.

Kant referred to judgement about the beautiful as a judgement of taste and he discussed this in his third Critique, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. *Kritik der Urteilskraft* or *Critique of the Power of Judgement* was written with the aim of finding an a priori principle for the feeling of pleasures or displeasures which Kant considered as indicative of one of the three upper mental faculties. Kant divided this book into two main parts; 'Critique of the Power of Aesthetic judgement' (*Kritik der ästhetischen Urteilskraft*) and 'Critique of the Power of Teleological Judgement' (*Kritik der teleologischen Urteilskraft*). The first part is again divided into two chapters; 'Analytic of the Power of Aesthetic judgement' (*Analytik der ästhetischen Urteilskraft*) and 'Dialectic of the Power of Aesthetic Judgement' (*Dialektik der ästhetischen Urteilskraft*). The first chapter, 'Analytic of the Power of Aesthetic judgement', is again split into two topics; 'Analytic of the Beautiful' (*Analytik des Schönen*) and 'Analytic of the Sublime' (*Analytik*

des Erhabenen), in which the second topic includes ‘Deduction of the Pure Aesthetic Judgement’ (Deduktion der reinen ästhetischen Urteile) within. Arendt, in her *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*, stated that only the first part concerns “the political” and thus she intended to focus merely on this part. The discussion above has followed her reading such that, among the topics in the first part, the judgement of the beautiful is considered to be the focal point. Thus, the argument in the thesis emphasizes only on ‘Analytic of the Beautiful’ and the second part of the chapter explained why are these selections legitimate.

Kant explains that there are two types of judgement; determinative and reflective. The difference between these two types of judgement concerns with the role of “concept” in the process of judging. For determinative judgement, concepts play a very crucial role. They determine in order to form a right judgement and have a direct link with an “end” of the object. Reflective judgement, on the other hand, is not regulated by the concepts. Thus, it is merely a process of the mind that reflects on an object without an affect from conceptual determination. For Kant, aesthetic judgement is one of the three forms of reflective judgement besides teleological judgement and the principle of judgement itself. However, he did not write about the principle of judgement directly but chose to discuss the principle of judgement through his idea of aesthetic judgement instead. In other words, Kant states that aesthetic judgement, unlike teleological judgement, is the only form of pure reflective judgement due to the fact that it judges merely upon the “form” of the object. Therefore, ‘Analytic of the Beautiful’ which is the only place discussing aesthetic judgement is also the only place where Kant’s principle of judgement could be understood. In sum, Arendt’s claim about her selection of the text is found legitimate. It is not an arbitrary choice to focus on the first part of *Kritik der Urteilskraft* to read Kant’s theory of judgement.

However, to claim only the first part of the book to be Kant’s political theory and make a division between the two parts of the book by the concept of the political sounds even harder to accept. For most of Kantian scholars, Pluhar and Guyer for example, the two parts of *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, despite their lack of connectivity, share with one another the concept of purposiveness. The concept of purposiveness (Zweckmässigkeit) is a concept which may explain the causal relation between concepts of an object with the aim or the end of the object. This is an influence of Aristotle’s “four causes” principle. To explain it simply, an idea of purposiveness is an idea that explains an object by the relationship between its concepts and its function. Giving an example, a car has wheels and these wheels help to make it move. A subject judges this object as a car partly because s/he links the concept (an object with wheels) and the end (to be a moving vehicle) together. In cognitive judgement, this certain idea of purposiveness is objective and real. It is determined by the ‘real’ connection between the concepts and the function. In reflective judgement, however, this purposiveness is unreal. It is judged merely as if there is a linkage between the end and its concepts. This idea of purposiveness is, therefore, extremely vital in understanding *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. However, Arendt tried avoid discussing this concept in her explanation about Kant. The reason is obvious, to accept an idea of purposiveness is to accept “an end” or “purpose” and its determination of things; and this is contradicting to Arendt’s concept of “politics” and “the political” in which freedom is the most basic and significant characters.

Instead of identifying purposiveness as the binding concept between the two parts, she points to human “communicability” as a joint concept between these two types of judgement and proposes “politics” to be a genuine topic of *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. She points out that plurality and communicability are the foremost ideas in *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. In the first part of *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, the communicability of judgement is the key; while in the second part, the sociality of man is the point. In other words, the plurality of men and their connectivity are the relevant points. And since plurality of men is one of the fundamental conditions of politics in Arendt’s thought, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* is thus a “Critique of Politics” for Arendt. Unlike the other Critiques, she claimed, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* is the only one that discusses man as “men in Plural”.

While reading *Kritik der Urteilskraft* as a Critique of Politics, the thesis also discusses why Arendt claimed that only the first part concerns with the idea of “the political”. This claim is extremely significant in order to affirm her claim about action and the political as distinctive from work and politics in general. At the end of the second part of *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Kant discusses the sociability of man. And even though Kant does not discuss anything about “politics” directly in any part of *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, from this, Arendt claims about Kant’s awareness of a difference between “the social” and “politics”. That is to say, Arendt claims Kant’s discussion in aesthetic judgement as “the political” and one in teleological judgement as “the social”. And together with the fact that only the first part of *Kritik der Urteilskraft* is the part that Kant discusses about the principle of judgement or the pure form of reflective judgement, only aesthetic judgement is thus in Arendt’s and this thesis’s interest. In fact, Arendt found that only Kant’s idea of the principle of judgement that corresponds to her idea of action and the political.

Kant explains that the judgement of taste, as a model of principle of judgement, is not a cognitive judgement, i.e., it is not operated logically. By indicating so, Kant claims that the power of judgement has its own mode of operation or *modus operandi*. This particular mode of operation makes *Urteilskraft* subjective and impartial in its nature. It is subjective, not objective, because it does not have “an object” as a determining ground but it is operated from the point of view of “the subject”. In other words, the judgement of taste depends only on the feeling of the subject who sees a certain object, make a representation of its through his power of imagination, and then “feel” in order to make an aesthetic judgement. In other words, this kind of judgement does not include purpose or function into its operating process and depends merely to the subject who judges, not the object itself.

However, this kind of subjective judgement, despite its lack of objective ground, can claim general or universal validity due to its impartial character. Kant explains that the quality of the judgement of taste is subjective “without interest”, i.e., it pleases without gratification. To expound this in detail, Kant states that the feeling of pleasure or displeasure arising from the judgement of taste does not arise from a sensation of private feeling. In other words, it is not sensual or arousing and it does not stir the subject’s desire. Therefore, the subject’s state and the object’s existence are not directly related. In this way, Kant concluded that this kind of judgement is impartial, thus, there is a possibility that it can be expanded from a subjective feeling into a universal standard.

Speaking in another way, this possibility to be expanded and universally accepted express a special characteristic, communicability, of the judgement of taste. In contrast to the subject's private feeling on which the "liking" or "Angenehm" is grounded, the beautiful is judged on everyone's subjective foundation. Kant bases the ground for universal validity of judgement on the faculty of representation, only one of the two faculties that can be universally communicated. For Kant, also Arendt, these faculties are communicable because they are the basic faculties which everyone has in common. In other words, Kant and Arendt believed that humans, despite their differences, can understand one another and share the same feelings and thought because they share and exercise the same basic mental faculties. According to Kant, these include the faculty of cognition and the faculty of representation. Judgement of taste cannot be grounded upon cognition because it is not fixed to any designated concepts thus grounded solely upon the faculty of representation. The *Frei Spiel*, the free movement between the power of imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) and Understanding (**Verstand**), helps make the power of representation (*Vorstellungskraft*) free. In sum, despite the fact that there are no concepts and objects as determining grounds, the judgement of taste can claim its universal validity through the faculty of representation, the faculty of the mind which all sane persons share. Therefore, it can be commonly understood and communicable.

Arendt picked this idea from Kant and then developed her political and ethical theory upon this ground. She argued that this communicability and the 'general' validity of the judgement of taste demonstrate the "political" character of the faculty of judgement and help form ethical theory in a way that contains freedom and plurality within. Kant's judgement of taste and his principle of judgement contain some characteristics which can be related to action and politics. It concerns freedom and opinion instead of the pre-determined absolute truth. Judgement of taste, as the chapter has shown, operates under the condition of the "free-play" in which the process is neither commanded by the concepts nor pre-set end. Arendt saw this as a characteristic of freedom that corresponds well with her political theory and concept of action. In this sense, judgement is not concerned with one single "absolute truth" but relates to opinions. It needs other people to form and others to be convinced to agree. These two characters; plurality and sociability, are the very characters of the political in Arendt's thought. Thus, it is obvious why Arendt agreed with Kant and decided to depict it as her model for political and ethical thought.

The "free-play" between imagination and intellect in the operation of the judgement of taste demonstrates an "active" character of the faculty of judgement which agrees well with her concept of action and world of appearance. Imagination and the faculty of intellect are always active while judging the beautiful; and the movement of these two faculties attempting to find a balance is the feeling of pleasure and displeasure itself. For Arendt, the political realm is characterised by an active character. This is contrast to the static and inalterable world of philosophy in which Arendt rejected. For her a never-ending movement of action and the world of appearance are the "real condition" of men and human lives. And in such a world of life, speech is also primal. Thus, communicability is also an essential disposition of man who lives with others in the world of politics. In this way, the faculty of judgement in which contains a communicability character reveals its compatability with action and politics. And therefore, it is perfectly fit to Arendt's political thought.

In sum, Arendt did not merely recommend using judgement of taste, which is supposed to use only in the realm of aesthetics, into the socio-political realm, but in fact, she suggested considering the judgement of taste itself as a political activity. In order to understand this issue, Arendt's concept of politics should be deliberately defined. The coming chapter is going to explain and define her concept of politics. Through the concept of action, an only political activity in the human world of appearance, the denotation of politics and the political will be defined. These discussions upon action and politics will help clarify Arendt's unclear claims appearing in this chapter and, at the same time, will also help answer one of the main questions posed in this thesis; is it legitimate for Arendt to see Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* as his *Critique of Politics*?



## Chapter III

### Judgement and the Idea of Political

In Chapter II, this thesis explained Kant's theory of judgement, especially the judgement of taste and the judgement of the beautiful. It also demonstrated how Arendt found Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* to be his political philosophy since she found that his theory of judgement has the characteristics of communicability and freedom. However, the thesis has not yet justified her proposal nor concluded whether her argument is plausible due to the fact that her concept of 'politics' and 'the political' need to be understood. This chapter has the main aim of explaining Arendt's concept of politics and her idea of the political, and it will justify her proposal relating to Kant's judgement at the end of the chapter.

To read and understand Arendt's theory is not a straightforward task. Therefore, in order to understand her concept of politics and the political, it is necessary to recognise her specific ideas in her political thought, which developed in a particular way. Naturally, Arendt is seen as a selective writer, who is often criticised about her 'selective method'. Readers and critics find that she always chose and picked out supporting arguments that only suited her theory and left many related facts she did not want to mention out of the discussion. This criticism surely has a point. It is undeniable that Arendt intentionally set a specific question and has a particular explanation to answer it in her writings. Her separation between work and action, for example, leads to the questionable distinction between the spheres of the social and the political which seem impossible to disengage. However, with a basic understanding of her political thought, this distinction can be explained and understood.

The main questions discussed in this chapter will revolve around the following discussions: How can Arendt find Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* to be his political philosophy? Is her interpretation wrong or, at least, too selective? Does she over-claim to propose so? In fact, all of these questions are spin-offs from the one main basic question: What is 'politics' and 'political philosophy' for Hannah Arendt? In this chapter, this question will be answered through the clarification and discussion about her definition of politics and its relating concepts.

To understand Arendt's concept of politics and her political thought, one must firstly understand her concept of *vita activa*. For Arendt, *Vita activa* is a form of human life that lives under some conditions on earth and it is a life that physically 'appears' to be perceived by its fellows. In contrast to the *vita contemplativa*, the 'contemplative life', which Arendt terms 'the life of the mind', *vita activa* is a life in which humans stay with and among others; a life to appear and be seen in. Arendt discusses this way of life mainly in *The Human Condition*, where she explains about the basic conditions and activities of humans. In fact, in this manuscript, Arendt has created a basis for her overall project about her thinking about politics. Most of her political thoughts was based on this proposition.

This chapter has two main objectives. Firstly, it will delineate Arendt's concept of politics and the political. Besides helping answer the second aim: to help justify Arendt's claim about Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, it also helps answer the question about her idea of ethics that

will be discussed in the last chapter. To do so, it will start by explaining the term ‘*vita activa*’ in which the concept of politics is discussed. After that, her concept of politics will be discussed, along with its characteristics, before moving on to justify her reading of Kant’s theory of judgement. As a result, this chapter will be divided into five parts. Part I aims to provide a foundation for Arendt’s concept of action by explaining her concept of *vita activa*. Part II will discuss the relationship between ‘action’ and ‘public realm’ in order to identify Arendt’s concept of politics, and this will be further explained under the concept of *politeúesthai* in Part III. Part IV will examine the process-character of politics and the relations between politics and power. Once these four parts have been discussed, Arendt’s concept of politics will be clear enough to be used in a discussion in Part V about her justification and reading of Kant’s theory of judgement.

### Section I: *Vita activa* and ‘Action’

In order to discuss *vita activa*, the main focus must be to highlight the book that Arendt published in 1958 with the title *The Human Condition*. Not only because this is the book that discusses *vita activa* directly in detail, but also that most of her subsequent works are simply the “offshoots” of the concept of action and other related concepts which are discussed in this manuscript. According to Arendt, politics is one of the three activities that correspond to the basic conditions of man. For her, human is a conditioned being<sup>1</sup> whose existence is determined beyond merely his own life between birth and death. Unlike other animal beings, men can fabricate and create conditions for themselves. Their existence does not merely depend on a pre-given condition and they are not incapable of controlling or changing anything around them. In Arendt’s words, “human is a conditioned being because everything he contacts with turns immediately into a condition of their existence.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, men are bound to live in both pre-given and self-created conditions.

Arendt calls the life that men living under these basic conditions “*vita activa*”. The term *vita activa* designates a restless and agonistic life, which Arendt describes as being opposite to a quiet life of contemplation. A contemplative life, either a philosophical or a religious one, has always been praised for its ‘superiority’ over a political life and a mundane world. The body is demed ‘inferior’ to the soul, as is mortality to eternity. Living in a confusing and active world is not as noble as living in a quiet and serene world, such as death. Arendt aims to recover the status of an active life in hierarchical order. In other words, she raises an active life into a level equal to a contemplative life, yet has no intention to eulogize it.

*Vita activa* is significant for Arendt at least in two ways. First of all, it designates a life that ‘appears’, i.e., a life with activities that can be seen and heard by others. Appearance is a key spirit of existence. Unlike the contemplative world, or the life of the mind, the existence of things can be determined by its appearance to sensual perception. Therefore, what can be seen, heard or touched cannot be denied its reality of existence. Secondly, *vita activa* includes politics; an activity which she praises highly and admires. With politics, men become distinct

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<sup>1</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

from other human beings and animals. And again, this distinction is demonstrated and can only be understood through physical activities in the world of appearance.

Arendt names three fundamental activities of men in *vita activa*, and each corresponds to one of the basic conditions that life on earth has given to men.<sup>3</sup> They are labour, work and action. Arendt explains that labour is an activity that corresponds to the biological process of the human body, and the condition of labour is the life of a human itself.<sup>4</sup> A human needs labour to sustain his own life and species. It is vital for survival and to maintain a life process. Work, on the other hand, corresponds to the worldliness or unnaturalness of human existence.<sup>5</sup> It provides artificial things to help life endure through time. Houses, buildings, schools and tables are examples of the fabricated things that men invent for their convenience and a comparable long-lasting life.

Unlike the two activities mentioned above, action is the only activity that goes on directly between men without the intermediaries of matter.<sup>6</sup> For Arendt, it corresponds to the human condition of plurality; a condition that is not only the *conditio sine qua non* but the *conditio per quam* of political life.<sup>7</sup> In other words, among the three basic activities, action is the one that relates to politics the most. For Arendt, it is a fact that, because men are born and live among others, plurality is therefore a fundamental condition of human life that humans on earth cannot avoid. According to her, action is an activity that helps form and preserve political bodies besides creating the condition for “remembrance”; i.e., the history of mankind.<sup>8</sup>

Arendt expounds on these three activities and their relationships through the idea of the “realm” and the “sphere” in which they dominate. She firstly proposes her concepts of action and labour by explaining them relating to the ancient Greek way of thinking. In ancient Greek society, Arendt explains, action and labour were activities representing a clear border between the “public” and the “private”. Labour, concerned with necessity production and the ever-recurring life cycle, is specified as a “private” activity. The term “private” here, for Arendt, has a definitively different meaning from the terms “privacy” and “private” as understood in the modern world. Her concept of the “private sphere” is drawn from the concept of “household” or *oikia* in ancient Greece. Therefore, it does not have a sense of intimacy but production to meet the necessities of life. Farming, labouring, raising children, slave management, cooking, land managing, etc. were all included as part of household management and were considered private activities. Economic activity was therefore one of the key concerns of labour and the private sphere. Here, the word “private” therefore creates a sense of non-communal activities that men do not share with other men but constitute an individual’s life maintenance activities that prepare them to be ready for the “outside world”.

The “public sphere”, however, designates space and activities in which men shared their activities together. The words ‘*agora*’ and ‘*ecclesia*’ were the significant physical spaces corresponding to the realm that is “common” and “public”. Conversing, searching for any form

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 7–9.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 8–9.

of truth or giving opinions about the community are all activities of the public domain. They require not only plenty of available time but also the companionship of others. Action, in contrast to labour, is an activity not conditioned by the necessity of life but conditioned by the plurality of men, and it is the only fundamental human activity that perfectly fits in this area. In ancient Greece, a man could leave his *oikos*, roam carefree around the city and carry out activities in the *polis*, because he was free from the responsibility of the household. Leisure time is a prerequisite for politics and other public life.

The public sphere dwells in the activity that relates to freedom and equality. Stepping from the safe private sphere of the *oikos* into an unpredictable sphere of “the public”, men learned to live among equals. While the household was a place where men enjoyed their despotic power and supreme authority over family and property, the *polis* was the place where equal people connected and engaged in the sphere where an individual man ruled no one and, not being ruled by anyone, lived with freedom. The public sphere, in this way, is considered the sphere of freedom, for it is the sphere where men were freed from both physical needs and the suppression of the others.

The connection between the public and the private spheres shows that these two spheres, despite their dependency can never be borderless. It was permissible for men to enter into the public sphere when they were secure in private affairs and therefore passing from one sphere to the other was up to them. However, these two spheres did not overlap. Men would not be able to stay in the two spheres at the same time. The borders between the two spheres were cut-clear and the distinction between them highlighted not only the difference between activities and physical space but also the status of those people participating. Transborder movement is a prerogative of the free man.

However, separation of the two spheres did not last long and could not survive to the modern age. The emergence of the ‘social realm’ in the modern age has blurred the border between the two spheres. The social realm in ancient Greece, according to Arendt, seems to be merely an extension of the “private realm” into a bigger family. Explained in Aristotelian terms, clans and villages were not similar to city-states and they functioned in the same way in which households did.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, they had a despotic relationship and autocratic character. For Aristotle, they were not self-sufficient and were ruled under the monarchical orders of the clan’s leader. Arendt maintains that ‘social’ was not considered as public, and the emergence of the public body, the *polis*, came with the price of the existing order of social rule.<sup>10</sup> However, this status of society and the social realm drastically changed into being neither public and no longer an extension of the private sphere with the arrival of nation-states.

Not until the modern era did society and the social realm, in the sense that it is neither private nor public, become a fundamental condition of men. Society as a whole, as in nation-states, has turned out to be one enormous family managed in the form of ‘collective housekeeping’.<sup>11</sup> The emergence of an economical science of the modern era has created a new concept of the

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<sup>9</sup> Aristotle, *Politika*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1944), 1252 a-b, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0058>.

<sup>10</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 28.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

term ‘society’, and this new connotation of society has also changed the meaning of ‘the private’ and ‘the public’ and their significance almost beyond recognition.<sup>12</sup> Society and the social realm, for Arendt, is merely an expansion of the housekeeping business into the sphere of the public; or, in her own words, they rose “from the shadowy interior of the household into the light of the public sphere.”<sup>13</sup>

Devouring and replacing the matter that once was private in ancient Greek regime, the social or a society demands its members to act as though they are members of the enormous family.<sup>14</sup> The autocratic power of the father has been replaced by the despotic authority of the nation’s governing body, and the equality of the people is similar to the equality of family members before the tyrannical household head.<sup>15</sup> Men as equals, in the sense that no man rules over others, disappeared, and plurality collapsed. Within the social realm, it is conformity that counts, neither contesting actions nor diverse opinions. In this way, Arendt continues that to transcribe and explain *zoon politikon* as *animal socialis* is a totally wrong understanding.<sup>16</sup> She suggests that *zoon politikon* indicates a specific concept of politics with a clear separation between the private and the public sphere of ancient Greece. Therefore, *zoon politikon* (ζῶον πολιτικόν), the political animal in Aristotelian terms, is not just a proposed political theory of the thinker but is also a fact and idea of political society during that age. *Polis* is a social organisation, which was formed not only with a specific purpose but also from the contrasting ideas from the private sphere and *oikos*. *Societas*, with its Roman origin, is a disparate social organisation from the *polis*. The term ‘*societas*’ in Latin indicates an alliance of people for a specific purpose in the way that men organise in order to rule others or to commit a crime.<sup>17</sup> For Arendt, society only serves the need of biological life and it is a natural organisation with *oikos* and *oikia* at its centre.<sup>18</sup>

The realm of the social, once blurring the line between the private and the public spheres, dominates both the realms of private and public. Unlike ancient Greek distinguishing between the private and public spheres, it is impossible to demarcate the border between each realm in the modern era. These realms overlap, not only in the spatial dimension but also in their activities. In fact, in order to explain about the realms in the modern world, Arendt makes a separation between the social realm and the political realm, which are both considered public realms. Therefore, the three basic activities of men – labour, work and action – seem to perfectly fit into the three realms. Labour dominates the private realm, while work and action dominate the social and political ones.

With a common and single objective to aim for, plans and detail are significantly required in order to ensure that ‘the greatest interest of all’ will be reached. Action, an activity which is unpredictable due to its condition of plurality, is thus downgraded. Society needs predictability and durability to guarantee its goal. In this way, work, an activity of worldliness, seems to fit perfectly into the social realm. Work not only offers a durability against time but also a

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 40.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 23.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

foreseeable outcome from well-planned and well-equipped measures, and succeeds the political sphere, which was once occupied by the activity of action. Politics is therefore managed and processed in a fashion as an activity of 'work'. The social realm, in summary, is the domain that comes to substitute and dominate both the private and the public realm in the way in which it provides durability for the private and predictability for the public.

The public sphere, which once only served a political purpose, becomes occupied by two disparate realms: the social realm and the political realm. In other words, it transforms into the realm in which action shares its place with fabrication. No longer is it a space only reserved for freedom. In this way, the physical space for the common or public has also been transformed to support both social and political activities and the boundary of the two activities is obscure. The private sphere, facing a similar change, loses its sole control over resource and household management. In fact, it is left with only intimate activities of the activity of labour. In this way, the 'edges' of all three fundamental activities are now indeterminate. A certain type of activity and physical space are no longer the sole determination of the realm.

It is interesting to point out Arendt's choice of terms used here. She seems to change the terminology from 'sphere' when discussing ancient Greece's political society to 'realm' when discussing the emergence of the social. Although she does not mention this directly, this thesis maintains that she wanted to express a contrasting relationship among these three activities in the two eras by applying the different terminologies. It is noticeable that Arendt does not use the word 'sphere' when she explains about the social realm. 'Sphere' seems to be used to convey the meaning of a clear separation and all-included notions of activities. The clear separation between the two spheres in ancient Greece demarcates a clear line between the two types of activities; i.e. household management and politics. The private sphere covered all dimensions of activities that were considered to be private, while the public sphere included all dimensions of activities that were considered to be common. 'Realm', in contrast, seems to demonstrate merely a single aspect of the activities. The blurred lines among the three fundamental activities place each activity in overlapping territory. At the same time, each realm can also cover activities that were only within a specific sphere. Economics, for example, once considered to be 'the private', can now be either 'the social' or 'the political'.

In summary, *vita activa* is a life living physically in the three realms of men; i.e. the private realm, the social realm and the political realm. These three realms seem to correspond to the basic three activities: labour, work and action. However, the borders between these three activities have been developed, altered and transformed during the process of human civilisation, and what Arendt aims to present in *The Human Condition* is the transformation of these activities' relation to the modern era. These changes significantly affect the lives of men today and have created significant phenomena in human history, especially the change in understanding about politics and the public world. Part II aims to discuss an activity of action and the public realm in order to illustrate their relationship with politics.

## Section II: Action and the Public Realm

For Arendt, men can share with other animals the ability to do the activities of labour and work. However, action is the only activity which is an exclusive prerogative of men, and, in addition, among the three activities, action alone is entirely dependent upon the constant presence of others.<sup>19</sup> This sounds like an echo of Aristotle's concept of politics, especially when he defines *polis* as the highest form of community and politics as humans' greatest activity. In fact, Arendt's concept of action is exactly the same as Aristotle's concept of politics. Had we further traced her idea of politics and action; it could be said that her political theory is at certain level another version of Aristotle's *Politika*. This is especially true when considering the connection between politics and plurality in addition to the one between speech and action.

Arendt maintains that, of all the necessary activities presented within the human community, only action and speech are considered to be political, and both constitute what Aristotle called the '*bios politikos*'.<sup>20</sup> Speech plays an extremely significant role in Aristotle's theory of politics, since it helps humans reach their *telos* through the activities of the city-states. Arendt expounds that the term '*zoon politikon*' (*ζωον πολιτικον*) in Aristotelian fashion can only be understood in consideration with the term '*zoon logon echon*' (*ζωον λογον εχον*) – a living capable of speech.<sup>21</sup> Action (*πραξις*) in ancient Greek understanding included finding the right words at the right moment, and 'to be political' meant that everything was decided through words and persuasion instead of force and violence.<sup>22</sup> Violence was considered to be pre-political and outside the *polis* in the same way that slaves and barbarians were deemed to be '*aneu logou*' (*ανευ λογου*) – "a living without speech".<sup>23</sup>

Arendt advances this by suggesting the closeness between speech and action, and recommends seeing them both as 'the disclosure of the agent'.<sup>24</sup> To use the term 'agent' instead of 'subject' reminds the reader to be aware of an active characteristic of being or the potentiality of man that Arendt would like to emphasize. To disclose himself through action and speech, man distinguishes himself from others, inserts himself beyond his original physical appearance into the human world<sup>25</sup> and initiates a new thing that has never happened before. Arendt believes that human plurality, which bears the two-fold characteristic of equality and distinction, is the basic condition of both action and speech.<sup>26</sup> The communicability of men demonstrates the condition of equality while the uniqueness of a single man manifests the condition of human distinctness. In Arendt's own words, human plurality is the paradoxical plurality of unique beings.<sup>27</sup>

Only in the plurality of men, through action and speech, can man reveal himself to others. 'To reveal', despite its notion of an active characteristic of an agent, also indicates the passive form of being an agent. Man can do, make, act and even be seen, but he can only reveal himself

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 22.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 26.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 175.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 176.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 175.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 176.

when he is perceived and confirmed by others. Only through action and speech can man reveal himself as a human being or as he is. It is the only way in which he can disclose 'who', not 'what', he is.<sup>28</sup> Put another way, the revelatory quality of action and speech is possible only when men are living together, not when living alone.

For Arendt, disclosure of the agent is an absolutely vital characteristic of action. To act without disclosing oneself is considered by her as one form of fabrication in which man is only used as a means or a tool to achieve the higher object. When a man is merely used for or against others, or when he employs a means of violence to reach the aim, Arendt argues, speech will be diminished to become 'mere talk' and action will lose its character<sup>29</sup>. Therefore, action no longer exists and man can no longer disclose himself as a unique autonomous human being.

The only place where action and speech can be revealed is in the web of relationships of men. Man inserts himself into the already existing web of relationships of men and, at the same time, initiates a new relationship into the web every single time he acts and makes speech. Action binds people together; and action itself turns into an intangible web which relates everyone together. Its place is therefore in-between man and man and among man and men. Intentionally or not, through the web of relationships, action and speech produces 'stories' of men in the same way that fabrication produces material products into this world.<sup>30</sup> Certainly, man can be bound with others through many kinds of relationship and tangible product. He can relate with others through an institution, a building, a piece of art and by consuming products, but action and speech are the only activities that men can relate to one another directly without the intermediary of physical objects. Through labour and work, men also relate to one another. However, these relationships can only be created through tangible things. Once these material objects are destroyed or missing, the relationship between men also disappears.

Stories enacted from the web of relationships of men can also be shown through objects, kept in materials, and remade again and again through many kinds of medium but, for Arendt, only action is real and it can tell the story of the subject greater than the story of a person who produces it.<sup>31</sup> Despite the disappearance of material objects, stories from the web of relationships of men will not disappear but will remain in the 'memories' of the people. In this sense, Arendt maintains, the 'story', unlike the material object, is therefore not a product.<sup>32</sup> And since it is not a product, one cannot claim to be the producer or author of his own story. In fact, the agent starts his action and speech but he is not the one who makes the story. It is the story that reveals an agent.<sup>33</sup> In other words, the one who judges action, and speech is the one who makes a story, and it can be anyone and everyone but the agent himself.

Action, therefore, as distinguished from fabrication or work, is an activity that corresponds to the social realm in the sense that it reveals and discloses the agent of an act. Unlike labour, in which an agent is similar to other animals, action allows an agent to be unique and distinguished. Men share with other animal beings the unending and recurring cycle of life to

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 179.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 180.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 184.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.



maintain life itself since the day of birth to the day of death. Forced by the necessities of life, man needs to eat, produce, labour, etc. He is not different from other men and other animal beings regarding these kinds of activity. He, as *animal laboran*,<sup>34</sup> has nothing to reveal. For fabrication, it seems that this certain activity can help reveal agent through work and product. Work, unlike labour, is an activity whereby man creates something that lasts longer than a ‘consuming’ product. As a *homo faber*, man lives in the world of durability of human artifice.<sup>35</sup> Yet, he is just a fabricator or a maker, who is merely a ‘means’ to produce a product which is the real ‘end’. In other words, he might expect to show who he is through his work, employ his product as a means to explain himself, and expect to be remembered by others through his creation. However, it is the ‘artifice’ that people remember. In other words, he is dominated by his own artifice of fabrication. And in this sense, he, the fabricator, cannot reveal himself as he expected to do.

Moreover, action is only possible under the condition of the plurality of men. Unlike fabrication, whereby man can be isolated, his capacity for action is deprived when he is alone. Man can fabricate things when he is alone; all he needs is the “surrounding presence of nature for his material”.<sup>36</sup> Action, on the other hand, needs a web of actions and the surrounding presence of others.<sup>37</sup> Since action does not allow an agent to be isolated from others, either in absolute isolation like a hermit or in comparative isolation as ‘a strong man’, an actor can never be merely a ‘doer’ but always at the same time the sufferer of action.<sup>38</sup> In other words, an actor might be a beginner of his own action but he has no control over the consequences of his own action, which is boundless. Arendt compares this uncontrollability of an agent over his action as ‘a chain reaction’.<sup>39</sup> Fabrication, in contrast, allows man to have full control over his own work and product. Man can change, destroy or remake his work whenever he wants. However, this is not the case for action. The boundlessness of the consequences and the uncontrollability of action, Arendt explains, arise from the fact that the actor “moves among and in relation to other acting beings.”<sup>40</sup> In short, due to the condition of the plurality of men, no one can take control of action, either an action of his own or of others. In action, man deals with other equal men; not a material or an object. Therefore, he has no absolute domination over any single thing.

Up to this point, it can be seen that action bears in itself a quality of autonomy and freedom. The fact that no one alone in his power can control the consequences of action reminds us of the unautocratic characteristic of this certain type of activity. In this sense, it fits perfectly well within the public realm, especially the realm of the political, because they both share an anti-despotic nature. As mentioned in Part I of this chapter, Arendt demonstrates that politics was a key activity of the public sphere in ancient Greek society. Therefore, for her, political activity and action can be regarded as synonymous, since political activities occupy most of an activity of action.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 136–139.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 188.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 188–190.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 190.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

Because controllability of an agent over action might be limited or restrained at some levels by the body politic itself, i.e. the law and its institutions, none of the protection measures is fully possible. Unlike fabrication. Whereby man has an ideal form or a blueprint of his product beforehand, action, under its condition of natality and uncontrollability, can never be planned in readiness. Since action always establishes new relationships, it in the meantime always inaugurates a possibility for the arrival of new things. The actor, in this way, can neither reverse nor predict the outcomes of an action he did. He is just 'the beginner', who merely adds another relationship into the already existing web of relationships of men. After he acts, revealing himself to others, he can never predict its consequences and know exactly how he is perceived by others. Certainly, he reveals himself through his action. However, this revelatory process has not stopped there. In fact, it has never stopped. The public, the other men, those who see or hear or are heard, will continue this revelation through their perceptions. Therefore, put another way, it is not an agent who can reveal himself fully through his action but all others who 'saw' it that help reveal the agent by narrating him and his action into their stories. It is the spectators who make a better judgement and revelation. In other words, the 'appearance world' consists of both actors and spectators. In this way, action is not only controllable but is also unpredictable.

Considering it this way, Arendt is well aware of the self-revelatory characteristic of action and realizes its impact on politics and the human world quite well. In the above discussion, it can be seen that the actor has very little control and impact on his action. Action might 'boast' its supremacy and independence in Arendt's political theory. However, it does not simply mean that it can be autocratic or authoritative in itself. Arendt's suggestion about the significance of the enacted story among spectators in the revelatory process of action shows her clear awareness of this matter. She confirms that full revelation is only possible when the story has already come to an end. Therefore, the 'essence' of a single man can "come into being only when life departs,"<sup>41</sup> where the actor himself has so little control over his own story. Therefore, in order to make his action a narrative story among people, an actor needs to do something great enough to be remembered. Arendt argues that, in this way, in action, there is a characteristic of 'greatness' within; and to appear or to be perceived in the human world, this greatness is a necessity. For her, to make such an appearance via action is to make oneself exist again, not physically but socio-politically. In short, action is considered as the 'second birth' of an agent into the web of relationships and the human world; or, in her own words, "*bios politikos* is the second life of a human being."<sup>42</sup>

This obsession with the self-revelatory characteristic of an actor, Arendt explains, is unique to ancient Greece and underlies the concept of politics in ancient Greek city-states.<sup>43</sup> Here, she starts to relate action to state and the concept of politics, and makes a separation between what is normally understood as politics and her own concept of politics and the political. As we know, 'politics' can be defined in various ways, ranging from an institutional entity to an act of power. However, in general, politics is understood as an activity of the institutionalisation of society, which includes the legislative process and law. According to Arendt, the ancient

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 193.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 24.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 194.

Greeks, in contrast, did not count these kinds of activity as politics, which was seen as a pre-political activity that needed to be done before the beginning of the genuine political activity. In this way, lawmaking is similar to the work of architects and craftsmen,<sup>44</sup> which is considered by Arendt as ‘fabrication’ and could be done or accomplished by non-citizens. Politics or *politeúesthai*, on the other hand, she continues, engages in the numerous activities that took place within the *polis* and were entirely restricted to citizens only.<sup>45</sup> In this thesis’s opinion, Arendt highlighted the relationship between the term ‘*politeúesthai*’ and the notion of being a citizen in ancient Greece in order to draw a distinct line between institutionalised politics and political action.

By proposing this, it can be said that Arendt’s concept of politics is founded upon the term ‘*politeúesthai*’ in ancient Greece. What she proposes here sounds strange and implausible. How can it be possible not to include legislation and administration in the substance of politics? What and where is the borderline between public administration and political activities? In order to answer these questions and to justify Arendt’s claim, we should start to explore the contexts in which this term has been used. In doing so, it may still not be possible to be certain about how this term was actually used (as with many other studies of history) but at least it will indicate why Arendt chose to interpret this term this way.

### Section III: *Politeúesthai* and the Action of Politics

Arendt is keen to indirectly claim that the term ‘politics’ used nowadays in the western world derives from the ancient Greek term ‘*politeúesthai*’. By doing so, she explains and defines the activities and characteristics of politics through the concept of *politeúesthai* and creates a clear borderline between ‘political’ and ‘non-political’ activities in ancient Greek city-states. In order to understand the idea she proposed, this thesis finds it important to explore the concept and usage of the term ‘*politeúesthai*’ so that it can be fully understood. In fact, understanding the concept of *politeúesthai* is key to understanding the underlying concept of Arendt’s *vita activa* and politics. It can be seen at the end of this chapter why the thesis is stating this.

The word ‘*politeúesthai*’ is the infinitive form of the verb in ancient Greek which has several meanings. From the evidence and texts found, it was used in many contexts. Firstly, it was used to mean ‘living in a free state’ or ‘being a citizen/freeman’. An example of this meaning is found in Thucydides’ *The Peloponnesian War* where it reads “*athla gar ois keitai aretes megista, tois de kai andres aristoi politeuousin*” (Thucydides 2. 46),<sup>46</sup> translated as “And where the rewards for merit are greatest, there are found the best citizens”.<sup>47</sup> The phrase ‘*andres aristoi politeuousin*’ translates literally as ‘men doing politics the best’. However, to do politics in this context does not mean engaging in an *ecclesia* or ‘dicastery’ (δικαστήριον) but implies having courage and freedom; i.e. doing an action and acquiring glory from war. In short, it was used to define an activity considered as one of duties of the citizens: waging the war bravely.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, trans. Richard Crawley (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1910), 2.46, [www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Thuc.+2.46&fromdoc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0199](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Thuc.+2.46&fromdoc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0199).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

This close meaning is also found in the same text when Thucydides used the terms to create the meaning of to ‘be free’ or to ‘live in a free state’, ‘*adeos politeuein*’ (Thucydides 4. 114)<sup>48</sup> “without fearing for their rights or persons”.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, it could be used to emphasise ‘the state of being free’ of a citizen or the state of participating in public affairs. A good example of this is in *Histories* by Polybius when he stated in his text that “the Thessalians were supposed to enjoy their own constitution, and to have quite a different status to the Macedonians.”<sup>50</sup> (“*Thettaloi gar edokoun men kata nomous politeuein kai polu diapherein Makedonon.*”<sup>51</sup> The term ‘*kata nomous politeuein*’ means ‘to do politics under its law’: i.e. under its own constitution. Therefore, it highlighted a state of men who enjoy their own freedom to engage in their own *polis*’ system, which is opposite to that of the Macedonians, who were ruled under a monarchical regime.

To further discuss this, the thesis will firstly start with the choice of the term that Arendt selected. Arendt purposely decided to depict the term ‘*politeúesthai*’, and this choice of hers needs discussing. In order to define the meaning of politics, which appears in the noun form, Arendt chose to explain it through the verb form of the word in ancient Greek. It can be noticed that, in general, the verb form of a word indicates a more ‘active’ quality, while the noun form suggests a more general and ‘rigid’ sense. To use the verb form in order to explain the noun form was surely not done by accident by Arendt. She tends to emphasis the ‘active’ quality of the word she discusses. Among the three ‘voices’ of the verb in ancient Greek language – active, middle and passive – she uses the verb in its middle voice form. Therefore, she decided to discuss the concept of politics by using the term ‘*politeúesthai*’ instead of ‘*politeúein*’ (the active voice of the verb and considered the more common). Her choice for the verb indicates many things to readers, at the same time reflecting her own intention relating to creating the definitions of action and politics. For those readers who do not understand her choice here, her intentions may be overlooked. However, for those readers who notice her selection, they would definitely understand what she was trying to propose. Arendt might be criticised about her ‘selective’ purpose, but, in many cases, her ‘selection’ should not be overlooked because it specifically points out some significant features of the concepts she wanted to share.

In ancient Greek, the middle voice form was used to express the verb in order to indicate the notion of ‘acting upon itself’ or ‘acting for one’s own interest’ of an agent. Despite its similarity to reflexive verbs and reciprocal verbs, the middle voice is neither; it is similar to a verb’s intensive expression. In general, a single verb could be used in either its active voice form or its middle voice form, and these forms were similar with only slightly different meanings. In other words, most of the time, the two voices could be used interchangeably and the agent could choose to express his intention more specifically by using the right voice form. In the case that the agent wanted to indicate that the action has been done by the doer himself or for the sake of the doer himself, the middle voice would be used instead of the active one. To be more specific, to use a verb in the middle voice simply means that the author or speaker intends

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 4.114

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Polybius, *Histories*, trans. Evelyn S. Shuckburgh (London: Macmillan, 1889), 4.76, [www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0234%3Abook%3D4%3Achapter%3D76](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0234%3Abook%3D4%3Achapter%3D76).

<sup>51</sup> Polybius, *Histories*, eds. Theodoros Büttner-Wobst and L. Dindorf (Leipzig: Teubner, 1893), 4.76.2, [www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Plb.+4.76.2&fromdoc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0233](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Plb.+4.76.2&fromdoc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0233).

to emphasize the characteristic of the subject in the sentence as ‘an agent’, the actor or the active doer, of the verb.

Not all ancient Greek verbs share similar meanings between the active and middle voices. In some cases, the meaning of verbs in the middle voice could have a totally different meaning from its active counterpart while some verbs only appeared in the middle voice form. However, in the case of *politeúesthai* and *politeúein*, these two terms could be used interchangeably because there is only a small difference in meaning between the two voices. So, one can use this verb in the active or the middle voice to indicate the same meaning (although the former is more common). Therefore, by choosing the term *politeúesthai* – the verb in the middle form – Arendt not only wanted to discuss the meaning of the verb and the concept of politics but also proposed a specific feature of her concept of politics. In other words, by using the middle voice instead of the active voice, she intentionally added the notion of an ‘active activity’ of an ‘active agent’ into the meaning of politics from the outset.

In ancient Greek terms, *politeúesthai*, *politeúein* and their derivatives generally indicate a close relationship between the idea of being a free citizen and the activity of man within the public sphere when referring to this certain activity. For example, it was used to create the notion of ‘living like a freeman or a citizen’ in Thucydides’ *The Peloponnesian War*.<sup>52</sup> In some situations, it was also used to mean ‘having a certain form of government or constitution’, for example, in *The Constitution of the Athenians* (written by an unknown author once believed to be Xenophon).<sup>53</sup> Despite many contexts for its use, *politeúesthai* illustrates a group of related activities and concepts in ancient Greece. It demonstrates a notion of the public activity of a citizen. However, the above has not yet specifically illustrated the characteristics of politics in the way in which Arendt attempted to claim a distinction between politics and law. However, in *Hellenica*, when Xenophon told the story relating to the oligarchy reign of Pythodorus, he interestingly used the term *politeúesthai*, as follows:

“...Edoke toi demoi triakonta andras elesthai, hoi tous patrious nomous suggraphousi kath’ ous *politeusousi*.”<sup>54</sup> (“In the way that choosing thirty men from the citizens, they wrote the ancestors’ law under which they [*will*] *do politics*.”) (my italics)

From the text above, the thesis translates *politeusousi* directly as ‘do politics’ because it has no equivalent English translation. It appears in the form of the active future tense, which is worth commenting on here in that this verb can be normally used in the future tense even though it bears the meaning of the present tense. The term *tous patrious nomous* in the text can be literally translated as ‘the heredity/ancestor law’, which can be understood as ‘constitution’ in the modern sense. The text clearly indicates that ancient Greek society

<sup>52</sup> Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, 2.46.

<sup>53</sup> “ὥστε μὲν γὰρ βέλτιον ἔχειν τὴν πολιτείαν, οἷόν τε πολλὰ ἐξευρεῖν, ὥστε μὲντοι ὑπάρχειν μὲν δημοκρατίαν εἶναι, ἀρκοῦτως δὲ τοῦτο ἐξευρεῖν, ὅπως βέλτιον πολιτεύσονται, οὐ ῥάδιον, πλὴν, ὅπερ ἄρτι εἶπον, κατὰ μικρὸν τι προσθέντα ἢ ἀφελόντα.” Pseudo-Xenophon, *Constitution of the Athenians*, ed. E. C. Marchant, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920), 3.9, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:abo:tlg,0032,015:3:9&lang=original>.

<sup>54</sup> Xenophon, *Hellenica*, ed. E. C. Marchant, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920), 2.3.2, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0205%3Abook%3D2%3Achapter%3D3%3Asection%3D2>.

considered constructing a law as a precondition of doing politics; i.e. the law must be made before politics can be done. In this way, the making of a law was regarded to be outside the realm of the political, or, to be precise, from the notion of an acting of politics. Xenophon's text is a good illustration to help support Arendt's claim relating to the separation between lawmaking and doing politics; in other words, between work and action.

In fact, the term 'constitution' can be translated as the term '*hē politeia*', which has many other meanings in English, for example, 'citizenship', 'administration' and 'government'. It appears in the noun form and shares the same root as *politeuo/ politeúesthai* but has a different, albeit related, meaning. One example is in Plato's *Republic*, when it was used to mean a polity or form of government.<sup>55</sup> The best example of the use of both terms is in *The Constitution of the Athenians*, as follows:

“*hōste men gar beltiov echein ten politeian.....hōpos beltion politeusontai.*” (my italics)<sup>56</sup> (“As so to have a fitting/better *constitution*... in such manner as to *do politics* better.”)

From the paragraph above, the two words in italics, *politeian* and *politeúsontai*, mean ‘the constitution’ (or the government) and ‘doing politics’, respectively. The first word is used generally throughout the text in the noun form to create the idea of ‘the form or state of government’, which is, in a way, the meaning of a constitution. The second word, however, is used in its verb form and means ‘doing politics’. Again, this term appears in its future tense form, and this seems to imply a sense of both the present and the future.

From the examples above, it can be seen that '*politeúesthai*' is an action that comes after the construction of a law. As Arendt claimed, politics (in case we want to believe that it derives from this term) does not include the law constituting process. In other words, legislation and law formation are pre-political. In Athens and most of the other ancient Greek city-states, the law and its process involved only a few people in the process because, in ancient Greek society, especially in Athens, the lawmakers were normally hired from elsewhere. Usually, they were experts from other Greek city-states: i.e. they were not Athenian citizens. Therefore, law and constitution drafting processes were normally determined by a few Athenian elites and foreign lawmakers. So, although it connected with publicity and people within the public sphere, it did not come from the citizens and their activities. To be more specific in Arendt's terms, it was ‘not an activity’ of the citizens themselves but a product that came from fabrication by the few. In this way, not surprisingly, according to Arendt, this cannot be counted as action and cannot be considered to dominate in either the political or the public realm.

The difficulty in discussing these concepts in etymological fashion is searching for and finding meanings and using words similar to the original term, in addition to the uncertainty relating

<sup>55</sup> Plato's *Republic*, p. 562a.

<sup>56</sup> Partly transcribed from “ὅστε μὲν γὰρ βέλτιον ἔχειν τὴν πολιτείαν, οἷόν τε πολλὰ ἐξευρεῖν, ὅστε μὲντοι ὑπάρχειν μὲν δημοκρατίαν εἶναι, ἀρκούντως δὲ τοῦτο ἐξευρεῖν, ὅπως βέλτιον πολιτεύσονται.” Pseudo-Xenophon, *Constitution of the Athenians*, 3.9.

to how to use it within a particular context. This also includes the case of *politeúesthai*, since we have already seen that it is not easy to find the exact words to include all features of the word in another language. If use of the term '*politeúesthai*' limits it to the context similar to the above, Arendt's claim relating to the distinction between work and action will be absolutely plausible. In order to identify the 'character' of politics from the term '*politeúesthai*' and to attempt to conclude that this activity did not include legislation and administration, further exploration of its use in other contexts is helpful. As mentioned before, in many cases, the term is used to indicate the state of a person in being a citizen or doing the duty of a citizen.

The above examples, *politeúesthai* and *politeúein*, were used with the meaning of activities in the public affairs of man as a citizen of the state. In addition, the term was also translated with the meaning of having a certain form of constitution. One good example can again be found in Thucydides' *The Peloponnesian War*, where it is used to explain the form of government of the Spartans. *Kat(a) oligarchian politeúsousi*<sup>57</sup>, 'to do politics according to the oligarchy', illustrates two features of politics at the same time. In addition to indicating an activity of the citizens, it also indicates that the people of Sparta were carrying out public affairs in an oligarchical way. In short, it indicates the notion of being or performing as a citizen and at the same time indicates the form of the government for the citizen to perform. Once more, the notion of a citizen's activity in public affairs has been illustrated in this context.

The above shows that, from its etymological origin, politics are concerned with the activities of the 'citizen' in the 'public sphere'. And to be a citizen simply means to have the right and the duty to participate in the affairs of the state as an equal person. *Politeúesthai*, for Arendt, therefore implies more than the notion of a (somewhat) free agent and his 'public' affairs; it includes the notion of the participation of a man freely among equal agents. Thus, according to her explanation of *politeúesthai*, Arendt suggests that politics is a form of human activity within the *polis*; not an organisational structure of society. In this sense, politics has an 'active' character excluded from the static form of institutionalised organisation of the state. Therefore, legislation in the modern sense, because it is a form of stabilising political society, were not regarded as political activities by Arendt. Both of them are seen as work or a fabrication which is designed or made before or separately from action and politics. Work indicates the relation between an activity and its result while action focuses on its sheer activity regardless of its results and outcomes. Lawmaking and legislation, as Arendt pointed out, are considered a kind of 'making', not 'acting', since they aim at the consequences as well as the process. This kind of work in politics also expands to cover an area of public administration which includes the day-to-day operation of public affairs. Under these 'works' of political society, nothing can be considered as 'new' but everything remains and continues within the same 'flow' of a certain system, in the same way that a machine has the same day-to-day operation.

For Arendt, an 'active' characteristic of an activity is significant for politics in two senses. Firstly, it provides an opportunity for the 'new thing' to arise. In the case of labour and work, whereby activities are predetermined and stable, the opportunity to break the preset boundary and cycle of recurring life is nearly impossible. Action is the only activity of man not to be

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<sup>57</sup> Thucydides, *Historiae*, eds. H. Stuart Jones and J. E. Powell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1942), 1.19, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:abo:tlg.0003.001:1:19&lang=original>.

controlled by any limitation. Therefore, the new thing is always allowed to be perceived and recognised. Action is the only activity that reconciles to an active characteristic of politics. As a consequence, it is also the only activity that saves humans from the meaninglessness of the mundane world by providing them with the opportunity to ‘make a new start’.

To draw a demarcation line between an ‘active’ and an ‘inactive’ activity within the *polis* is essential in understanding Arendt’s concept of politics and her political theory. In general, politics is understood as an activity of men that occupies the public sphere and concerns the affairs of the people. For Arendt, the term ‘politics’ is more specific and refers to only an active style of the activity. In other words, by separating the active and the inactive activity, Arendt makes a distinction between the social sphere and the public sphere, and the social and the political. What is usually understood as politics –election, government, party system – is not exactly politics in Arendt’s definition. She saw them as features of the social rather than the political world.

Returning to the term ‘*politeúesthai*’, it is clear that this term is restricted to be acted only by the citizens of the *polis*. It indicates the right of the citizen to deal with public matters in his own state. Law can be made by the foreigner in the same way that a wall can be made by slaves; politics, on the other hand, can only be done by the ‘free man’ of the *polis*. In this way, only citizens and their activities are considered to correspond to the political and the public sphere. Once the law has been ‘made’, as in the case of lawmaking, by foreigners or experts, not particularly by the citizen; the political activities can then emerge. They are activities that the citizens become truly engage with; voting, giving speech and opinions, making decisions together, etc. They are exclusively restricted to citizens and concerns entire activities that took place within the *polis*.<sup>58</sup> Unlike the Romans, who saw legislation and foundation as action and politics, the Greeks saw it as pre-political. It cannot be made but can only act. Arendt maintained that to do the activity as a man of the polis is ‘to act’ (‘*prattein*’ [*πραττειν*]); not ‘to make’ (‘*poesis*’). The word ‘*prattein*’ (*prattō* or *prassō*) (‘to act’, ‘to practise’ or ‘to do business’) indicates the act for the sake of an action of an activity, while ‘*poieō*’ (‘to produce’, ‘to create’) focuses on the outcomes or the ability to yield an outcome of an activity. To draw a demarcation line between acting and making is the main theme of Arendt’s political theory. It is a separation between “an active politics” and “an inactive politics”, so to speak, in the sense of the modern world. Thus, considering this point of view, if all the activities that are made by officers and politicians in contemporary world are not real politics in Arendt’s understanding, the only agents left to do this act – i.e. to do politics – are the common people of the state. Citizens are then the key figure of politics; not officers or leaders.

Discussion relating ‘*politeúesthai*’, implicitly demonstrates the difference between the terms “the political” and “politics” in Arendtian world. Politics, used in general sense, indicates an activity concerning the state or polis and its governing and organization. In this way, this activity, in Arendt’s terms, can be used widely and the activity itself can dwell in both social or political realm. In other words, it can be either “work” or “action”, depending on its characteristics. The political, in contrast, relates to only “action”. It refers to the particular feature and special dimension of something or some activity, which might not concern the

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<sup>58</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 194.



government or public administration at all. These particular features include freedom and men live in plurality as its conditions. In this way, politics can either contain or not contain a political feature and the political is not limited to only politics. In short, politics or political matter being or not being 'the political' depends on its own characteristics and functions. For Arendt, when she made some statements concerning "politics", she normally included "the political" within and expected that it should contain within it the political character; otherwise that "politics" would be considered to be only the social activity in the public sphere, not in the public realm.

To sum up, even though both the 'social' and the 'political' contain and maintain within them a certain level of 'public' characteristic because their activities take place within the public space and public sphere, the political and the social are not similar. The political and its public realm concerns not only the plurality of men in number, it also requires diversity in plurality to commence and arise. Politics, for Arendt, thus concerns with diverse people living and interacting with one another. Togetherness without diversity is not plurality according to Arendt. Plurality in both quantitatively and qualitatively, is thus the foremost fundamental condition of politics. However, the possibility of maintaining this diversity of plurality depends on another vital condition, the freedom. Without the free condition, difference and distinctness will never be possible. Thus, it is considered to be another indispensable condition.

In addition, by stating freedom as a requisite condition and excluding politics from the institutions and structure of the *polis*, it is obvious that politics is considered to be free from the condition of necessity. While labour guarantees the biological necessity of men to live, work guarantees their other physical necessity to live in the world of appearance. With work, men have shelters, clothes, tools and equipment that help facilitate their lives. In other words, work secures men both physically and worldly. Laws, regulations and societal institutions also facilitate men to have structures and tools in order to deal with the life of living among other men as citizens. Only when these two necessities have been fulfilled can politics emerge. And when it emerges, it is now free from any reason of necessity. In other words, necessity has no place within the realm of action and politics. Any politics that claims its existence upon a necessary condition is not considered to be genuine politics by Arendt. She deliberately explains this concept again when she discusses the concept of power and violence.

#### **Section IV: Politics, Power and its Process-character**

Arendt states the connection between action, public realm and power in that action is an activity corresponding to the public realm, but what keeps the public realm in existence is power. In short, power is the key condition of action, since it is power that can create the public realm for action to arise. In order to understand this connection, it is necessary to first understand the difference between the public realm and the public space in Arendt's discussion on action and *vita activa*. In general, 'space' is the term used to indicate an actual area or dimension in the physical sense. The term 'realm', on the other hand, implies a more abstract sense of an area in the mind. The public realm, in this way, provides a hint of a certain imagined sphere of influence or dominion. Even though it is not as obvious, Arendt tends to highlight the difference between the public realm and the public space when she discusses action and politics. The term

‘public realm’ seems to be employed to indicate the imagined space of the political sphere; and at the same time connected to the human interaction of speech and action. In contrast, the term ‘public space’ is more likely to imply a space of fabrication. Arendt defines the terms, as follows:

“Unlike the spaces which are the work of our hands, it (the public realm [my explanation]) does not survive the actuality of the movement which brought it into being.”<sup>59</sup>

Despite their dissimilarity, ‘realm’ and ‘space’ are interrelated. Arendt defines the public realm with the term ‘space of appearance’ to show the potential character of the public realm and its activities. When the public realm is actualised, it becomes a space of appearance. About this she writes:

“The space of appearance comes into being wherever men are together in the manner of speech and action, and therefore precedes all formal constitution of the public realm and the various forms of government...”<sup>60</sup>

And

“Power is what keeps the public realm, the potential space of appearance between acting and speaking men, in existence.”<sup>61</sup>

The above highlights many interesting issues. Firstly, it suggests that the public realm is merely a ‘potential’ space that can be fully actualised into the space of appearance. Secondly, this space of appearance is the actual space in which men will exercise their speech and action. And, finally, it states that the only way in which the public realm can become an actual space of appearance is through the exercising of power. The interconnection between these three terms is significant when reading Arendt’s *vita activa* because all three terms have their own very specific meanings. We have already seen that the public realm has its own particular sense of potentiality. The difference between the public space and the public realm, even though not discussed directly by Arendt, can also be traced in her writings. In the same way, the term ‘space of appearance’ does not simply mean ‘the world of the physical living of beings in which everything appears’. It is, rather, used in the phenomenological sense to define the space in which men can be seen and perceived by others as who they are. In summary, it is within this

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 199.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 200.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

space of appearance that men do their actions and create the actual public realm out of an ordinary public space. And, according to Arendt, it is only with the help of power that makes all these things possible.

As usual, Arendt has her very own specific meaning of the term 'power'. She defines it using the terms '*dynamis*' in Greek and '*potentia*' in Latin. It is also equal to term German term '*Macht*', which derives from '*mögen*' and '*möglich*'.<sup>62</sup> In other words, Arendt identifies the potential characteristic of this term and its potential as the most significant characteristic that helps distinguish power from other related terms. The word '*dynamis*', from the noun '*δυναμις*' in ancient Greek, indicates the meaning of 'capacity', 'faculty', 'property' and 'quality', in addition to its physical meaning of 'force' and 'influence'. In this sense, it suggests bringing possibility into reality. The ability to change is key for the Greek word '*dynamis*' and Arendt's concept of power. And the condition that allows this possibility to change, Arendt states, is the living together of people.

According to Arendt, the only condition of power is the plurality of men; i.e. the living together of people. This is more than just the way in which a man lives with other men or the common 'plurality' in number, for it focuses on the relationship created by men when they live and participate with one another. Only when people live together can the possibility of action arise. Potentiality is the very characteristic of both power and action. In power and action there is the possibility of beginning something new and, with this, the plurality of men and people. A man who lives alone can neither generate power nor act with words and deeds.

At first glance, Arendt shares the same opinion as most political theorists in that she sees power as an essential component of politics because the public realm is not possible without power, as with political action. However, in her point of view, the relationship between power and the political realm is not that conventional. As with all other concepts, Arendt defines her power specifically, and particularly makes use of it to support her political theory. The concept of power receives great respect from her. While power is usually defined and seen as a negative aspect of politics (and most of the time is regarded as evil in politics), this is not a similar case for Arendt. She regarded politics and the political realm as being both moderate and neutral in their nature. To be more exact, she had an optimistic view towards them because both of them engage with the plurality of men and the idea of freedom. In order to define power, she distinguished it from other related but contrasting concepts. According to her, power is generally understood negatively because it is normally mixed up with other related concepts, especially strength and force.

Strength, Arendt explains, is power's counterpart but appears in a singular context. In other words, strength is the natural quality of an individual while power springs up between men when they act together. Therefore, strength, by itself, cannot substitute or defeat power because it appears in isolation with an individual. Power is boundless, in the same way as action, but strength is limited physically by the bodily existence. The difference between power and strength was explained more lucidly in 'On Violence', where she explains about power, as follows:

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

“Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together.”<sup>63</sup>

And about strength, she states:

“Strength unequivocally designates something in the singular, an individual entity; it is the property inherent in an object or person and belongs to its character, which may prove itself in relation to other things or persons, but is essentially independent of them.”<sup>64</sup>

However, most of the time, people understand power in the form of force and violence. In *The Human Condition*, Arendt does not make a clear distinction between force and violence and defines force as the ability to possess a monopoly by the means of violence. At the same time, she finds it the only alternative to action. However, this idea had changed when she wrote ‘On Violence’ and decided to disconnect these two terms. In ‘On Violence’, she states that force is often used as a synonym for violence, especially when it is served up as a means for coercion, but, in fact, it should be terminologically used to indicate the energy released by physical or social movement. Violence, on the other hand, should be understood as a means by its instrumental character. It is close to strength in the sense that they are both created and used for specific purposes. About this she writes,

“Force, which we often use in daily speech as a synonym for violence, especially if violence serves as a means of coercion, should be reserved, in terminological language, for the ‘forces of nature’ . . . .”<sup>65</sup>

And

“Phenomenologically, it is close to strength, since the implements of violence, like all other tools, are designed and used for the purpose of multiplying natural strength until, in the last stage of their development, they can substitute for it.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Hannah Arendt, “On Violence,” in *Crises of the republic: lying in politics, civil disobedience on violence, thoughts on politics and revolution* (San Diego, California: Harcourt Brace, 1972), 143.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 145.

In this way, to speak about the ‘powerful man’ is not exactly correct in Arendt’s opinion because power is not possible to arise in any one single man. For her, power in this sense is just a ‘metaphorical’ word for strength, which is the correct term to use. And to consider power in the negative sense is also a misunderstanding for her because it simply means confusion with strength and violence. In summary, Arendt maintains her distinction of power from force, violence and strength. With some of its characteristics, power reconciles to action and the public realm because they all have plurality as a key condition and are changeable on temporary agreement.

From these definitions, it is obvious that, according to Arendt, only power can correspond to the public realm and action. It deals with men in plural, or ‘men acting in concert’, and rejects being merely a means towards a certain end. Furthermore, it also shares with action its boundless characteristic because plurality of men allows unexpected new things to occur. Violence, in contrast, is more compatible with work and the social realm because its very essence is its instrumental characteristic. In this way, Arendt’s concept of power, along with action, also reconciles to Aristotle’s concept of *energeia*, since it is an end in itself and does not pursue *telos* (purpose). Arendt explains, as follows:

“It is this insistence on the living deed and the spoken word as the greatest achievements of which human beings are capable that was conceptualized in Aristotle’s notion of *energeia* (‘actuality’), with which he designated all activities that do not pursue an end (*ateleis*) and leave no work behind (*no par’ autas erga*), but exhaust their full meaning in the performance itself.”<sup>67</sup>

Arendt then moves on to the last feature of her concept of action: the process-character. It is another significant characteristic of action which also marks the explicit contradiction between work and action. She started to explain the process-character of action through Aristotle’s concept of *energeia*. In fact, before discussing this characteristic, Arendt spends more time pointing out the substitution of ‘fabricating and work’ for ‘acting and action’ due to the fact that ‘product’ – the outcome of man as *homo faber* – is more durable than the producer itself.<sup>68</sup> This ‘unpolitical’ activity tends to denounce action and speech as idleness and considers public activities as a useful activity for a higher end.

Arendt explains Aristotle’s idea of *energeia* as an activity that does not pursue an end (*ateleis*) and, at the same time, does not leave any work behind (*no par’ autas erga*)<sup>69</sup>. Instead of insisting on a dichotomy between potentiality and actuality like most philosophers in ancient Greece and during the medieval period, Arendt viewed these two concepts as being related to one another and employed both of them to explain action and power. In general, potentiality (*dynamis*) is described as an opposite state of actuality (*energeia*) and implies an innate ability to change or to achieve its fullest form or the real form in the future. *Energeia*, in contrast, is

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<sup>67</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 206.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

used to describe something which has already arrived at its fullest reality, and most of the time is employed as an interchangeable term with *entelecheia*. However, Arendt explains that *energeia* and *entelecheia* are the two Aristotelian concepts that are different; albeit closely interrelated. ‘*Energeia*’ means ‘full actuality’, which effects and produces nothing besides itself, while ‘*entelecheia*’ means ‘full reality’, which has no other end besides itself.<sup>70</sup>

Similar to ‘*eudaimonia*’, or ‘living well’ (*eu zen*), Arendt considers *energeia* and *entelecheia* to be the very characteristics of action. According to her, the insistence on deeds and speech, which are central to action, being the highest forms of human activity that do not pursue and end and leave no work behind, indicates the notion of an ‘end in itself’ characteristic of action. In this way, *energeia* becomes the same as *entelecheia*; the work does not pursue the other *telos* but lies in the process.<sup>71</sup>

Generally perceived to be an opposite characteristic, *dynamis* shows its ‘potential’ characteristic while *energeia* ‘boasts’ a characteristic of full actuality, however, Arendt sees action having both of these contrasting characteristics.<sup>72</sup> *Dynamis* is a vital characteristic of power within the public realm and action, since power allows the possibility of action to arise within the public realm, while action allows the potentiality of a new beginning and a full revelation of the subject’s character.<sup>73</sup> In the meantime, action contains Aristotle’s notion of *energeia* because it exercises its full actuality in the performance itself. In this way, according to Arendt, action becomes a certain kind of ‘work’, which is not a work product but exists only in sheer actuality.<sup>74</sup> In other words, action is an activity that provides possibility and opportunity for the new thing to happen. However, this new thing is not the end that action aims to reach because action is not the process of an end. The new thing, in this way, is merely an unexpected consequence of the multiple and complex relationships of men. Plurality is therefore the true source of potentiality or *dynamis* in Arendt’s opinion, and the attempt to abolish this condition of human plurality is an endeavour to destroy the public realm itself.<sup>75</sup>

However, this ‘end in itself’ characteristic of action is always neglected and action is always seen as synonymous with work, which is the product of fabrication. The substitution of work for action appears in traditional political philosophy and practical politics in order to avoid moral irresponsibility and the unpredictability of action arising from the plurality of agents.<sup>76</sup> Because of their anxiety relating to its unpredictability characteristic, men search for certainty by planning their activities with aims and processes. Morals are set in order to create guidelines for a more predictable activity of men. The quiet and orderly world of political philosophy seems to be the perfect place for humans to escape from the frailty of human affairs in action.

For Arendt, it seems that it was Plato who originally started discussing the replacement of fabrication for action. To divide the ruled from the ruler and to make a gap between *archein* and *prattein* in political philosophy, Arendt argues, is the pursuit of an ordered world of men

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

amid an active and disordered world of appearance.<sup>77</sup> The division between ‘to begin’ (*archein* [ἀρχεῖν]) and ‘to achieve’ (*prattein* [πραττεῖν]) becomes a separation between ‘to rule’ and ‘to act’. Therefore, action turns out to be merely ‘an execution of orders’.<sup>78</sup> The interconnection between *archein* and *prattein* once understood by the Greeks became less obvious and it is Plato who introduced the division between ‘the one who knows and does not act’ and ‘the one who acts but does not know’.<sup>79</sup> In other words, the distinction between thought and action began to emerge.

Arendt suggests that the division between the ruler and the ruled which Plato suggested should not be read as abolishing household and family institutions but should rather be read as abandoning the private characteristics of household community and the expanding of a household form of relationship to embrace all spheres within the *polis*. In fact, she argues, the scheme of seeing city-state as an extension of man was obviously in Plato’s ideas.<sup>80</sup> In *The Republic*, the construction of the city-state relating to the characteristics of men, according to the tripartite soul of an individual man, reveals the principle of control over oneself in western tradition, which reflects on the commands of philosopher-kings and reason over the unknowns and passions of the soul. ‘Ruling’, although originating and once dominating the area of *oikos*, turned out to be the most decisive part of organising public matters and those closely related to politics. From this expansion of the concept of ruling from within the private sphere to embrace the whole public sphere, the replacement of fabrication to action arose. According to Arendt, the view of seeing politics as the art of ruling continuing to live on after Plato is due to the fact that the substitution of rulership for action was strengthened by his interpretation of action and ruling as fabrication.

Arendt explains that to employ the term normally used within the world of fabrication into the world of philosophy, Plato adopted the idea of ‘making’ to be applied to philosophy and politics.<sup>81</sup> In the world of fabrication, the making process is divided into two steps: perceiving the image or *eidos* (εἶδος) of the product-to-be and then organizing the means and executing them according to the planned image.<sup>82</sup> In order to avoid the frailty of action and the moral problem within the human world, an ideal of politics is necessary and therefore the practice of it will then follow. The philosopher-king is the one who knows best. Therefore, he is fit to rule and do this duty for his people to act and follow. In this way, politics – activities within the public sphere – was no longer perceived as actions done by equal men but considered as a tool for a higher end within the philosophical world of goodness. Its revelation and plural characteristics are therefore diminished and subside under the effectiveness of means-end relationships. In other words, politics and action cannot be fully actualized by themselves but must be justified by the end which follows but has been previous planned. In short, they lose both of their characteristics of dynamis and *energeia* in Arendt’s understanding.

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid, 222.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 223.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 224.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 225.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

However, Arendt argues, this substitution of work for action cannot eliminate action or destroy human affairs.<sup>83</sup> Instead of leading to immoral irresponsibility and frailty of human affairs from the unplanned web of action, it is the characteristic of unpredictability itself which helps maintain action and the public realm. The characteristics of action, the process-character in particular, help strengthen human affairs and action itself. Arendt explains that the process-character of action is quite new in political thought. It was not interested in the world of antiquity but merely appeared to be significant in the modern age, especially in the fields of natural science and historical science where nature and history were seen as systems of processes.<sup>84</sup> With this view of the two new sciences, the underlying assumption is that the ability of man to act is the same capacity of ability to start the process by himself; and this process, once it has already begun, cannot be undone or destroyed. According to Arendt, among all the natural or artificial things in the world, it is only action that man can never destroy although he is the one who starts or ‘makes’ it himself. The deeds of the past cannot be undone, nor their future consequences, which can never be foretold or prevented. Instead of being weaknesses, these two unreliable features are in fact the strengths of action. In the process of work and fabrication, the process of production is inferior to its own end since the domination of the process is absorbed into the finished product. In action, in contrast, this very process will not be obliterated but can even develop itself due to the multiplication of its own consequences. In other words, it is not the product or artificial objects but the process itself that endures within the realm of human affairs but the process and it is unlimited, for the action has no end. For Arendt, this is the highest product of humankind and is superior to every other man-made product, had he – man – been able to bear its burden of irreversibility and unpredictability of action. In this way, action is the only activity in which man can always be free to start new things but can never be free to get away from what he has done. He cannot control the consequences of the action he made and cannot maintain his position as an author or doer of action once his action has already appeared in the web of human relationships. In other words, while he acts, he has already been the doer and the sufferer at the same time, since his action will become the ‘past’ for other men to see and judge. In this way, Arendt points out that, only in action, the freedom of man is very limited even though the very essence of this capacity is freedom itself.

### **Section V: Politics versus the Political and Arendt’s reading of *Kritik der Urteilskraft***

Part IV highlighted the characteristics of action in Arendt’s concept. ‘Action’ is defined by its plurality of uniqueness, non-instrumentalisation, freedom and process-character. In summary, Arendt defines her meaning of action as a political activity. However, this political activity does not simply mean an activity about politics in the general sense, but, rather, an activity that is political by its nature. To make a clear distinction between fabrication and action, Arendt demarcates a line between what she defines as ‘the social’ and ‘the political’ in order to explain the public realm and the world of appearance. In general, men dwell in three distinct but related realms, and, among these three realms, there are three different activities. As already discussed

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 226.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.



before, defining a corresponding sphere of an activity not only depends on the type of activities themselves but also on the characteristics and purposes of the activity. For example, the economics once located in the private sphere of *oikos* and considered to be an activity of labour, could possibly be regarded as an activity of work in the sphere of social when its conditions and purposes have been changed. The farmer who lives a sustainable lifestyle and chooses to farm for a living can call his farming activity 'private' and 'labour'. He may exchange some of his produce with his friends and neighbours, but, if his main aim is to do it for the purpose of consumption by his family, this activity is considered to be labour and he needs to do it repeatedly because his activity can produce only consumable products. On the other hand, had the same farmer carried out the same activity of farming but with the purpose of selling and trading, he should call his activity 'work'. He might keep some of his rice to eat but most of the rice is produced for selling and all of his farmland is planned for commercial purposes. The government then suggests for him to produce more rice for domestic consumption and export and produce less corn because there is a period of oversupply. So, the farmer plants his crops for the purpose of exchange and trade and his planting was planned by the state. His yields are not for his consumption but for others who he has never met. It is not food but another commodity that he gets in return. As a result, he needs to depend on others for living and surviving. His farming activity in this sense is no longer private. It becomes 'work' and a 'social activity' that he shares and interacts with others within the public realm and the public space.

Among these three activities, there only two that correspond to the public realm and the public space: work and action. Similar to the distinction between labour and work, the distinction between work and action is not determined merely by the activity itself. Politics is the only prominent activity to occupy both the social and the political realm because it 'swallows up' most of the space within the public domain. Both of these two realms and activities involve a significant amount of people, and it can be said that both are somewhat concerned with plurality as their condition. However, the border between these two activities is defined by certain of the characteristics discussed earlier in this chapter. To be considered as action, a certain activity must be done upon the firm foundation of plurality and freedom. At the same time, it must also contain a revelatory character; i.e. it must help the subject reveal himself through speech and deed. Plurality in action is therefore not only quantitative; it must also be a plurality which is formed from the variety and uniqueness of each man. Moreover, in action, plurality springs from the direct relationships among men. They connect and relate to one another without any product as intermediary. It is the relationship between man and other men that is a priority in action.

In the case of work, plurality of man arises from the relationship between men and his products. Men relate to men through the products they produce. Product is therefore not only an end of an activity of work but also a medium that ties people together. In other words, in work, men relate to one another by connecting each relationship of men and the product he produces together. In summary, even though both work and action are concerned with plurality in the human world, plurality of action is dissimilar to plurality of work because plurality in the activity of work is mainly quantitatively plural.

Considering the relationship of men in this way, it can be seen that the difference in plurality between work and action also reflects the different notion of freedom appearing in both activities. The distinction that Arendt made between work and action indicates her prioritisation of the process when it comes to action, since the product is not a main aim in the relationship of men. It is neither an end that dictates an activity nor a process in order to reach its purpose nor a means to connect men together. Therefore, man and his activity are not considered as a tool towards a certain planned objective. In action, it is an activity of connecting men and his fellows that matters the most. In this way, action is also dissimilar to work when it comes to the issue of freedom. It is free because it is not determined by the preset end or objective. And, for Arendt, it is only from this kind of relationship and activity that the world of appearance can arise. The world of appearance is therefore the world in which man can be perceived and recognised from his speech and action. It is not his physical appearance that matters here but his words and deeds in others' eyes. The world of appearance therefore does not include an activity of work but only an activity of action because it is only through action that men can do words and deeds in their full revelatory character, not as a tool for something bigger or a higher aim.

In other words, the activity of work and fabrication, even though it appears within the public space, is not considered to be within the political domain. Certainly, it shares its space with action within the public realm. However, it has no political characteristics. For Arendt, this activity of work or fabrication is the activity of society and its corresponding realm is the social one. Despite these differences between the two activities of man, Arendt adds, action is often seen as a certain kind of fabrication or work. The substitution of 'acting' with 'making' is the most prominent within the realm of politics. Politics, nowadays, is considered from the viewpoint of fabrication, creating a strong constitution and administration according to a certain set of morals. In other words, there is little space left for action in the world of politics. From the definitions and explanations Arendt made on action and work, it can be implied that she made a clear distinction between the terms 'politics' and 'the political'. She employed the former to define activity that concerns public affairs and public space in general. The latter, however, appears only occasionally in her writings to specifically define an activity with political characteristics. Action, therefore, can relate to both politics and the political while work can only relate to politics and never the political.

The term 'the political' is the nominalisation of the adjective 'political'. Instead of changing it into 'politics', Arendt turned the adjective into a noun by keeping the term in its adjective form in order to maintain its sense. An adjective is a part of speech that helps explain the qualities or characteristics of a noun. It gives detail and extends the knowledge about the thing it works with. In other words, it allows variety and plurality to be expressed. A noun, in contrast, has the characteristic of generalisation. It turns uncountable forms and various characters into one common concept. In short, it diminishes detail and reduces variety. Therefore, Arendt tends to use the adjective even though she has already turned it into a noun. In this way, she employs the term 'the political' in order to render a certain activity with political characteristics. Accordingly, 'politics' can either be the same as 'the political' or not. It depends on the characteristics of the activity of politics itself.

With regard to the adjective ‘political’, this is a term that can also be understood in two ways. Firstly, it can simply mean an activity relating to the activity of politics, for example, ‘political philosophy’ refers to the philosophy relating to politics. Secondly, it can be used to indicate the political characteristics of an activity. Political philosophy, in this sense therefore means the philosophy which is the political or bears a political characteristic itself.

As a result of the above, the remaining question from the previous chapter can now be investigated: Is it plausible when Arendt states that the third critique is actually Kant’s critique of politics? Can the third critique be read as his genuine political philosophy? It can now be seen that, when Arendt proposed to read Kant’s third critique as his political philosophy, there are two possible ways to read her questions. Firstly, it can simply be interpreted that Arendt saw Kant’s *Kritik der Urteilkraft* as his writing about politics. Or, alternatively, it can be interpreted that Arendt saw the third critique as a piece of writing concerning the characteristics of the political. In order to answer these two questions, in particular the second, it is necessary to prove that Kant’s third critique illustrates certain characteristics of action and the political within it. The following section will examine each characteristic of the judgement of taste, which is the first part of the third critique that relates to Arendt’s concept of action and the political individually.

This section starts with the concept of plurality and sociability that Arendt found in Kant’s concept of judgement. Action and the public realm, for Arendt, are, vitally, found upon the very condition of the plurality of men. It is seen not only as the basic condition which brings forth the other features of action and politics but also the characteristic of action itself. Without plurality, politics in the sense of public activities and action would never be possible. In other words, in order to indicate a certain activity as action and politics, plurality is the first key factor to consider. Therefore, in order to propose that *Kritik der Urteilkraft* is Kant’s critique of politics, Arendt needed to prove that it contains this very basic condition. In addition, the plurality must not only be the plurality of the unconnected individuals who disperse around the space without interrelation with one another. ‘Men in plural’, in Arendt’s opinion, therefore indicates the condition of the human web in which each individual man connects with other men as his condition of activity. Moreover, this plurality is not only the plurality of number but also the plurality of viewpoints, characteristics and appearances. It seems that Arendt could possibly find all these features of plurality in Kant’s third critique. The following paragraphs will explain her reading about this particular characteristic.

Firstly, as Arendt suggests in her *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*, the whole of the *Kritik der Urteilkraft* concerns men in plural for it deals with the concept of man as one single member of the human community who cannot and will not live separately by himself. As already explained in the previous chapter, *Kritik der Urteilkraft* consists of two main parts focusing on the different kinds of judgement. In the case of the judgement of taste, the only way in which it could be valid is upon the condition that the judgement itself would supposedly be proven by others within the human community. In other words, the validity claim for the judgement of taste relies on the imaginative community of men. To explain it in Arendt’s terms, it is not the actor who can decide about the validity of his judgement but the spectators who look upon his judgement and judge. The appearance of actors and spectators in judgement is

evidently showing that the plurality of men is the condition of the human community and the key issue in the judgement of taste. In the case of teleological judgement, however, the characteristic of plurality is connected to the faculty of the sociability of men as ‘an end’ of all humankind. To see ‘the end’ of man as a social being is, in other words, to state that sociability is ‘the nature’ of man in general. Despite the fact that Arendt strongly rejects this idea of teleology and absolute human nature, she accepts this special faculty as evidence that helps prove that man cannot live separately from his other fellow human beings. In other words, the plurality of men is the key concept that both kinds of judgement share in common in both parts of the third critique. In short, unlike the first and second critiques, where Kant focuses on the concept of man as a single cognitive and moral being, the third critique is the only one not to deal with man in the singular.

Moreover, the concept of plurality discussed in the judgement of taste also indicates a plurality of unique beings within the human community. In order to exercise the faculty of judgement, Kant states that the subject needs to enlarge his mentality and place himself in other men’s positions. By moving towards others’ positions, the subject is allowed to leave his own conditions and change his points of view. These points of view might only be imagining the viewpoints created by the subject, but at least it allows the subject to collect various points of view into his process of judgement. The more positions he can imagine being in, the better possibility of impartiality being created and the better or purer the judgement. In short, it could possibly claim that, at a certain level, plurality is an inheritance from Kant’s judgement of taste, even though it can also be argued that these possible points of view are just imagined; not real.

It seems that Kant’s judgement of taste could boast its characteristic of plurality when considered in Arendt’s terms for it deals with the concept of man as a unique being; in both senses of a unique creature and a unique characteristic of being in itself. Therefore, it is only in the third critique that Arendt’s concept of plurality appears, especially in the ‘Critique of Taste’. In fact, what is significant here is the communicability of men. According to Kant and Arendt, men share the same mental faculties, especially the faculty of representation and the cognitive faculties. Therefore, they can communicate and understand one another. Considered in this way, it is possible to state that equality of men is also the key foundation of human society. Plurality in Arendt’s, and probably Kant’s, opinion therefore relates closely to human equality. With plurality and equality, it could be said that human society connects to Arendt’s idea of the political by its nature.

The communicability of men from this point of view links closely to sociability. Despite some differences, they are both concerned with the relationship of men. The discussion about the sociability of men in the second part of the third critique might lead readers astray in that Arendt proposed to read Kant’s *Kritik der Urteilskraft* as his political philosophy only because of his concerns about the sociability of men. However, it seems that this is not the case for Arendt, even though she also mentioned it as Kant’s issue of interest, especially during the latter part of his life. In fact, for Arendt, despite showing the possibility for plurality and the political realm, Kant’s sociability might or might not reflect plurality and action in Arendt’s own opinion. Arendt herself demarcated the line between the social and political. The social activities of men therefore can indicate only a possibility of the public realm arising but cannot

guarantee its emergence. In other words, the sociability of men is certainly one of the reasons that causes Arendt to describe Kant's third critique as political philosophy. However, it is not the main or only reason, since there are several indicators for her that the third critique, especially its first part, can claim to be a critique of politics.

In addition, Arendt finds Kant's judgement of taste as a judgement that relates to freedom. The sociability of men is the very basic human faculty that helps state humans as being political beings in general. But, for Arendt, this indicator is not enough to prove that men are political beings because it cannot guarantee the emergence of action in the world of appearance. For Arendt, it is only action that can indicate the political condition of men, and she considers freedom as a key feature of action. In addition to plurality, freedom is the most significant condition within the public realm and the space of appearance. Furthermore, freedom also appears in Kant's judgement of taste and is his principle of judgement in many aspects. There are at least three issues in Kant's judgement of taste that can be considered as a mental faculty that concerns freedom. It is likely that Arendt also considered these three aspects in a similar way and proposed to read the third critique as a critique of politics. These three aspects are discussed below.

Firstly, judgement of taste is related to freedom in the sense that it does not impel others to agree upon the result of judgement; i.e. it respects the condition of plurality as a basic foundation of action and principle of judgement. In order to claim judgement's validity, the agent needs to convince the spectator. To convince reminds the readers about the power of the speech. It demonstrates the superiority of convincing to compelling and opinions over truth. Secondly, due to the fact that impartiality is the necessary condition of the judgement of taste, the subject needs to release himself from his condition and the prejudice he has before moving his position into others' points of view. In this way, the subject has to free himself from all the existing conditions that bind him to his fixed position. Therefore, he is no longer tied to the previous constraints surrounding him. Unlike determining judgement and moral judgement, freedom is therefore the significant condition in the process of the judgement of taste.

Thirdly, considered from the procedural point of view, the process of judgement of taste itself can be counted as a free mental faculty of man in many aspects. In order to make a judgement of taste, *frei Spiel* between the two other mental faculties is needed. It is considered to be free in two aspects. In order to obtain a representation of an object, man needs the power of imagination to determine the manifold aspects of the object. This power of imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) itself works freely in order to create the representation of the 'manifold intuition'. However, at the same time, it usually works along with another faculty of the mind in order to determine the object. The intellect (*Verstand*), the cognitive faculty that provides concept, will offer the choice of concepts for the power of imagination to choose. At the same time, the power of imagination will also provide the manifold intuition to fit into the concept of the intellect. In this process, the power of the imagination and the intellect will flow freely in the case of judgement of taste because there is no concept in which the intellect can provide the power of imagination in order to judge the beautiful. In other words, it has no determined concepts involved in the process of this certain kind of judgement. Therefore, these two faculties of the mind can work freely, unlike cognitive judgement, whereby the interplay

between these two faculties will be finally fixed and determined when the judgement comes to an end. In this way, judgement of taste, and the principle of judgement itself, proceeds freely and remains free throughout the process even though the beautiful has already been judged. Therefore, the *frei Spiel* can be considered to have a connection with freedom in the sense that: firstly, it is a process that is freed from the determined concepts; and, secondly, the interplay between the intellect and imagination is free and remains free during the process of judgement because active interplay between these two faculties itself is the feeling of pleasure from the judgement of the beautiful, according to Kant.

In addition, the judgement of taste and the principle of judgement also indicate the notion of freedom in the sense that it is not predetermined by the end of the object. Unlike the determining judgement, whereby the process of judgement is designed by the end or aim of the object, the principle of judgement has no predetermined end to achieve. The function and the purpose of the object are not taken into consideration when it comes to the judgement of the beautiful. For example, in order to determine whether a teacup is a teacup or not, the purpose of the teacup is significant in the consideration. Is it able to contain liquid and be used for drinking? On the other hand, to judge whether this teacup is beautiful or not, the ability of the cup to hold a drink is not necessary. Therefore, the judgement of taste is not only free in its process of *frei Spiel* but also free from the determining concept of the end.

Moreover, Arendt also believes that Kant's judgement of taste has a process-oriented, non-instrumental and active character. Due to the fact that the judgement of taste, in the same way as the principle of judgement, has no end or purpose to achieve in its consideration, only the process of judgement is the significant matter here. In the judgement of taste, as can be seen above, it is the process of the interaction between the power of imagination and the faculty of the intellect that is the judgement of the beautiful. The feeling that arises from the interaction itself is the judgement, unlike other kinds of judgement, for example, determining judgement, in which the result or outcome of the process does matter. It is necessary that the process of the judgement already comes to an end so that the judgement is completed. To judge that this certain object is a cup, the matching or the play between the power of imagination and the intellect must already be stopped. To judge whether the cup is beautiful, on the other hand, does not need the process to stop in order to attain the judgement of taste, for the movement of interaction between the two faculties itself is the feeling of pleasure or displeasure.

Likewise, in action, what does matter is the process of interaction among men, and this interaction is not employed in order to reach the higher aim. To end this very process of interaction among men in order to reach a certain aim is, in fact, to push a certain activity out of the political realm into the social realm and turn action into fabrication. Judgement of taste therefore corresponds well to the activity of action. In short, even though the judgement of taste is not the activity of action nor is it concerned with politics, it shares with action a political characteristic of the process-oriented and non-instrumental. In this way, the judgement of taste can be considered to be a political activity in the sense that it has some political characteristics; not in the sense that it is itself political or concerned with political matter.

From another point of view, the judgement of taste also shares the activity of action as another characteristic: an active, non-static, characteristic. In all of her working life, Arendt tried hard

to protect freedom and defend an active life in the world of appearance. She rejected the idea of placing an active world under the superiority of philosophy or the ideal world of the moral. Action is therefore the highest form of human activity and corresponds directly to the human condition. It is active, autonomous and authentic. In this way, it is not surprising that Arendt states in her lectures that Kant's judgement of taste is his political philosophy, for the process of the judgement of taste itself has also illustrated an active characteristic. The 'active' movement between the faculty of the intellect and the power of imagination is not only the process but the result of the judgement of taste itself. Therefore, unlike cognitive and moral judgement in general, the judgement of taste will always be active and vital.

## Conclusion

In her *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, Arendt proposed that Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, especially the 'Critique of Taste', is his genuine critique of politics. This interpretation of hers is quite unusual due to the fact that Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* involves discussion about aesthetics and teleology. In order to justify her claim, this thesis has already discussed and studied Kant's 'Critique of Taste' in the previous chapter. This chapter, the third of this thesis, aims to define Arendt's concept of politics in order to help adjudicate her claim about the 'Critique of Taste'. As a result, it starts with an exploration of her concept of *vita activa*; the concept on which Arendt's theory of politics is founded.

*Vita activa* is the term Arendt chose to explain the physical life of men on earth with the intention to differentiate it from the life of the mind: *vita contemplativa*. She starts by defining a human as a "condition being" and suggests that there are three activities that correspond to the fundamental conditions of men. These three activities are labour, work and action. They correspond to the conditions of life, worldliness and plurality, which are all conditions of men on earth. These conditions, for Arendt, were given to men yet they can change through time and space. Therefore, they are not "human nature". In her own words, "an emigration of men from the earth to some other planet" means "man would have to live under man-made conditions" and none of these activities "would then make sense any longer."<sup>85</sup>

With these three activities, the human world is divided into separated spheres regarding the activities involved. Labour activities, for example, are located within the private domain, while action is considered to be within the sphere of the political. This thesis suggests that, in *The Human Condition*, Arendt makes a distinction between the two terms "realm" and "sphere". She tends to use the term "sphere" when she discusses ancient Greek society, where the separation between the two spheres was clear and activities made in each sphere were specific and obvious. To give a clearer illustration, household management took place within the private sphere and political activities took place within the public sphere. These activities would not "cross the border" that divided each sphere but stayed strictly within their own spheres. The public sphere, containing activities relating to the *polis*, therefore considered the sphere of politics.

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<sup>85</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 10.

In contrast, Arendt tends to use the term ‘realm’ when the border between each realm is not obvious. Strictly speaking, when she moves from ancient Greek society to discuss activities in the modern age, she employs the term ‘realm’ to indicate domains where activities are decided by purpose and characteristics; not by an activity itself. To give an example, farming can be considered to be both the private realm and the public realm. If a man is farming for himself and his family or for a local trade, his farming can be considered a private matter within the private realm. However, once his farm is linked to government policy and trade outside his community, it can no longer remain within the private realm but the social realm instead. In other words, when activities in each domain overlap, Arendt tends to use the term ‘realm’ to describe this transborderability and alterability of activities.

Among the three activities, Arendt contends that ‘action’ is the activity closest to politics. Following Aristotle’s ideas of *praxis* and *lexis*, she maintains that action and speech are the two related activities that dominate the public sphere. With these two basic capabilities, political activities within the *polis* are possible. In this way, Arendt views action and political activities synonymously, and both are the pre-eminence of the public domain. However, from the modern age onwards, the public domain has not restricted the area of political activities. “The rise of the social”, or the emergence of the new realm, which is neither private nor public (as understood in the ancient world),<sup>86</sup> makes an activity of work predominating the domains which were once considered to be the prerogative for politics. Politics, then, does not monopolise the public realm but shares in it with social matters and activities. Therefore, from the modern age onwards, the public realm can be divided into two realms – the social realm and the political realm – and these two realms can overlap.

Arendt makes the distinction between social activity and political activity because of the characteristics that a certain activity has. In order to clearly define political activity, she clarifies it through the ancient Greek verb ‘*politeúesthai*’. By claiming that the term “politics” derives from this term used by the ancient Greeks, Arendt tends to express her idea of politics and political thought through its usage. As a result, this thesis proposes that Arendt’s concept of politics and her idea of ‘the political’ were formed upon the characteristics of the term ‘*politeúesthai*’. To justify this claim, this chapter has examined the term and its usage in ancient Greek, and tends to support Arendt’s claim and the assumption of the thesis. In short, *politeúesthai* has some characteristics that connect closely to Arendt’s politics, and therefore her political thought is found upon these characteristics.

The word ‘*politeúesthai*’ was normally used with two different but related meanings. Firstly, it was used to mean “being a freeman” or “being a citizen”. The second meaning, normally appearing in the future tense and the middle voice form, was used to mean “engaging in a political activity” or “doing an activity within the *polis*”. These two meanings are closely related because only a freeman was considered as a citizen of a certain city-state, and only a citizen had rights within the *polis*. Put another way, only a freeman of a certain city-state was allowed to participate in the activities of the *polis*. In addition, *politeúesthai* was used to render an activity of the citizens after a law or constitution was made, which was normally by elites, experts and foreigners. In other words, “*politeúesthai*” was used to define activity that was

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 49.



concerned with ‘fellow citizens’, in contrast with lawmaking activity that was concerned with only a few people; not the plurality of men. In this way, *politeúesthai* is a verb that can indicate the status of the agent and the characteristics of his action. Not only being a freeman or living in a free-state, he must also be a citizen of any single city-state when carrying out an activity within the public space. *Politeúesthai*, therefore, indicates certain characteristics of being free relating to the public, and combines plurality and being a citizen in one word.

These characteristics helped Arendt to highlight the difference between the social and the political because only the latter is considered to have these characteristics. The social, in contrast, despite being concerned with publicity or politics, does not have these characteristics in its activities. It is not free because it is planned for a preset objective, in the same way that it is not concerned with plurality of the people because it only relates to a certain group of people with the same ideas and opinions. In other words, while the political expresses the idea of freedom, distinction and plurality, the social expresses the idea of instrumentalisation and conformity.

The differentiation between the political and the social is reaffirmed when the thesis discusses the concept of power and process-character. Arendt links the concept of power to plurality and autonomy in order to connect it with the activity of action. For her, power is not similar to violence and strength. Violence, with its instrumental character, is used with a tool towards a certain aim. Therefore, it is not free. Strength, referring to one individual’s power, has no plural characteristic. Therefore, according to Arendt, only power can relate to action and politics because they share similar characteristics. Work and the social, on the other hand, relate to violence due to their instrumental trait.

Moreover, action and work are also discerned by the process-character of an activity. Arendt explains work as an activity whose main concern is making or providing a tangible product. The process of making a product is merely seen as a tool towards the end and does not count as significant. Action, in contrast, does not aim for any purpose in advance. Its process of activity itself is considered to be noteworthy; not an outcome of the process. This characteristic of action is due to the fact that it is concerned with plurality and the distinction of men. Therefore, the end or consequence of action is neither predeterminate nor predictable. The consequence of action is therefore only considered as a by-product of the process but cannot count as being significant in itself.

In this way, despite still considered to be public, politics nowadays can be either the social or the political. In other words, the content or the matter of politics can be in both the social realm and the political realm; and politics may not be the political if a certain activity does not have the characteristic of the political. Arendt takes law as an example of social activity in ancient Greece. For her, lawmaking was similar to wall building, which was considered to be a pre-political activity. Considered in this way, this thesis also suggests reading Arendt’s political theory in order to make a differentiation between politics and the political. Politics is used with the intention to define the broader and general sense of activities that concern public matters. The political, however, is used to define a certain activity with political characteristics; i.e. free, autonomous and plural. In other words, politics can concern either work or action in the social

or political realm in the sense of the contemporary world. The political, however, concerns only action, and these two are synonymous in Arendt's opinion.

With these specific characteristics of action and the political, Arendt's claim about Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* can be considered. Had Kant's 'Critique of Taste' been considered to be his political philosophy, it must have contained certain characteristics that reconcile with action and the concept of the political. In this way, Part V of this chapter has shown the possible way in which Arendt read the 'Critique of Taste' as Kant's political philosophy by demonstrating some 'political characteristics' of the judgement of taste. Examined in this way, this chapter has illustrated that Kant's judgement of taste has four political characteristics of action: plurality of uniqueness, non-instrumentalisation, freedom and process-character.

Considering the themes presented in Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, it can be seen that it can be interpreted as political philosophy in some ways, especially when assessing the second part of the book. Despite describing an idea of society and the sociability of man, its main idea focuses on teleology and purposiveness. Therefore, thinking in an Arendtian way, this cannot be political in its own sense because action and the political cannot be predetermined for the pre-set goal: *telos*. Instead, Arendt focuses on the political characteristics of the judgement of taste in the first book. Kant's judgement of taste, requiring other men in the process of judgement, concurs with Arendt's idea of "men in plural"; i.e., man can never live his life in singularity. Besides, since 'possible opinions' play a vital role in the judgement of taste, it reflects an appreciation of the idea of uniqueness or the distinction of being human. At the same time, judgement of taste has no fixed point between the concepts and the representation. Unlike other kinds of judgement, an agent plays freely with his imagination in the process of judging the beautiful, and this, according to Arendt, seems to reflect an idea of freedom and autonomy. As a result, it is the process of the judgement itself that counts because Kant defines the feeling of the beautiful as a feeling arising from the "free play" between the two mental faculties. No result has come from this process of judgement since the imagination will never be able to find the "right concept" to match in order to produce an outcome of knowledge. In other words, the feeling is the process of the judging of the beautiful itself; not the result of that judgement. Similarly, action is also process oriented.

Due to the fact that the process of judging of the beautiful is an end in itself, not its product, it also reflects a characteristic of non-instrumentality. Other kinds of judgement, in contrast, aim for the result of judgement, and judgement is used merely as a tool towards a priority end. The idea of purposiveness of the judgement of taste indicates a disconnection between the process of judgement and the end, and this shows that the process of judging is not merely a tool for something else. It is complete in itself in the same way that action is.

As a result, this chapter would like to justify that Arendt's claim about Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* is legitimate when considered from her particular concept of politics and action. It can be seen that Kant's theory of judgement reconciles very well with her idea of action and the political. Certainly, the idea of sociability in the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* can be read as his philosophy of politics. However, this is not Arendt's main proposition. Her main proposition is on the judgement of taste, or the critique of the beautiful, where its characteristics concur with her concept of action. Therefore, when Arendt states that Kant's judgement of taste is his

political philosophy, it does not only mean that it relates to politics, but also has a characteristic of politics. Put another way, Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* is considered to be his political philosophy because it is a philosophy that reflects political characteristics in Arendt's terms. It is the judgement itself that is "political", even though it relates to the matter of aesthetics; not politics.

Therefore, in a similar manner, this thesis would also like to propose reading Arendt's political theory with the view that there is a separation between the terms "politics" and "political". This way of reading is especially significant when her ideas on *vita contemplativa* are read. In the next chapter, this separation between politics and political will be further discussed relating to the judgement of taste and morality. It will result in an interpretation that helps provide a better understanding relating to Arendt's idea of ethics and *vita contemplativa*.

## Chapter IV

### Judging as a prominent idea of political ethics

Due to the fact that Arendt herself has not produced any particular piece of writing about her ideas of ethics and morality but discussed them widely through many concepts and thoughts, her ethical and moral ideas are far from being called ‘systematic’. Ranging from a discussion on the topic of conscience, the prevention of evil and moral action to the mental faculty of the mind, her ideas of moral seem to be ambiguous and uncertain.

As a result, Arendt’s ideas of morality are unsurprisingly read and interpreted differently among different scholars. Their interpretation ranges widely from criticism of the lack of normative moral theory, and the failure of an attempt to establish one, to the appraisal of an alternative form of morality that she proposed. Consensus on this matter seems hard to be reached. In fact, it was not until the case of the Eichmann trial that Arendt focused her interest on the question of ethics and morality. Her ideas concerning morality and ethics seem to be more coherent and clearer during the latter part of her life, especially when she wrote about the *vita contemplativa*. From *Eichmann in Jerusalem* onward, she began devoting her time to think more about the question of morality and evil.

Despite these variant ideas and thoughts about morality and ethics, there is one characteristic that these ideas have shared in common, their strong connections to the concept of action and the idea of politics. In fact, it can be said that her ethical ideas are founded upon a strong foundation of her political concepts such that they may be inseparable. In other words, the thesis contends that her ideas of ethics do not only aim at saving humanity and its dignity but also preserving the sphere of the political. In other words, Arendt went back to the Aristotelian ethics when it comes to the inseparable interaction and connection between politics and ethics. However, Arendt turns Aristotelian ethics upside down. By rejecting Aristotelian’s teleology, Arendt did not see politics as a tool for ethics and human’s telos. On the contrary, ethics is seen as a tool to serve politics and its sphere. In other words, her attempt is to find an idea of ethics that helps maintain a political sphere suiting to serve men in their existing conditions.

Arendt firstly began discussing about the ideas of ethics and morality explicitly in *The Human Condition*. At the end of the part called ‘Action’, she states the ‘faculty of forgiving’ and the ‘faculty of making and keeping promises’ as “the remedy against the irreversibility and unpredictability of action” that “establishes a diametrically different set of principles from moral standards inherent in the Platonic notion of rule.”<sup>1</sup> In this piece of work, Arendt considers these two faculties as the two particular types of action.<sup>2</sup> Action, in general, cannot be reversed, predicted or remedied by any other types of activities; it can only be remedied by specific activities of action; i.e., forgiving and making promises.<sup>3</sup> In other words, it seems that Arendt suggests to use these two faculties as a certain type of “moral action” that helps solving political

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<sup>1</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 236.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

conflicts by using forgiveness to help end political conflict before using promise to “pave the way” to a new future after the conflict has been solved.

However, these two “moral” concepts do not seem to satisfy Arendt since she continued to develop her ideas of ethics and morality after that. After the Eichmann trial, her ideas about morality changed drastically and she started focusing on human mental faculties to find an answer to her question about ethics and morality. She started by exploring the concept of evil and goodness, then later turned to the faculties of the mind. The life of the mind or *vita contemplativa* is the terminology that Arendt uses to discuss about three basic and autonomous human mental faculties. And it seems Arendt has expected to find an answer for her question of morality in them.

The terminology itself illustrates the three basic human mental faculties – thinking, willing and judging. Arendt states that these three faculties are basic faculties because they are all original and autonomous;<sup>4</sup> i.e., they do not derive from other mental faculties and are not subordinate to one another. Despite the fact that all three faculties are more or less concerned with evil action and the question of morality, only thinking and judging are discussed upon this matter. An exploration of her text in Chapter I of this thesis has already demonstrated that, at the beginning, the faculty of thinking and judging are normally discussed together under the topic of ‘Thinking’. Any borderlines and scope of these two faculties were not yet certain and it is not sure that Arendt saw these two faculties as two independent mental faculties or not. Only when she was writing *vita contemplativa*, did Arendt considered these two faculties separately.

The shift of interest from moral action to mental faculties as an answer to the moral and ethical question seems, at the first sight, to demonstrate Arendt’s failure to highlight an active life or *vita activa*. However, this thesis finds that it is not the case. On the other way round, it illustrates the firm foundation of her political and ethical theory upon the concept of plurality and publicity in political life. Unlike other political theory or political philosophy in general that either identifies a contradiction between an active life of politics and the contemplating mental faculty or subordinates an active life to a higher life of the mind, Arendt closely links these two worlds together as they are both two worlds that men need to live in. In the previous chapter, an inseparable connection between the faculty of judgement and action is identified. Thus, this illustrates that Arendt was likely to interpret the faculty of judgement as a political faculty and created a strong relationship between judging and the political. For Arendt, judging is considered to be a political faculty due to the fact that it has some political characteristics and corresponds well with the activity of action.

It seems that Arendt has been finally satisfied with the answer to the question of morality that she began to ask. However, for some scholars, this attempt of her is not that successful. Surprisingly enough, Arendt, who seems to have devoted all of her life towards understanding and preventing evil action, seems to fail to provide an ethical theory or concept of morality. Among the scholars, Seyla Benhabib and George Kateb are the prominent figures. Despite having different points of view, they share at least one view in common: Arendt’s political theory does not include morality within it. This thesis disagrees with this point of view and

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<sup>4</sup> Arendt, *Life of Mind*, 69.

proposes that Arendt, in a certain way, seems to somehow succeed in inserting her ideas of ethics into her political thought. However, this ethical thought of her is not conventional and it requires a particular set of concepts and ideas relating to the political to accompany in order to be understood.

Despite this certain disagreement, this thesis found Kateb's reading of Arendt's moral theory both useful and interesting, and the debates between Kateb and other scholars are significant relating to understanding Arendt's idea of moral as a whole. Kateb, whose main interest lies in an ethical dimension, focuses most of his writings on Arendt's theory on her ethical and moral issues. From exploring her idea of morality from her very broad range of writing, his works provide a strong understanding of her concept of morality from many aspects. In short, he tries to investigate and explain Arendt's idea of morality from the whole system of her political thought.

In 1983, Kateb published his *Hannah Arendt: Politics, Conscience, Evil*, which includes at least two significant sections discussing her concept of morality. He argues that Arendt insists on there being antagonism between absolute morality and the practice of politics.<sup>5</sup> In other words, Arendt's political action neither aims to fulfill any morality<sup>6</sup> nor contains any character of 'goodness'. Kateb grounded his criticism on the existential value of appearance and the existential supremacy of political action. According to him, the existential value of action is so supreme in Arendt's political writings. As that it dominates her idea of moral.<sup>7</sup> Put another way, Kateb seems to think that Arendt decided not to, or was unable to, fully develop her "moral" theory because of the contradiction between the existential value of action and the constraint value of morality.<sup>8</sup> However, he assumes that Arendt did not totally reject the idea of morality. In fact, what she has tried to do is to establish an internal connection between morality and politics by proposing two moral dispositions which correspond to politics and action. These two dispositions – promising and forgiving – are believed to keep men in action and keep the world of existence or appearance going on. Nevertheless, they tend not to be enough for the resistance of evil. Kateb thus believes that Arendt's concepts of thinking and judging are another set of mechanisms that help strengthen this internal moral system. He further states that the idea of "agreement" is the key for these two faculties: thinking as agreement with oneself and judging as agreement with others. Emphasis on an idea of agreement, Kateb adds, reflects Arendt's persistence with the ancient Greek concept.<sup>9</sup>

For Kateb, the very characteristics of Arendt's political theory – existential value and Greek concept – turn out to be her own weakness regarding the issue of morality. Despite his claim that Arendt tried to establish an internal relationship between morality and politics in her political theory, Kateb frequently mentioned that her political theory lacks a morality aspect, since the separation between morality and the political realm is vivid and explicit. Morality is allowed to exist in politics but it can shine only under the brighter light of the existentialist

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<sup>5</sup> Kateb, *Hannah Arendt: Politics, Conscience, Evil*, 85.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-5.

characteristic of action. In short, for Kateb, morality has no dominant place in Arendt's political theory at all.

Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves disagrees with Kateb's reading of Arendt's concept of morality. In *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, he argues that Kateb, like some other scholars such as Martin Jay and Margaret Canovan, focuses so heavily on the "existential dimension of action" that he ignores the "communicative" dimension that Arendt has tried to propose.<sup>10</sup> By basing his critiques on an overemphasis of Arendt's "expressive character" of action, Kateb capitulates too easily that Arendt utterly excludes the issue of morality from her concept of action and he therefore put her concept of action under the instruction of the absolute moral command. D'Entrèves accepts that Arendt focuses heavily on the expressive character of action in *The Human Condition*. In identifying Arendt's theory of action as an "expressive model of action" or the "Greek concept of political action", d'Entrèves continues, Kateb has forgotten that Arendt's concept of action has been developed from her concern of morality which is guided by a criterion of justice and human dignity.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast, d'Entrèves proposes that, according to Arendt, morality within the political realm must be founded upon a political norm or political measure and, at the same time, must be acted out from the human mental faculty or capability, not using abstract absolute moral law.<sup>12</sup> Like Kateb, d'Entrèves believes that Arendt's political-based morality was developed from four human faculties: forgiving, making and keeping promises, thinking and judging; and all these four faculties, or capabilities, are not possible without the human condition of plurality.<sup>13</sup> The existence of others and communication with others help make these four faculties possible and they can only be real within the public sphere.<sup>14</sup> In this way, for him, the communicative aspect of Arendt's political theory plays a significant role in developing her moral thought.

In addition, due to the fact that Arendt vindicates strongly a plural condition of men and prioritises the public sphere as two significant factors in founding the idea of morality, d'Entrèves states that Arendt therefore rejects the idea of guiding a political action by a moral absolute.<sup>15</sup> For Arendt, the moral absolute not only tends to distort the content of moral but also possibly leads to an absolute evil. Therefore, d'Entrèves concludes that there is a certain kind of "moral" implication in Arendt's political theory but it is merely an "ordinary moral consideration", which does not have any connection to any abstract moral absolute.<sup>16</sup> It is on this point that d'Entrèves disagrees with Kateb and states that Kateb attaches an idea of moral absolute to evil prevention.<sup>17</sup> In other words, Kateb interprets that Arendt's idea is that it is appropriate to control political action under a higher absolute moral law. In short, d'Entrèves disagrees with Kateb on the point that, for Arendt, absolute morality is considered to be a private issue, and it tends to become distorted or destroyed once it appears within the public sphere. She therefore chose to replace this absolute goodness or morality with worldly or

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<sup>10</sup> d'Entrèves, *The Political Philosophy of Hannah Arendt*, 10.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

mundane values: virtue for goodness, respect for love, solidarity for pity and compassion, and citizenship for conscience.<sup>18</sup>

In 2007, Steve Buckler proposed a different way of reading Arendt's idea of morality. Like d'Entreves, Buckler believes that morality is significant in Arendt's political theory. However, while d'Entreves bases his argument on the communicative dimension of action and counters Kateb by addressing an overemphasis of expressive dimension of action in his criticism, Buckler bases his argument on the expressive dimension of action. Unlike most political theorists who insist on subsuming political theory to the requirements of philosophy and view Arendt's approach as confusing and inconsistent, Buckler argues that her method is distinctive and consistent and embraces the "phenomenological sensitive standpoint".<sup>19</sup>

In his 'Political Theory and Political Ethics in the Work of Hannah Arendt', he claims that Arendt tried to save the "appearance of the public realm" by using an approach containing two "key mediations": epistemological and temporal. In other words, Arendt does not use the method which rests on the narrative form. Buckler assumes that Arendt's method of political and moral theory challenged conventional approaches in contemporary political theory.<sup>20</sup> He insists that traditional moral precepts cannot apply to Arendt's concept of morality. According to Arendt, Buckler explains, morality must be related to action and arise from the very faculty of action itself.<sup>21</sup> He suggests there are three main components in Arendt's idea of morality: forgiving, making and keeping promises, and judging.<sup>22</sup> While the faculty of making and keeping promises, together with the faculty of forgiveness, are considered to be a set of "control mechanisms" for the unpredictability and irreversibility of action<sup>23</sup>, an "enlarged mentality" in the judging process will help spectators form their opinions and have the possibility of action's "glory"<sup>24</sup> to shine.<sup>25</sup> In short, Buckler proposes, according to Arendt, morality should be formed within the same sphere and process as the political and action.<sup>26</sup>

In his 'Ethics and the Vocation of Politics', Buckler points out that even though promising and forgiveness cannot underwrite a substantial political ethics, they can be useful in politics and public realm as a "moral code" due to their performative character as speech acts.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, the conjunction of action and judgement allows the arise of ethical consideration as a function of the perlocutionary circumstances of public exposure.<sup>28</sup> In this article, Buckler proposes to read Arendt's idea of ethics and morality as a "vocational ethics"<sup>29</sup> which corresponds to her idea of politics that is also "vocational". For him, due to the perlocutionary circumstances of action, the appropriate judgement is required to bestow glory. And it is here, that ethical questions become relevant in Arendt's political thought.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 93.

<sup>19</sup> Buckler, *Political Theory and Political Ethics in the Work of Hannah Arendt*.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 462.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 476.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Buckler, *Ethics and Vocation of Politics*, 122.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 127.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 117.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 126.



This thesis agrees with Buckler, which along with David Marshall and Lawrence Biskowski, sees Arendt's idea of morality arises from her idea of the political.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, it also agrees that Arendt has proposed her idea of ethics in an unconventional approach and there are three concepts of morality; namely, forgiveness, promise and judgement, in her ethical-political thought. However, this thesis contends that even though these three concepts are all significant, judgement is the most vital and fertile concept since forgiving and promising are operated with the help of the faculty of judgement. At the same time, it also proposes that Arendt's idea of morality should be considered as a certain kind of "ethics", which is different from "moral" precept and developed distinctively from the other moral theory in political philosophy and political ethics.

The discussion in this chapter is founded upon the assumption that Arendt's concept of ethics has been formed with a hope to maintain the political sphere and the public realm. In the previous chapter, it has been shown that how can one understand the meaning of "the political" and how can judgement be seen as the political activity in Arendt's political thought. The thesis contends that an inseparable connection between Arendt's concept of ethics and politics demonstrates the Aristotelian tradition of ethico-political thought. However, in the case of Arendt's political ethics, it is not an aim of the politics to serve ethics but, on the contrary, politics should be maintained by the help of ethics and thus ethics must serve politics instead.

In order to propose so, the thesis begins this chapter by discussing on Kateb's reading of Arendt's "moral thought" in order to show how judgement can be seen as Arendt's ethical concept before moving to the debates and discussion with Seyla Benhabib and Steve Buckler under the same topic. After that, the chapter will turn to discuss about the Arendt's idea of forgiving and promising regarding its morality aspect. In the last section, an application of these two concepts will be discussed focussing on conflict resolution and transitional justice where it can be seen explicitly that how judgement and these two faculties are intimately related. It provides a useful way of expressing the importance of the idea of judgement developed throughout this thesis, considering it the most prominent and fruitful and Arendt's ethical concepts.'

### **Section I: Judging as an Ethical Faculty**

George Kateb in his 'Existential Values in Arendt's Treatment of evil and Morality' defines Arendt's concept of morality into five different meanings; moralities as mores, Socratic morality, morality as commands from God, morality as Christian Goodness and the morality of authentic politics.<sup>32</sup> Among these five, Kateb maintains that the first two meanings are the most important.<sup>33</sup> In addition, Kateb contends that Arendt's idea of morality as authentic politics is defined by promise-keeping and forgiveness.<sup>34</sup> He, at the same time, proposes that Arendt's view on the resistance to evil includes Socratic idea of morality and violence<sup>35</sup> and

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> George Kateb, "Existential Values in Arendt's Treatment of Evil and Morality," in *Politics in Dark Times: Encounters with Hannah Arendt*, eds. Seyla Benhabib, Tsao Roy and Peter J. Verovšek (Cambridge [UK]: Cambridge, 2010), 346-347.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 356

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 356.

argues that “evil” offends all these meaning of morality except morality as mores.<sup>36</sup> In other words, Kateb sees “evil” concerns with most of Arendt’s ethical quest.

This thesis wants to argue with Kateb in three points here. Firstly, the thesis disagrees that morality as mores and Socratic morality are the two most important idea of morality in Arendt’s thought but argues that morality as authentic politics is indeed the most important one. Secondly, it contends that Arendt’s idea of morality as authentic politics does not limit to only the two faculties of forgiving and promising as Kateb has argued, but it also appears eminently in her idea about the faculty of judgement, too. Moreover, Kateb restricts merely to an idea of radical evil but does not include the idea of banality of evil, an idea that Arendt has proposed when she was dealing with Eichmann’s trial and plays an extremely significant role in Arendt’s formulation of her ethical thought in his discussion. In other words, this thesis argues that Kateb has missed two most significant ideas on Arendt’s concept of morality which verily have a very strong connection to one another in his discussion; judgement as authentic politics and banality of evil.

Banality of evil appears for the first time in her book called *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* but it was clearly explained in her lecture on ‘Thinking and Moral Considerations’ when she defines it as “the phenomenon of evil deeds” which has no trace of “any particularity of wickedness, pathology, or ideology conviction in the doer”.<sup>37</sup> About this she writes;

“However, monstrous the deeds were, the doer was neither monstrous nor demonic, and the only specific characteristic one could detect in his past as well as his behavior during the trial and the preceding police examination was something entirely negative: it was not stupidity but a curious, quite authentic inability to think.”<sup>38</sup>

In other words, banality of evil is a term that Arendt uses to explain, at that time Eichmann and, any person who, despite his very banal or normal character, does an extremely monstrous deeds without any feeling or intention that he is doing something wrong. Richard J. Bernstein points out this separation between the deeds and its motives that the term “banality of evil” does not refer to someone’s deed but his motives and intentions.<sup>39</sup> In other words, no matter the deeds are evil or monstrously bad, the doers of the deeds are terrifying normal and banal. To explain in Bernstein words, Arendt has intention to propose that “normal people with banal motives and intentions can commit horrendous crimes and evil deeds.”<sup>40</sup>

However, despite this “banal” character of an evil deed, Arendt does not mean to alleviate the responsibility of the one who commits the crime. As Bernstein has mentioned, that Arendt’s idea of banality of evil helps us to “confront the paradox that even though normal persons may

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 347.

<sup>37</sup> Richard J. Bernstein, “Are Arendt’s reflections on evil still relevant?,” in *Politics in Dark Times: Encounters with Hannah Arendt*, eds. Seyla Benhabib, Tsao Roy and Peter J. Verovšek (Cambridge UK: Cambridge, 2010), 293-304.

<sup>38</sup> Hannah Arendt, “Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture,” *Social Research* 38, no. 3 (Autumn 1971): 417 – 446.

<sup>39</sup> Bernstein, *Are Arendt’s reflections on evil still relevant?*, 301.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

commit horrendous deed even without deliberate intention, they are nevertheless fully responsible for the deeds and must be held accountable”.<sup>41</sup> This thesis concerns with this point and sees that banality of evil is significant not only to Arendt’s thought but also to an understanding about political ethics in general. The normality of people and their banality of life shows us that this horrifying thing can happen anywhere and anytime that we the people can face it in everyday life. Even the best king, an infamous public figure, respectable friends or relatives that we know, can all do the monstrous deeds that no one expects. How the good neighbors in the time of Nazi regime can support Nazi party and Jews extermination without being guilty? How can our sentimental friends and religious relatives support Thai royalist junta government to kill the pro-democracy supporters even though they are their friends and family members? How can these royalists and junta supporters can publicly make fun and jokes of the shot-death of pro-democracy protesters in the mid of Bangkok with joy and fun? How can one be slapped and hit on to her face by the stranger on the bus merely because she did not wear black in the month that the king died? How could Thai students who protested in 1976 were killed by the para-military royalist supporter group while people around them clapped with the shout and laugh of joy in the Thammasart Massacre incident? How can pro-democratic students can be cursed by their fellow citizens when they are arrested and prosecuted by law under the Section 112 of the Criminal Code, or Lèse-majesté law in Thailand?

These incidents sound ridiculous, disgusting, and terrifying, and all of them share in common how “banal” or “normal” the doers of these deeds are. They are normal people, many with good characters, good education, and have no trace of psychological disorders. They are friends, colleagues, and relatives who without these incidents are kind, gentle, and nice. These bring us to the question about morality and its capability in the time that we people extremely need. During these times of catastrophe, morality is needed even much than ever. We need a certain kind of moral or ethical conduct for us to follow. Some pillars that we can hold, some pathways that we can follow when we are lost and face with the situations that we have never before confronted. The empirical evidence in the history of mankind demonstrates that the existing concepts of morality we have got proves itself to be failures. They look absolutely perfect when they are set right as principles but they tend to be dysfunctional when they are applied to the real world. This problem, however, seems to go beyond the problem of rule exercising and applicability. There must be a problem within the concept of morality itself.

Judgement, in this way, comes into consideration whenever we want to decide whether a deed we will do is the “right” action or not. In everyday life, we judge not only ourselves but also others. And most of the time, we judge on the basis of norms and normativity. Norms and mores are the very basic controlling systems of every political community. Searching for the way to control men in order to act rightly and properly in the public sphere is as long history as the history of human civilization itself. However, from all the incidents mentioned above, applying mores to politics and the public realm may raise problems and monstrous deeds by itself. Mores, as a rule set and cultured by people and the long tradition of the society, turns to be a source of these evil deeds as it gives them right to make violence and discriminate people.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 303.

In this way, even though judging on the basis of normativity may be able to be a guide for behaving in the society but it cannot provide a satisfactory guide to take action in the political realm. For Arendt, judgement should not be bound by the pre-determined set of rules or even “norms” of the existing factual surroundings. Morality, for her, must not be based on any kind of normative ground even though that ground might derive from the public realm itself.

In this way, Arendt turns to Kant’s aesthetic judgement and deliberate a kind of judgement that does not need to judge from moral precepts or norms. Judgement is an ethical faculty in itself in the sense that, if it is exercised in the process rightly, it helps discern right from wrong and may prevent an evil or “wrong” action from both sides of the actor as doers and spectators. By judging one’s own deed, an agent discerns and reaches an “ethical” idea by oneself and he “may” have will to act rightly. His action, on the other hand, will also be judged by the others in the public realm and his action will be “tamed” by the condition of plurality, the presence of the others.

Judging, in its basic function and principle, is a capacity to discern something particular among others and to make a decision about it regarding particular subjects. It is an activity of the mind that men carry out in everyday life and it covers everything from cognition to the moral and aesthetic issues. Both thinking and judging require imagination: the faculty that helps make the unrepresented presents in the mind to be contemplated. While thinking allows one’s own voices to be conversed inside one’s head, judging lets “other’s voices join and appear”. In short, judging allows much intensity of plurality into the process and requires the public sphere to be operated.

However, the public sphere is not a “real” public sphere with regard to judging, but merely an “imaginary public sphere” in Arendt’s opinion. Following Kant’s theory of judgement, Arendt’s faculty of judging neither relies on empirical evidence nor includes real opinions of others. During the two stages of operation of judging, imagination is required to be processed twice. Firstly, it is required when an agent perceives the “at-sight” of the object to be judged and creates a “re-presentation” of the object in the mind. Secondly, when the re-presentation, which is now disinterested, is ready to be judged, the process of imagination is again necessary in order to imagine the “possible opinions of others” from the various aspects as much as possible.

It sounds ridiculous to listen to the imaginary voices of others instead of their real ones in order to make a good judgement. How could this imaginary thing produce a valid judgement? Some scholars, Seyla Benhabib, for example, comment about this choice that Arendt made and state that she missed an opportunity to exercise her ethical theory in the real world.<sup>42</sup> This thesis, however, disagrees and find this choice of Arendt plausible, and in fact, truly significant. In order to imagine and gather possible judgements or opinions of others, an agent allows himself to “flee” from the limited condition he may be facing at the time and expand his thought more “generally”. In every political society, there are some specific or particular norms and moral precepts that people tend to be familiar with or view as “normality”. It is not an easy task to judge something that is not common in one’s own environment because what is right or wrong

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<sup>42</sup> Benhabib, *Judgement and Moral Foundations of Politics in Hannah Arendt’s Thought*.

is normally fixed unconsciously in everyday life. Considering the case of members of religious states where killing is called a “moral action” when it is done in the name of their God, world history has also shown that propaganda and brainwashing have an eminent impact in making judgement among people. Even secular states may see violence as an acceptable action when it comes to the case of state security. In these cases, gathering the “real” opinions from an empirical world to form judgement and morality might not be a good choice to make. Imagination, however, may help remove these limitations by forming a “re-presentation” for a “sound” judgement.

This mental expansion, or “enlarged mentality”, plays a vital role in the process of judgement, too. Imagination helps an agent break through the ceiling of one’s familiar code of conduct and allows one to expand his thought openly outside the world one lives in. In other words, imagination creates a gap between an empirical world and the agent’s process of judgement. This gap is significant in a way in that it may help reduce social impact on the agent’s judgement and idea of moral. It protects judgement from habits, preferences and dogmatism. These gaps, thus, allow an agent to see and judge in the other positions apart from one’s own position freely and extensively. In other words, with the help of imagination, one can “enlarge” his “mentality” and judge more soundly from many points of view.

To maintain a gap between an empirical world and a possible opinion, however, does not mean that participation of agents with others in the real world is unnecessary. On the contrary, the presence of the agent and his participating conversation in the real world is extremely required. For Arendt, imagination and enlarged mentality could only function well under the condition that an agent participates in the web of human relations as much as possible. The more dialogue an agent has with others, the greater possibility that an agent can imagine and think from others’ points of views, and the more points of view the agent can re-present, the greater possibility to make a validity claim for the judgement he makes.

For Arendt, this possibility of re-presentative points of view and validity claim depend on what she, by following Kant, calls ‘common sense’ or *sensus communis*. It is called common sense, not because it is normal or the most basic requirement of men to have but because it is a faculty “shared among men in common”. With this faculty, Arendt believes, one can possibly imagine another’s feelings and opinions if one is in the same condition and status, and can therefore make re-presentations of them. He can do this because he has the same mental faculty that the others have. Arendt views this as ‘a mother of judgement’<sup>43</sup> and argued that no judgement can be made without this inclusion of others in the re-presentation. In other words, in “*sensus communis*”, communicability is a key term.

Plurality and communicability play a significant role in Arendt’s theory of judgement in the same way that plurality and speech are significant for the activity of action. Certainly, judgement is not an action, but Arendt tries to illustrate it in a way that resonates with action. In other words, she attempts to demonstrate as close a connection between action and judgement as possible, since she has proposed that judgement is the mental activity that is closest to politics. In this way, in addition to plurality and communicability of judgement, she

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<sup>43</sup> Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's political philosophy*, 75.

signifies that judgement has a characteristic of freedom, which makes it pertinent to action and politics. This characteristic not only shows the political character of judgement but also helps remove the ‘gridlock’ that Arendt could not avoid when she discussed forgiving and promising in her moral theory. In other words, while forgiving and promising cannot fulfill the characteristic of communicability and freedom in addition to its function that is used only in the catastrophic time, judgement offers her a better version of moral theory in her political theory. It provides communicability and freedom. And of the same time, it provides an “ethics” for the people to be guided therefore in their everyday life.

It can be seen that judging offers ethical theory with a characteristic of freedom. Considering its function, judging allows an agent to arrive at the concept of goodness by discerning between right and wrong by himself. In contrast to other moral theories or religions, judging does not specify and declare what is good and the right things to do. This function of judging helps an agent to maintain his “free spirit” while having an opportunity to attain goodness and morality. He is still an autonomous agent that is not under any moral despotic rules but can consider how to do the right and good thing by himself.

## **Section II: The Debates with Benhabib and A Response to Buckler**

Going back to the arguments about Arendt’s ethical and moral thought, in her book ‘Judgement and the Moral Foundation of Politics in Arendt’s Thought’ Seyla Benhabib proposes that Arendt’s claims on judgement create some conflicting ideas that contest with one another.<sup>44</sup> Benhabib lists three of these different kinds of arguments. Firstly, Arendt was considering the connection between the faculty of thinking and judgement as her moral faculties. Secondly, contrasting to the first argument above, Arendt also considered judgement as “the retrospective faculty of culling meaning from the past”.<sup>45</sup> In other words, Benhabib agrees with Richard Bernstein and Ronald Beiner that there was a shift in her standpoint about the theory of judgement from the actor’s point of view to the spectator’s one, that is, from the point of view of the moral action to moral contemplation.<sup>46</sup> Thirdly, Arendt tries to integrate two different understandings about judgement, Kant’s concept of enlarged thought and Aristotle’s concept of phronesis, together.

Benhabib states that she intends to discuss judgement as a moral faculty and criticizes Arendt for failing to establish it as the basis of her theory of ethics but instead thought of it as the cognitive faculty which is “the most political” of all. It is of her intention, Benhabib adds, to make two arguments. Firstly, the characterization of action will be a framework for analysing Arendt’s theory of judgement and; secondly, Arendt was misled about the faculty of thinking by a quasi-intuitionist concept of moral conscience and a narrow concept of morality. In other words, Benhabib argues that, with respect to action Arendt provides a good framework to begin analysing judgement as a moral faculty, however, she was unsuccessful in developing it. This thesis disagrees. It is argued that Arendt has made a plausible ethical theory that reconciles

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<sup>44</sup> Benhabib, *Judgement and Moral Foundations of Politics in Hannah Arendt’s Thought*.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Beiner, *Hannah Arendt on Judging*, 117; Bernstein, *Philosophical Profiles: Essays in a Pragmatic Mode*, 221-2.

neatly with her political thought. It is clear that Benhabib debates all these matters on the assumption that Arendt has made a clear separation between morality and politics. In this thesis it is argued that the connection between politics and morality in Arendt's theory is extremely close; albeit in an unconventional manner.

Arendt tried to combine two contrasting ideas, Aristotle's *phronesis* and Kant's enlarged mentality together, into her theory of judgement. Despite criticisms from others, Benhabib claims that this venture is possible and tries to justify it from the neo-Kantian point of view.<sup>47</sup> She explains that the gap between moral judgement and moral principle in Kantian moral theory allows reflective judgement to rise. In other words, she points out that a procedure of enlarged thought and contextual moral judgement agree with one another and, in this way, it can be considered as universalist-egalitarian.<sup>48</sup> In short, it leaves room for the idea of enlarged mentality to be explained by the idea of *phronesis*. However, she criticizes Arendt for restricting this theory only to the political realm and for rejecting its application in real dialogue in the world of appearances. For Benhabib, in this way, Arendt missed an opportunity to develop her ethical theory by this combination of thoughts through a dialogic or discursive ethics, or in other words, Arendt has failed to develop the theory of judgement as a moral theory.<sup>49</sup>

This criticism, however, seems not to get along with Arendt's stance and her point of view. Arendt certainly sees a formal operation in the faculty of judging. However, she does not see it as the way that she must claim for universal validity. For her, it does not mean that this formal operation must provide some substantive ethics. Instead of claiming the universal validity through formal operation and imaginary points of view, Arendt sticks to particularities of cases and empirical experience of politics. In other words, Arendt does not want to offer or propose an a priori political ethics principle. About this, Buckler explains that, on the contrary, due to the fact that circumstances of reflective judgement cannot be formalized, this makes it "answers to the authentic experience of the political."<sup>50</sup>

Despite agreeing with Benhabib in the points that Arendt was successful in combining Kant's and Aristotle's ideas into her ethical theory and to read the concept of judgement as both political and ethical faculties, this thesis disagrees with Benhabib on many points. It finds that Benhabib's argument is based upon one significant assumption; that is, Arendt made a separation between morality and politics and wanted to create an ethical theory separate from her political one. Benhabib makes three arguments regarding this matter. Firstly, she argues that there is a conflict between Arendt's moral principle and political one since Arendt emphasized harmony as a moral principle while indicating plurality as a political principle.<sup>51</sup> For Benhabib, the emphasis on harmony is a quasi-intuitionist standpoint and it generates a difficulty to combine the harmony as moral principle and plurality as political principle when exercising these principles together.<sup>52</sup> To be more specific, Benhabib sees that it is difficult to exercising the enlarged thought in which plurality is a key concern while trying 'to be at home

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Benhabib, *Judgement and Moral Foundations of Politics in Hannah Arendt's Thought*, 43.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Buckler, *Ethics and the Vocation of Politics*, 124.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

with oneself' during exercising the moral judgement.<sup>53</sup> Benhabib points out Eichmann as an example of the one who is "at home with himself" while doing an evil activity at the same time.

Regarding this, the thesis sees there are some problematical issues when Benhabib indicates harmony as a key moral principle. By proposing so, Benhabib explains it from Arendt's concept of thinking and conscience which are the two moral faculties that Arendt rejected.<sup>54</sup> Certainly, Arendt discussed these two faculties when she proposed her ethical thought. However, Arendt finally declined their validity and moved on to discuss the other possible concepts instead. In this way, both thinking and conscience are not a good choice for Benhabib to employ when discussing about Arendt's morality. The thesis, on the contrary, suggests that Arendt's morality is based on the principle of plurality and freedom. These two principles, as it can be clearly seen, are the very principles of action and politics themselves. As we can see from the beginning of the chapter, successfully or not, Arendt always tried to propose her concept of morality on the political principle. The faculty of forgiving and promising, for instances, are the two most explicit examples that demonstrate this attempt of her. And when she was discussing both of these two faculties, she did not mention anything about harmony at all even she indicated directly that she proposes these two faculties as her moral precepts. In this way, the thesis strongly disagrees with Benhabib in indicating harmony as a key principle of Arendt's theory of moral. In contrary, it proposes that there is no conflict between Arendt's morality and political principles since both of them consider plurality and freedom as their very principles.

Besides the issue about the conflict between morality and political principles, Benhabib also argues that Arendt's objection to a worldly idea of enlarged thought means that she misses an opportunity to expand this idea and her concept of judgement from the realm of politics to morality. Unlike Arendt, Benhabib sees that by exercising an idea of enlarged thought in the actual world, the discursive dialogues can help enhance the understand among one another by letting one know the real points of view of the others.<sup>55</sup> Benhabib herself wants to demonstrate that Arendt's theory of action can not only be useful in supporting the concept of moral judgement but that it can also reformulate Kantian moral theory of enlarged mentality as well.<sup>56</sup> Speaking in this way, Benhabib encourages Arendt or any Arendtian to conjoin politics and morality together in order to make moral judgement more practical and reconcile with her political theory in general. The thesis surely agrees with Benhabib at this point.

However, the thesis disagrees with Benhabib on the point that an empirical treatment of enlarged thought can promote morality and support better judgement. Benhabib herself seems to recognize the problem of empiricising enlarged thought as well and she also justifies Arendt's choice in a historical perspective. She explains that Arendt might find her argument about simulated dialogue "reveals the utopianism of moral thought in the extreme"<sup>57</sup>. However, Benhabib bases this comment only on a historical perspective when she mentions National Socialism and Stalinism as the examples of the failure of intersubjective communication and

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<sup>53</sup> Benhabib, *Judgement and Moral Foundations of Politics in Hannah Arendt's Thought*, 45.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 48.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 45.



enlarged thought. The thesis proposes that the possibility that Arendt maintains her idea of an ‘imaginary’ enlarged thought is based on the fact that her focus is on the concept of freedom and liberation of the subject from its existing condition is what she values. Considering the situation where most of the German citizens were socialized under the Nazi regime, listening to the real “voices” from the standpoints of the others are certainly not helpful and may not be applicable. Imagining that most of the people agree that killing Jews is “moral”, these real voices of the people will certainly not help the subject attains a good judgement.

The thesis understands that Benhabib’s suggestion has an aim to encourage discursive dialogue in order to reach a moral consensus. However, this is not an aim for Arendt. The thesis sees that Arendt did not expect that society will attain any consensus which seems to be “moral” as a guideline for everyone to follow. She, instead, aimed at “ethics” on the “personal” level and expected that by exercising an enlarged thought, the subject will reach a good judgement and suppose to act accordingly. In other words, Arendt saw an exercise of enlarged mentality as an ethics both personal and practical. And she presumed that this kind of ethics will be applied, and function, not only in an “abnormal” situation but also in an everyday life.

Besides the problem of an applicability and attainability of the discursive dialogue to form a good judgement, following the real voices of the others through the discussions in order to reach morality reflects a lack of freedom of the subject, speaking in an Arendtian sense. Arendt suggested the subject who judges to exercise an enlarged thought to collect as many imaginary viewpoints as possible because she wanted the subject to set itself free from the binding conditions. At the same time, the capability of the subject to exercise the judging and imagining faculties by itself signifies the subject as active and autonomous. This is extremely significant point in Arendt’s concept of judgement, since it reconciles well with her concept of action in her political theory. In this sense, unlike Benhabib and many others scholars, the thesis finds Arendt both successfully developed her “half”- ethical theory and that it concurs perfectly with her political one.

However, by proposing it in this way, the criticism about the political character of Arendt’s concept of judgement could also be questioned. It may be criticized that basing judgement on the imaginary points of view demonstrates the disagreement between Arendt’s concept of judgment and her other political concepts since judgement is actually founded merely from the mind of one person’s opinion. In other words, judgement seems to lack the character of plurality and discard the world of appearance from its operation and process. Regarding this point, the thesis disagrees and wants to justify as follows. Despite processing merely in the mental faculty, it cannot be said that Arendt has left the empirical world and plurality in order to form her ethical thought. By conjoining her concept of politics and her idea about the life of the mind, it is clear that, like Kant, Arendt ambiguously attempted to found her political theory based on the combination of the empirical and mental world. In ‘Thinking’, Arendt has mentioned the crossing between the two worlds, the world of the appearance and the world of thinking. Even an activity of thinking which seems to be the most private of all still requires “materials” from the world of appearance to formulate thoughts and continue the thinking process. The faculty of judging which deals directly with the particulars of the physical objects also demand the appearance of others both physically and mentally to operate and judge. The

more experience the subject gains from an empirical world in which it interacts with other men, the better judgement it could possibly make. In this sense, world of appearance and the “real opinions” of the other men are always included in the mental process. Certainly, there is a separation between the two worlds in Arendt’s thought, however, it cannot be said that one is more significant than another. Both are required equally for human to live in the human society, especially in order to live a life politically and well.

In sum, this thesis strongly disagrees with the argument that Arendt should empiricise the idea of enlarged mentality in her theory of judgement. It finds setting the boundary between the real opinions in the world of appearance and the imaginary viewpoints could possibly allow the subject to form a good judgement and encourage morality and, at the same time, maintain the autonomy of the subject to operate mentally and physically when it comes to the consideration about morality. It also rejects that Arendt has made a separation between morality and politics. As discussed before in the previous parts, Arendt aims to combine her morality into her political thought and the thesis has shown throughout that Arendt tried to find an ethical theory that agrees well with her concept of action and the political.

Thus, the faculty of judgement allows her to form a “half-way theory of ethics”, not in the sense of a normative ethics that demands everyone to conform, but as a “habit” or “ethos” of being autonomous and including others into consideration. Instead of telling the rules or guidelines of “what is right?” and “what should we do?”, Arendt suggested a certain way for each individual subject to find his own answer of “what is right?” and left a room for them to consider about his or her action. In this way, this kind of ethical theory has found its place in the very heart of her political theory, since it does not only reconcile well to it but also help create and maintain ‘the political’ in the space that politics dwells on.

While Benhabib, along with some other political theorists such as Jay<sup>58</sup> and Kateb for example, has argued about the lack of a normative element in Arendt’s thought, Steve Buckler disagrees and sees that Arendt’s idea may supply a source of ethical constraint and guidance.<sup>59</sup> For him, even though Arendt did not develop a conventional style of political ethics, her agonal model of politics and action provides somewhat character of ethics in her political consideration.<sup>60</sup> He proposes an idea of politics as vocation, which is not only “appropriate to Arendt’s conception of political agency” but also allows “an exploration moral implications of that concept in terms of a vocational ethics.”<sup>61</sup>

About this vocational ethics, he defines;

“is a set of ethical considerations and constraints arising from a particular vocational practice and grounded in the purposes, motives and commitments that define that practice.”<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Martin Jay, “Hannah Arendt: Opposing Views,” *Partisan Review* 45, no. 3 (1978): 348-368.

<sup>59</sup> Buckler, *Ethics and Vocation of Politics*, 117.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

In other words, it is “grounded in the specific and distinctive experience of political agency” rather than deriving “from any set of principles or reference points outside that mode of experience.”<sup>63</sup> By this, he rejects that Arendt’s account of politics can be considered as “procedural ethics grounded in universal rationality” nor “an ethical framework appealing to cultural convention.”<sup>64</sup> He contends that Arendt would see a communitarian account of politics as unpolitical and “a tendency to marginalize the possibility of authentic freedom.”<sup>65</sup> In short, Buckler proposes to see Arendt’s ethical foundation from the expressive point of view of an action which derives “from the condition of plurality itself.”<sup>66</sup> By this, he contends that there are three ethical faculties in for Arendt; promising, forgiving and judging.

Buckler maintains that, while Kateb argues that promising and forgiveness are not sufficient to be a general framework for ethical constraint in politics, “the significance afforded to these two faculties in Arendt’s thinking may be suggestive.”<sup>67</sup> For him, Arendt’s concept of forgiveness and promise can be understood from its revelatory characters and linguistic enactment.<sup>68</sup> Quoting from Austin’s *How to do things with words* in 1975, Buckler sees these two faculties having declaratory and contractual illocutionary force.<sup>69</sup> About this, he writes;

“Looked at from this perspective, what appears to afford them significance pertinent to public realm is their *performative* character, their nature as speech act.”<sup>70</sup>

Buckler suggests the performative conditions of speech and action to “provide a way for moral considerations to become relevant to politics”<sup>71</sup> and this view also extend to helps define Arendt’s idea of judgement as the context of appearance from its perlocutionary condition.

Buckler poses the question about the possibility to provide a foundation for the ethical guides that is grounded in the public realm rather than transcendental; if reflective judgement is proven to be central to the idea of public realm and the possibility of the universality in the intersubjective conditions of reflective judgement to provide somewhat substantive political ethics.<sup>72</sup> By answer this question, he turns back again to Kant and Benhabib, who sees Kantian reflective judgement as ‘a formal operation’<sup>73</sup> that claims “its universality through an appeal to the putative standpoints of a universal spectatorship.”<sup>74</sup> In other words, Benhabib understands this as a basis for a priori ethical principles. Arendt, in contrast, sees that actuality of political

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 120.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 121.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 121.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 122.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 123.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 123-124.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

circumstances is already enough to provide a ground for its validity without providing a substantive elaboration as a universal and formal operation. And in this sense, judgement can be an “authentic experience of the political” because “the circumstances of reflective judgement cannot be formalised.”<sup>75</sup>

This thesis shares with Buckler that Arendt intended to provide three concepts concerning her idea of ethics and moral; forgiveness, promising, and judgement. However, the thesis finds that these three faculties are not equally fruitful in Arendt’s ethical thought. Besides, it does not find that only expressive or performative character plays a key role in understanding her ethical thought. In fact, it agrees with Maurizio Passerin d’ Entreves in the point that communicative dimension of ethics plays a significant role in Arendt’s forming of her ethical thought. For D’Entreves, an idea of morality in politics must be founded on political measures and acted out of human capabilities. However, the exercise of these capabilities is not possible without communication among real people within the public sphere. I do agree with d’Entreves at this point. For Arendt, the actuality and real political experience is the ground of judgement and Arendt tends to see judgement as “the authentic experience of the political”, communicating experience of an agent is thus extremely significant.

### **Section III: Forgiveness and Promising as the Ideas of Morality**

Despite agreeing with Buckler that all the three mental faculties, the faculty of forgiving, the faculty of making and keeping promise, and the faculty of judging, are mainly composed into her ethical thought. This thesis argues that these three faculties are not equally fertile in Arendt’s ideas of morality and ethics.

During 1970s, forgiveness turns to become a prominent concept in politics and political science. Like Andrew Schaap has stated, Arendt’s idea of forgiveness has become to be interested at the end of the twentieth century when citizens globally had to struggle with violence fueled by the Cold War.<sup>76</sup> He explains that forgiveness and reconciliation became a central term in discussing politics throughout the world as reconciliation has been promoted to help balancing justice within transitional society.<sup>77</sup> During that time, the concept of Transitional Justice was initiated and suggested into the political world.

Transitional justice or TJ is a concept that combines the idea of transition and justice together. In *The Encyclopedia of Political Science*, edited by George Thomas Kurian, TJ is defined as “approaches societies undertake to reckon with legacies of widespread and systematic human rights abuse, mass atrocity, genocide or civil war as they move from a period of violent conflict or oppression toward peace, democracy, the rule of law, and respect for individual and collective rights.”<sup>78</sup> In addition, the book argues that new democracies engage in TJ due to many reasons.<sup>79</sup> They seek to achieve justice for their citizens and to bring closure for victims;

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 124.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Schaap, *Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice*.

<sup>78</sup> Lavinia Stan, “Transitional Justice,” in *The encyclopaedia of political science*, ed. George Thomas Kurian (Washington: CQ Press, 2011), 1680.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

establish civil trust and enhance social capital; reform the state's armed officers and misuses of state's resources, for examples.<sup>80</sup>

Ruti G. Teitel explains that the debates upon TJ can be considered from two perspectives, realist and idealist.<sup>81</sup> Realist approach focuses on the possibility of the legal and political process that could possibly find the truth and leads to legal process and justice at the end.<sup>82</sup> Idealist approach, in contrast, focuses on explaining and searching for the definition of the transitional justice in order to make it as a starting point of the procedures which will consequently effect the justice seeking process.<sup>83</sup> There also arises many debates and arguments about the TJ and forgiveness. Jefferey and Kim states three key dichotomous debates in question emerged in TJ. Firstly, prosecution versus pardon, which is also referred to as "trial versus amnesty", or "justice versus peace". Secondly, retributive versus restorative justice, variants of which included justice versus truth, perpetrator-focused versus victim-centered approaches, and backward-looking versus forward-looking approaches. And thirdly, top-down versus bottom-up, or state-led versus civil society-initiated approaches, or international versus local approaches.<sup>84</sup>

Despite the fact that this concept of TJ had firstly arisen from the holocaust incidence which urged human society to reconsider and find the new measures to deal with the "new type of crime", the concept became to be renewed and merely extremely interested among political scientist, legal theorist and political leaders during the third wave of democratic transition<sup>85</sup>. After the cold war period, there is an urgent interest in the concept of reconciliation of politics.<sup>86</sup> Thus, a concept of justice in TJ has been extended and moved from legal responses to an establishment of trials and truth commissions.<sup>87</sup> As, Jefferey and Kim agree with Richard H. Solomon that TJ is a "justice associated with periods of political change from repressive regimes to democratic societies."<sup>88</sup> Thus, to speak easily, Transitional Justice approaches can be either judicial or nonjudicial in nature.<sup>89</sup>

With this certain concept that includes nonjudicial approach into the Transitional Justice, forgiveness becomes to be a prominent concept and "precept" for conflict resolution and reconciliation. Ari Kohen in his 'The Personal and the Political: Forgiveness and Reconciliation in restorative justice', has defined forgiveness as the most basic foundation of reconciliation and Restorative Justice.<sup>90</sup> In the same manner, Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, in their 'Forgive and Not Forget: Reconciliation between Forgiveness and Resentment', maintains that forgiveness constitutes the background of debates about restitution, politics of memory, and

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ruti G. Teitel, *Transitional Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3-4.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 3-4.

<sup>84</sup> Jefferey and Kim, *Introduction New Horizons: Transitional Justice in the Asia Pacific*, 8-9

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>86</sup> Schaap, *Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice*.

<sup>87</sup> Jefferey and Kim, *Introduction New Horizons: Transitional Justice in the Asia Pacific*.

<sup>88</sup> Richard H. Solomon, "Preface," in *Transitional Justice: How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, Vol. 3*, ed. Neil J. Kritz (Washington D.C.: United States Institute for Peace, 1995), xiii.

<sup>89</sup> Stan, *Transitional Justice*, 1680

<sup>90</sup> Ari Kohen, "The Personal and the Political: Forgiveness and Reconciliation in Restorative Justice," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 12, no. 3 (September 2009): 399-423.

historical injustices.<sup>91</sup> They add that forgiveness is normally exercised by the countries that need to “strike the balance between the search for justice and the need for civil and political stability.”<sup>92</sup>

However, the concept of forgiveness defined and exercised in Transitional Justice has also been discussed and debated widely. Despite these different perceptions of forgiveness, Levy and Sznajder argues that most of them share the perception that forgiveness has a “power to undo what has been done.”<sup>93</sup> This mentioned characteristic of forgiveness seems to reflect the heart of Arendt’s concept of forgiveness. Here, the thesis then starts exploring and examining Arendt’s another two ethical concepts besides the concept of judgement; forgiveness and Promise.

Arendt has firstly discussed about the faculty of forgiving deliberately in *The Human Condition* where she states the faculty of forgiving and the faculty of making and keeping promises as the remedy against the irreversibility and unpredictability of action. There, she mentioned the faculty of forgiving and promising as a set of “moral code”<sup>94</sup> that;

“...their role in politics establishes a diametrically different set of guiding principles from “moral” standards inherent in the Platonic notion of rule.”<sup>95</sup>

The reason Arendt sees these two faculties as a different set of guiding principle is that it corresponds closely to the human condition of plurality.<sup>96</sup> Considering in this way, there are two things that Arendt proposes here. Firstly, she proposes these two faculties as a “moral” or “guiding” principles. Secondly, she proposes that these moral principles are different from that of Platonic rulership where the moral’s legitimacy depends on the dominion of the self and the relationship between me and myself.<sup>97</sup> Arendt argues that the faculty of forgiving and of making promises rests entirely on the presence of others and they can function only under the condition of plurality.<sup>98</sup>

In other words, what Arendt tried to do is to propose a set of “code of conduct” for the people who dwell in the political arena. The code of conduct that corresponds to the condition of plurality and fits into the realm of the political, i.e., the code of conduct that helps maintain the political realm.

In the political realm, the activity of action bears two distinctive characteristics, irreversibility and unpredictability. Action, together with its result, can never be predicted; and once the action has been done, it can never be undone or reversed. Labour and work are predictable.

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<sup>91</sup> Daniel Levy and Natan Szchneider, “Forgive and Not Forget: Reconciliation between Forgiveness and Resentment,” in *Taking Wrongs Seriously: Apologies and Reconciliation*, eds. Elazar Barkan, Alexander Karn (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 84.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

<sup>94</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 238.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 237-38.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

They can be predicted and planned. Unlike action, work can be undone. It can be destroyed, remade, or changed. These two characters of action makes political realm to require a different way to handle it. And here, Arendt thus offers the faculty of forgiving and the faculty of making promise as the codes of conduct. The two faculties that could possibly ‘release’ people from the undone activities and ‘bind’ them to stay together in the public realm. And even though action should not be reined by any moral rules for Arendt, these two faculties are considered to be possible because both of them are also action themselves and bear characteristics that fit into the realm of the political.

Unlike the activity of labour and work, action cannot be redeemed by the other activities.<sup>99</sup> For the animal laborans, their predicament of an unfree from the ever-recurring cycle could be redeemed by the viewpoint of the homo faber who introduce and “make” the world of durability. Homo faber, on the other hands, could also be redeemed from the predicament of meaningless by an activity of action.<sup>100</sup> In other words, labour and work can be redeemed by some other higher faculties. Action, on the contrary, cannot be redeemed by any other activity outside itself. Only possibility of the redemption can only be done by the action itself. About this she writes;

“Here, the remedy against the irreversibility and unpredictability of the process started by acting does not arise out of another and possibly higher faculty, but is one of the potentialities of action itself”<sup>101</sup>

And;

“These moral precepts are the only ones that are not applied to action from the outside, from some supposedly higher faculty or from experiences outside action’s own reach.”<sup>102</sup>

Regarding this, Arendt tries convincing the readers that these two faculties are considered as action. By doing, so Arendt tries pointing out that they are both bearing the character of plurality and freedom. That;

“Both faculties, therefore, depend on plurality, on the presence and acting of others, for no one can forgive himself and no one can feel bound by a promise made only to

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 236.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 246.

himself; forgiving and promising enacted in solitude or isolation remain without reality and can signify no more than a role played before one's self."<sup>103</sup>

And;

“Without being forgiven, released from the consequences of what we have done, our capacity to act would, as it were, be confined to one single deed from which we could never recover;..”<sup>104</sup>

Also;

“; it (the faculty of promise) corresponds exactly to the existence of a freedom which was given under the condition of non- sovereignty.”<sup>105</sup>

Regarding to this, she also points out that both of these two faculties can make new beginning and starts something new for human society. About this she writes;

“..thus they are like control mechanisms built into the very faculty to start new and unending processes.”<sup>106</sup>

By proposing these two faculties as the moral precepts for action and political realm, Arendt seems to base this certain idea of morality upon the idea of the “will”. She writes;

“In so far as morality is more than the sum total of mores, of customs and standards of behavior solidified through tradition and valid on the ground of agreements, both of which change with time, it has, at least politically, no more to support itself than the good will to counter the enormous risks of action by readiness to forgive and to be forgiven, to make promises and to keep them.”<sup>107</sup>

And also,

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 237.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 244.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, 246.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 245.



“They arise, on the contrary, directly out of the will to live together with others in the mode of acting and speaking,…”<sup>108</sup>

At the same time, she also discusses about the faculty of promising and Nietzsche that;

“Nietzsche, in his extraordinary sensibility to moral phenomena, and despite his modern prejudice to see the source of all power on the will power of the isolated individual, saw in the faculty of promises (the “memory of the will,” as he called it the very distinction which marks off human from animal life.”<sup>109</sup>

In other words, it seems that Arendt sees these two faculties as the abilities to “will” for freedom and a certain level of stability. By forgiving, one ‘wills’ to be free and ‘releases’ oneself from the consequences of the actions that have been done<sup>110</sup> in order to move oneself to the possible new façade of relationship. Thus, even though action cannot be reversed, forgiving can undo the deeds of the past and free men from the confinement of the deed that can never be recovered.<sup>111</sup> Making and Keeping promises, at the same time, demonstrates the ‘will’ of men to bind themselves to set up “islands of security in the ocean of uncertainty”.<sup>112</sup> This certain kind of security allows men to make the possible relationship, keeps their own identity and confirm the reality of themselves in the public realm.<sup>113</sup> In short, the faculty of forgiving helps release men from the chained consequences of the past before allowing them to form the new community in the political realm by exercising the faculty of promising. In this way, these two faculties belong together<sup>114</sup>. They go together and work together as a set of mechanism set of moral conduct in the public sphere and the realm of the political.

#### **Section IV: Forgiveness and Transitional Justice**

Arendt’s attempt to emphasize the characters of plurality and freedom has been shown in the discussion about the faculty of forgiving. Like most of the time when she proposes a certain concept or thought, Arendt proposes a certain concept with an etymological study and using a role model as an example of thought. In the case of forgiveness, Arendt proposes Jesus of Nazareth as a role model and states that he was the one who discovered the role of forgiveness in the realm of human affairs.<sup>115</sup> By doing so, she extends that not only God but also man has a power to forgive, and this power of man does not derive from God.<sup>116</sup> This is a decisive

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 246.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, 245.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, 237.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid, 238.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, 239.

character of the faculty of forgiving that Arendt tries to propose about her concept of forgiveness.

However, for Arendt, forgiveness cannot be applied to the intentional wrong doing which will be judged and punished by God and characterized by the idea of just retribution. As Marguerite La Caze has mentioned that Arendt “links forgiveness to wrong actions that have been committed ‘unknowingly’ or without awareness of the depth of he wrong.”<sup>117</sup> About this Arendt herself writes;

“The reason for the insistence on a duty to forgive is clearly “for they know not what they do” and it does not apply to extremity of crime and willed evil...”<sup>118</sup>

And;

“Crime and willed evil are rare, even rarer perhaps than good deeds; according to Jesus, they will be taken care of by God in the Last Judgement, which plays no role whatsoever on earth, and the Last Judgement is not characterized by forgiveness but by just retribution (apodounai).”<sup>119</sup>

These two characters of forgiveness, an activities in the human affairs and validity on the unintentional wrong doing, marks its characteristics as action and puts it into the opposite position of vengeance, which is acted on the basis of an ‘re-action’ against an original trespassing.<sup>120</sup> According to Arendt, revenge is natural, automatic, and predictable; and it confines men to “one single deed from which we could never recover” and makes men to “remain the victims of its consequences forever.”<sup>121</sup> Forgiveness, on the contrary, is unexpected and frees both the one who forgives and the forgiven from the suffer of vengeance. In short, Arendt tries to point out this as a character of freedom of forgiveness and indicates it as an activity of action.

Arendt also states punishment as an alternative to forgiveness. For her punishment is not on the opposite side of forgiving since both of these two activities are an attempt to “put an end to something that can go endlessly.”<sup>122</sup> And regarding to this, Arendt contends that men cannot forgive what they cannot punish, so does the other way round. In this way, men can neither

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<sup>117</sup> Marguerite La Caze, “The Miraculous Power of Forgiveness and the Promise”, in *Action and Appearance: Ethics and the Politics of Writing in Hannah Arendt*, ed. Anna Yeatman, Phillip Hansen, Magdalena Zolkos, and Charles Barbour (Continuum: London 2011).

<sup>118</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 239.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 240.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 241.

forgive nor punish the ‘radical evil’ doing since it transcends the realm of human affairs and potentialities of human power.<sup>123</sup>

In sum, there are four characteristics of forgiveness in Arendt’s thought. Firstly, forgiveness is a human activity. Secondly, it depends on plurality, that is on the presence and acting of others. Thirdly, it demonstrates the character of freedom. Fourthly, it can only apply to an unintentionally wrongdoing, i.e., to the one who did not or could not know what they did. In other words, Arendt’s characteristics of forgiveness has reflected and reconcile well with Christian’s way of thought and this is also shown explicitly when her concept of forgiveness is applied in the context of Transitional Justice.

Even though forgiveness and Transitional Justice has often praised by the world community in balancing against conventional concept of justice in the transitional society where the institutional and legal remedies are usually felt to be insufficient to address the previous violence<sup>124</sup>, the criticisms also arise widely among the scholars and practitioners. Besides the illegitimate and non-transparency problems of the trial procedures and ECCC, for example, the issues regarding the responsibility of the perpetrators in the case of Khmer Rouge in Cambodia also reflects a wariness of applying forgiveness and reconciliation and its practicality.<sup>125</sup> To speak it shortly, the criticisms about its practicality range from the efficacy of forgiveness in producing reconciliation, especially among the forgiving victims, to “reproducing their postcolonial condition to the broader geopolitical forces.”<sup>126</sup> Regarding the efficacy of forgiveness, the criticisms also range wildly theoretically, from “forcing the victims to forgive”<sup>127</sup> to “morally undesirable” and “betraying the sense of justice”.<sup>128</sup>

And since forgiveness, discussed mostly in Transitional justice, is understood through the Christian or Abrahamic concepts of forgiveness. Therefore, problems concerns with application of this certain concept into the non-western and non-Christian political society where forgiveness is understood differently are always arisen.<sup>129</sup> Even in the Christian community, the effectiveness of forgiving in the transitional society is questioned, as research on apology for both individual and collective wrongdoing suggests that it may be less therapeutic value and healing for the receiving victims than the apology-giving perpetrators.<sup>130</sup>

Kathryn J. Norlock and Jean Rumsey notice quite a similar problem and argue that the outcome of forgiving, especially to whom that might not deserve it, may bring many costs to come than what can be counted or calculated. In ‘The Limits of Forgiveness’, Norlock and Rumsey rejects Arendt’s idea that forgiveness can free ourselves from the consequences of our past actions.<sup>131</sup> According to Norlock and Rumsey, instead of interrupting the damages of wrong actions, forgiveness for sorts of evils that Arendt did not consider comes with too many costs

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Schaap, *Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice*, 68-69

<sup>125</sup> Kirsten Ainley, “Transitional Justice in Cambodia The Coincidence of Power and Principle,” in *Transitional Justice in the Asia Pacific*, eds. Renee Jefferey and Hun Joon Kim (New York: Cambridge University Press), 139-141.

<sup>126</sup> Adams and Kurtis, *Collective Memory Practices as Tools for Reconciliation*, 10-14.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>128</sup> Mrovlje, *Forgiveness, Representative Judgement and Love of the World*, 1080.

<sup>129</sup> Siwach Sripokangkul, “Creating Reconciliation through Traditional Systems and the Limitations of Restorative Justice: A Case Study of Reconciliation under the Xeer System in Somalia,” *Journal of Political Science and Law, Kalasin University* 5, no. 1 (January-June 2016), 25.

<sup>130</sup> Adams and Kurtis, *Collective Memory Practices as Tools for Reconciliation*, 10

<sup>131</sup> Kathryn J. Norlock and Jean Rumsey, “The Limits of Forgiveness,” *Hypatia* 24, no. 1(Winter 2009): 100.

and sufferings of those who forgive others who may not deserve it.<sup>132</sup> Despite an awareness about the disconnection between Arendt's concept of forgiveness and the intentional wrong doing, the article criticised that Arendt does not clearly focus on radical evil which is an extraordinary wrong that is not less common than that of the ordinary one.<sup>133</sup> This thesis, however, disagrees and believes that Arendt already has a clear answer regarding this question; which it will be discussed later on.

Norlock and Rumsey's concern about forgiving the undeserved plays a significant point in understanding Arendt's concept of forgiveness as well as in the attentiveness of applying forgiveness into the political realm. As Rumsey also mentioned in her article, forgiveness for Arendt does not apply in the case of the "willed evil" or intentional evil deeds of the perpetrators.<sup>134</sup> The similar point of view is also noticed by Levy and Sznajder in their 'Forgive and Not Forget: Reconciliation between Forgiveness and Resentment' where they maintained that Arendt excluded "radical evil" from the politics of forgiveness.<sup>135</sup> Marguerite La Caze has also mentioned that Arendt "links forgiveness to wrong actions that have been committed 'unknowingly' or without awareness of the depth of the wrong".<sup>136</sup> In fact, Arendt seems to have an answer to this question already. By using analogy with "the Last Judgement" of the God, Arendt provide an alternative way to deal with the wrongs by the concept of punishment. About this, Andrew Schaap maintains the same position when he explains Arendt's concept of forgiveness that punishment is more appropriate in the case of willed evil and crime in order to undo the meaning of the wrong.<sup>137</sup>

Punishment is the most classic measure human has been using for conflict settlement or resentment management. Murphy and Hampton explain that by rejecting "the evidence of superiority implicit in the wrongdoer's original act", the "wrong" can be undone by punishment.<sup>138</sup> About this, Schaap has explained that punishment is a "symbolic defeat of the wrongdoers at the hands of the victim to "annul the significant of the original act as evidence of wrongdoer's superiority".<sup>139</sup> It nullifies the "insulting message" of the wrong and confirmed "the illegitimate act of the oppression of the perpetrators" that had made "the subordinate social status of those it was perpetrated against".<sup>140</sup> Considering in this way, this function of punishment is quite similar to that of apology and repentance since apology is served to "undo the meaning of the wrong by withdrawing endorsement of the insulting message the act communicated".<sup>141</sup> Repentance and apology are considered as significant characters of Arendt's concept of forgiveness as well as that of the Christianity. Besides the notion of

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<sup>132</sup> Norlock and Rumsey, *The Limits of Forgiveness*, 100-101.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 102-104.

<sup>135</sup> Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder, "Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory," *European Journal of Social Theory* 5, no. 1 (February 2002): 85.

<sup>136</sup> Marguerite La Caze, "The Miraculous Power of Forgiveness and the Promise," in *Action and Appearance: Ethics and the Politics of Writing in Hannah Arendt*, ed. Anna Yeatman, Phillip Hansen, Magdalena Zolkos, and Charles Barbour (Continuum: London 2011).

<sup>137</sup> Schaap, *Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice*, 77.

<sup>138</sup> Jean Hampton, "The Retributive Idea," in *Forgiveness and Mercy*, Jeffrey G. Murphy and Jean Hampton (Cambridge [UK.]; Cambridge University Press, 1988), 129.

<sup>139</sup> Schaap, *Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice*, 77.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

liberation and freedom, Arendt and Christianity also share that repentance of the wrong doer is required in the process of forgiveness. About this she quotes from Luke 17:3-4 and writes;

“The reason for the insistence on a duty to forgive is clearly “for they know not what they do” and it does not apply to the extremity of crime and willed evil, for then it would not have been necessary to teach: “And if he trespasses against thee seven times a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying I repent; thou shalt forgive him”.”<sup>142</sup>

And;

“The possible redemption from the predicament of irreversibility- of being unable to undo what one has done though one did not, and could not, and have known what he was doing- is the faculty of forgiving.”<sup>143</sup>

When Arendt attempts to demonstrate the pluralistic character of forgiveness and relates it to her idea of action and the political, she also contends that forgiveness is not a one-sided activity without the repentance of wrongdoers and forgiveness must also be acknowledged when it has taken place as;

“Forgiving and promising enacted in solitude or isolation remain without reality and can signify no more than a role played before one’s self.”<sup>144</sup>

Considering in this way, repentance is also significant for her idea of forgiveness in the sense that it affirms pluralistic character of forgiveness. It affirms the sense of mutual feeling or understanding between the victims and perpetrators. In fact, it is Arendt’s attempt to emphasize that the characters of plurality and freedom has also been shown in the discussion about the faculty of forgiving.

It is helpful to conclude here about Arendt’s concept of forgiveness before discussing further about its application into transitional justice. Arendt’s concept of forgiveness shares most of its characteristics with Christian concept of forgiveness, or speaking specifically, Arendt interprets Christian concept of forgiveness in the eye of her political thought. Forgiveness in Arendt’s term, thus, concerns with plurality and freedom, is a human affair, requires repentance

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<sup>142</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 240.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

of the wrongdoers, and valid merely for an unintentional trespass. Among these five characteristics of forgiveness, repentance and intentional evil are much debated.

Going back to Norlock and Rumsey's criticism on Arendt's concept of forgiving, not all perpetrators deserve forgiveness. However, this idea of forgiveness raises some criticisms. Cheshire Calhoun, in 'Changing One's Heart', contends that, to forgive only ones who deserve is merely a "minimalist forgiving" which is not a "genuine case of forgiveness".<sup>145</sup> She suggests that we aspire to get a certain kind of forgiveness that is a "forgiveness for culpable, unrepentant, unpunished and unrestituted wrongdoing whose existence is not dismissed by refusing to think about it"<sup>146</sup> By doing so, Calhoun suggests forgiving through "telling a story that makes biographical",<sup>147</sup>i.e., forgiving through understanding biographical context that the wrongdoers did the deed that makes sense of their own lives. In her own words, "aspirational forgiveness" requires an understanding of "how culpable wrongdoing fits into the larger pattern of a person's life".<sup>148</sup>

According to Calhoun, forgiving the undeserves does make biographical sense even though it may fail to make moral sense, and in this way, aspirational forgiveness is a commitment to "deprioritizing the moral".<sup>149</sup> And by forgiving only the deserves, she argues, forgiveness becomes morally required rather than elective."<sup>150</sup> Looking from this perspective, Calhoun seems also connect forgiveness with freedom and liberation. In other words, Calhoun proposes to see forgiveness beyond merely moral faculty or action and vindicates an idea of freedom in the "genuine" forgiveness. Maša Mrovlje, in her 'Forgiveness, Representative judgement and Love of the World: Exploring the Political Significance of Forgiveness in the Context of Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Debates', shares the similar points of view when she contends that the concept of forgiveness in Transitional Justice and reconciliation context, which are normally determined on the question of deserving of forgiveness, is self-centered focus and grounds on "the rational and determinant decision that is concerned with the essentially subjective states of the victim and the wrongdoers".<sup>151</sup> For Mrovlje, either liberal or communitarian points of view, forgiveness in Transitional Justice is "usually conceptualized with regard to the preconceived end of reconciliation and/or justice" which risks abstracting to see the world from the point of view of history and reality<sup>152</sup>, instead of realizing the possibility of a new beginning and re-establish relationships between victims and perpetrators with the sense of responsibility for the shared world.<sup>153</sup> In other words, she suggests a shift of focus from a moral to a worldly perspective<sup>154</sup> by examining forgiveness through the lens of the existential and narrative-inspired judging sensibility that rejects to rely forgiveness on a set of prefabricated moral standards.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Cheshire Calhoun, "Changing One's Heart," *Ethics* 103, no. 1 (October 1992): 77-78.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>147</sup> Schaap, *Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Transitional Justice*, 72.

<sup>148</sup> Calhoun, *Changing One's Heart*, 92.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>151</sup> Mrovlje, *Forgiveness, Representative Judgement and Love of the World*, 1083.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 1083.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 1083.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 1087.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 1079.

Through representative judging, Mrovlje argues, one can see political significance of forgiveness in “the willingness to depart from pre-established standard” by “reclaiming a plurality of memories in the past as a shared reality” in order to be ready to engage in the “tentative process of reconciling with reality”.<sup>156</sup> In other words, Mrovlje shares with Alisa L. Carse and Lynne Tirrell in basing the forgiveness upon “the practices of the world-building”.<sup>157</sup> She maintains that worldly and representative judgement helps make forgiveness “remains loyal to the plurality”<sup>158</sup> and “avoids issuing a technical prescription or a clear cut guideline” for forgiving while “affirming the ambiguity of a new beginning”.<sup>159</sup> In short, Mrovlje suggests to exercise the faculty of forgiving from the process of judging in order to see it as an indisposable response of political life<sup>160</sup> instead of indicating forgiving as a tool or means for reconciliation as in the Transitional Justice framework.

### **Section V: Forgiveness and Promise: A Case of Transitional Justice**

In the previous part of the chapter, it has been shown that Transitional Justice has been widely criticized from the viewpoint that considers forgiveness as a precept of moral and an essential element for reconciliation. Like Calhoun, who suggests to deprioritize moral in the concept of forgiveness<sup>161</sup>, Mrovlje also advocates the shift from morality to the worldly perspective when it comes to the discussion about forgiveness. According to her, these criticisms can be easily solved and the concept of forgiveness can be redefined and understood under the existential and narrative-inspired judging sensibility by exercising the faculty of imagination and representative judgement.<sup>162</sup> In other words, Mrovlje turns to Arendt’s idea of judgement and looking through the lens of aesthetics judgement instead of moral judgement. For her, Arendt has explored the faculty of forgiveness not as a duty or virtue but “a moral power which has important performative dimension”.<sup>163</sup> In this way, Mrovlje explains, forgiveness for Arendt is an important political capacity.<sup>164</sup> Regarding this, Levy and Sznajder suggests the similar idea and contends that Arendt did not see forgiveness as a “moral sentiment” but “parts of politics and justice”.<sup>165</sup>

Agreeing with these ideas, this thesis however contends that Arendt’s forgiveness should be understood, together with her concept of judgement, as “political ethics”. By rendering this terminology, the thesis intends to propose that forgiveness should be understood as an “ethical” way of life in the realm of the political. Speaking in this way, this thesis means to put political realm as a priority. By indicating political realm as a priority, it suggests to read Arendt’s ethical faculty as an “ability” of men to preserve the realm of the political society which is characterized by plurality and freedom, a realm that the citizens can come engaging and

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid, 1092.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid, 1092.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid, 1093.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, 1094.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid, 1097.

<sup>161</sup> Calhoun, *Changing One's Heart*, 92.

<sup>162</sup> Mrovlje, *Forgiveness, Representative Judgement and Love of the World*, 1079, 1084-1085.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid, 1081.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid, 1082.

<sup>165</sup> Levy and Sznajder, *Memory Unbound*, 86.

interacting with one another freely and equally with their own particularity of opinion. From this point of view, the thesis contends that Arendt, despite following Aristotle's idea of an inseparability between politics and ethics, turns his politico-ethics upside down. Instead of proposing an idea of politics that helps each individual man reach his own telos in the political society through ethics, she proposes to see ethics as a way of life that help political realm to be erected and endured.

With this point of view, forgiveness cannot be functioned alone and considered as an absolute remedy for either unintentional violence or evil deeds. In other words, in contrast to the Transitional Justice framework, forgiveness should not be operated as a moral act or a necessary command of politics. To speak specifically, forgiveness should be seen as an "option" of the political society after a thoroughly consideration and contemplation of citizens, i.e., forgiveness can only be functioned as a political capability and political ethics through and with other political faculties; namely promising and judging.

There are some certain reasons that forgiveness should not be considered separately from the faculty of promising. Arendt herself indicates that forgiving and promising are the faculties that belong together. While forgiving may be a remedy for irreversibility, promising is a remedy for unpredictability of action.<sup>166</sup> For Arendt, the faculty of promising has a function of "mastering" the twofold darkness of human affair, namely, "basic unreliability of men" and "impossibility of foretelling the consequences of an act within the community of equals" which are the "price" that human pay for freedom, plurality and reality.<sup>167</sup> In other words, the ability to make and keep promise is an ability that help create a certain level of "stability" that people can "trust". As Annette Baier mentioned about forgiveness as an activity that help maintain trust relationship<sup>168</sup>, she suggests us how close forgiveness and promise are in order to continue going into the future. Jeffrie Murphy also puts it in the similar direction. He suggests that we need a kind of forgiveness that is "not regarded as a healing and restoring virtue", i.e., "not the flabby sentimentality of forgiving every wrong", but the "willingness to be open to the possibility of forgiveness with hope and some trust".<sup>169</sup> Hope and trust are all about the future; and promising is the key to both of them.

Arendt herself also states that the force that keeps people to act together and generating power is the force of mutual promise or contract.<sup>170</sup> In other words, for Arendt, only in promise that we can experience a plurality and generate power and action. Without promising, plurality seems to be merely an aggregation of the isolated men staying together. Trust is impossible and power cannot be generated. Without trust, men cannot act and express opinions freely. Consequently, to establish and maintain identity is impossible. In this sense, promising is a condition of the political realm and the possibility of action. Speaking in this way, if we really want to keep this certain kind of "power" and the "realm" for people to act together, forgiveness

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<sup>166</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 237.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid, 244.

<sup>168</sup> Annette Baier, "The Possibility of Sustaining Trust," *Vienna Circle Institute Yearbook* 2, (1994), 103.

<sup>169</sup> Jeffrie G. Murphy, "Forgiveness and Resentment," in *Forgiveness and Mercy*, Jeffrie G. Murphy and Jean Hampton (Cambridge [UK.]; Cambridge University Press, 1988), 32.

<sup>170</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 44-45.



alone is never enough but it must be considered together with the certain kind of trust in promising if we do hope to keep continue “the political” for the “future”.

In this sense, in order to be more reliable that the public space will be the place for the possibility of people to “act in concert”, to forgive all wrongs are impossible and pointless. Forgiveness without a hope for the future is not only useless but can also be extremely dangerous. As Claudia Card has mentioned in her *Atrocity Paradigm*, forgiveness should be granted slowly and with caution.<sup>171</sup> Regarding this, this thesis finds it might be useful to reconsider about two characteristics of forgiveness that they have already mentioned, repentance and unintentional deed of doing wrong. The thesis finds them significant in enhancing the faculty of promising and establishing the promise for the new shared world.

For the one who supports a “genuine forgiving” like Calhoun or looks at forgiveness from the viewpoint of the existentialist like Mrovlje, repentance seems not to be significant for forgiveness. However, this thesis finds that in most of the cases of political forgiveness, repentance should be required. This repentance should not be seen as a condition of forgiveness but it should be seen as a condition for promising, i.e., hope and future, since it is one condition that allow “trust” to be initiated. Without repentance of the wrongdoers, how can people connect, communicate, and trust one another. Considering about the case of Thailand at this moment, if the Yellow Shirts do not repent for what did they do in the past and insist on their opinions that killing the pro-democracy protesters is a moral act and a right action, how can political realm can be a “common world” for people to converse, make dialogues and start a new beginning together. Under this certain condition, how can people maintain their identities and live in plurality if they cannot speak freely and equally in the sphere that their speech capability is deprived?

It may be possible, however, to forgive unconditionally and the repentance may be not that necessary, if some other conditions in the political society support freedom and plurality in the political realm. If the new regime has already been established, any kind of forgiveness will be able to make a success reconciliation. Elizabeth A. Cole, points out that reconciliation can begin only when peace and stability have been achieved.<sup>172</sup> By providing Iraq as a case study, she maintains that reconciliation and debates about the past can begin only when the nation is in place under the right conditions.<sup>173</sup> Jack Snyder and Leslie Vinjamuri also contends in the same way that the success of the countries under the condition of Transitional Justice depends on two conditions; firstly, only when the political institutions has already been firmly established as a normative foundation for democracy, human rights, and law enforcement, and secondly, there is a political coalition between citizens and civil society in enforcing those certain norms.<sup>174</sup> In such a condition, repentance may not be a significant condition of forgiveness since unrepentance may not be an obstacle for re-building the new shared world of the people in the society. However, looking closely at these conditions, it is even clearer that

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<sup>171</sup> Claudia Card, *The Atrocity Paradigm: A Theory of Evil* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 176.

<sup>172</sup> Elizabeth A. Cole, “Shop of Horrors,” *The New York Times*, June 12, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/10/21/opinion/shop-of-horrors.html>.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>174</sup> Jack Snyder, and Leslie Vinjamuri, “Trials and Errors: Principle and Pragmatism in Strategies of International Justice,” *International Security* 28, no. 3 (2003): 5–44.

promising is significant to forgiveness. With a certain political condition that one can trust, forgiveness is easier and repentance might not be a requirement for it.

Besides repentance, intention is another interesting point in discussing about Arendt's concept of forgiveness and promising especially under the Transitional Justice framework. As it can be seen from the above discussion, Arendt limits forgiveness only to the unintentional wrongdoing; and it seems that for the willed evil deeds or intentional wrong doing, Arendt assigns punishment to be an answer. Considering from the view point of Transitional Justice, punishment seems to be a measure that reconciliation should avoid. However, this thesis sees that even under the transitional period, punishment can also initiate trust among the citizens when they are looking forward to the new regime. Looking forward the new beginning, the citizens need some certain kind of conditions that they can trust. And among the trusts, the confidence in judicial process and legal procedure can enhance a trust among people. Justice is always a component of state and the sense of justice can help people to make a "promise" more easily with confidence.

In this way, the thesis suggests that when it comes to reconciliation in Transitional Justice, forgiveness should not be seen as "a must" or a key concept in the reconciliation process. The balance between justice and reconciliation, punishing and forgiving, should be considered thoroughly through many conditions and aspects. To speak specifically, two levels of measurement should be exercised or applied in the transitional society; forgiving for the unintentional wrongdoers who are the normal citizens that engaged in the horror regime with no will and punishment for the officers and leaders who committed wrongly knowingly. Considering a case of Thailand, for example, the red-shirts can choose to forgive their friends, neighbors and relatives who were once supporting the terror as the active citizens. They can also choose to forgive some of the security officers if they find they are willing to forgive, too. However, to guarantee that the political realm will be open for them and all other citizens in the near future, the leaders and security officers who involved with the violent suppression, enforced disappearance and slaughter, should be taken into their responsibility for their decision in the judicial process. How can one trust and the possibility of political realm can be guaranteed, if the political leaders and high-ranked officers are scot free and there is possibility that they will come back into the office in the near future? Under the condition that promise is not possible, forgiveness might be meaningless. However, the decision to apply certain kinds of measures are not definite and it does not mean that forgiveness is not possible at all regarding the willed evil doers. Like Claudia Card has mentioned, it is easy to forgive the ordinary wrongs but it does not mean that we cannot forgive the "extraordinary" wrongs at all; but in those cases, forgiveness should be considered more thoroughly with caution.<sup>175</sup>

By considering in this way, it can be seen that judgement plays the very significant part in the decision about forgiving and promising. Whether one will choose to forgive or not, how and when and to whom are all need judgement to help consider the situation in each particular cases. There is no definite way to indicate how should we do. By exercising the faculty of imagination and representative thinking, one will be able to reconcile with reality and share

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<sup>175</sup> Card, *The Atrocity Paradigm*, 176.

memories with other victims as well as the perpetrators.<sup>176</sup> To forgive or not forgive is therefore a choice. In this way, this thesis thus contends that even though it agrees with Buckler that all these three are the key ethical concepts in Arendt's idea about morality, judgement is the most fertile concept, not only because it can be used in both ordinary and extraordinary time but also it helps another two faculties to function freely and sensibly, too.

## Conclusion

This thesis chapter has shown that despite some criticism that Arendt's political thought has no concept of morality within or unsuccessfully proposes her theory of moral, some of the concepts she presents can be consider as a set of ethical thought or a "half-way theory of ethics". In fact, the thesis has been propounded on the assumption that Arendt advocates an ethical theory in an "unconventional way" and she has grounded her ethical thought on the foundation of her political framework. In other words, this chapter has been written on the presupposition that Arendt's ethical and political thought are wholly interrelated and inseparable from one another. However, instead of proposing political thought on the ethical thought and aims like Aristotle, Arendt advances an idea of ethics that springs from and helps maintain the political realm instead. This ethical idea of her has compounded with three significant concepts; namely, forgiveness, Promising, and Judgement. However, these three components are not equally fertile.

Disagreeing with Kateb, this thesis sees an idea of authentic politics which is founded upon the concept of banality of evil is the most significant conception in Arendt' ethical thought. Banality of evil, not only offers Arendt's a starting point for developing her concept of judgement, it also reconciles well with another two ethical concepts; forgiveness and promising. From the point of view that men are so banal, it is so common for human to err or to wrong others either intentionally or unintentionally. Judgement, with the help of imagination and *sensus communis* has helps men to expand their mentality to think from the other's view point and make representative thinking. With this process in the mind, it may be possible that one who exercises this capability of mind will produces a "right" opinion or a "sound" judgement which may lead to the "right" act. However, this is only a possibility and it is not certain. And in the complex world that plurality of opinions of people is a condition, sometimes "right" seems hard to be defined and trespassing is far from uncommon. In this way, forgiveness has come into action. And in this way, that the concept of banality of evil is significant since it can explain the condition of the political world and offer a "half-way" solution for human to do some possible remedy.

Arendt's concept of forgiveness plays a very significant role in the politics of transition. The idea and framework of the Transitional Justice has forgiveness as its key factor. Despite many claims and some successful evidence, the idea of Transitional Justice and the concept of forgiveness itself were nevertheless widely received criticisms. Ranging from its impracticality to justice trade-off, forgiveness has seen as a mis-concept in politics. Mrovlje, however, by using phenomenology perspective and narrative-inspired approach, re-defines the meaning of

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<sup>176</sup> Mrovlje, *Forgiveness, Representative Judgement and Love of the World*, 1079, 1092.

forgiveness through Arendt's concept of judgement. With this certain point of view, forgiveness can be seen as a significant political necessity in the imperfect and plural world.

Even the debates about the concept of forgiveness itself is also varies, among them, there are debates over the character of repentance and question about who should be the one who deserve to be forgiven. For some scholars, genuine forgiveness should be an act that has been done unconditionally. For them, one should forgive even though the forgiven does not repent or initially had a will to do wrong. This chapter however has shown that by considering the concept of forgiveness with promising, repentance and unintentional condition may be crucial for forgiveness since they enhance the feeling of trustfulness among the citizens in the society in order to forgive and re-build the sharing world and political realm together again. Nevertheless, this requirement is not absolute.

For Arendt, forgiveness should not be exercised alone without the faculty of making and keeping promise. These two faculties belong together as forgiveness release men from the past while promise allows men to aggregate and interrelate together for the future. Transitional justice tries applying these two concepts into the political society that facing the transitional period into democracy after a long conflict or oppression by an autocratic regime. The studies, however, found that there are some specific conditions of the society that make this application to be successful. Peace and strong political institutions that supports democracy seem to define the success of transitional justice. In this way, it is quite obvious that an appropriate condition is significant for forgiving and promising. To know whom, when and how to forgive is essential for promise and the future.

It is here that judgement plays its vital role again. With the faculty of judgement, considering each case as particularities without pre-determined set of rules, an agent may be able to get the "right" decision of how and when to exercise these two faculties in order to rebuild and maintain the public sphere and political realm. In this sense, judgement is an ethical concept that is more fertile than another two since it can be applied from the point of view of an actor so one can possibly know how to act rightly and the point of view of the spectator who will judge other's deed and react in a "sound" manner. In other words, without judgement, forgiveness may be not possible and pointless, if not even make a serious problem in the future.

## Conclusion

This thesis started from, besides the academic preference, the question of how to understand the present conflict situation in Thailand. How can one understand the meaning of “morality” and its relation to politics? How can one discern right from wrong, and then exercise their opinions freely through his speech and action in Thai political sphere? Can and should morality have a place in politics and political realm? Can one act freely and morally at the same time? The thesis, thus, starts from examining Arendt’s concept of judgement, a concept that is considered as one of the most significant in Arendt’s ethical thought, on the basis assumption that the faculty of judgement, for Arendt, is both political and ethical mental capabilities of human as a political living creature of the world.

By doing so, this thesis then begins with literatures review on the faculty of judgement written by Arendt and it chooses four pieces of her work that concerns directly with ethics and morality. In the meantime, the thesis also tries to define Arendt’s concept of politics. By doing so, this thesis tries to read and re-define it from what Arendt’s has proposed about the concept of judgement and Kant. In contrast from other scholars, Arendt defines Kant’s *Critique of the power of Judgement* as his political philosophy. This thesis then explores Kant’s idea of aesthetic judgement in original in order to get the closest sense and meaning of Kant’s power of judgement and, at the same time, explores Arendt’s concept of politics through the term “politeuesthai”, the terminology that her concept of action has grounded upon. By considering and exploring this term in ancient Greek meaning, the thesis finds that her concept of politics can then be understood into two meaning; firstly, politics as a “state affair”, the meaning that people are generally understood, and secondly, the political, a special “activity” that concerns with freedom and duty of the citizens in engaging with their political society’s affair. In this sense, the thesis reads that, when Arendt mentioned the term “political philosophy”, she did not mean simply as philosophy about politics, but saw it as a philosophy that bears the sense of freedom and citizens’ engagement into it, too. In this way, when Arendt defines judgement as a political faculty. This thesis thus defines “political faculty” as an ability of men to do politics, that is, ability to engage with political society which has freedom as a condition.

Arendt, however, defines the faculty of judging, not only as a political faculty, but also an ethical faculty, too. With the hope to produce a “half-way theory of ethics”, Arendt tries to find certain kinds of morality concept that are suit and reconcile well with the political realm and fit into her political thought, i.e., her concept of action. However, this attempt of her seems to be a failure for many political theorists which criticizes that either lacks of normative morality or unsuccessfully theory formulation. In contrast to these certain ideas, the thesis finds three concepts that concerns directly to her concept of morality and it contends that Arendt successfully propose her “half-way” ethical theory in an unconventional approach and methods. However, this thesis also finds that these three concepts are not equally fertile and it contends that judgment is her most significant and fertile ethical concept. By proposing so, the thesis has investigated into these concepts and their application into the framework of

transitional justice, in which forgiveness is considered as an indispensable act in the conflict reconciliation.

Even though the success of the TRC has famously marked the accomplishment of Transitional Justice and become to be a model for conflict resolution and an alternative framework of justice after the Cold War period, many criticisms also arise concerning both fundamental concept and its application or practicality. Forgiveness, a requisite of the process, has been denounced as a “westernizing/Abrahamic concept” that tried to force applying into the other parts of the world, or condemned as a concept that force victims to forgive and justice trade-off. In other words, it has been criticized as a certain kind of imperative moral command.

However, by using Arendt’s concept of judgement, forgiveness can be then considered in another way, as Mrovlje has suggested to confront forgiveness in an “existential world judging sensibility” viewpoint so that it can be recognized as the very condition of freedom and the future of human solidarity.<sup>419</sup> Agreeing with Mrovlje that forgiveness should not be reckoned as an absolute remedy for conflict resolution and alternative justice, it sees forgiveness as an opportunity and a choice that human who live together in community can choose. After a thoroughly deliberation in the process of judgement, one can decide not only whether he wants to forgive or not but also how and when. In other words, with the help of judgement, forgiveness can be exercised meaningfully and men can then beseech for the future in the faculty of promise. Judgement, therefore, has a vital role in Arendt’s ethical thought, since it not only possibly helps one to act rightly in everyday life but also help exercise the other faculties in the time of extra-ordinary as well.

Considering from this point of view, morality and politics are intertwined in Arendt’s political thought. To indicate more specifically, Arendt tried to develop an ethical theory that is not only inseparable from politics, but that is also developed for the purpose of the political upon the ground of her political thought; or in other words, Arendt would like to propose an ethical theory which is a political one. Ethics, for Arendt, is therefore not a rule or concept of goodness in a moral sense but a way of living of a political being who has to live with others in the political society. Only in political society that human attains its fully capability of speech and action. only in the political realm that men can preserve their dignity in their plurality and freedom. Thus, only a way of life that helps maintain the political realm which can guarantee plurality and freedom suits to be used in politics.

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<sup>419</sup> Mrovlje, *Forgiveness, Representative Judgement and Love of the World*, 1092, 1092.

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