A Phenomenological Analysis of The Relationship between Intersubjectivity and Imagination in Hannah Arendt

Kazue Koishikawa

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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
INTERSUBJECTIVITY AND IMAGINATION IN HANNAH ARENDT

A Dissertation

Submitted to the McAnulty School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for

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By

Kazue Koishikawa

May 2014
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
INTERSUBJECTIVITY AND IMAGINATION IN HANNAH ARENDT

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ABSTRACT

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERSUBJECTIVITY AND IMAGINATION IN HANNAH ARENDT

By

Kazue Koishikawa

May 2014

Dissertation supervised by Dr. Lanei Rodemeyer

My dissertation is a phenomenological analysis of the relationship between intersubjectivity and imagination in Hannah Arendt. The objective of my dissertation is to demonstrate that Arendt has a theory of imagination that provides a substratum to explain her key notions such as “action,” “freedom” “beginning,” “history,” “power,” “understanding,” “appearance,” “space of appearance,” and “judgment.” In other words, my dissertation shows that not only are these notions related, and not only do they characterize Arendt’s account of the political life as fundamentally intersubjective, but they are also derived from her peculiar understanding of imagination that arises within the phenomenological legacy.
The thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 provides an analysis to suggest a strong relation between imagination and taste as an intersubjective phenomenon in Arendt’s *Lectures on Kant Political Philosophy* (1992). Chapter 2 traces the “possible” nature of imagination in Arendt’s notion of “action and “understanding” back through her various works, beginning with the essay “Understanding and Politics” (Difficulties of Understanding) (1954) and the last chapter of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1952), the proceeding through further analyses in *The Human Condition* (1958). There is an intermediate section outlining the structure of Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 3 focuses on what Arendt calls “metaphysical fallacies” that are derived from thinking activity and the thinking ego in *The Life of the Mind: Thinking*. Moreover, this chapter serves as a preparatory discussion and analysis for the following chapter, in addition to discussing how Arendt tries to reestablish a linkage between thinking and judgment based on intersubjectivity, echoing her encounter of Adolf Eichmann’s “thoughtlessness.” The last chapter demonstrates that these analyses of the “metaphysical fallacies,” which Arendt points out in *The Life of the Mind: Thinking*, are her implicit criticism of Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1973). Furthermore and finally, by pointing out several parallelisms between Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant and Arendt’s criticism, the chapter offers a way to reconstruct Arendt’s account of intersubjectivity as her own phenomenological interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination as reproductive imagination against the productive imagination in Heidegger’s interpretation.
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Finally, I would like to dedicate my thesis to my father, Uichi Koishikawa, my mother, Setsuko, and my only brother, Keisaku, who have all been gone a long time. Without their unconditional love, I would have never gotten where I am. You live in my heart always, and I love you.
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Chapter 1: The Issue of the Relation between Intersubjectivity and Imagination in Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy

At the time of her death in 1975, Hannah Arendt was working on a book on the three human mental faculties of thinking, willing, and judgment. The first two parts were assembled posthumously by her friend and editor, Mary McCarthy, and published under the title of The Life of the Mind. What was supposed to be the last part, viz., judgment, was never written. Instead of a draft, Arendt left behind a lecture note on Kant’s third Critique, which she had prepared for her course at the New School for Social Research in the fall of 1970, which was later published as LKPP. Given the nature of this text as a lecture note, Arendt did not fully develop the key notions regarding judgment and left little in the way of theoretical explanation. Aside from these underdeveloped notions, we can only speculate as to what the content of the last part of LM might have been, what Arendt’s overall intention was in tackling these three mental faculties, and if LM would have shown any continuity with her earlier works in which she had dealt with the political life.

Nonetheless, we can attempt to answer these questions based on the evidence that Arendt did leave behind. One thing that is apparent in her treatment of judgment in LKPP is her proclamation that taste is intersubjectivity. There are two reasons to pay attention to this fact. One is that Arendt’s notion of action, or, freedom, is intrinsically related to her notion of appearance. For Arendt, freedom is primarily the freedom to act with others through which who one is, is disclosed. As we shall touch upon later in this chapter, as well as in the following chapters, we will merely say here that Arendt’s notion of appearance gives an account of how

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1Hannah Arendt, Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy, ed. Ronald Beiner (University of Chicago Press, 1982), hereafter abbreviated as LKPP.
3 LKPP, 67.
human freedom exists and obtains its objective reality, which in turn is equivalent to describing what human existence is.

The important point here is that Arendt consistently describes her notion of appearance with intersubjective characteristics not only in *LKPP*, but across the span of her work, from the earliest to the very last work, *LM*. The fact that Arendt posits taste as intersubjectivity may indicate that her treatment of judgment is developed along the same line of thought.

Another important point to consider is that though Arendt does not provide a full theoretical explanation as to why taste is intersubjectivity in *LKPP*, it is the first place where Arendt suggests that her account of intersubjectivity is related to the imagination. Since Husserl, imagination has had a special place in the development of phenomenology. As a student of Heidegger, Arendt is generally recognized as someone who belongs to this tradition, indeed, who owes a great debt to the phenomenological legacy and method. And yet, Arendt is never explicit about her method. Thus, the indication of the linkage between intersubjectivity and imagination in *LKPP* may provide us, as we shall see, with an insight to reexamine the possibility that Arendt’s notion of appearance and other related notions have a systematic structure that can be claimed as her own phenomenological endeavor.  

Thus, the purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, we will sketch out Arendt’s claim in *LKPP* that taste is intersubjectivity. Second, we will lay out the role of imagination in her claim and the issues left unanswered in her text. In doing so, the overall objective here is to demonstrate that *LKPP* may indicate that, if there is a possibility that Arendt has a theoretically

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4One of the chief problems of Arendt scholarship is that, though many scholars agree to treat Arendt’s work as a phenomenological description of the public life, only a few approach it as a systematic theory such as Jacques Taminiaux and Dana Villa. For instance, Dermot Moran says, “Arendt’s practice of phenomenology is original and idiosyncratic: she exhibited no particular interest in the phenomenological method and contributed nothing to the theory of phenomenology.” (Dermot Moran, *Introduction to Phenomenology* [Routledge, 2000], 289.)
coherent framework for her account of intersubjectivity, such a framework may be structured through her peculiar understanding of the imagination.

At first glance, it appears that there are two points of concern in terms of dealing with Arendt’s treatment of judgment in *LKPP*. The first point is to ask whether or not her account of judgment is theoretically coherent with that of action. In his interpretive essay to *LKPP*, Richard Beiner claims that Arendt “offers not one but two theories of judgment,” the former centered on her earlier works and the latter particularly on *LKPP*. The shift from the first to the second theory, according to Beiner, occurs in the different emphases that Arendt puts on her understanding of judgment in these respective works. He thinks that while Arendt approaches judgment in the earlier works from the viewpoint of *vita activa*, or, the actor, she approaches judgment in *LKPP* from that of *vita contemplativa*, or, the spectator. Beiner says, “In what I call her ‘later’ formulations, she [Arendt] is no longer concerned with judging as a feature of political life as such. What emerges instead is a conception of judging as one distinct articulation of the integral whole comprising the life of the mind.” Beiner argues that the more that Arendt reflects on judgment, the more she is inclined to see it as the prerogative of solitary mental activity, as opposed to action. One of the reasons behind his claim derives from Arendt’s ending the

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5 *LKPP* is regarded the text that fills in the absence of the last part of *LM*. Arendt planned to write this book as a treatment of the three human mental faculties, viz., thinking, willing, and judgment. However, her untimely death left the third and last part of this book unwritten. Still, as I shall present in my analyses and discussions in the later chapters, we can observe a continuous account of intersubjectivity or “plurality,” throughout the whole of her work, such as *The Human Condition* [hereafter abbreviated as *HC*], *Between Past and Future* [hereafter abbreviated as *BPF*], and *LM*. Ronald Beiner, who edited *LKPP* and contributed an interpretative essay to it, claims that there are two theories of judgment in Arendt: one is from her earlier works, in which Arendt focuses on judgment from the actor’s viewpoint; the other is from her later work, especially in *LKPP*, where she focuses on judgment from the spectator’s viewpoint. However, I do not agree with his reading, and will argue against it. For Beiner’s argument, see his interpretive essay in *LKPP*, 91-93.

6 By two theories of judgment, Beiner refers to Arendt’s works in the 1960s, such as “Truth and Politics” in *BPF*, for one theory and those from 1970s, such as “Thinking and Moral Considerations” (1971) and *LKPP* for the other theory. Beiner is the editor of *LKPP* and also the author of his interpretive essay added to *LKPP*. His “Interpretive Essay” appeared in *LKPP*, 91.


second part of *LM*, i.e., “Willing”, where she points out the “abyss of freedom.” What Arendt means by this term is that the perplexity of securing human freedom, or, the claiming of human freedom, is something akin to bringing about a new beginning against the law of causality, either as the human faculty of willing or the establishment of a new political body.9 According to Beiner, by appealing to the feeling of pleasure or displeasure, Arendt attempts to find a way of “embracing human freedom and of seeing it as bearable for natal and mortal beings.”10

However, as we shall demonstrate later, in her treatment of judgment in *LKPP*, we can trace the central theme of Arendt’s description of the political life that is common across her corpus, viz., appearance. In *LKPP*, Arendt does not use the term “appearance,” but if we look carefully at what she calls the “phenomenon of the beautiful” and its relation to judgment, we see that it indicates a very similar relation between action and the space of appearances, which characterizes her notion of appearance in *The Human Condition*.11 Briefly described, Arendt takes (human) action as being equivalent to freedom. Freedom means the “freedom to act,” by which something new is brought into the world. For Arendt freedom is synonymous with action.

What is important here is that action requires others for both the possibility of action in the first place and for action to gain its reality. The matter of action is characterized as *that which can be otherwise*. By definition being free means that it cannot be predetermined, on the one hand. On the other hand, “action” means “to act together with others,” and the end of an action cannot be foreseen by the other. Thus, action requires a different way to acknowledge its reality, i.e., it requires the witness of others. For Arendt, politics means a way of human life in which human freedom, or autonomy, obtains its reality without being reduced to any form of the

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10 Beiner, “Interpretive essay,” in *LKPP*, 93.
law of causality. The ultimate meaning of *appearances* is that this reality is secured in a space where people act together and action is seen and heard. Furthermore, while the space of appearance offers a space in which action can appear, that space itself is opened and sustained through action. The relation between action and the space of appearance is an intersubjectively- granted world.\(^{12}\) The point is that *appearances* cannot be granted by either metaphysics or Newtonian objectivity, since action (freedom) can exist as long as it lasts and when it is seen and heard by others. Putting it differently, *appearances* are nothing but phenomena qua phenomena.\(^{13}\)

In the context of *LKPP*, this means that, insofar as Arendt’s interpretation of Kant’s judgment of taste, which is reflexive judgment, is judging the beautiful qua beautiful, and insofar as there is the relation between the appearance of the beautiful and the space in which the beautiful appears similar to the appearance of the action and the space of appearances, we can see a greater continuity in Arendt’s description of the political life in *LKPP* with the rest of her

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\(^{12}\) *HC* presents three basic human activities, viz., labor, work, and action. Labor is the activity primarily related to the sustenance of life itself, which leaves “the least durable of tangible things” in the (human) world, for its end is sheer consumption. Work, on the other hand, gives the duality to the world through its end product, i.e., the artifacts including the work of art. It does so because the end products often endure longer than the lifespan of a human being. Action, however, is considered truly unique to human beings, for it is through action that one not only discloses herself to her peers but also brings something new in the (human) world. By action, Arendt means human discourse and the deeds that arise through them. Unlike work, action does not leave a tangible object after it ceases nor does it have a predetermined goal, for it calls forth numerous interactions, counteractions, and reactions. Action is unpredictable and irreversible. Yet it is human action that truly constitutes the world. By this, Arendt means the “web” of human relationships, or the “subjective in-between.” There is also what Arendt calls the “objective in-between,” which is designated for the human world in a wider sense. It is constituted by human artifacts such as architectures, tools, and artworks, and connects people by those objects as common interest. In contrast to the visibility of the world as “objective in-between,” “subjective in-between” is synonymous with what she calls the “public realm/sphere” and the “space of appearances.” It is a space where human freedom (spontaneity) can appear and obtain its reality. See Hannah Arendt, *HC*, 182-184.

\(^{13}\) As noted above: though Arendt admits she is a kind of phenomenologist, she is never explicit about her method. This is also the case of *LKPP*. Nonetheless, we should not ignore her use of the terms “phenomenon” and “phenomena” when describing taste, such as: “the phenomenon of taste,” “the mental phenomenon of Judgment,” “the phenomenon of the beautiful,” and “these phenomena of judgment,” appearing in *LKPP*, 66, 68. It is particularly noteworthy that Arendt calls a “judgment” (of taste) and consequently “taste” as “phenomenon.” It alludes to the intrinsic relationship between “taste” and “intersubjectivity” as we shall see later on. The judgment of taste is judging *appearances*. 
work than the discontinuity that Beiner claims is there.\textsuperscript{14} It means that there are not \textit{two} chief difficulties to approach Arendt’s treatment of judgment, but only \textit{one}: that is, the nature of intersubjectivity, which Arendt identifies with taste. More precisely, we must ask why Arendt proclaims that taste is intersubjectivity; we must examine if there are any hints that allow us to explore Arendt’s account of intersubjectivity theoretically; and, finally, to make clear what are the issues raised in \textit{LKPP} and yet left unanswered.

Nonetheless, given that the text of the \textit{LKPP} exists only as lecture notes, a different, non-linear reconstruction of Arendt’s arguments is required in order to clarify the matters that we listed above in terms of her account of intersubjectivity in her treatment of judgment. To do so in the following sections, we shall first analyze Arendt’s general remarks on Kant’s judgment of taste as reflective judgment. Secondly, we shall pay close attention to Arendt’s account of spectators and their role in the judgment of taste, particularly focusing on the nature of imagination.

As mentioned above, Arendt claims that taste is intersubjectivity. By intersubjectivity, Arendt here means the “nonsubjective element in the nonobjective senses,” which she identifies with community sense.\textsuperscript{15} This formulation of intersubjectivity in regards to the judgment of taste immediately invites three questions: 1. What is the “nonsubjective element” in a judgment of taste? 2. When senses are considered to be “nonobjective,” what kind of senses are they? 3. How are the “nonsubjective elements” and senses considered to be “nonobjective” in relation to community sense? We will turn to answering these questions eventually, but, in order to do so, we must first look into how Arendt interprets the judgment of taste as community sense, and from where in Kant she derives such an interpretation.

\textsuperscript{14} We shall take up this issue in greater detail in Chapter 2.
\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid.} 67.
We can outline Arendt’s understanding of judgment of taste as being three-fold: a. Since
taste is community sense, a judgment of taste is a judgment of community sense.  b. The criterion
for this judgment is “communicability and the standard of deciding about it is common sense.”16
c. The “sense” that consists of “community sense” is the “effect of a reflection upon the mind.”17
Arendt considers a judgment of taste to be a judgment on community sense, for the
“communicability” of that judgment rests on common sense. Furthermore, since a judgment of
taste is a reflective judgment, common sense as the standard for this kind of judgment is not
given to judgment externally as a rule by which judgment has to be conducted but is inherent in
reflection. Thus, when Arendt claims that the judgment of taste is community sense, what she
means is that what makes such a judgment possible is found in the act of reflection. In short,
when Arendt posits that “taste is community sense,” she means that sensus communis as the
standard for judgment of taste is found in the very reflexivity of the activity of judgment.
Arendt’s such understanding of taste as the community sense is derived from her interpretation
of sensus communis appeared in CJ § 40. Arendt takes it to be “an extra sense—that fits us in to
a community,” which is found in reflection.18

[U]nder the sensus communis we must include the idea of a sense common to all, i.e., of a
faculty of judgment which, in its reflection, takes account (a priori) of the mode of
representation of all other men in thought, in order, as it were, to compare its judgment
with the collective reason of humanity….This is done by comparing our judgment with
the possible rather than the actual judgments of others, and by putting ourselves in the
place of any other man, by abstracting from the limitations which contingently attach to
our own judgment….Now this operation of reflection seems perhaps too artificial to be
attributed to the faculty called common sense, but it only appears so when expressed in

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16 Arendt, LKPP, 69.
17 Arendt, ibid., 71.
18 Ibid, 70. I would like to remark that there is a similar discussion of common sense in The Life of the Mind:
Thinking, hereafter abbreviated as LM: I. Here, Arendt identifies common sense as the sixth sense found within us
as the inner sense that puts the five senses together so that we can have the sense of reality of the world we share.
abstract formulae. In itself there is nothing more natural than to abstract from charm or emotion if we are seeking a judgment that is to serve as a universal rule.\(^{19}\)

The object of the reflection, or judgment, is that “extra sense” that takes “account (\textit{a priori}) of the mode of representation of all other men in thought.” In other words, it is not what is sensed that is judged, or reflected upon, but the representation of others in thought. Arendt explains it with her reading of the “enlarged mentality.”

“Enlarged mentality” is one of the maxims of \textit{sensus communis} in \textit{CJ} §40:

However small may be the area or the degree to which a man’s natural gifts reach, yet it indicates a man of \textit{enlarged thought} if he disregards the subjective private conditions of his own judgment, by which so many others are confined, and \textit{reflects upon it from a general standpoint} (which he can only determine by placing himself at the standpoint of others).\(^{20}\)

Arendt argues that the “enlarged mentality” is the condition for critical thinking “where the standpoints of all others are open to inspection.”\(^{21}\) However, it does not mean comparing one’s judgment with the \textit{actual} judgments of others or enlarging one’s empathy by knowing what actually goes on the mind of others.\(^{22}\) Rather, it means a kind of thinking that brings about the “enlarged mentality” \textit{in reflection}, “\textit{makes the others present and thus moves in a space that is potentially public, open to all sides}” \textit{by the force of imagination}.\(^{23}\) The “general standpoint” brought about by the “enlarged mentality” thus means \textit{representation} of all other members of community in thought through the operation of imagination. It suggests two characteristics of Arendt’s understanding of taste. One is that the intersubjectivity found in taste has an affinity with the imagination’s ability to make present others’ perspectives. Related to the former remark is that Arendt emphasizes the “general” characteristic revealed through such representations.

\(^{19}\) Arendt, ibid., taken from Kant, \textit{Critique of Judgment}, §40 (Immanuel Kant, Critique of Judgment, trans. Werner S. Pluhar [Hackett Publishing Co., 1987], 218, hereafter abbreviated as \textit{CJ}), mphasis added
\(^{20}\) \textit{Ibid.}\ Emphasis added.
\(^{21}\) \textit{Ibid.}, 43.
\(^{22}\) \textit{Ibid.}
\(^{23}\) \textit{Ibid.}\ Emphasis added.
Before we proceed to further analysis of the relation between the “representations of others,” which is considered to be an *a priori* in reflection, or *sensus communis*, and imagination, let us shed light on Arendt’s idiosyncratic understanding of *sensus communis* in comparison with that of Kant.

Kant sees the common basis for the communicability of the judgment of taste in the *a priori* subjective condition of cognitive powers in general. Kant states that a pure aesthetic judgment as a reflective judgment is a “free play between imagination and understanding.” In the determinative judgment—which operates for cognition—intuition and understanding are unified through the operation of imagination under the guidance of rules, i.e., categories. In the reflective judgment, which operates for the judgment of taste, imagination does not go through the restriction of understanding. The communicability of the determinative judgment is found in the objectivity of human cognition. What about the communicability of the judgment of taste? Kant says, “[P]leasure—must of necessity rest on the same conditions in everyone, because they are subjective conditions for the possibility of cognition as such…” The important point is that, though imagination is free from the strain of understanding in a reflective judgment, and thus a judgment of taste is merely subjective, its universal communicability rests on the presupposition that everyone has the same cognitive conditions, viz., imagination and understanding. Again, to quote Kant:

> If, then, we are to think that the judgment about this universal communicability of the presentation has a merely subjective determining basis, i.e., one that does not involve a concept of the object, then this basis can be nothing other than the mental state that we find in the relation between (re)presentational power [imagination] and understanding insofar as they refer a given (re)presentation to cognition in general.

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24 Kant, *CJ*, 218.
25 Kant, *CJ*, 293.
26 Kant, *CJ*, 217. Pluhar translates “vorstellen” as “to present.” See Pluhar’s footnote 17 to *CJ*, 14. However, I prefer to use “representation” for “vorstellen,” and thus add “re” in parentheses each time when this word appears in the quoted lines.
It is in that “relation” between imagination and understanding in reflective judgment that the universal communicability of taste can be claimed. For Kant, the feeling of pleasure can be communicated, since the harmonious relation between imagination and understanding testifies that all human beings share the same subjective condition for cognitive powers. Kant calls this “subjective purposiveness” without any purpose.27 Thus, it is with respect to this “subjective purposiveness” that taste is universally communicable, which in turn is what Kant means by the term, sensus communis.28

By contrast, as we have seen, Arendt interprets the communicability of the judgment of taste—sensus communis—as being generality resting in intersubjectivity. It is noteworthy to mention Ronald Beiner’s comments on Arendt’s usage of generality in LKPP at this point as we begin to contrast Kant’s views with Arendt’s. Beiner points out that Arendt “consistently substitutes ‘general’ where the standard translations have ‘universal’” for the translation of Kant’s term “allgemein.”29 Arendt’s emphasis on the “general” character of sensus communis in her interpretation thus suggests that the thing judged by the judgment of taste cannot claim universality in a Kantian sense, on the one hand, and also suggests that her not adopting “purposiveness without purpose” as the basis for the validity of judgment of taste is an intentional choice along with her appeal to the “exemplary validity,” on the other hand.30 For

27 “Therefore the liking that, without a concept, we judge to be universally communicable and hence to be the basis that determines a judgment of taste, can be nothing but the subjective purposiveness in the presentation of an object, without any purpose (whether objective or subjective), and hence the mere form of purposiveness, insofar as we are conscious of it, in the presentation by which an object is given us.” Kant, CJ, 221.
28 Kant, CJ, 295.
29 Beiner argues that Arendt’s word choice of the translation for “allgemein” as “general,” instead of “universal,” is related to her understanding of judgment. Beiner mentions that, for Arendt, a judgment is valid only for those who are members of the community. In other words, the validity of judgment is never “universal” for Arendt. See, footnote 155 in LKPP.
30 Again, Arendt does not give a full account as to why “exemplary validity” is suitable for her interpretation of Kant’s judgment of taste. But she takes “purposiveness” to be “an idea by which to regulate one’s reflections in one’s reflective judgments.” See ibid., 76-77.
Arendt, what is important is judgment’s ability to think the particular without subsuming it under either generality or universality.\textsuperscript{31} And it is in the exemplar that the “particularity reveals the generality that otherwise could not be defined.”\textsuperscript{32}

Overall, what this suggests is that what Arendt is seeking in her treatment of judgment in \textit{LKPP} is not to find a harmony between nature and human freedom, as Kant intended with his third \textit{Critique}.\textsuperscript{33} The importance of finding “generality” in a particular is probably related to Arendt’s account of human action, events as the result of actions, and the understanding of such events, (i.e., I address this in Chapter 2, and discuss about “exemplary validity” with its relevance to Arendt’s project on judgment in Chapter 4.) And we will return to this topic through her critical analyses of reason and thinking activity in our third chapter, but for now we refrain ourselves from further discussion at the moment, only suggesting this possible theoretical tie between “generality,” intersubjectivity, imagination, and the “exemplary validity” in Arendt’s interpretation of Kant.

Now, let us turn to the role of imagination, since the core of Arendt’s claim that taste is intersubjectivity is obviously derived from her interpretation of \textit{sensus communis} as residing in reflection, and since reflection means to “take account (\textit{a priori}) of the mode of representation of all other men in thought.” In other words, the key to approaching Arendt’s account of intersubjectivity is imagination, which makes representation possible in reflection.\textsuperscript{34}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{31} In Arendt’s context, of course, the concepts of “generality” and the “universality” are different. The point here is to establish that Arendt is looking for a way of finding the “generality” \textit{in} a particular without reducing that particular to the “generality.” In other words, Arendt takes a judgment of taste as being truly \textit{reflective}, rather than appealing to the “universal communicability” of taste, as Kant does in his discussions of \textit{sensus communis}. It is in the \textit{reflection} itself that one’s liking or disliking of a particular finds its way to generalize itself in order to communicate itself. Ibid., 76.
\bibitem{32} Ibid., 77.
\bibitem{33} Kant. \textit{CJ}, 197.
\bibitem{34} Toward the end of the 10\textsuperscript{th} session, Arendt raises a question as to why taste, which seems the most private sense, is communicative. She answers that the riddle can be solved in imagination, though here she calls it “the operation
\end{thebibliography}
First, we need to obtain a general view on the role of imagination, which plays an important part in the judgment of taste. In the 12th session of LKPP, Arendt shows that the judgment of taste consists of a twofold operation: the operation of the imagination, which prepares representation, and reflection, which is the actual activity of judging. Briefly, the former operation transforms the object into an inner sensation by representation. Through representation, one immediately discriminates whether that sensation is agreeable or disagreeable to oneself. It is in reflection, on the other hand, that reflection occurs. That is, a person reflects on her immediate liking and disliking to see if she can actually approve of such feelings. If she approves of her feelings, this approval brings a feeling of pleasure.

There are three peculiarities that can be seen in Arendt’s account of the operation of imagination to bring about representation: de-sensing, internalization, and distancing. It is through de-sensing that the sensed object is transformed into one’s mind as if it were inner sense, i.e., the given object “becomes an object for one’s inner sense.” In other words, the given object for the outer sense is now internalized. Imagination transforms the sensed object into the representation. Through that transformation the object is de-sensed, which means, according to Arendt, is that the sensed object is transformed to sensation. In taste, what is sensed is not “an object but a sensation.” The sensation brought by the representation is what Arendt means by the sense which is “internalized.” This internalized sense, or sensation, is the object of the reflection, or judgment. The sensation is called the “inner sense,” because in that sensation I am

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of reflection”; in the 12th session, she differentiates “the operation of imagination” from that of “reflection.” See ibid. 65 & 68.

35 Arendt, ibid, 68.
36 Arendt, ibid. Emphasis added. I shall discuss the nature of representation as inner sense in regards to Arendt’s account of intersubjectivity in Chapter 3.
37 Ibid., 66.
38 Ibid.
immediately and directly affected.\textsuperscript{39} In other words, \textit{in the sensation I sense myself}.\textsuperscript{40} Putting it differently, through the operation of imagination in the judgment of taste, the representation is prepared in which I sense myself.

Now there is a curious twist in the process of representation in terms of internalization, since Arendt claims that by this internalization, reflection acquires the proper distance to reflect upon one’s own feeling of agreeableness or disagreeableness. It allows us to judge with impartiality.\textsuperscript{41} In other words, the \textit{distance} created by the representation is what we have seen in the “enlarged mentality,” i.e., to \textit{“make the others present and thus moves in a space that is potentially public, open to all sides.”}\textsuperscript{42} In a literal sense, taste is the most private, and thus the most subjective, sense. There is no way anyone can tell exactly what and how I taste when I put an oyster in my mouth. Yet, through the operation of imagination, that which is the most private and subjective sense is transformed such that it acquires an appropriate distance to see the whole—how another may taste the oyster, for example—by transcending one’s own position due to the effect of representation, according to Arendt’s account. Thus, imagination has a capability to bring about such a transformation, not by being subsumed under the concept according to universality, as is the case of Kant’s determinative judgment, but by internalizing the sense to the sensation. By internalizing the most private and subjective sense, the represented sensation is paradoxically transformed into something \textit{beyond}-subjectivity.\textsuperscript{43} The operation of imagination

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 68.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid. 44 & 68.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.43.
\textsuperscript{43} If we consider taste in the strictest sense, relating to foods and beverages, it may make more sense naturally. For human beings, most tastes are \textit{acquired}. How many children do we know who love the taste of oysters the first time that they taste them? Or blue cheese, anchovies, or liver paste? We learn to appreciate the tastes of these foods; they are not automatically given to us. Some still may not like them after trying them, yet they nonetheless understand that these foods are taken to be delicacies. We understand that there are many people who enjoy those foods. Those who do not like those foods express their disagreement with others who love them. However, those who dislike certain tastes never consider people who like these foods as insane for liking them, other than perhaps in
prepares the impartial condition necessary to the fair judgment, i.e., reflection. Arendt metaphorically calls this operation the “blind poet”: “By making what one’s external senses perceived into an object for one’s inner sense, one compresses and condenses the manifold of the sensually given; one is in a position to ‘see’ by the eyes of the mind, i.e., to see the whole that gives meaning to the particular.”\footnote{Ibid. Emphasis added.}

Let us take a few steps back. Arendt posits that taste is to judge as a member of a community, i.e., taste is a judgment of the community sense. We judge our immediate liking/disliking by reflecting whether that particular liking/disliking is suitable for our community. However, there is no universal pre-established rule to make a reference for judgment of taste. Judgment of taste as the reflective judgment, the standard for judgment is found in reflection itself. The standard, in turn, found in reflection is sensus communis; taking \textit{(a priori)} of the mode of representation of all other men in thought.” And that is intersubjectivity, the “nonsubjective element in the nonobjective senses,” according to Arendt. By now we know that the “nonsubjective element” is the reflection and the “nonobjective senses” are sensation transformed by the imagination, viz., the representation. Taste “pleases in representation.”\footnote{Ibid. Emphasis added.} It is in this sense that we can say that representation and reflection are the same operation. In the representation, the sensed object is transformed to the sensation, internalized, and thus is experienced \textit{as if} an “inner sense,” for in it, “I sense myself.” However,

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\footnote{Ibid., 67.}
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paradoxically, it is in my sensing myself, viz., sensation or, the representation, others’ possible judgment is presented.

There are two insights that we can draw from these descriptions. First, through the operation of the imagination in the judgment of taste what is represented already contains others’ possible judgments, though in it I sense myself. It indicates that there is an intrinsic relation between others and myself in Arendt’s understanding of imagination. (We will further attest to this possibility from a different angle in the next chapter.) Second, though Arendt describes judgment of taste as consisting of two processes—the operations of imagination and reflection—it seems that they are actually one and the same operation, i.e., the operation of imagination preparing for the representation. This is so because the object of reflection is the representation, which means the sensation, and as the reflective judgment, the reflection is held by looking back at the sensation brought by the imagination. It explains why Arendt says that common sense is the “effect of a reflection upon the mind,” which is synonymous with sensus communis. Then, taking “account (a priori) of the mode of representation of all other men in thought” in sensus communis is already occurring in the representation, which is the operation of imagination. Naturally, it leads us to conclude that Arendt’s claim that taste is intersubjectivity is derived from her understanding of imagination peculiar to the aesthetic feeling. In other words, what makes taste intersubjective resides in the apriority of imagination’s ability to represent others, which somehow is felt as sensing myself.

It is possible to raise questions and/or criticism on our remarks on the nature of Arendt’s imagination which are based on our analyses of LKPP. In terms of the first remark, one may criticize Arendt establishes her account of intersubjectivity merely by claiming others are represented in one’s imagination. In other words, one could say that the representation of others
in imagination is a creation of the one who forms such representation in her imagination, and thus is not sufficient to claim intersubjectivity. Or, Arendt’s claim could be criticized as intersubjectivity based on subjectivity. For the second remark, one may challenge to our understanding that imagination (representation) and reflection (judgment) are not one and the same operation as we pointed out but two steps of the same operation. We are aware of those possible criticisms on our analyses of LKPP. However, since Arendt does not provide a theoretical explanation in LKPP about her understanding of imagination, we are not the place to answer to those criticisms at this point but have to withhold further discussion till our last chapter where we shall draw a series of parallelism between Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination as productive imagination and Arendt’s treatment of imagination in LKPP as reproductive imagination. All we can indicate is that if there is indeed a possibility that Arendt has a theoretical framework to support her account of intersubjectivity, which we have analyzed only in LKPP so far, it should lie in the reflexive nature of the judgment of taste and in imagination, since what makes reflection possible, in which others are represented a priori in thought and by which alone judgment is possible due to the nature of judgment of taste, is imagination. We can also detect this relation between the reflexivity of judgment and imagination with respect to Arendt’s account of intersubjectivity in her discussion on the spectator in terms of Arendt’s understanding of “originality,” to which we will turn next.\textsuperscript{46}

In the 10\textsuperscript{th} session of LKPP, Arendt discusses the relationship between genius and the spectator.\textsuperscript{47} Following Kant, Arendt says that while genius can express the spirit through the

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 63.

\textsuperscript{47} Arendt identifies genius with the artist and actor. Ibid. 63.
representation, and thus makes the spirit “generally communicable,” it is the spectator, or, more precisely her ability to judge, that makes such communicability possible.\textsuperscript{48}

The faculty that guides this communicability is taste, and taste or judgment is not the privilege of genius. The condition \textit{sine qua non} for the existence of beautiful objects is communicability; the judgment of the spectator creates the space \textit{without which no such objects could appear at all}. The public realm is constituted by the critics and the spectators, not by the actors or the makers. And this critic and spectator sits in every actor and fabricator; without this critical, judging faculty the doer or maker would be so isolated from the spectator that he would not even be perceived. —[T]he very originality of the artist (or the very novelty of the actor) depends on his making himself understood by those who are not artists (or actors). — Spectators exist only in the plural.\textsuperscript{49}

However, Arendt finds that the communicability of taste rests in the spectator, \textit{not} in the genius (the artist). And though the implications are unclear at this point, while Arendt identifies \textit{genius} with productive imagination, she points out that it is “never entirely productive.”\textsuperscript{50} We think that it is probably crucial that Arendt says that the “\textit{productive} imagination, is actually entirely dependent upon the so-called reproductive imagination” in \textit{The Life of the Mind: Thinking}. But for now we withhold further discussion of Arendt’s emphasis on reproductive imagination and only acknowledge the fact here.\textsuperscript{51}

What should be noted here is that Arendt identifies \textit{genius} with productive imagination, and yet she insists that the communicability of taste relies on the spectator. At first, this might puzzle us. Whether or not there is a spectator, as long as the \textit{genius} creates her work, does the art work not exist? After all, regarding fine art at least, the work of art is a tangible concrete object. However, Arendt’s contention here is to ask what determines the beautiful as beautiful prior to the determination of the artwork as a physical object. Arendt’s position is that the sheer

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 62-63.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 63. Emphasis added.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 79.
\textsuperscript{51} Arendt. \textit{LM}: I, 86.
physical presence of the art work is insufficient for claiming that the beautiful object \textit{exists}. The emphasis is not, therefore, on the “object” but on “beautiful.”

This emphasis makes some sense, since the topic here is the aesthetic judgment, which is different from the determinative judgment. While a determinative judgment claims the objective reality of the cognized object, a judgment of taste as a reflective judgment judges the sensation as we have seen it. In other words, what it meant by representation in reflective judgment is different from that of a determinative judgment. As we have analyzed, the representation in the judgment of taste already contains the possible judgment of others, which allows us “to see the whole.” A judgment of taste, which judges the aesthetic feeling in reflection, decides what is beautiful. The \textit{existence} of the beautiful thus depends on the spectator, according to Arendt, and the spectator must be considered always as “plural” due to the peculiar nature of the representation in the reflective judgment in her understanding.\footnote{Our contention is that the nature of the representation in the judgment of taste that arises from Arendt’s understanding of imagination, which makes the \textit{existence} of the beautiful possible, is essentially related to her account of appearance, particularly that of human being as \textit{existence}. We will discuss this topic further in Chapter 3.} In short, by claiming that the \textit{existence} of the beautiful depends on the communicability of the beautiful and thus on the spectators, Arendt suggests that what grants existence to the beautiful qua beautiful is the imagination in which others are represented. This characteristic of the existence of the beautiful helps us to understand Arendt’s account of “originality.” What does she mean by this term?

In the ninth line of the text cited, Arendt insists that “the very originality of the artist (or the very novelty of the actor) depends on his making himself understood by those who are not artist (or actors).” Here we observe what seems to be a shift, in two ways: firstly, because Arendt finds the communicability of the beautiful in the spectator’s ability to judge, the locus of “originality” is shifted from the artist (\textit{genius}) to the spectator. As a result, Arendt juxtaposes the
artist (*genius*) and the spectator. Secondly, if we read the text carefully, what *appears* is also shifted from the beautiful to the artist/the actor.

Regarding the first point, we noted that what makes the artist (*genius*) to be an artist is not the artwork *per se*, but the artwork as the beautiful, and what causes the beautiful to *exist* is the communicability derived from the spectator. This point explains why the second shift occurs. The quoted line does not say that the “originality” of the artist is to *make her work understood*, which most of us would naturally think when it comes to the artwork. Instead, Arendt claims that the “originality” depends on her “making (her)self understood” by the spectator. Why does Arendt posit the “originality” of the artist (*genius*) in this way?

One way to answer this question is to say that, in order for a new artwork to be recognized as art and as beautiful, the *intention* of the artist must be understood, i.e., what she means by it is a certain form of the art with a certain meaning. But that cannot be the case, since Arendt says that “The beautiful is, in Kantian terms, an end in itself because all its possible meaning is contained within itself, without reference to others—without linkage as it were, to other beautiful things.”

Thus, when Arendt claims that the “originality” of the artist is to make herself understood, she does not mean the *intention* of the artist by which she tried to express herself in her work. Or, based on Arendt’s understanding of beautiful as end in itself, we can at least point out that if artist’s *intention* is a part of what makes her understood by lay person, her *intention* (what she wanted to express or, what she meant by a certain work) isn’t solely rest the side of the artist. That point become clearer in Arendt’s understanding of performing art.

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53 Arendt. *LKPP*, 77
54 In *LM*: I, Arendt distinguishes between what she calls the “self-display” and the “self-presentation.” The former does not involve any choice “but to show whatever properties a living being possesses,” whereas the latter involves reflection and deliberate choice. (*LM*: I. 36) “Self-presentation” always accompanies with deed and word, which indicates how one wish to appear, “what in [one’s] opinion is fit to be seen and what is not.” (*LM*: I, 34) We shall discuss the relation between the performing arts and Arendt’s notion of action in Chapter 2.
In the performing arts, it is quite difficult to draw the line where the art starts and where the artist reveals herself, that is, as an actress. We could still argue that she is merely performing a role as a character. But, as Arendt argues in *LM*: I in regards to the appearance of who one is through one’s actions, we choose what we present to others, which she calls “self-presentation.” We choose to do so because it pleases ourselves. Is it pretentiousness? Arendt would say “No.” Rather, it is one’s decision as to how she wants to appear to the eyes of others, to present herself as who she is among her fellows, i.e., she identifies herself through her performance.55

A vastly different relation can be stated in the case of the fine arts, in terms of the relation between the art and the artist. Unlike the performing arts, the artwork exists once the artist finishes making her work. Though generally Arendt sees the parallel relationship between her notion of action and the performing arts, here in the case of the fine arts it is helpful to understand why Arendt posits the “originality” of the artist as making herself understood by laypersons with respect to grasping her peculiar understanding of the imagination in the reflective judgment. Our question is to ask why Arendt emphasizes the self of the artist to mark her “originality” as an artist, while at the same time contending that the existence of the beautiful relies on its communicability, which in turn rests in the spectator.

Again, the key is that a judgment of taste judges the sensation, which is brought about by the representation via imagination, and through such judgment the beautiful come to exist, or, to

55 “Self-presentation would not be possible without a degree of self-awareness—a capability inherent in the reflexive character of mental activities and clearly transcending mere consciousness, which we probably share with the higher animals. Only self-presentation is open to hypocrisy and pretense, properly speaking, and the only way to tell pretense and make-believe from reality and truth is the former’s failure to endure and remain consistent. It has been said that hypocrisy is the compliment vice pays to virtue, but this is not quite true. All virtue begins with a compliment paid to it, by which I express my being pleased with it. The compliment implies a promise to the world, to those to whom I appear, to act in accordance with my pleasure, and it is the breaking of the implied promise that characterizes the hypocrite.” (*LM*: I. 36, emphases added.) The quoted lines indicate several keys to understand how Arendt’s treatment of reflective judgment, her understanding of self-consciousness and that of the self are related to each other. We shall discuss on those point in Chapter 4. The crucial point at the moment is that, for Arendt, the notion of the self solely depends on appearing to others.
appear. We have analyzed that there is a paradoxical relation between oneself and others in that representation. That is, on the one hand, through the operation of the imagination the sensed object is transformed into the sensation, which is felt as the inner sense. It is in that sensation we sense ourselves, according to Arendt. Yet, on the other hand, the same transformation is done by representing others’ possible judgments. The paradox is that in the sensing of oneself others are represented in the imagination. It is due to this paradoxical relationship in the representation that taste acquires its communicability, and thus the beautiful appears. That is why Arendt posits that “the very originality of the artist depends on his making himself understood by those who are not artists.” It is another way to claim that the existence of the beautiful rests in the ability to judge or, on the spectator who is present and who judges. The “condition sine qua non for the beautiful object is communicability,” which is derived from the spectator.\footnote{Arendt, LKPP, 63.}

Nonetheless, this does not mean that the artist (genius) lacks the ability to judge; indeed, the spectator “sits in every actor and fabricator.”\footnote{Ibid.} In other words, Arendt’s claim that the “originality” of the artist depends on her making herself understood emphasizes the peculiar nature of taste as judging the sensation brought about by imagination in which paradoxically one’s self and others’ perspectives coincide. Without sharing the ability to transform the sensed object to the sensation, the artist (genius) fails to create the beautiful object, because the beautiful object would never come to exist for the first place, based on Arendt’s account of the beautiful.

Now let us return again to what Arendt says about the spectator and the existence of the beautiful. For this time by paying attention particularly to her claim that “the public realm is constituted by the critics and the spectators, not by the actors or the makers.”\footnote{Ibid.} There is clearly a keen relation between the spectator and her ability to “create the space” in which alone the
beautiful can appear. Why does Arendt insist that the space of appearances is “constituted” by the spectator? Is this evidence to support Beiner’s interpretation that Arendt has retreated from the political life and her theory of action, thus shifting her interest to the vita contemplativa?

Here again, the key is the nature of the representation in the reflective judgment, or, in the judgment of taste. Arendt’s contention is that, in order for the beautiful to exist, it requires the space in which the beautiful can appear. We have discussed that the judgment of taste is to judge the sensation brought about by the representation in which others are represented in imagination. Though Arendt suggests the two steps to achieve the actual judgment—the operation of imagination and the reflection—we have pointed out that they are essentially one and the same operation of the imagination. That is so because it is in the representation that others are represented, and since the judgment of taste is a reflective judgment, it does not have the standard outside of itself by which to judge. The only standard it has is found in the act of reflection, and what this means is that we reflect on our immediate liking or disliking based on sensus communis, taking account “(a priori) of the mode of representation of all other men in thought.” In other words, sensus communis is already contained within the representation prepared by the imagination. We have also pointed out that it is in the representation that the “distance” required for a fair judgment is created, which Arendt calls “impartiality.” Overall, sensus communis, the “impartiality,” “distance,” and the “enlarged mentality” are pointing to the same understanding of Arendt on the representation derived from the imagination.

Arendt’s claim, in short, is that it is the spectator, or, more precisely the spectators that constitute the public realm, suggested in the relation between her account of the appearance (the beautiful) and the imagination. That is, the imagination fundamentally has its root in plural perspectives, at least when it comes to the reflective judgment in which imagination does not

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59 Ibid.
serve the concept, as is the case for the determinative judgment in Kant, but rather has a mutual relation with the understanding. It is in the representation prepared by the imagination that such plural perspectives are represented. Insofar as the existence of the beautiful rests in the appearance, and appearance depends on the judgment of the spectator, what this existence of the beautiful acknowledges is that the necessary condition for the appearance is the existence of plural perspectives. The spectators, or, the plurality of perspectives, are said to “open a space” for the beautiful to appear, because it is at the center of the plurality of viewpoints where the space opens up. This means that judgment of taste with its peculiar reflexivity suggests the plurality of perspectives brought by the imagination is the necessary condition for the appearance. In other words, in taste, others are represented. What Arendt means by “the nonsubjective element in the nonobjective senses is intersubjectivity” is that the judgment of taste as judging the sensation in which others are represented in imagination is to judge according to the plural perspectives represented in the imagination. It is in this sense that the judgment of taste is to judge what is beautiful qua appearance by which the beautiful comes to exist. The very reflexivity found in the judgment thus suggests that there is a close relation between Arendt’s account of intersubjectivity and her understanding of the imagination.

All of these analyses that we have provided suggest that we can read, with good foundations, LKPP as Arendt’s theory of imagination by which her account of appearance or, intersubjectivity is granted. Yet, we cannot find any further theoretical explanations in LKPP. Thus, our task in the following chapters is to explore Arendt’s other works to find any evidence to suggest that she has her own theoretical understanding of imagination to give an account for her notion of intersubjectivity, or, appearance.

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60 “[B]y force of imagination it makes the others present and thus moves in a space that is potentially public, open to all sides.” Ibid., 43.
**Chapter 2: Action, Understanding, and Imagination**

To review the argument so far: in Chapter 1, we discussed that, as long as the beautiful is understood as judging the beautiful *qua appearance*, what makes the artist’s work communicable, her very originality *qua* artist, is found paradoxically in her ability to judge as a spectator. The ability is derived from imagination, which makes it possible to represent something to others in thought. From that analysis, we concluded that, in Arendt’s interpretation in *LKPP*, *sensus communis* as the standard for the judgment of taste is already contained in the representation by the imagination. As its very name suggests, the standard for judgment is found in the act of reflection itself, and what is reflected upon is the representation in which others are represented in that reflection. This analysis also led us to grasp why Arendt says that the “spectator creates the space” in which the beautiful can appear or, “the public realm is constituted by the critics and the spectator not the actors or the makers.” What Arendt seems to claim is that it is the plural perspectives prepared by the imagination that provide the necessary condition for the beautiful as appearance. In other words, the communicability of taste, judging what is beautiful, rests in the plural perspectives brought about in the imagination.

There are two issues that arise from our previous analyses of *LKPP*. First, the text of *LKPP* itself does not offer much theoretical explanation as to why Arendt thinks the imagination has such a capacity, or, if indeed she has any coherent theoretical framework that endorses the relation between the appearance and the imagination. Second, the judgment of taste in which the imagination plays a significant and peculiar role indicates Arendt’s conviction that the beautiful or, more precisely the *existence* of the beautiful, is *appearance*. That is, the beautiful is an “end in itself” in which “all its possible meaning is contained” without referring to other things. For
Arendt, the judgment (of taste) is the “faculty of thinking the particular.” Since the judgment of taste is to judge the beautiful *qua* appearance for Arendt, it suggests that her account of appearance is to think the particular *qua particular*.

Now, those who are familiar with Arendt’s works recognize that the notion of appearance is not new in *LKPP*. In fact, it is one of the key notions that marks her description of the political life, what she calls the *vita activa* in *HC*. It is relevant to ask if Arendt’s account of the beautiful *qua* appearance in *LKPP* shares the same nature as the action and its agent as appearance in the political life. This is especially so, since we already know that Arendt does not provide any apparent theoretical account of her understanding of the imagination in *LKPP*. What this means is that we do not have any immediate leading thread to follow the matter at this point. In addition to this, inquiring into her account of appearance in terms of the action and its agent or, the actor in the political life, offers us some materials that enable us to examine if there is a discrepancy in Arendt’s account of judgment in *LKPP* and that of the political life, as Beiner insists there is.

Beiner claims the following. He notes that Arendt approached judgment from the viewpoint of the actor in her earlier writings, whereas in her later writings she took judgment to be strictly a mental activity and the prerogative of the spectator. In this, Beiner sees a tension between the political life (*vita activa*) and the mental life (*vita contemplativa*), or “a dualism that pervades Arendt’s *entire work,*” which led Arendt to adhere to “a firm disjunction between mental and worldly activities” and forced her to expel judging from the world of the *vita activa*, to which it maintains a natural affinity.” In other words, Arendt’s treatment of judgment in

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61 *LKPP*, 76, emphasis added.
63 Ibid., 140, emphasis added.
LKPP is no longer ascribed to the viewpoint of the actor making a judgment by which one should act, but to that of the spectator who is non-committal, and who sees the whole as “the prerogative of the solitary (though public-spirited) contemplator.” Overall, Beiner observes in Arendt’s work a sharp contrast between the actor and the spectator and their respective judgments, particularly because he thinks that when the spectator judges there is no actual dialogue with others, but only a possible encounter in one’s imagination. The lack of actual dialogue with others in the judgment is thus taken as evidence of Arendt’s retreat in LKPP from her theory of action with respect to her treatment of judgment. Our analysis of the nature of the “originality” observed in LKPP could be taken to support Beiner’s view, since it pointed out the shift from the artist/ the actor to the spectator in Arendt.

However, so far our analyses in Chapter 1 indicate that the “possible” nature of the judgment of taste in LKPP is derived from Arendt’s peculiar understanding of the imagination by which plural perspectives are represented in thought. It is true that Arendt does not provide any theoretical account of how this is so in LKPP. What we know at this point and what is important for us to take into account is that Arendt presents the judgment of taste first and foremost as a way to think the particular qua particular. And thus when she proposes the judgment of taste as judging the beautiful qua appearance, she puts her emphasis on the appearance. It means that it is in appearance that the particular qua particular becomes thinkable and the plural perspectives given in the representation in thought via imagination is decisive for that matter. In other words, the possible nature of the judgment of taste in LKPP is insufficient to prove Arendt’s exclusion of judgment from “the world of vita activa,” as Beiner claims. Rather, the very reflexivity found

64 Ibid., 92.
65 “One acts with others; one judges by oneself (even though one does so by making present in one’s imagination those who are absent). In judging, as understood by Arendt, one weighs the possible judgments of an imagined Other, not the actual judgments of real interlocutors.” Ibid.
in the activity of judgment in which the possible judgments of others are represented itself only indicates that there is a relation between Arendt’s account of appearance and that of imagination in LKPP, though we cannot determine if Arendt has a coherent theoretical framework to explain such a relationship, insofar as the analysis of LKPP alone is concerned.

Thus, the aim of this chapter is to shed light from a different angle on the possible nature of judgment that we observe in LKPP. That is, by keeping in mind the relation between the particularity grasped by the judgment and the beautiful qua appearance in LKPP, we shall examine the nature of action as appearance, which is articulated mainly in HC. The purpose is to examine whether the possible or potential nature of the judgment really marks Arendt’s withdrawal from exploring judgment from the political life and worldly activities, as Beiner claims, or, contrarily, it suggests instead continuity with Arendt’s description of the political life connected to the mental life. Our central contention is to demonstrate that not only is Arendt’s account of action as appearance intrinsically related to the appearance and the disclosure of the agent of such action (“the actor”), but also that the assessment of appearance, or, its objective reality, is embedded in her peculiar account of understanding. As we shall demonstrate in what follows, the action and the understanding mutually depend on each other for their respective form of actualities. In short, in all of this discussion and analysis, the chief concern in this chapter is to trace the origin of the characteristic of potentiality found in Arendt’s treatment of judgment in LKPP, and to analyze its theoretical implications in terms of Arendt’s account of appearance.

The chapter is comprised of three parts. First, we examine Arendt’s early essay, “Understanding and Politics” (The Difficulties of Understanding), from 1954, in which we can detect one of Arendt’s earliest presentations of her own understanding of judgment. The essay
provides the background for understanding Arendt’s later exploration of judgment in her analyses of Kant’s reflective judgment.\textsuperscript{66} In this examination, we shed light on the crucial point in that essay, where Arendt presents her notion of action as a new beginning, or, to phrase it differently, action as being comprised of freedom and understanding, both being two sides of the same coin that form history. Secondly, we further explore Arendt’s notion of history as a tragic model in \textit{HC} (1958), in terms of the relation between understanding and action as a new beginning. Thirdly, we take up Arendt’s notion of power adopted from the Aristotelian notion of \textit{dynamis} in order for us to trace a theoretical linkage between the appearance of action and judgment as judging appearance qua appearance.

\section*{1. “Understanding and Politics” (The Difficulties of Understanding)}

According to Jerome Kohn, the editor of \textit{Essays in Understanding 1930-1954}, there are two essays written by Arendt under the title of “Understanding and Politics.”\textsuperscript{67} Of the two, we will discuss the one contained in \textit{EU} whose subtitle is ‘The Difficulties of Understanding’, which was originally published in \textit{Partisan Review} in 1954. The central issue of “Understanding and Politics” (The Difficulties of Understanding) is to claim that we—the post WWII generation—are facing a crisis, i.e., the crisis of understanding, partly because totalitarianism is an utterly new phenomenon and partly because we have lost the “yardstick” or the “framework” for understanding.\textsuperscript{68} Arendt’s awareness of this crisis and taking it as the political issue may be seen as the essence of her political philosophy and what leads many to see her first and foremost as a

\textsuperscript{66} Hannah Arendt, “Understanding and Politics” (The Difficulties of Understanding), in \textit{Essays in Understanding 1930-1954} (Shocken Books: 1994), hereafter abbreviated as \textit{EU}. The original essay was published in 1954.

\textsuperscript{67} \textit{EU}, xix.

\textsuperscript{68} See \textit{EU}, 313 & 316.
political philosopher. Though the essay belongs to a very early stage of Arendt’s work and offers no theoretical explanation for her claims, the careful reader will notice that these mere 16 pages offer a rich context for understanding Arendt’s oeuvre. As we demonstrate in this section, the essay provides some insights into the continuities and developments of Arendt’s thought in its early stages. There are several notions and understandings in this essay, such as human freedom as a new beginning and an understanding of the relation between law and morality, that appear without much explanation, but for which we can find deeper development and explanation in the last chapter of *The Origin of Totalitarianism*, “Ideology and Terror.” Furthermore, those two texts suggest linkages to her notion of freedom, or to action, understanding, and history that appear in *HC*, which we discuss in the second and third sections of this chapter.

As noted above, this essay was published in 1954; the last chapter of *OT* was added to the second edition of the same text in 1966, and *HC* was published in 1958. Though generally my thesis does not intend to provide a detailed chronological development of Arendt’s thought, the linkages and developments we can trace across these three texts are interesting in order for us to recognize the coherency in her thought. We will see with surprise that what Arendt is proposing in the essay (1954) is carried through into her last work, *LM* and her interpretation of Kant’s aesthetic judgment, which will be demonstrated in the final chapter of this thesis. In any case, these three texts with which we are about to deal show that Arendt is a more systematic thinker and writer than she is often perceived.

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69 Hannah Arendt, *The Origin of Totalitarianism* (Harcourt Brace & Company, 1951), hereafter abbreviated as *OT*.  
70 This essay was written between *The Origin of the Totalitarianism* (1951) and *The Human Condition* (1958). As such, through her account of understanding that she gives in this essay, we can see how Arendt’s criticism that she offers in *OT* of the pseudo-scientific view of history adopted by totalitarian regimes shapes her own understanding of history, which is based on tragedy, as it is developed in *HC*.  

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Let us undertake a brief overview of the points Arendt delivers in the essay. Arendt starts with positing that understanding is a constant activity by which we reconcile ourselves with reality. The reconciliation we are striving for through understanding is our attempt “to be at home in the world.” Understanding as a constant activity does not produce the final result but lasts through our lives. In other words it is the “specifically human way of being alive,” according to Arendt. The reconciliation is brought about by understanding, since the result of the activity of understanding is the meaning of what we do and suffer. “The understanding of political and historical matters, since they are so profoundly and fundamentally human, has something in common with the understanding of people: who somebody essentially is, we know only after he is dead.”

Stating her general comprehension of understanding, Arendt lays out the second point: the difficulty of understanding. Arendt points out that the chief difficulty for us in understanding the phenomenon of totalitarianism is that we have lost the “yardstick” or the “framework” for understanding. As these names suggest, the “yardstick” or “framework” are the categories and the referential “framework” to which we subscribe when we understand.

According to Arendt, this loss raises a series of issues. It causes our “inability to originate meaning.” It also means not only the loss of the reference by which we can understand but also that the transmissibility of human experience and wisdom has become extremely difficult. Without an understanding of what happened, viz., grasping the meaning of

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71 Arendt, EU, 308.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid. 309.
76 Ibid, emphasis added.
77 Ibid 313.
78 “Tradition transforms truth into wisdom, and wisdom is the consistence of transmissible truth. In other words, even if truth should appear in our world, it could not lead to wisdom, because it would no longer have the
a human event, it is extremely difficult to remember and to pass on what we have learned from that event. Furthermore, Arendt considers that this predicament creates not only a crisis of understanding, but a crisis of judgment as well. Arendt writes, “Is not understanding so closely related to and inter-related with judging that one must describe both as the subsumption (of something particular under a universal rule) which according to Kant is the very definition of judgment, whose absence he so magnificently defined as ‘stupidity,’ and ‘infirmitiy beyond remedy’ (Critique of Pure Reason, B 172-73)?”79 If judgment always requires the universal rules under which the particular is subsumed in order for it to function, the loss of a framework suggests the inability to judge as a consequence.

Given these issues brought about by the loss of a “framework,” and as the first half of the title of the essay suggests, it is clear that Arendt’s main concern in the essay is the understanding. For our purposes, the question to ask is how the difficulty of understanding due to the loss of its “framework” is related to politics specifically for her account of politics. In other words, what in following, we are conducting to demonstrate how the understanding and politics are related in the development of Arendt’s thought by examining the essay in the light of her analysis of totalitarianism that appeared in the last chapter of OT, “Ideology and Terror.” Our contention is that it is in the linkage of the two texts that Arendt’s peculiar understanding of history and human freedom, or, action, is developed in HC.

Now, we inquire into what Arendt is proposing by pointing out the loss of the “framework.” The “framework” of understanding is related to our ability to originate meaning.

79 EU, 313, emphasis added.
Quite naturally, then, the loss of the “framework” increases “meaninglessness.”

There are two clues to understand how the loss of a “framework” has political significance for Arendt. First is that Arendt seems to suggest that the “framework” is “common sense” which “presupposes the common world.”

The interesting point for us is that Arendt suggests that the growth of “meaninglessness” is accompanied by the loss of “common sense.” Of course, we do not have enough materials to determine whether the term “common sense” as it appears in the 1954 essay written is the same as common sense or, sensus communis, which appeared in LKPP from 1970. Nonetheless, we can say that Arendt writes in this 1954 essay that the world without a “framework” is a “topsy-turvy world, a world where we cannot find our way by abiding by the rules of what once was common sense,” and “common sense presupposes a common world.”

She continues, “In this situation, stupidity in the Kantian sense has become the infirmity of everybody, and therefore can no longer be regarded as ‘beyond remedy.’” It could be that Arendt means that the “framework” and “common sense” are synonymous, and the universal character of the “framework” comes from “common sense.” At least, Arendt seems to suggest that there is a correlation between “meaning,” the “framework,” and the “common world,” though it is unclear what she means by the “common world” here.

The second clue seems to take us a little bit further. That is, Arendt states that the loss of the “framework” also means the loss of a moral foundation. Surely, it is unsurprising that the loss makes it difficult to properly understand, and without a good understanding it is hard to tell what is right and what is wrong. However, the point here is that Arendt brings up the topic in

80 Ibid., 314.
81 Ibid., 318.
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid., 314.
84 Ibid., 318.
85 Ibid., 318.
86 Ibid., 315.
terms of law and lawfulness. Referring to Montesquieu’s distinction between laws and customs, Arendt posits that though both laws and customs serve as guidelines for moral behavior, the morality practiced out of custom is much weaker than that of laws, for it lacks a solid foundation. She notes that

Laws establish the realm of public political life, and customs establish the realm of society. The downfall of nations begins with the undermining of lawfulness, whether the laws are abused by the government in power, or the authority of their source becomes doubtful and questionable. In both instances, laws are no longer held valid. The result is that the nation, together with its ‘belief’ in its own laws, loses its capacity for responsible political action; the people cease to be citizens in the full sense of the word.

It seems that Arendt suggests that the “framework” is essentially related to the foundation of the political body, whose establishment depends on the law. Does she mean the constitution of the state? Arendt does not provide further explanations as to how the law, “lawfulness,” and the foundation of a political body are related to the “framework” in the EU essay. Still, we can get some general ideas what Arendt means by law within her understanding of the political life in The Human Condition.

Arendt’s understanding of law is derived from the role of the law in the Greek polis. The laws draw the boundaries of the political body, noting where it starts and where it ends. The political body is the public realm, which opens up inside of these boundaries. In other words, the state, whose sphere is articulated by the boundaries of its law, is an artificial space created by the people. The boundary the law draws distinguishes the humanly-constituted sphere versus the natural world.

Of course, physically these two worlds overlap; human beings are also a part of nature. Moreover, we can see that Arendt’s distinction here may raise objections by those who challenge

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87 Ibid., emphasis added.
88 Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition (The University of Chicago Press, 1958) hereafter abbreviated HC.
89 “This wall-like law was sacred, but only the inclosure was political.” HC. 64.
Arendt’s three different categories of human activity: action, work, and labor, which she proposes in *HC*. Let us first define these categories before we note the objections. Action is synonymous with human freedom, which consists of words and deeds and in its essence is intrinsically related to the space delineated by the laws, though law itself is the categories in human work. Work takes part in providing the relative permanence for that space by the physical objects we produce, such as architecture. Labor by nature is the least durable, for whatever it produces is destined to be consumed in a very short time duration and it must be repeated as soon as it finishes one cycle, such as producing foods.⁹⁰

The artificially-created space outlined by the laws makes possible the articulation of what is properly human. Arendt’s distinction between the human world and the natural world, though, has its root in her analyses of totalitarianism in which the notion of the law plays a crucial role. Her analyses of “legality” and “law” in totalitarian rule help us to understand why she presents a correlation between the “framework” of understanding and the foundation of the political body in *EU*.

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⁹⁰ Arendt’s three categories of human activity may raise some objections. One may object that, by placing action as the highest of human activities and to claim the public realm as the truly human world is to shun a variety of issues, for there are constant interactions and relations between human beings and nature. To name just a few: there are issues such as human activity and its impact on the environment, the hormonal changes in one’s body that affects one’s behavior and that has effects on human interaction, the questions regarding sex and gender, and so forth. These are all valid concerns. However, Arendt does not claim that it is possible to draw a clear line between the human world and the natural world. Rather, her claim arises from her awareness that human beings are “flexible.” (*EU*, 316) Not only do human beings have the ability to adapt to different environments, but they also have the ability to create new living conditions with the things that we have created, as well as being conditioned by them: “Whatever enters the human world of its own accord or is drawn into it by human effort becomes part of the human condition.” (*HC*, 9) For instance: the advancement of medicine and bio-technology not only facilitates curing and treating diseases and injuries, but will likely extend the human lifespan significantly in the future, especially among the industrialized countries where the average lifespan is already much longer than those in the third world. It would necessarily bring about many changes in society around the areas of, e.g., retirement age, life planning, social welfare, and the possibility of ending one’s life by euthanasia. These possible changes are all political issues insofar as the decision on what change should be made rests neither solely on technical capability nor on biology but on discussion among the members of the political body.
Let us follow Arendt’s discussion on the difference between “legality” and “justice” in the last chapter of *OT*. She writes that

The discrepancy between legality and justice could never be bridged because the standards of right and wrong into which positive law translates its own source of authority—‘natural law’ governing the whole universe, or divine law revealed in human history, or customs and traditions expressing the law common to the sentiments of all men—are necessarily general and must be valid for a countless and unpredictable number of cases, so that each concrete individual case with its unrepeatable set of circumstances somehow escapes it.\(^{91}\)

What lies beneath each law is the notion of justice, which provides the authority to each law and whose origin varies. It could be the “natural law” or the “divine law” or “traditions and customs.” Whatever the source of the authority that provides the legality of a particular law, the source lays out only a “general” understanding of what justice is. The difference between “legality” and “justice” indicates two points. One is that both the enactment of a new law and its practice always requires going through a translation of what justice is, which is suggested in the source.\(^{92}\)

The other is that it allows for judging individual cases. Because the discrepancy between legality and justice “could never be bridged,” the law has to and is able to judge the individual case under the light of the general understanding of what justice is, upon which the individual law stands. But such jurisdiction can function only when the shared premise is valid. That is, the sole premise of the legal system across the history of Western civilization, according to Arendt, is that there is the consensus that “the criminal can be judged justly only because he takes part in the *consensus iuris*, and even the revealed law of God can function among men only

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\(^{91}\) *OT*, 462.
\(^{92}\) “By lawful government we understand a body politic in which positive laws are needed to translate and realize the immutable *ius natumale* or the eternal commandments of god into standards of right and wrong. Only in these standards, in the body of positive laws of each country, do the *ius natural* or the Commandments of God achieve their political reality.” Ibid., 464.
when they listen and consent to it.”93 Seeing it from a different perspective, Arendt’s discussion on the discrepancy between the legality and justice is about the legitimacy of the political body.

The legality of the positive laws is derived from the legitimacy of the political body. Because the political body is recognized as legitimate, it holds the authority to determine that its positive law is just. Where a political body derives its legitimacy differs from state to state. Yet the bottom line is that, regardless of the source of the legitimacy and authority of the state and of law, the discrepancy between legality and justice always remains. Since the idea of justice derived from the source of the authority has only a general character, it is impossible to cover “each concrete individual case with its unrepeateable set of circumstances.” That is why the laws “only tell what one should not” do, not what one should do.94 The premise of the laws is that a person acts, and because of that the laws function as the “stabilizing forces in the public affairs of men” and “[I]lawfulness sets limitations to actions.”95 But the laws do not function without another premise, which consists of human action: the person can take responsibility for her actions. Without these premises, neither the enactment of the law, the observance of the law, nor punishment is possible.

What this means is that the authority of laws and thus that of the political body rests on these shared premises, shared among people who reside within the boundary of the law. To be sure, Arendt does not single out the modern democratic state and the social contract when she talks about “lawfulness.” Rather, what she means is that in the most fundamental sense that the notion of law in the Western tradition has been always understood as the shared promise or, acknowledgement among people about the human ability to act. Because of this

93 Ibid.
94 Ibid., 467.
95 Ibid.
acknowledgement, the laws can function as the boundaries of the specifically human sphere, i.e., the political body.

We need to understand Arendt’s analysis of “lawfulness” as it is presented above in contrast with her analysis of the meaning of “lawfulness” as formulated under totalitarian rule, for it is in this contrast that what she proposes in the latter half of the essay in EU and its linkage to her notion of action and understanding in HC is made clear. According to Arendt, totalitarian rulers were not lawless, as was the case of tyranny, for “the supreme proof for the badness of tyranny [is] that only tyrannies are liable to be destroyed from within [the government], to decline by themselves, whereas all other governments are destroyed through exterior circumstances.” 96 Rather, under totalitarian rule the term “‘law’ itself changed its meaning.”97 Unlike all other Western states up till the emergence of totalitarian regimes, whether it was Nazi Germany or Stalin’s USSR, totalitarian rule found its way by going straight to the authority of law—the law of Nature for the former and that of History for the latter.98 Arendt notes: “Its defiance of positive laws claims to be a higher form of legitimacy which, since it is inspired by the sources themselves, can do away with petty legality.”99 She goes on to write:

Totalitarian lawfulness, defying legality and pretending to establish the direct reign of justice on earth, executes the law of History or of Nature without translating it into standards of right and wrong for individual behavior. It applies the law directly to mankind without bothering with the behavior of men. The law of Nature or the law of History, if properly executed, is expected to produce mankind as its end product; and this expectation lies behind the claim to global rule of all totalitarian governments. Totalitarian policy claims to transform the human species into an active unfailing carrier of a law to which human beings otherwise would only passively and reluctantly be subjected.100

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96 Ibid., 467.
97 Ibid., 465.
98 Ibid., 461-462.
99 Ibid., 462.
100 Ibid., emphasis added.
Under totalitarian rule, the law became the “law of the movement” of History or Nature, which had its own end. Under such a conception, the meaning of law changed from expressing the framework of stability within which human actions and motions can take place to expressing of the actions and motions themselves. The individuality of each person became pointless, for within such an understanding of the law, the agent of action is not the individual but humankind as a species. The individual person’s ability to act became the hindrance for such law. Under the totalitarian rule, the source of the authority of the law is the suprahuman motion of Nature or History, which has its own beginning and its own end. The law ceased to be the boundary which delineates a space for spontaneous human action, and history became a sheer process of whatever History or Nature was aiming at. As a movement of History or Nature, totalitarian rule did not need and want either human freedom or the plurality of human beings, for they were simply obstacles to establish humankind as its carrier. In other words, under totalitarian rule, the law became synonymous with history or nature, both of which have nothing to do with the individual person or her ability to act autonomously.

It becomes clear that to claim that there is an intrinsic correlation between understanding and politics, as Arendt does in the essay in *EU*, means to alert the reader to the peril of taking history to be a sheer process, since Arendt thinks that that is how totalitarianism emerged and endangered the dignity of human existence as the free individual. When Arendt writes about the loss of the “framework,” which causes the crisis of understanding and judgment, and ultimately the loss of a moral foundation, what she means in its essence is the loss of understanding; that human freedom requires its own space in order for it to retain its autonomous nature against the eternal movement of Nature; and that human freedom requires a specific form of remembrance

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101 Ibid., 465.
102 Ibid., 464.
103 Ibid., 465.
in order for it manifests its autonomous nature against Nature, i.e., human history against the History. In *OT* she writes that

the laws hedge in each new beginning and at the same time assure its freedom of movement, the potentiality of something entirely new and unpredictable; the boundaries of positive laws are for the political existence of man what memory is for his historical existence: they guarantee the pre-existence of a common world, the reality of some continuity which transcends the individual life span of each generation, absorbs all new origins and is nourished by them.\textsuperscript{104}

It is at this point that we have to recall that Arendt suggests the growth of meaninglessness has something to do with the loss of common sense, and common sense in turns “presupposes a common world.”\textsuperscript{105} As we have noted above, the “framework” of understanding is related to the political sphere in which actions are held. We could understand by Arendt’s term “the common world,” which is presupposed by common sense, the political sphere. In fact Arendt says, “[L]ogic and all self-evidence from which logical reasoning proceeds can claim a reliability altogether independent of the world and the existence of other people,” and “Only under conditions where the \textit{common} realm between men is destroyed and the only reliability left consists in the meaningless tautologies of the self-evident can this capacity [logicality] become ‘productive,’ develop its own lines of thought(.)”\textsuperscript{106}

Once the “framework” of understanding is lost and replaced by the idea of sheer process, what remains is mere “logicality.”\textsuperscript{107} The totalitarian transformed the common world in order to “pervert the ‘idea’ into a premise in the logical sense, that is, into some self-evident statement from which everything else can be deduced in stringent logical consistency.”\textsuperscript{108} The problem of logic is that its consistency has nothing to do with its premise, and so any hypothesis can be

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{105} *EU.*, 318
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., emphasis added.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 317.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
carried out logically once it is placed in motion, since logic itself lacks the capacity to examine its very first premise. Indeed, Arendt writes that when we lose our ability to examine the premise that “we are all too likely to accept logicality” as the substitution for understanding.109

What Arendt is pointing out here is that it is understanding that enables us to examine the premise, or, the very beginning of the train of thought. When the historian “insists on causality and pretends to be able to explain events by a chain of causes which eventually led up to them,” history is reduced to a sheer process and ceases to be the meaningful context to understand action, thus depriving us of human freedom.110 Therefore, to articulate the beginning as something new without reducing its sheer causality through understanding is crucial for resisting the treatment of history as a sheer process, for the “beginning of something new” is the “very essence of human freedom.”111

As Arendt suggests at the beginning of the essay, the problem is that we have lost the “framework” of understanding. Yet, Arendt remains positive, in spite of the predicament that we are facing. By citing Augustine, “initium ergo ut esset, creates est homo, ante quem mullus fuit” (‘That there might be a beginning, man was created before whom nobody was’),” Arendt posits that the essence of human being is beginning).112 Each birth of a person is a new beginning, and as such history never ceases to unfold the meanings of events; “the very fact of the memorable continuity of these beginnings in the sequence of generations guarantees a history which can never end because it is the history of beings whose essence is beginning.”113 And for that reason, Arendt claims that being a new beginning is enough to understand “without preconceived

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109 Ibid., 318, emphasis added.
110 Ibid.
111 Ibid., 321.
112 Ibid., 321.
113 Ibid.
categories and to judge without the set of customary rules which is morality.”"\(^{114}\) In other words, Arendt claims that understanding is the other side of action, a distinctive form of cognition.\(^{115}\) She concludes that understanding, which is the other side of action, is “imagination.”\(^{116}\)

Imagination alone enables us to see things in their proper perspective, to be strong enough to put that which is too close at a certain distance so that we can see and understand it without bias and prejudice, to be generous enough to bridge abysses of remoteness until we can see and understand everything that is too far away from us as though it were our own affair. This distancing of some things and bridging the abysses to others is part of the dialogue of understanding, for whose purposes direct experience establishes too close a contact and mere knowledge erects artificial barriers.\(^{117}\)

Arendt does not explain why understanding is imagination or, what she really means by it in the essay. Her description merely suggests that if understanding is the other side of action and understanding is imagination, all three of these—action, understanding, and imagination—could be the same.\(^{118}\)

Arendt’s concern in both OT and the essay in EU is to note that, by changing the meaning of law and history under totalitarianism, the human ability to act is stripped of its nature (i.e., being a new beginning), on the one hand, and the danger of our blindness in our tendency to think everything in terms of process, and how we have come to be oblivious about the distinction between thinking and understanding, on the other. In the EU essay, she is inviting us to ask what understanding is and why it is important for us.\(^{119}\) Her invitation suggests a way of rediscovering the meaning of history as the history of human action, and thus as being the political sphere. For

\(^{114}\) Ibid.
\(^{115}\) Ibid.
\(^{116}\) Ibid., 323.
\(^{117}\) Ibid.
\(^{118}\) As we shall demonstrate in Chapter 4, it can be said that understanding, action, and imagination are the same for Arendt, since understanding and action are conceived as different modes of the synthesis of imagination that articulate the different tenses. Similar to Heidegger, who interprets Kant’s transcendental imagination not as the third component of what consists human knowledge—understanding, intuition, and imagination, but the common root of understanding and intuition, Arendt understands imagination as the common root of action and understanding.
\(^{119}\) The distinction between thinking and understanding seems to be a minor point in the essay, “Politics and Understanding.” However, this theme resurfaces in The Life of the Mind and plays a significant role there. We will return this point in Chapters 3 and 4.
that reason, it can be said that Arendt’s notion of the world means primarily a historically-constituted human world in which a new beginning, or, human freedom, is articulated and understood. For now, we know at least that there is a close relation between understanding and action in Arendt’s work, which is shaped through her critical confrontation of totalitarianism. We also know that the key to understand the relation between understanding and action in Arendt’s work lies in the articulation of the concept of “the beginning.” In the following two sections, we shall further examine the relation between understanding and action in her adoption of Aristotelian tragedy (the second section) and the relation between action and imagination by focusing on action’s potential nature (the third section) in HC.

2. Tragedy: Action and Understanding

In the previous section, we stated that, in her 1954 essay, Arendt characterizes the post-WWII era as the era of the crisis of understanding and that of judgment, for we have lost the “yardstick” or the “framework” for understanding. Yet, curiously, Arendt remains optimistic in the face of our predicament. Without much theoretical explanation, Arendt suggests that understanding is the other side of action, and the fact that the essence of human being is beginning something new, or, in other words, freedom, is somehow sufficient to maintain hope in finding the origin of understanding itself. Arendt’s claims in this essay are these: understanding is the other side of action; action is a new beginning, or *initium* (“natality”), which is taken as a new beginning of the linear movement in the universe, viz., time; to understand means to articulate the “beginning”; the essence of human being is the new beginning (freedom);
in that essence human being has the origin of understanding in herself; and, finally, the other name of understanding is imagination.\textsuperscript{120}

In light of the above, the aim of this section is primarily to explore the relation between action and understanding by focusing on the initiative characteristic of action, on the one hand, and the theoretical reason why understanding is said to be the other side of action, on the other. Though the 1954 essay does not provide much of a theoretical account for her claims, nonetheless, if we turn our eyes to HC (1958), the correlations become clear. That is to say, the correlation between action and understanding that Arendt claims in this essay are manifest in her account of action in HC as being similar to performance art, particularly in the conception of Greek tragedy derived from Aristotle’s \textit{Poetics}\textsuperscript{121}. Moreover, in addition to Arendt’s notion of action, there are four key elements in terms of analyzing Arendt’s use of tragedy as her model for describing the relation between action and understanding: the Aristotelian notions of \textit{mimēsis} and \textit{dynamis} and Arendt’s notion of natality and plurality. Keeping these in mind, let us first look into how Arendt identifies action with \textit{drama} in HC.

As we have demonstrated in the previous section, the meaning of politics and the political life for Arendt is primarily shaped against the totalitarian way of viewing history as a process, indeed, of thinking everything in terms of process, for they endanger the individuality of each person and her freedom. To refuse being absorbed into a part of sheer process (of either Nature or History) means to claim and articulate human action as a new autonomous beginning, which is ultimately equivalent to claiming the autonomy of human freedom. It in turn means to claim history as the memory of human actions. The peculiarity of Arendt’s understanding of history,\textsuperscript{120} EU, 323. Again, for clarification, we have to wait till Chapter 4. See my footnote 58 above.\textsuperscript{121} Aristotle, \textit{Poetics}, trans. Gerald F. Else (The University of Michigan Press, 1970).
however, is that it carries a spatial connotation, which we have seen through our analyses of the relation the “framework” of understanding and the foundation of the political body. If fact, Arendt says that the “polis—is a kind of organized remembrance” in HC.\textsuperscript{122} Arendt asks, “Jeder Zeitgewinn ist ein Raumverlust. Folgt daraus, dass ein Raumgewinn ein Zeitverlust ist??” [Each gaining of time is a loss of space. It follows that gaining a space is loss of time??]\textsuperscript{123} Arendt claims that freedom, or, action, needs a specifically designated sphere:

[W]e understand the political in the sense of the polis, its end or raison d’être would be to establish and keep in existence a space where freedom as virtuosity can appear. This is the realm where freedom is a worldly reality, tangible in words which can be heard, in deeds which can be seen, and in events which are talked about, remembered, and turned into stories before they are finally incorporated into the great storybook of human history.\textsuperscript{124}

If history is the record of what happened in terms of human actions, then history can be said to be the history of that sphere. By finding the spatial character in history, which we always associate with time, Arendt characterizes the human world as spatialized time. In the following section we shall demonstrate how Arendt structures such characteristics of the world in its relation to action through her adaptation of the Augustinian notion of initium as a beginning of time and Aristotelian tragedy as a model of history.

Against viewing history as a mere process which nullifies the autonomous nature of human action, Arendt, borrowing from St. Augustine, differentiates two kinds of time. One is

\textsuperscript{122} HC, 198. emphasis added. By the polis, Arendt does not mean only the ancient Greek city-state. Her usage of polis is instead more metaphorical. The Greek polis serves as the archetype of democracy in Western civilization. It has nothing to do with her nostalgia for the classical Greek world, as some scholars have commented. She means that, etymologically speaking, as much as the word democracy has its origin in ancient Greek, the polis is the very first human experience of living together democratically in recorded history. The idea of democracy has its root in the polis, and as such the polis serves as a metaphor for the embodiment of the political life that provides us with a concrete historical example. The full line goes as follows: “The organization of the polis, physically secured by the wall around the city and physiognomically guaranteed by its laws—lest the succeeding generations change its identity beyond recognition—is a kind of organized remembrance.”


\textsuperscript{124} BPF. 154-155, emphasis added.
designated as the eternal circular movement of all lives and matters in the universe, viz., *principium*, and the other is designated as human freedom, viz., *initium*. Insofar as human beings are a part of nature, biological life never ceases, for life is passed on from one generation to the next. However, insofar as human freedom is concerned, it is the linear movement that cuts through the cyclical movement in the universe. Arendt sees the origin of human freedom in *initium* (which she also calls natality), for human being can bring about something “new” against the cyclical movement of nature. With the birth of each person a new life begins: a new beginning because each person lives her own life by bringing about something new, which is characterized as “it could be otherwise” through innumerable interactions with others.\textsuperscript{125} As a new beginning, it is a beginning without precedence, i.e., *free*. This linear movement cannot be characterized by “in order to” as serving for another end but is only characterized by “for the sake” of its own activity.\textsuperscript{126} To put it differently, because human being is born with the ability to initiate something new against the odds of the law of causality, Arendt identifies time as the essence of human existence, i.e., Arendt finds the ontological root of human action as initiative in “the fact of natality.”\textsuperscript{127} Thus, Arendt understands that it is with *initium* that *time* is created.\textsuperscript{128}

However, that new beginning can be said to be a “new beginning” only insofar as there are interactions with others due to its nature as action, i.e., human plurality, according to Arendt. By plurality she means the equality and distinctness among human beings; human beings are simultaneously equal to and different from each other, and taken together they reveal the

\textsuperscript{125} “[T]he new beginning inherent in birth can make itself felt in the world only because the newcomer possesses the capacity of beginning something anew, that is, of acting.” *HC*, 9.

\textsuperscript{126} According to Arendt, “meaning” and “purpose” are altogether different in terms of category. Arendt gives a concrete example in the case of carpenter. It is one thing that a carpenter makes a table “in order to” provide furniture upon which to eat, and it is another thing why he is a carpenter. In other words, the carpenter is a carpenter “for the sake of” being a carpenter. Whatever made him a carpenter, his reasons are within himself, which cannot be explained by the sheer “in order to.” See *BPF*, 78-79.

\textsuperscript{127} Arendt, *HC*, 247.

\textsuperscript{128} See n.7.
uniqueness of the individual. Even though human beings are equal, they can express differences among themselves, hold different opinions, and thus can communicate. In short, human plurality is the condition under which we can act together to initiate something new, through which we differentiate from each other and disclose the uniqueness of who we each are. It means that though a human being is born with the ability to initiate—that its essence is freedom—it is in plurality that the initiative character of human being is actualized. The newness brought about in each birth, which is not only new in chronological order but new in terms of being unprecedented and thus unique, acquires its individuality in the interaction with others. Plurality is the paradoxical individuation of a new beginning. If human action is a new beginning (time) and is freedom that needs a space specifically designated for it to exist, then it is in the individuation occurring in the correlation between action as a new beginning and human plurality that the moment in which such time acquires its spatial characteristics lies. Arendt finds her model in the theater, especially in the Aristotelian understanding of tragedy as imitation of action, viz., mimēsis.

As we mentioned in Chapter 1, Arendt recognizes the similarity between her account of action and performance art, particularly when it comes to drama. We withhold our analysis of the particular actuality of action until the next section, where we shall illuminate how Arendt finds this actuality both in action and performing art, and which she shares with Aristotle. Here

129 Arendt differentiates “distinctness” from “otherness” (alteritas). While “otherness” merely means the difference, e.g., A is not B, “distinctness” is only found in human beings. By “distinctness,” Arendt means that a human being can express her being differently from other human beings. “Distinctness” is different from “distinction,” which is shared with even among the same species. “Distinctness” comes with verbal expression, or speech. See HC, 175-176.

130 “If action as beginning corresponds to the fact of birth, if it is the actualization of the human condition of natality, then speech corresponds to the fact of distinctness is the actualization of the human condition of plurality, that is, of living as a distinct and unique being among equals.” Ibid., 178, emphasis added.

131 “With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is a second birth, in which we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original physical appearances.—With the creation of man, the principle of beginning came into the world itself, which, of course, is only another way of saying that the principle of freedom was created when man was created but not before.” Ibid., 176-177, emphasis added.
we focus on Arendt’s reference to drama as an enactment and imitation of action as found in Aristotle’s Poetics. In HC Arendt writes:

But the imitative element lies not only in the art of the actor, but, as Aristotle rightly claims, in the making or writing of the play, at least to the extent that the drama comes fully to life only when it is enacted in the theater. Only the actors and speakers who re-enact the story’s plot can convey the full meaning, not so much of the story itself, but of the “heroes” who reveal themselves in it.

The enacted plot reveals the full meaning of the “heroes.” By “heroes,” Arendt means the main characters. What Arendt means by this is clarified in her footnote:

The decisive point is that tragedy does not deal with the qualities of men, their poiotês, but with whatever happened with respect to them, with their actions and life and good or ill fortune. The content of tragedy, therefore, is not what we would call character but action or the plot.

When Arendt claims that plot reveals the full meaning of the hero, she does not mean “hero” in the sense of personal “character,” which is often taken to be the intrinsic personality or the true self in our everyday life. Rather, who the hero is (the agent of action), is revealed only through her action. The key lies in Aristotle’s understanding that life is an activity, or, action. Resonating with his ethics, Aristotle claims that one’s action shapes her character, who she is. The tragic end comes not from one’s character but from one’s actions. Thus, tragedy is the imitation of the main character’s life as an action. What Arendt is suggesting in the quoted lines

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132 Ibid., 187-188.
133 Ibid., n. 12., 187.
134 C.f. “courage,” ibid., 186. What Arendt means by the hero is simply the actor, who is willing “to act and speak at all, to insert one’s self into the world and begin a story of one’s own.” The world here means the web of the human network, or the subjective in-between which “consists of deeds and words and owes its origin exclusively to men’s acting and speaking directly to one another.” As we shall see later, “action”—words and deeds—makes one disclose who one is. The point is that the uniqueness of the individual person, i.e., who one is, cannot be articulated by words that end up being merely a list of what. Rather, it is disclosed through one’s deeds and words. The disclosure is beyond one’s control, which thus requires one to be courageous in expressing one’s opinion and acting with others. Also see ibid., 179-182 for Arendt’s description of “the who” and 183 for the “subjective in-between.”
135 Ibid., 187.
136 “For tragedy is an imitation not of men but of a life, an action—.” Aristotle, 1450a 16.
137 Aristotle. 1450a 20.
above is that there are two kinds of mimēsis in tragedy: the imitation of action by the actor who enacts the play at the theater, and the imitation of action by the writer through composing the play. As far as Arendt’s account of action as a new beginning is concerned, the latter type of mimēsis is crucial here.

Aristotle posits that the plot is the “soul of tragedy.” His claim is based on his understanding that a human life is an action, or, praxis, not poiēsis. While the end, or, the actuality, of praxis resides in the action itself, e.g., playing a flute, the end of poiēsis, on the other hand, resides in the product, e.g., the actuality of the building a house is a house. Taking the human life as an action means to embrace the life as it is lived; the end of the life resides in living itself, not in achieving the predetermined goal. Tragedy as an imitation of a life, the characteristic of praxis is manifested in his emphasis on the “beginning” of plot as “that which does not necessarily follow on something else, but after it something else naturally is or happens.” Plot as mimēsis enables the author to present various actions of the main character through which her life is presented as one action. In other words, by choosing which actions should comprise the parts of plot and unifying them effectively, the author presents the life story of the main character as a coherent whole resulting from the main character’s choices, or action. It means that by giving a structure for actions and events or, by structuring actions and events into a coherent whole, plot takes up the main character’s action as a new beginning and

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138 Aristotle, 1450b3.
139 Aristotle, 1450b28.
140 “A poetic imitation, then, ought to be unified in the same way as a single imitation in any other mimetic field, by having a single object: since the plot is an imitation of an action, the latter ought to be both unified and complete, and the component events ought to be so firmly compacted that if any one of them is shifted to another place, or removed, the whole is loosened up and dislocated; for an element whose addition or subtraction makes no perceptible extra difference is not really a part of the whole.” Aristotle, 1451a30-35. This is what Paul Ricoeur calls “emplotment”: “The Poetics does not speak of structure but of structuration. Structuration is an oriented activity that is only completed in the spectator or the reader.” See Paul Ricoeur, Time and Narrative, Volume 1, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer, (University Of Chicago Press, 1990), 48.
reveals its meaning, i.e., a concrete storyline. The storyline offered through plot is the same as what Arendt proposes with the notion of *initium*; linear movement cutting through the eternal movement of the universe. In this context, Arendt and Aristotle agree that action should be taken as a *spontaneous* beginning and whose course must be understood within its own context.

Yet, the structualization of action by the poet is insufficient for the completion of *mimésis* according to Aristotle. The complete *memésis* in tragedy requires the presence of the spectators or, more precisely it depends on their feeling of pity and fear.\(^{141}\) It is by arousing the feeling of fear and pity in the spectators that a tragedy is completed.\(^{142}\) The completion of *mimésis* rests on the enacted plot at the theater with presence of the spectators. It is in this sense, the experience at the theater, that action as a new beginning and *time* can be said to acquire its spatial characteristic. The revelation of the meaning of action in both cases is always owed to others who are not a part of the action. In Arendt’s context, this revelation coincides with her understanding that natality is actualized in the condition of human plurality within which the individuation occurs: “It is the space of appearance in the widest sense of the word, namely the space where I appear to others as others appear to me, where men exist not merely like other living or inanimate things but make their appearance explicitly.”\(^{143}\) As tragedy requires its enactment at the theater, understanding an event initiated by human action requires the space of appearance, in which action appears, is seen and heard to others, and is understood. As the enacted plot reveals the meaning of action to the eyes of the spectators without losing spontaneous nature of action, the presence of others, who see and hear one’s action, save one’s action from reducing it to the sheer law of causality.

\(^{141}\) *Viz., catharsis*. Aristotle, 1449b.28. 
\(^{142}\) “Since it is the pleasure derived from pity and fear by means of imitation that the poet should seek to produce, it is clear that these qualities must be built into the constituent events.” Aristotle, 1453b12. 
\(^{143}\) Ibid., 198-199.
This Aristotelian understanding of the role of plot with respect to action, in turn, suggests to us why Arendt writes in her 1954 essay that “understanding is the other side of action,” and why Arendt links understanding with “reconciliation” in the same essay. That is, the sole reality of human action or, freedom, depends on being understood within its peculiar context. Arendt understands that in order for us to claim human freedom as being truly free, it must retain its spontaneous character. As Dana Villa points out, Arendt’s notion of freedom is “groundless.”

The only way to grant the reality of human freedom is to seek it in its appearance, i.e., of action. For Arendt, there is no distinction between Being and appearing in the Western metaphysical tradition; rather, Being and appearing coincide. Putting it differently, we human beings can be said to exist or, to be, insofar as we appear, or disclose, who we are through our action, acting together with others, and appearing to the eye of others, viz., in plurality. Though Arendt borrows the notion of initium from St. Augustine, this borrowing does not mean that Arendt takes God to be the creator and ground of that human freedom as well. Quite the contrary: there is no ground for human freedom in Arendt. Besides the fact that action is fragile due to the groundless nature of human freedom or, to give it another name, human initiative nature, action’s

144 Villa’s analyses on the distinction in Heidegger between the authenticity and inauthenticity of Dasein, and how that distinction is taken up by Arendt in a radical way based on her criticism on Heidegger’s ontological project provides us with much insight into Arendt’s account of freedom here. Villa points out that, for Heidegger, the groundless freedom of Dasein is found in his notion of “guilty.” Dasein is an open structure of possibility or “thrown projection,” “is a projective structure of understanding.” (125) Because of Dasein’s thrownness in the world, Dasein constantly understands whatever it encounters, and discloses itself. It is the way Dasein is, its being. Yet, that way of being itself is not the “basis of its Being.” “As a thrown projection, the ‘Being of its Basis,’ Dasein ‘as such is guilty,’ without foundation” (133). It is that guilt that provides Dasein with its freedom; “the freedom of Dasein’s original openness” (134). Villa sees a similar structure in Arendt’s account of freedom in action, though Arendt externalizes the groundless freedom of Heideggerian Dasein by “emphasizing the intersubjective dimensions of Dasein’s thrownness.” “Our thrownness or contingency is highlighted when we initiated actions that change constellations in unforeseeable ways. Groundlessness, then, is concretely encountered in the realm of plurality, not the self” (141). See, Dana Villa, Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 1996), 125-141. Here, the point for our purpose is twofold. First, Arendt’s notion of freedom is actualized only through one’s interactions with others in plurality, which we shall discuss in the following section. Second, unlike Heidegger, authentic understanding resides in plurality, which we shall take up as the issue of the self in Arendt in Chapter 3 and 4.

145 Arendt’s claim, “Being and appearing coincides” is consistent across the whole of her corpus, e.g., HC, 199 and LM: I, 19. When she writes that action has its ontological root in natality, what she means by “ontology” must be understood in that context. See HC, 247.
boundlessness makes it difficult for human freedom to hold on to its reality. While action is incapable without the condition of plurality and people living-together, this plurality and communal living makes it very difficult to articulate when exactly a particular action is initiated, for not only is action initiated within a dynamic human relationship, but action calls forth numerous reactions, interactions, and chain reactions in response. Here, the point is that human freedom or, action, whose reality depends on appearances, is fragile by nature. Thus, by contextualizing an action, the tragic model of understanding articulates the beginning of a particular event, which reveals the meaning of that action within its own concrete context. Groundless human freedom, or action, appears in the light of this kind of understanding, which allows for the possibility of our “reconciling” with the reality in appearances.

Based on our analyses of Arendt’s adoption of Aristotelian mimēsis with respect to the relation between her notion of natality and plurality on one hand, and action and understanding on the other, let us revisit for a moment the points where we seem to disagree with Beiner, to see how the above analyses can add anything new to our position. Beiner posit a disjunction between the earlier treatment of judgment by Arendt and her later treatments, particularly in LKPP. That is, while in earlier writing Arendt deals judgment as that of the actor, in her later writings she treats judgment as that of the spectator. Beiner’s such insistence, as we pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, is derived from seeing that there is a sharp contrast between the actor and the spectator. We have suggested that our analysis of Arendt’s notion of the “originality” in LKPP may be seen as a support for Beiner, since our analysis has pointed out there is a shift from the actor to the spectator in Arendt’s discussion of “originality.”

146 As we shall discuss later, Arendt theoretically captures that nature of action with the peculiar nature of action’s actuality with another adopted notion from Aristotle, i.e., dynamis.
However, our analyses of the theoretical implications of Arendt’s adoption of Aristotelian mimēsis suggest that the “originality” shifted from the artist to the spectator found in LKPP does not support Beiner’s claim for the following reasons. We have seen that what the tragic plot, or, the tragic model of understanding, reveals is the full meaning of the action of the main character, which is equivalent to revealing the “who” of the protagonist, for life is considered to be an activity, or action, through which alone the “who” of the agent/ the actor is disclosed. By doing so, the tragic model of understanding both articulates the spontaneous beginning and allows the spectators to grasp the meaning of the action of the main character within its own context. As we have argued, that tragic model of understanding shows the peculiar relation between action and understanding on the one hand, and how human plurality is the condition for a new beginning or, natality for its actualization on the other. In short, the shift we observed in our discussion in the previous chapter agrees with the relation between understanding and action and that between natality and plurality. A new beginning not only is actualized in plurality in action but also by appearing to the eyes of others. And appearance of the “who” through action always requires a kind of understanding that we have seen in Aristotelian mimēsis. That is what we mean by appearance in which the newness brought about by action obtains its reality. Therefore, we can conclude that the “originality” of the artist/the actor dealt with in LKPP is embedded in plurality, without which any appearance is impossible in the first place, for the individuation of the “who” of the actor occurs in plurality. It is in this sense that the appearance of the “originality” of the artist/ the artist is shared with the spectator.

Moreover, this point also offers an explanation for the second shift we observed in Chapter 1: the shift of what appears shifts from the beautiful to the artist/the actor. The beautiful qua appearance really means appearance qua appearance for Arendt insofar as the beautiful is
taken as end in itself. By the beautiful, Arendt means that it is beyond utilitarian purposes or ends. The beautiful is concrete by itself, and that is what she finds in human action and the agent of the action as appearances. It is through action in human plurality that the individuation of the self is possible and the initiative nature of human being is actualized. Since there is no distinction between Being and appearing in Arendt, it is impossible to separate the actor from her action. What is beautiful, or appearing, is the appearance of the actor and her action. In other words, in the appearance, the actor/the artist and her action coincide, as do the actor and the spectator, due to the individuation in plurality. In appearance, seeing and being seen coincide.

Thus, we claim that the juxtaposition of the actor and the spectator that we detected through our analyses in Chapter 1 does not suggest that Arendt’s treatment of judgment in LKPP results from her making a shift from \textit{vita activa} to \textit{vita contemplativa}. Rather than a retreat, the parallelisms between \textit{LKPP} and \textit{HC} discussed so far point out the existence of a theoretical continuity and coherency in Arendt.

Beiner’s remaining claim that there is a disjunction between \textit{vita activa} and \textit{vita contemplativa}, is in reality the characteristic of the \textit{possible} dialogue held in judgment in \textit{LKPP}. The lack of any \textit{actual} dialogue with others in making a judgment is taken as evidence of Arendt’s retreat from her theory of action with respect to her treatment of judgment in \textit{LKPP}. However, this claim of Beiner’s can be likewise be refuted by closely looking into Arendt’s adoption in \textit{HC} of another notion of Aristotle’s, \textit{viz., dynamis}, or the potential characteristics of action. We will do so in the next section.

\footnote{Arendt categorizes the “beautiful” as things “neither necessary nor merely useful” but essentially related to the political life, i.e., bios politikos. See \textit{HC}, 12-13.}

\footnote{More precisely, if the artist engages in the performing arts, which is what Arendt has in mind here. For the affinity between action and the performing arts, see the next section.}
3. The potential characteristics of action and imagination

As we discussed previously, there is a unique relationship between Arendt’s notion of natality and plurality, or more precisely, how the human capacity to initiate something new against the odds and the law of causality comes to be actualized and how action and the space of appearance come to be actualized in relationship of each other. In the former relation, while the individual human being is born as a new beginning, it is under the condition of human plurality alone that such spontaneity is fully actualized through action, and thus appears to the eyes of others in the world. In the latter relation, action, which is initiated within the preexisting human network consisting of human plurality, contributes to opening up the space of appearance. Though action is potentially there under the condition of plurality, it is action itself that opens the space of its appearance. For action always calls for reaction, interaction and subsequent chain reactions; it “always establishes relationships and therefore has an inherent tendency to force open all limitations and cut across all boundaries.”149 In other words, the very space in which action alone can appear, is at the same time the potential existence that contains action’s ability to open new human relationships. That is why Arendt takes one’s insertion of oneself into the human world to be a kind of “second birth,” for it is in the “second birth” that human ability to initiate is actualized.150 It is here, taking action as the “second birth” that the nature of human ability to begin something new, which Arendt reckons as human essence with her notion of natality, can be articulated.

We show in this section that it is not mere coincidence that the relation between natality and plurality coincides with that of action and the space of appearances. Indeed, this section

149 HC, 190, emphasis added.
150 Ibid, 176-177. Or, “The space of appearance comes into being wherever men are together in the manner of speech and action.” Ibid., 199.
point out that there is a parallelism among Arendt’s various notions, such as natality-plurality, action-the space of appearance, and action-understanding. We shall demonstrate that this parallelism is derived from action’s peculiar actuality, or its potential characteristics, as well as inquire into their origin in imagination. Thus, the aim of this section is threefold. Firstly, we delineate action’s potential characteristic in Arendt’s notion of power, or *dynamis*, as she discusses it in *HC*. Secondly, with the aid of this first analysis, we shall demonstrate that action and understanding are two sides of the same phenomenon, viz., appearance. Finally, we trace the potential characteristics of action and understanding in imagination by revisiting to the role of imagination in Arendt’s treatment of judgment in *LKPP*.

When it comes to politics, the term “power” is often understood to be the strength to have control over a political regime or a party. However, such is not the case for Arendt. Power, according to Arendt, is different from strength and violence. Power “cannot be stored up and kept in reserve for emergencies,” but resides in action and speech. It is power that keeps the space of appearance open in which “potentialities of action” are always present. Arendt identifies her notion of power with the Aristotelian notion of *dynamis* which bares “potential” characteristics. Keeping these in mind, let us look closely at the relation between action and the space of appearance.

151 Ibid., 199-207.
152 Strength is “nature’s gift to the individual which cannot be shared with others,” and violence does not entail words and deeds, which is the opposite pole of power, according to Arendt. For this reason, tyranny has the closest affinity with violence. The tyrant relies on violence and she is “isolated” from others, which contradicts “the essential human condition of plurality.” See *HC*, 202-203.
153 Ibid., 200.
154 “Only where men live so close together that the potentialities of action are always present can power remain with them, and the foundation of cities, which as city-states have remained paradigmatic for all Western political organization, is therefore indeed the most important material requisite for power.” Ibid., 201.
155 Ibid., 200, emphasis added.
What we find in Arendt’s description of power regarding the relation between action and the space of appearance is something already familiar to us. On one hand, “power is actualized only where word and deed have not parted company—to disclose realities,” and “to establish relations and create new realities.” On the other hand, action is potentially there when people live closely together in the space of appearance. At the same time, it is power that keeps this space open. In other words, action and the space of appearance exist both potentiality and actuality: The potentiality of action depends on the space of appearance, and yet this space is kept open by power when action is there. These correlations among action, the space of appearance, and power are derived from dynamis.

The Aristotelian notion of dynamis is typically translated either as “potentiality” or “power.” In this, Arendt sees the peculiar form of the actuality of action as being the same as in the performing arts. Arendt’s point is that both action and performance last while they are performed. While the end of fine art is a tangible object, e.g., a painting, performing art does not leave anything behind. In other words, the end of performing art is in the performance itself. The distinction in the ends of these two types of art is derived from the Aristotelian notion of energeia, or actuality. The point is that each type of art has a different kind of actuality respectively, and in the case of the performing art and action, their respective actualities reside in their activities themselves. For action, “dynamis is internal in energeia,” or, the actuality of

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156 Ibid.
157 Ibid., 201.
158 HC, 206.
159 “For in these instances of action and speech the end (telos) is not pursued but lies in the activity itself which therefore becomes an entelecheia, and the work is not what follows and extinguishes the process but is imbedded in it; the performance is the work, is energeia.” Ibid., 206.
action is actuality qua potentiality. That is, action is actualized only while it is acted, and so its end resides in its activity itself.

If there is no action, then there is no space of appearance. Yet at the same time, if there is no space of appearance, there is no action. For it is only when people live together closely exchanging opinions and acting together that power keeps the space of appearance open. In other words, power designates the reflexive relationship between action and the space of appearance; action potentially exists in the space of appearance, and is actualized while it is acted in that space. However, what grants action’s potentiality is the actualized power to keep that space open. “Power preserves the public realm and the space of appearance, and as such it is also the lifeblood of the human artifice, which, unless it is the scene of action and speech, of the web of human affairs and relationships and the stories engendered by them, lacks its ultimate raison d’être.” We should not fail to notice here that that description of power coincides with, or is at least very similar to, Arendt’s description of the reflexive nature of intersubjectivity, which we saw in our analyses of judgment in LKPP in Chapter 1.

All of this returns us once more to our original questions: Why does Arendt juxtapose the actor with the spectator? Is judging the same as action? If so, does this mean that what Arendt means by judgment is the judgment of the actor? Or, on the contrary, by judgment does Arendt take action’s peculiar characteristic and bestow it upon judgment as a mental activity (as Beiner claims), and as a result, is Arendt “forced to expel judging from the world of the vita activa”? However, these seem to be overly hasty conclusions. Instead, we can further look into the

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161 Ibid. 204.
theoretical implication of the potential characteristic of action and the space of appearance for answers.

For Arendt, the potential characteristics are shared in action, the space of appearance, natality, plurality and understanding. Though human beings are born with the ability to initiate (natality), it is under the condition of plurality that this ability is actualized. However, the condition of plurality is not actualized without human words and deeds, i.e., action. In other words, when people live closely together and where one acts and/or expresses one’s opinion, the individuation of the “who” someone is appears. It is on this account that the space of appearance is required for action. Yet that space cannot be understood as something static and always there waiting for the actor. Rather, the space of appearance owes its existence to action itself, for it is action’s boundless characteristic that opens new human relationships. What Arendt suggests with her notion of power adopted from Aristotelian dynamis is the interrelationships among those notions. That in turn provides a theoretical framework for Arendt’s claims that “Being is Appearing” for human existence, since “who” someone is, which is a new beginning of a linear movement in the universe in which everything makes the eternal cyclical movement, only obtains its reality by its appearance through her action. Natality, plurality, action, and the space of appearance are potentially there in the world, and only actualized when they are interrelated.\(^{162}\) In other words, the human sense of reality, or appearance, depends on all of them equally and as such remains inherently fragile.

As we have seen through our analyses of tragedy, this is the reason why the tragic model of understanding is required for such reality. Furthermore, the nature of meaning of action, through which the plot of tragedy is revealed, shares the same potential characteristics as we

\(^{162}\) I shall take up their relation to imagination later in this section.
found above. According to Aristotle, tragedy reveals universality: “[T]he poet’s job is not to report what has happened but what is likely to happen: that is, what is capable of happening according to the rule of probability or necessity.”\textsuperscript{163} “The poet’s job,” here of course, means constructing the plot, and the “rule of probability or necessity” means the probability or necessity due to the actions conducted by the main character. Aristotle compares the work of the poet with that of the historian, pointing out the former is more “universal” than the latter.\textsuperscript{164} It is a unique form of universality, for its claims are based on “probability.” While the historian deals with what has happened, the poet can show to her audience what \textit{can} happen.

The “can happen” found in the universality shown in tragedy is what could possibly happen, i.e., the open possibility that every action has. What happens in tragedy, the tragic end, happens because of the series of actions that the main character has taken through the course of her life. The necessity of that end is strictly derived from the actions and choices that the main character has made, which the poet puts together as an action, i.e., a life story. Seeing it from a different perspective, the tragic end could have been avoided if the main character had taken different actions. Clearly, the kind of universality at stake here is different from scientific truth. The kind of universality Aristotle discusses here tells the spectators what human action is \textit{possible} to be brought about and its consequences. Nonetheless, the meaning of the main character’s action is considered to be universal, for the spectators can see why the tragic end happened and are convinced that it is \textit{probable}. In other words, when the main character’s series of actions is presented within the unity of the plot, the spectators are persuaded as to why the tragic end happens. Thus, the key for this kind of universality is twofold: the well-constructed and unified plot by the poet, and the persuasion of the spectators based on human action’s

\textsuperscript{163} Aristotle, 1451a38-1451b1.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid., 1451b5-8.
probability. Given this, tragedy conveys the meaning of the main character’s action, which is based on the shared understanding among the spectators that such action is possible and plausible. The possibility and plausibility contained in the universality suggests both the limit of human action as something comprehensible, which is based on the shared historical/cultural context on the one hand, and something beyond such context; yet it is still plausible, thus opening up a new understanding that allows for the possibility for such action, on the other hand.

Jacques Taminiaux calls the universality shown in tragedy “tragic theôria.”\textsuperscript{165} What Taminiaux means by this term is that the ambiguities entailed in action, or praxis, are the ambiguities derived from the boundlessness of action.\textsuperscript{166} Echoing Arendt, he suggests that the opposite pole of that theôria is hubris: “[T]ragedy teaches that the fragility and the manifold ambiguousness of praxis forbid anybody putting himself or herself in a position of mastery and never allows them to anticipate an entire process of events and subject interhuman enterprises to the indisputable norms legitimately prevailing in the realm of poiêsis.”\textsuperscript{167} Taminiaux’s point is that in what he calls “tragic theôria,” the meaning of the particular action in its particular context is grasped. Thus, he equates it with Aristotelian phronësis, which is not a speculation but the

\textsuperscript{165} Taminiaux. 98.  
\textsuperscript{166} Ibid., 108.  
\textsuperscript{167} Ibid., 106.  Arendt claims that hubris is the sense of omnipotence that is synonymous with “the destruction of plurality”; see, e.g., HC. 202. In terms of the kind of apprehension offered through tragedy or story-telling, we find the following in her essay on Isaak Dinesen: “It is true that storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it, that it brings about consent and reconciliation with things as they really are, and that we may even trust it to contain eventually by implication that last word which we expect from the ‘day of judgment.’” \textit{MDT}, 105. Generally, this essay offers many insights on the topics of story-telling, understanding, and reconciliation. Arendt points out that before Karen Blixen assumed her penname of Isaak Dinsen, as a young woman she committed the sin “of making a story come true, of interfering with life according to a preconceived pattern, instead of waiting patiently for the story to emerge, of repeating in imagination as distinguished from creating a fiction and then trying to live up to it.” (Ibid., 106) Arendt concludes her essay on Dinesen thusly, “[T]he earlier part of her life had taught her that, while you can tell stories or write poems about life, you cannot make life poetic, live it as though it were a work of art (as Goethe had done) or use it for the realization of an ‘idea.’ Life may contain the ‘essence’ (what else could?); recollection, the repetition in imagination, may decipher the essence and deliver to you the ‘elixir’; and eventually you may even be privileged to ‘make’ something out of it, ‘to compound the story.’ But life itself is neither essence nor elixir, and if you treat it as such it will only play its tricks on you.” (Ibid., 109) These descriptions about Dinesen’s sin are the same as Arendt’s and Taminiaux’s accounts of hubris, whose opposite pole is the tragic model of understanding or “tragic theôria.”
“apprehension, in the midst of a common world of appearances, of a mean, mesotês, between two extremes.”168 Phronésis, in this context, primarily teaches the spectators to be open to all the ambiguities human action brings about. It also warns them of the danger of being arrogant when they act, for it is the main character’s arrogance in her belief in her capability to change her fate, and her pride in thinking that she knows everything in terms of her course of action that she faces her tragic end. He continues to say, “The beautiful is not at all the intelligible Idea, but a sensible appearing offered to judgment.”169

Villa opposes the idea of claiming Arendt’s notion of judgment to be phronésis. He claims that, in order for phronésis to work as a referential framework for judgment, a society must have a far more solid ground for sensus communis than mere feeling, as is the case of Arendt’s judgment in LKPP. Villa’s view is that, while Arendt’s account of judgment presupposes the loss of a framework for understanding in modernity, which puts us in crisis of judgment and understanding on the one hand, it paradoxically also helps human freedom to appear, on the other.170 In short, Villa’s claim is that in the society where phronésis works, religion keeps its authority and citizens share similar values; their yardstick remains intact. In such a society, morality has a solid basis, and thus does not need to appeal to mere aesthetic feeling.171 Villa counters this state of affairs: “What Kant offers (and Aristotle doesn’t) is a way of conceiving judgment that does not subsume the individual under the community.”172 In other words, Villa thinks the condition under which phronésis will work is the existence of a community with the “yardstick.” Thus phronésis means the understanding that works by being

168 Ibid., 113.
169 Ibid.
170 Villa, Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political, 164.
172 Ibid., 302.
subsumed under pre-established categories, whereas judgment presupposes the absence of such categories.

Yet, we have to pause here and ask carefully if the kind of understanding that Taminiaux calls “tragic theôria,” as phronêsis and judgment is as problematic as Villa suggests. Villa is at least partially correct to assume that, in order for the spectators to apprehend that kind of understanding, or phronêsis, a solid common historical/cultural understanding is required. However, insofar as that understanding is open to the possibility of human action, identifying that understanding with phronêsis and judgment seems not to be contradictory. This openness seems always to have some potentiality to go beyond what is customary taken for granted, i.e., norms.

In fact, there is a strong indication that Arendt seems to support in this view of the openness carried in the tragic model of understanding in The Promise of Politics. In this text, by Aristotelian phronêsis, Arendt means “[N]othing other than the greatest possible overview of all the possible standpoints and viewpoints from which an issue can be seen and judged.” More importantly, Arendt identifies such account of phronêsis with “enlarged mentality” found in Kant’s account of “common sense” in CJ. There are two particularly relevant points here for our purpose in her examining her argument that identifies Aristotelian phronêsis with the enlarged mentality found in Kant’s reflective judgment. First, Arendt suggests that the “real

173 Hannah Arendt, The Promise of Politics, ed. Jerome Kohn (Shocken Books, 2005), hereafter abbreviated as PP. The writings that are included in this book were never published during Arendt’s lifetime. Dating these particular manuscripts remains difficult. The text we are dealing with here was prepared by Arendt under the title of “Introduction into Politics.” According to Kohn, the first sections of this text were written between 1956 and 1957, and the latter section, including on the meaning of politics on which we are focusing here, were written between 1958 and 1959. See PP, xvii.
174 Ibid., 168.
175 Ibid.
political faculty in Kant’s philosophy is not lawgiving reason, but judgment.”\textsuperscript{176} Second, Arendt’s assertion, “[P]olitics is not so much about human beings as it is about the world that comes into being between them and endures beyond them.”\textsuperscript{177} The significance of the first point is actually twofold. What is immediately relevant for our discussion here is that Arendt herself does not necessarily disagree with identifying phronêsis with (Kant’s reflective) judgment. Her real intention is manifest in the second point, regarding to the importance of the world in her political philosophy. The world, here, means a space created between people and thus relates them to each other. Politics is primarily about that world, because only within such a world is the reality of appearance granted:

> If it is true that a thing is real within both the historical-political and the sensate world only if it can show itself and be perceived from all its sides, then there must always be a plurality of individuals or people and to guarantee its continuation. In other words, the world comes into being only if there are perspectives; it exists as the order of worldly things only if it is viewed, now this way, now that, at any given time.\textsuperscript{178}

What these two points indicate is that if in fact Arendt identifies Aristotelian phronêsis with Kantian (reflective) judgment, the core of her identification is to first and foremost give an account of the reality of appearance through plural perspectives. It suggests that her main concern should not be regarded a mere attempt to combine Aristotelian ethics with Kantian moral philosophy. The second point relates to the first point. For Arendt says that what makes Kantian (reflective) judgment to be the “real political faculty” is the enlarged mentality, not the categorical imperative.\textsuperscript{179}

\textsuperscript{176} “[T]he validity of the categorical imperative is derived from ‘thinking in agreement with the self,’ and reason as the giver of laws does not presuppose other persons but only a self that is not in contradiction with itself. In point of fact, the real political faculty which is an enlarged mentality has the power to override its subjective private condition.” The relation between reason and thinking with respect to their relations to the self has a great relevance to our discussion in Chapter 4. Ibid, 169, emphasis added.
\textsuperscript{177} Ibid., 175, emphasis added.
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid., 177.
\textsuperscript{179} Ibid., 169. Arendt’s point is that while the categorical imperative is derived from “thinking in agreement with the self,” (reflective) judgment is based on the enlarged mentality. If judgment and phronêsis are the same in Arendt’s
Based on what we just saw, then, it could be that the issue at stake is not so much of the actual existence of a community with respect to the workability of *phronēsis* and judgment, but rather, if “tragic *theôria*” or, *phronēsis* and judgment share the potential characteristic of action, which Arendt captures with her adoption of *dynamis* from Aristotle, and its theoretical implication. More precisely, we need to examine the theoretical implication that we can observe in similar theoretical structures carrying the potential characteristics in both *phronēsis* and judgment.

First, let us recall the way by which Taminiaux comes to his conclusions on the characteristics of “tragic *theôria*” or *phronēsis*. Tragedy teaches the spectators the importance of keeping their mind open to the ambiguities of action. Action is ambiguous due to its potential nature, and thus tragedy offers us a kind of understanding, an apprehension, of action as an appearance. As we have analyzed, the appearance of action is the only way to grant reality to action, whose trait is fundamentally ambiguous, full of possibility, and characterized as being something that could be otherwise. These characteristics of action are derived from the two sets of notions, natality—plurality and action—the space of appearance, all of which have a potential nature whose actuality depend on their interrelatedness. In other words, none of those notions can be actualized by themselves; they remain potential by themselves. It means that they do not possess the foundation for referring back, viz., Being, but can only exist as appearance. When Arendt claims that for us, Being is appearing, she does not mean to degrade action and the human sense of reality based on appearance as mere appearance, as it has been done in the Western metaphysical tradition. Rather, she intends to give an account of the fragility and reality account, as we shall demonstrate in the following paragraphs, they are derived from her account of appearance. The problem of the categorical imperative as inadequate for the political faculty is not simply because it demands the agreement of one’s self and not with others, as is the case of judgment. Rather, the issue is how each philosopher finds the source of the self. We shall return to this topic in the next chapter.
of action. Thus, viewed from the potential characteristics entailed in Arendt’s notion of action and other related notions, *phronēsis* is nothing but a way of understanding appearance as such. This viewpoint clarifies why Arendt claims that “understanding is the other side of action” in her essay, “Understanding and Politics” (The Difficulties of Understanding). For Arendt, what matters the most is the appearance of human action and its reality. Action and the understanding of action cannot be separated, for they are two sides of the same phenomenon. Without action, there is nothing for the understanding to understand; vice versa, without the apprehension of action by the understanding, action is left as mere ambiguity. With action and understanding together, appearance gains its reality, and it is power, or *dynamis*, which makes action and understanding arise together.  

So far, it is clear that the interrelatedness between action and understanding comes from the potential characteristic that action shares with understanding and other related notions such as natality, plurality, and the space of appearance. However, the origin of these potential characteristics prevailing among notions constituting Arendt’s account of appearance remains unclear, since the notion of power, or *dynamis*, only suggests the potential character of action and its peculiar actuality. There are two textual sources that provide clues as where to look into the topic. One is the fact that Arendt not only claims that “understanding is the other side of action,” but also that she claims that what she calls understanding is in fact “imagination” in the

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180 Arendt elucidates on this point by using a quotation from Ecclesiastes: “‘Vanity of vanities; all is vanity….There is no new thing under the sun,…there is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after’—does not necessarily arise from specifically religious experience; but it is certainly unavoidable wherever and whenever trust in the world as a place if it for human appearance, for action and speech, is gone. Without action to bring into the play of the world the new beginning of which each man is capable by virtue of being born, ‘there is no new thing under the sun’; without speech to materialize and memorialize, however tentatively, the ‘new thins’ that appear and shine forth, ‘there is no remembrance’; without the enduring permanence of a human artifact, there cannot ‘be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.’ And without power, the space of appearance brought forth through action and speech in public will fade away as rapidly as the living deed and the living word.” *HC*, 204.
The other is Arendt’s treatment of judgment in *LKPP*. Revisiting judgment seems to be compelling, for now we know that the potential characteristics found in both action and understanding enable appearance (of action), and Arendt’s account of judgment in *LKPP*, to judge appearance *qua* appearance, has imagination playing a significant role, as we demonstrated in the previous chapter. Furthermore, the notion of judgment itself offers us another advantage. That is, the judgment of taste is a reflective judgment. It means that a judgment of taste does not have a standard outside of itself to appeal for its validity. In other words, since judgment is to judge appearance *qua* appearance without any preexisting rules to apply, we can find the condition, or standard, which makes such a judgment possible. For this purpose, let us return to Arendt’s account of *sensus communis*, paying particular attention to its possible nature.

We have seen that the locus of the intersubjective characteristic of Arendt’s judgment is to be found in her interpretation of *sensus communis*:

> [U]nder the *sensus communis* we must include the idea of a sense *common to all*, i.e., of a faculty of judgment which, in its reflection, takes account (*a priori*) of the mode of representation of all other men in thought, in order, *as it were*, to compare its judgment with the collective reason of humanity…. This is done by comparing our judgment with the possible rather than the actual judgments of others, and by putting ourselves in the place of any other man, by abstracting from the limitations which contingently attach to our own judgment.182

Here, Beiner’s claim provides us with a guiding thread. His contention is that it is due to the possible nature of others’ judgment, not the actual ones, which reflection takes into account that expels Arendt’s account of judgment in *LKPP* from the *vita activa*. To challenge Beiner’s claim, what we need to examine is if the possible nature observed in judgment actually supports our suggestion that imagination is the common root for action and understanding.

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181 *EU*, 323.
182 *LKPP*, taken from Kant, *CJ*, §40.
By *sensus communis*, Arendt means an *a priori* representation of others’ possible judgment, which is prepared by the imagination. That operation of imagination is what Arendt calls, the “enlarged mentality.” Imagination “makes the others present and thus moves in a space that is potentially public, open to all sides.” The power of imagination makes present what is absent. By representing others, imagination creates a space in which things are seen from “all sides” in the *sensus communis*. It suggests that that space consists of plural perspectives.

The point here is not about merely representing others in imagination. Rather, this representation prepares the condition for appearance by opening up a space in which appearance is alone possible. As we have seen in the previous chapter, it is in this space that the beautiful is judged *qua appearance*, if it is suitable for us to share commonly. Yet, the standard for such a judgment is not given to us, but is only to be found in the act of reflection. Thus, we said earlier that “It is in *reflection* itself that a particular liking is judged as to whether it should be shared as something common *for* others, and at the same time such an act itself allows for a space to emerge in which that common thing can *appear*.” In other words, we have found that the very reflexivity in judgment of taste comes from intersubjectivity, or judging the beautiful as *appearance qua appearance*. It means that on the one hand, imagination opens up a space for possible appearance; yet, on the other hand, the act of reflection makes appearance possible. In other words, it is imagination that both “opens up a space” for the beautiful to appear and at the same time makes judgment possible *qua* appearance. That is what we suggested, that in reflection others are already represented, i.e., in reflection the plural perspectives are represented.

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183 Ibid.
184 Arendt, ibid., 43.
The reflexivity of judgment suggests the human plurality of the world. That is what we have observed in the structure of the relation between natality and plurality, action and the space of appearance, and action and understanding. That is, neither the appearance (of the beautiful) nor the space of appearance is actualized without the other.

In terms of our topic here, what does it mean? It means that what is a priori in the sensus communis is that imagination is the condition for appearance. In the sensus communis, others’ perspectives are potentially there, if it is the imagination that opens up the space of appearance. Based on our analyses, there is no way to determine which comes before the other. In other words, they are both conditions for appearance, each of which is the flip side of the same phenomenon. The reflexivity of judgment, which we have analyzed in our examination of judgment in LKPP consists of imagination, which suggests the same nature of dynamis, and which keeps the space of appearance open and makes people act together. Therefore, we can conclude that it is the imagination that bestows the potential characteristics to appearance and the space of appearance in LKPP. And this structure resonates with action and understanding, natality and plurality, and action and the space of appearance.

Based on our analyses above, we can now shed new light on the theoretical implications of Taminiaux’s suggestions. That is, Arendt’s tragic model of understanding is phronēsis, which is synonymous with judgment. We proposed examining Taminiaux’s claim, which is to see “tragic theôria” as phronēsis and judgment, by focusing on its potential characteristic. Unlike Villa’s criticism of identifying judgment with phronēsis on the one hand, and against Beiner’s criticism of Arendt’s treatment of judgment in LKPP, our analyses suggest that it is the imagination that bridges action and understanding for the following reasons. For one, they are two sides of the same phenomenon, i.e., appearance (of human action and event). For another,
Arendt’s treatment of Kant’s aesthetic judgment, particularly in her interpretation of *sensus communis*, is judging appearance qua appearance. Our series of analyses has made it clear that such a judgment is possible because it contains the conditions for appearance in itself. In other words, we have demonstrated that appearance’s potential characteristics and its actualization (qua appearance) are owed to the imagination. Villa insists that Arendt’s conception of judgment cannot be identified with *phronēsis*, since *phronēsis* requires the thick community sense. And Arendt’s judgment presupposes precisely where such community sense is lost, according to Villa. However, Taminiaux suggests with his notion of “tragic theôria” that what both judgment and *phronēsis* offer is a kind of understanding which is open to the potential nature of human action. Our analyses showed that the potential nature is common both action and understanding in Arendt, which in turn points out the peculiar account of actuality found in appearance. It is in this sense that we have to say that Villa’s insistence misses Arendt’s intention to suggest the relation between appearance and judgment. Similar point can be also made about Beiner’s interpretation of Arendt. Beiner insists that Arendt’s judgment in *LKPP* solely focuses on judgment as a mental activity and nothing to do with action or *vita active*. Such claim is derived from the potential dialogue with the other held in the mind in judgment. Yet, as our analyses demonstrated that the possible dialogue in judgment is linked with the potential characteristic of appearance, which we have recognized in both action and understanding. In other words, the potential nature shared in judgment, action, and understanding is derived from Arendt’s peculiar phenomenological account of appearance, and more fundamentally they are derived from Arendt’s theoretical account of imagination. In short, both Villa and Beiner’s interpretations indicate the absence of inquiry into the role that imagination plays in Arendt’s thought.
Arendt acknowledges in the introduction of *LM*: I that it is her encounter with Adolf Eichmann at his trial in Jerusalem that makes her take up the topic: “What is thinking?”186 Her encounter with Eichmann, which would fuel much controversy due to her use of the phrase “the banality of evil,” caused her to reflect upon the relation between “thinking” and “judgment.” Eichmann was not stupid but “thoughtless.”187 Arendt thinks that his thoughtlessness, or, the “absence of thinking,” enabled him to follow the order to transport Jews as efficiently as possible to the extermination camps without ever feeling guilty or responsible for their fate.188 Though Eichmann played a significant role in exterminating those Jews living under the Nazi regime, he himself lacked any personal motivation for acting thusly.189 The law presupposes that there is a motive for an act. The awareness of what a moral agent intends to commit—motivation—is the basis for determining the responsibility for what s/he has done. It is our presupposition that one will “stop and think,” then articulate her motivation before committing to perform a moral act.190 Eichmann, who exhibited his “thoughtlessness” throughout his trial testimony, suggested that he had neither any particular personal motivation to commit evil-doing nor any sense of personal responsibility for his act.

Based on her observation of Eichmann at his trial, Arendt wonders if there is a correlation between thinking and moral judgment:

Is evil-doing (the sins of omission, as well as the sins of commission) possible in default of not just ‘base motive’ (as the law calls them) but of any motives whatever, of any particular prompting of interest or volition? Is wickedness, however we may define it,
this being ‘determined to prove a villain,’ not necessary condition for evil-doing? Might the problem of good and evil, our faculty for telling right from wrong, be connected with our faculty of thought? — Could the activity of thinking as such, the habit of examining whatever happens to come to pass or to attract attention, regardless of results and specific content, could this activity be among the conditions that make men abstain from evil-doing or even actually ‘condition’ them against it? 191

At first glance, the question regarding the relation between thinking and judgment does not seem to play any decisive role in the development of Arendt’s actual analyses and discussions on “thinking” in the work. It seems that the first volume of LM (Thinking) denotes a twofold thesis: Arendt’s account of appearances independent of the metaphysical world order, or, the “primacy of appearance,” and her articulation of the origin of “metaphysical fallacies.”192 In fact, there is only one occasion where the relation between thinking and judgment is referred to explicitly throughout the entire volume of “thinking.” This is in chapter 18, where Arendt notes that “conscience” is the by-product of the harmonious thinking dialogue held in one’s mind, a dialogue between me and myself, with judgment as the manifestation of such thinking in the world of appearances.193

Nonetheless, it would be hasty to conclude by this fact that the question of the relation between thinking and judgment is a mere background for her twofold thesis. As we shall demonstrate in the following, it is quite the contrary. That is, Arendt’s account of appearance suggests her conscious and theoretical attempt to propose a new basis to link thinking and judgment based on her understanding of perception. It is at this venue that the question on the relation between intersubjectivity and imagination in Arendt finally becomes clear.

191 Ibid., 4-5.
192 Ibid., 25.
193 Ibid., 193.
Our previous analyses in Chapters 1 and 2 suggest that there are close affinities between many of Arendt’s key notions, such as “taste (judgment),” “intersubjectivity,” “appearances,” “the who of the actor,” “initium,” “plurality,” “(tragic) understanding.” We also have seen other indications that imagination lies beneath those notions, which creates the affinity between them. Nonetheless, we must admit that not only does Arendt’s understanding of “intersubjectivity” still remain obscure, but also that our analyses and discussions so far only indicate the possible existence of theoretical understanding of imagination in Arendt up until now. Is there really such a theoretical understanding of imagination in Arendt?

In order to answer this question, we propose a series of close analyses and examinations of what Arendt calls the “dismantling of metaphysics,” the main thesis of LM: I. The objective of Chapters 3 and 4 is twofold. First, we will outline Arendt’s analyses of the “metaphysical fallacy,” whose origin she finds in a peculiar understanding of thinking activity by professional thinkers, as being her critical response to Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant’s transcendent imagination. Second, it is in her criticism of Heidegger that she also lays out her own interpretation of Kant’s transcendent imagination that gives an account of her notion of appearance based on intersubjectivity.

However, since none of these points are presented explicitly by Arendt, we need to present our analyses and discussions in two steps through Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. To state briefly, each chapter shall address the following. Chapter 3 shall focus on to examine Arendt’s account of “appearances,” and its relation to her deconstruction of metaphysics, or, the “dismantling of metaphysics.” The purpose of our analyses in this chapter is to make manifest that Arendt’s intention in this “dismantling” is to point out the fallacy of interpreting the thinking ego as the self. According to Arendt, such an understanding of the self deprives us of the
objective reality of both human existence and of the object. Our aim is to demonstrate how Arendt analyzes the fallacy by focusing on the thinking ego, and to analyze how her account of the self—the individuation of the who of the actor in plurality as we have seen in Chapter 2—and her account of appearances are presented as her counter argument. Through our analyses in Chapter 3, we suggest that Arendt’s “dismantling of metaphysics” is her attempt to lay the ground for a theory of perception that provides the unity between subject and object, or, the perceiving and the perceived.

Based on the analyses and discussions in Chapter 3, in Chapter 4 I suggest a possible way of reconstructing Arendt’s account of “appearances.” This falls in line with how her theory of perception was established on her interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination as reproductive imagination. I shall demonstrated this possible way by suggesting a parallelism between Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant and Arendt’s accounts of the self, appearances, and related notions. That is to say, I will show how Arendt’s accounts of the self, appearances, and related notions such as “freedom,” “action,” understanding,” “space of appearances,” (aesthetic) “feeling,” and “originality,” with which we have dealt in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, form parallelisms that run along but also against Heidegger’s interpretations. In doing so, I will suggest how such parallelisms indicate how Arendt’s account of “appearances” offers her own interpretation of transcendental imagination as reproductive imagination, shaped as her critical response to Heidegger.
Chapter 3: Appearance and Human Existence

There is a twofold thesis in LM, which is expressed explicitly as follows: first, Arendt claims the “absolute primacy of the world of appearances” over and against the traditional metaphysical two-worlds theory, which views appearance as the mere semblance of Being; she calls the latter the “metaphysical fallacy.” In contrast, Arendt proclaims that “Being and Appearing coincide.” Second, Arendt posits that the origin of this “metaphysical fallacy” by and large arises when philosophers demand the “kind of results and apply the kind of criteria for certainty and evidence that are the results and the criteria of cognition” to reason. It means that the origin of “metaphysical fallacy” is the interpretation of thinking activity through the application to it of the model of perception. Or more precisely, those who commit a “metaphysical fallacy” tend to forget that thinking is, really, “after-thought,” arising once perception ceases. Instead, they often treat thinking and knowing (perception) as being the same, which leads to the giving of a superior ontological status to the idea (the thought object) as the substratum of appearance. As a result, the dichotomy of Being and being is introduced. Arendt points out that this is due to the distinction between reason (Vernunft) and intellect (Verstand) introduced by Kant, which made a decisive impact on subsequent philosophy, particularly on German Idealism. In short, Arendt notes the origin of the “metaphysical fallacy” in the speculative thinking by professional thinkers who interpret the experience of the thinking ego on the cognitive model and apply it to reason.

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194 LM: I., 12.
195 Ibid., 19.
196 Ibid., 15.
197 We have to note that it is Kant who introduced the distinction between reason and intellect and “made room for thought.” According to Arendt, as a result, he opens the door for the “metaphysical fallacy.” At first glance, Arendt’s criticism for “metaphysical fallacy” seems to be addressed to Kant. However, as we shall demonstrate in
Let us start with the first point. Arendt posits the absolute primacy of the world of appearances over and against metaphysical world order where appearance is taken as mere semblance of Being. Arendt objects the idea of Being as the substratum of appearance but rather insists that in the world of appearance “Being and Appearing coincide.”\(^{198}\) However, if we pay attention closely, we notice the issue that Arendt raises in the text is much more complicated and goes deeper. The issue at stake is Arendt’s account of the relation between appearance and human existence. To make this point clear, first we need to give close attention to the relation between appearance and plurality.

In this world which we enter, appearing from a nowhere, and from which we disappear into a nowhere, Being and Appearing coincide.—Nothing and nobody exists in this world whose very being does not presupposes a spectator. In other words, nothing \textit{that is}, insofar as it appears, \textit{exists} in the singular; everything \textit{that is} is meant to be perceived by somebody. Not Man but men inhabit this planet. \textit{Plurality is the law of the earth}.\(^{199}\)

To appear presupposes that there is at least a spectator to perceive her appearing.\(^{200}\) Without this spectator, there is no appearance. When someone appears, this implies that her appearing is to appear to the eyes of another. To be, particularly for us, as human beings in our context, is same as to appear, and to appear is to exist. And since every appearance already presupposes a spectator, human existence is always embedded in plurality. It is in this sense that “plurality is the law of the earth,” for it is the very condition of appearance. And it is in her proclamation, “Being and Appearing coincide,” that we can first detect that her explicit twofold thesis embraces her implicit thesis in the text, i.e., the issue of human existence. If “Being and

\(^{198}\) Ibid., 19.

\(^{199}\) Ibid., 19. Emphasis added.

\(^{200}\) Though here Arendt says “a spectator” in the third line in the quotation, we should remember that the spectator is plural for Arendt. See ibid., 96.
Appearing coincide” in the world of appearance and “to appear” means “to exist” for us as she claims, the objective reality of our perception rests in human plurality. In other words, Arendt proposes that perception rests in intersubjectivity in which Being and appearing coincide, since we are not just in the world but of the world and as such we are both subjects and objects—“perceiving and being perceived”—at the same time.\(^2\) It is in this relation between perception and human existence that we can point out that not only Arendt’s account of appearance is perception, but such account suggests her theoretical understanding of perception is fundamentally intersubjective.

In fact, our suggestion seems to be supported when Arendt refers to Husserl’s concept of intentionality for explaining her account of appearance.

Husserl’s basic and greatest discovery takes up in exhaustive detail the intentionality of all acts of consciousness, that is the fact that no subjective act is ever without an object. Objectivity is built into the very subjectivity of consciousness by virtue of intentionality. Conversely and with the same justness, one may speak of the intentionality of appearances and their built-in subjectivity. All objects because they appear indicate a subject, and, just as every subjective act has its intentional object, so every appearing object has its intentional subject.—Whatever appears is meant for a perceiver, a potential subject no less inherent in all objectivity than a potential object is inherent in the subjectivity of every intentional act.—[O]ur certainty that what we perceive has an existence independent of the act of perceiving, depends entirely on the object’s also appearing as such to others and being acknowledged by them. Without this tacit acknowledgment by others we would not even be able to put faith in the way we appear to ourselves.\(^3\)

Arendt agrees with Husserl that “objectivity is built into the very subjectivity of consciousness by virtue of intentionality.” So, what appears indicates a perceiving subject, which means that every appearing object has its intentional subject and every intending subject has intended object. In other words, in the phenomenon of appearance, the fact that something appears means that, in its appearance, both a “potential subject” and a “potential object” are

\(^2\) Ibid., 20, emphasis added.
\(^3\) Ibid., 46, emphasis added.
inherent. However, the certainty of the perceived object, viz., its existence, depends on the acknowledgement of others. That is, the very object I perceive is also perceived by them.

Arendt’s contention is to point out that the certainty of existence—both of subject and object, cannot be derived from the intentionality of the act of consciousness as long as the relation between *intentio* and *intentum* is separated from acknowledgement of others, since the relation between the two in the act of consciousness, which is put in a bracket, is not a cognitive activity but is derived from a thinking reflection about the cognitive activity. For that reason, her objection goes beyond Husserl and is extended to Descartes.

“[I]t never occurred to him [Descartes] that no *cogitatio* and no *cogito me cogitare*, no consciousness of an acting self that had suspended all faith in the reality of its intentional objects, would ever have been able to convince him of his own reality had he actually been born in a desert, without a body and its senses to perceive ‘material’ things and without fellow-creatures to assure him that what he perceived was perceived by them too.”

My thinking may be real and so the I as thinking ego in the I-think is presupposed in that activity, yet thought can “neither prove nor disprove it.” In other words, in the solipsistic thinking certainty of thinking cannot provide the certainty of existence.

Against the philosophical view to take certainty of thinking as that of existence, which Arendt posits as a fallacy, she claims that the reality of the world of appearances consists of the mode of the “it-seems-to-me,” or, *dokei moi.* Her explanation is something with which we are already familiar. That “seeming” reflects the fact that everyone sees things from different places

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203 Ibid., 48.
204 *LM*: I, 21.
where they stand, just like different spectators see the actor on the stage from different seats.\textsuperscript{205} She writes: “Seeming corresponds to the fact that every appearance, its identity notwithstanding, is perceived by a plurality of spectators.”\textsuperscript{206} Because each one of us dwells in a particular place in the world, each perspective alone merely expresses “it-seems-to-me.” The objectivity of things that I see from my perspective gains its objectivity when others acknowledge by responding, “Yes, it-seems-to-me too.” Naturally, then, the more people who acknowledge to me what I see, the more reality my perception gains. Our sense of reality depends on the plurality of perspectives whose other name is “the world of appearances. “The subjectivity of the it-seems-to-me is remedies by the fact that the same object also appears to others thought its mode of appearance may be different.”\textsuperscript{207}

However, if that is all there is about Arendt’s account of appearance (the intentionality of appearances), it is insufficient to prove that that this account is significantly different from Husserl’s intentionality, which is derived from a single consciousness. The decisive point is that as much as the individual perspective depends on others’ acknowledgements, these acknowledgements require some kind of communication and agreement. Despite the fact that no one sees the object precisely from the same perspective, there must be something which makes all those different perspectives unified in order for us to accept others’ acknowledgments. Arendt points out that what guarantees reality in the world of appearances is a threefold commonness: First, the five senses. Though they are utterly different from each other, they have the same object in common. Second, the common context shared by the same species. It is the

\textsuperscript{205} “To appear always means to seem to others, and this seeming varies according to the standpoint and the perspective the spectators.” Ibid.
\textsuperscript{206} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{207} Ibid., 50.
context that “endows every single object with its particular meaning.”

Third, agreement among members of the same species. Though the object is seen from utterly different perspectives, they agree on the identity of the object. Arendt said that “out of this threefold commonness arises the sensation of reality.” The “sensation” is common sense or, sensus communis which here Arendt also calls a kind of the “sixth sense,” for it is this sense that keeps the five senses together and makes us fit to the common world and guarantees objective reality of things which we encounter in the world. It is the world as “context,” which lies “inter-” subject allowing the same object to appear to others who see the object from different perspectives. Arendt proclaims that it is sensus communis that provides “feeling of realness,” viz., objective reality.

It is natural to notice that Arendt’s account of “sensation” or sensus communis seems to be very similar to the aesthetic feeling as sensation which we analyzed in LKPP in Chapter 1. The judgment of taste is to judge not an object but sensation brought by representation, and such sensation is what Arendt articulates in the notion of sensus communis: an a priori representation of others’ possible judgment. It is in the representation that sensing one’s self and others’ perspectives somehow coincide. We concluded that such coincidence is derived from the reflexivity of judgment. If “sensation” in LM: I were same as what we have seen in LKPP, it would suggest that by aesthetic judgment Arendt is seeking her theory of perception in her account of appearances, which has fundamentally intersubjective character. We can suggest such possibility from the fact how Arendt tries to explain her notion of appearances with Husserlian notion of intentionality. However, we have to withhold further examination till next

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208 Ibid., 50.
209 Ibid.
210 Ibid.
211 Ibid.
212 Ibid., 52. Arendt writes that this feeling is the “sheer thereness,” the context of which we are a part.
chapter, since our objective in this chapter is to analyze what Arendt intends to show by pointing out the “metaphysical fallacy.”

Unlike this “common sense,” thinking has a natural tendency to doubt whatever it gets hold of, and so does not possess the natural “matter-of-fact relation to reality.” Because of this, Arendt points out, Descartes reflects on the meaning of certain scientific discoveries, which destroys his common-sense trust in reality. He tries to overcome his doubt “by insisting on withdrawing from the world altogether, eliminating every worldly reality from this thoughts and concentrating only on the thinking activity itself.” What Descartes attempts, as does Husserl with his epoché, is a withdrawal from the world of appearances; yet this withdrawal never lasts forever but is only temporary. The experience of this withdrawal is common both among professional thinkers and laypeople alike, though it happens more often to the former when the “thinking ego asserts itself temporarily” or when we reflect on something. In other words, the state of the mind of those who engage in thinking activity is what we call absent-mindedness. Even though they lose the “feeling of realness” while they are thinking, eventually the absent-minded will return from their withdrawal to the common world. But it is when professional thinkers mistake the certainty of thinking as that of existence as we saw in the case of Descartes for instance, then the danger of “metaphysical fallacy” emerges particularly when thinkers start interpreting thinking activity as if it is cognitive activity.

It is on this point that her analyses of what she calls the “metaphysical fallacies” play a particularly important role. Arendt finds that the liberation of reason from cognition is the origin

\[213\] Ibid.
\[214\] Ibid.
\[215\] Ibid., 53.
\[216\] Ibid.
of metaphysical fallacies. More specifically, Arendt considers that the metaphysical fallacies are derived from those professional thinkers’ interpretation of reason from the viewpoint of the experience of the thinking ego. That is, those fallacies arise through applying the “kind of criteria and certainty and evidence that are results and the criteria of cognition” to the activity of reason, viz., thinking. This leads us to examine the second point of Arendt’s twofold thesis in *LM*: I.

Let us follow Arendt’s discussion of the difference between reason (*Vernunft*) and intellect (*Verstand*) introduced by Kant. Arendt claims that these two concepts refer to “altogether different mental activities.” While reason is the activity of thinking, intellect is that of knowing. The former is concerned with meaning, whereas the latter is concerned with cognition. Kant himself thinks that, while we cannot know of God, freedom and immortality, we also cannot help thinking about them, and thus he “justified reason’s need to think beyond the limits of what can be known.” Though Kant thinks that in doing so he makes room for faith, Arendt points out what he does is only to separate knowledge from thinking and thus to make room for thought instead. Arendt’s core claim is that truth and meaning are not the same and neither are their designated mental activities. The metaphysical fallacy arises when professional thinkers who follow Kant want to find the basis of certainty in the activity of thinking itself. The basic fallacy, taking precedence over all specific metaphysical fallacies, is to interpret meaning on the model of truth.

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217 Ibid., 15.
218 Ibid., 14.
219 Ibid.
220 Ibid.
221 Ibid.
222 Ibid. Arendt continues to point out that that distinction has an “extraordinary liberating effect on German philosophy, touching off the rise of German idealism” which makes room for “speculative thought.” For our
According to Arendt, “[c]ognition, whose highest criterion is truth, derives that criterion from the world of appearances in which we take our bearings through sense perceptions, whose testimony is self-evident,” whereas that is not the case for meaning and its faculty, viz., reason.\textsuperscript{223} Reason is unconcerned about the existence of the object, for object is always taken for granted. Rather, it is concerned with what it means for that object to be.\textsuperscript{224} The desire to know by intellect is always answerable by “common-sense experience and common-sense reasoning”; while these may make errors, like perception, it can be corrected for the same reason. However, the desire for the “quest for meaning,” is endless, for the question raised by reason is unanswerable. To illustrate her point, Arendt quotes a verse from W.H. Auden:

Unpredictably, decades ago, You arrived  
Among that unending cascade of creatures spewed from Nature’s maw.  
A random event, says Science.  
Random my bottom! A true miracle, say I,  
For who is not certain that he was meant to be?\textsuperscript{225}

The birth of someone is just a random event in nature, as seen from the viewpoint of science. Yet, it is felt by that person that his existence is real and he was “meant to be.” However, Arendt comments that that “being ‘meant to be’ is not a truth” but “a highly meaningful proposition.”\textsuperscript{226} There is no way to know if he was “meant to be,” and thus to ask this question is not the role of intellect but that of the reason of what it means for him to be. In asking and answering that question, the person would think about the meaning of his life either for himself or for nature, or for both. What is clear regardless is that there is no clear and fixed answer to that question. Arendt says, “To expect truth to come from thinking signifies that we mistake the need to think

\textsuperscript{223} Ibid. 57, emphasis added.  
\textsuperscript{224} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{226} Ibid., 61.
with the urge to know.”227 Even though “the proposition that everybody who is ‘was meant to be’ can easily refuted,” the reason why the certainty of the I “was meant to be” survives such refutation is that the “feeling of certainty” that the I-am is “inherent in every thinking reflection,” according to Arendt.228 On the contrary, from the viewpoint of common sense and what she calls “common-sense reasoning,” the quest for meaning is “meaningless,” because “it is the six sense’s function to fit us into the world of appearances and make us at home in the world given by our five senses; there we are and no questions asked.”229 It is another way to describe that we human beings are beings of the world of appearances in which our existence is determined. In other words, the “quest for meaning” is said to be “meaningless” raised by reason, for human existence means that we are always already being of a part of the meaningful context. The context is already given thereby or, our existence is already contextualized. If the “quest for meaning” is “meaningful,” that is so only when the “meaning” is sought within that context, not apart from it. But that is not how the “quest of meaning” is pursued by the philosophers, and that is precisely what Arendt is trying to point out here. “Thinking can and must be employed in the attempt to know, but in the exercise of this function it is never itself; it is but the handmaiden of an altogether different enterprise.”230 That “all together different enterprise” is metaphysics.

Truth belongs to intellect and thus cognitive activity, whereas meaning belongs to reason and thinking activity. Arendt emphasizes repeatedly that truth and meaning are not the same.231 However it does not mean that Arendt denies the close affinity between reason and intellect. Quite the contrary: she presumes that it is reason’s appetite for meaning and its desire to ask

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227 Ibid., emphasis added.
228 Ibid., emphasis added.
229 Ibid., 59.
230 Ibid., 61.
231 Or, we should say that the distinction between truth and meaning is derived from the distinction between reason and intellect, from Arendt’s point of view. For Arendt, truth is perceptual truth and the meaning of such truth is derived from reflecting on what happened, i.e., from the historical understanding.
The problem arises due to the keen affinity between the two different mental capacities, and the philosophers’ tendency to apply the criterion of truth to their own rather extraordinary business, i.e., thinking activity. And it is in this sense that Kant’ is no exception. \(^{234}\) In spite of that his “famous distinction between \textit{Vernunft} and \textit{Verstand}, between a faculty of speculative thought and the ability to know arising out of sense experience,” he could not part altogether with the conviction that the final aim of thinking, as of knowledge, is truth and cognition.\(^{235}\)

Let us summarize Arendt’s analysis of the origin of the “metaphysical fallacy” based on the distinction between reason (thinking) and intellect (knowing) here. Arendt’s claim is that truth, which is the object of knowing, belongs to the world of appearances, for intellect aims at cognition, which enables us to apprehend perception. And since perception is fundamentally based on intersubjectivity as we have seen so far, the “feeling of realness” or, “certainty” is derived from the world of appearances. Reason, in contrast, is unconcerned with the certainty of the existence of the perceived object, which is taken for granted, desiring instead to think “what it [the existence of the object] means for it to be,” viz., the meaning of being. Arendt criticizes such questioning as “meaningless,” since the being, whose meaning is asked, is torn out from its context. In other words, the quest for the meaning of Being arising out of the thinking activity is rendered void, given its de-contextualized approach toward being. Her critique is understandable, given her thesis that “Being and Appearing” coincide in the world of appearances. Given that “to be” is synonymous with “to appear” and since existence is determined by appearance, the criterion of truth, viz., the “feeling of realness,” is different from the “feeling of certainty”

\(^{232}\) Ibid., 62.
\(^{233}\) Ibid., emphasis added.
\(^{234}\) As we mentioned in n. 195 above, the real target of Arendt’s criticism on this matter is Heidegger, not Kant.
\(^{235}\) Ibid., 62-63. Arendt points out his use of \textit{Vernunftkenntnis}, “knowledge arising out of pure reason” is a contradiction in terms for him.
derived from thinking. The “feeling of certainty,” which is thought to be experienced in thinking reflection as that I-am is not the same as the “feeling of realness” experienced in perception occurred in the world of appearances. Therefore, Arendt’s remarks on the origin of the “metaphysical fallacy” is twofold: the “feeling of certainty” experienced in the thinking activity as the I-am, and the “quest for meaning” arising from that thinking activity.

What we can observe in those remarks above is that they, too, seem to suggest the issue of human existence. The “feeling of certainty” of the I-am experienced in thinking raises the question of the I as existence, as contrasted with the existence determined in appearances. Moreover, the quest for meaning also sheds light on the meaning of Being with respect to the relation between a being and the world of appearances as the intersubjective context. Our inquiry is to determine how these remarks would aid the re-establishing if unity between thinking and knowing in appearance. The Origin of the “metaphysical fallacy” and its relation to a peculiar account of human existence derived from thinking activity will become clearer when we look into two correlated sections in LM: I.6, “The thinking ego and the self: Kant,” and LM: I 18, “The two-in-one” where Arendt deals with the nature of the “thinking dialogue” taking in the consciousness.

As the title of the section suggests, the overview of LM: I. 6 is to examine the relationship between the thinking ego and the self, which Arendt finds in Kant’s “I think.” At first glance, Arendt’s seeming contention is that Kant’s distinction between noumena and phenomena is derived from taking the thinking ego (the I of the I-think) as the “thing in itself,” which is ultimately identified with the self. Arendt denounces this account of the self as a “fallacy.”236 When we examine Arendt’s argument closely, however, we notice that she does not merely

236 Ibid., 45.
intend to denounce the two-worlds theory based on Kant’s notion of the “thing in itself” and his famous noumena/phenomena distinction. Rather, we argue that, by claiming that the “thinking ego is not the self,” she is preparing to lay the foundation for her theory of perception upon which she will erect her account of human existence. In other words, what we are about to propose in the following paragraphs is the need to read the chapters 6 and 18 of LM as a constitutive pair that lays the groundwork for her theory of perception.

Arendt launches this section by pointing out the role that Kant’s notion of the “thing in itself” (transcendental object) plays in his noumena/phenomena distinction. That is, his notion of “thing in itself” allows him to treat appearance as “mere representation.”\(^{237}\) What is unclear for us at this point is her intention to indicate that his distinction “has been explained on the grounds of the theological tradition”—God is something who is “in itself” and does not appear, yet causes everything to exist. Arendt points out that that explanation is insufficient to explain Kant’s notion of the “thing in itself.”\(^{238}\) Her point is that God is not an object of our knowledge, but He is still thinkable as an “Idea of reason,” and for that reason God is “for us.”\(^{239}\) For now, we have to pass on to other matters, but we will save this observation for later.

Let us start with the text of LM that begins toward the end of page 42 and extends to the beginning of the following page. Here, Arendt posits that “thinking is not the self,” which is her main contention in this chapter.\(^{240}\) Arendt says,

> If I reflect on the relation of me to myself obtaining in the thinking activity, it may well seem as though my thought were ‘mere representations’ or manifestations of an ego that

\(^{237}\) Ibid., 41.
\(^{238}\) Ibid., 40.
\(^{239}\) Ibid., 40-41.
\(^{240}\) Ibid., 42-43, emphasis added.
itself remains forever concealed, for thoughts of course are never anything like properties that can be predicated of a self or a person. According to Arendt, the “thinking ego is not the self,” for neither it appears to others nor to itself as the self of self-awareness.” And yet the thinking ego is “not nothing.” The thinking ego as “not nothing” causes a “metaphysical fallacy,” for it plays a role as “thing in itself” upon which appearance is grounded and makes appearance as “mere representation.”

In short, Arendt claims that the thinking ego cannot be the self but is a “sheer activity” that lacks “a life” story, unlike the self. Her claim is derived from her interpretation that “[t]he thinking ego is indeed Kant’s ‘thing in itself.’” Yet, what she means by the “thinking ego” is at this point unclear, along with why it cannot be claimed to be the “self.” Ultimately, what Arendt’s point on making this claim is unclear.

In any event, let us proceed to see on page 43.

The inner sense that might let us get hold of the thinking activity in some sort of inner intuition has nothing to hold on to, according to Kant, because its manifestations are utterly unlike ‘the appearance confronting external sense [which finds] something still and remaining…while time, the only form of inner intuition, has nothing permanent.’ Hence, ‘I am conscious of myself, not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am. This representation is a thought, not an intuition.’ And he adds in a footnote; ‘the ‘I think’ expresses the act of determining my existence. Existence is already given thereby, but the mode in which I am…is not thereby given.’

Arendt’s remarks are threefold in this section. One: though the inner sense might let us get hold of the thinking activity, the inner intuition itself does not have anything to get hold of. Two: the “I” of my consciousness, i.e., “that I am,” is a “representation” of a “thought,” not an intuition. Three: though the “I think” is said to express “the act of determining my existence,”

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241 Ibid.
242 Ibid., 42-43.
243 Ibid., 42-43.
244 Ibid., 41.
245 Ibid., 43.
246 Ibid., emphasis added.
that “existence,” i.e., the “I” of the “I think,” the mode how “I am” is not given in that act. Arendt seems to think that to mention these remarks is sufficient proof for her claims: namely, that the “thinking ego is not the self” (to take that ego as the self is a metaphysical fallacy) and that “the thinking ego is Kant’s ‘thing in itself,’” both of which are seen as “metaphysical fallacies.” In order to clarify her claims and intentions we require much closer examination.

There are two clues to clarifying Arendt’s claims that the “thinking ego is not the self” and “thinking ego is Kant’s thing in itself.” First, by criticizing Kant’s notion of “thing in itself,” Arendt points out that the notion not only reduces appearance to mere representation, but that it also contradicts his own thesis in the first Critique: “We assert that the conditions of the possibility of experience in general are likewise conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience, and that for this reason they have objective validity in a synthetic a priori judgment.”

Second, Arendt claims that his notion of “thing in itself” is derived from the reflection on one’s thinking activity, i.e., the “not-at-all ordinary experience of the thinking ego.” It is on these two points that Arendt claims that taking the thinking ego as the self is a “metaphysical fallacy” or “semblance of reason” must be clarified.

Now, Kant’s notion of the “I think” is another name for judgment, i.e., the synthesis of intuition and understanding. As Arendt points out, judgment as the act of thought is said to express the “act of determining my existence” according to Kant. However, Arendt also suggests that the “I” of that “I think,” viz., “my existence,” which lies in my consciousness as “myself” is not an intuition but a representation of thought. When Arendt denounces that the “thinking ego is not the self,” she casts doubt on identifying the “I” of the “I think” as my

247 Ibid., 41.
248 Ibid., 42.
249 Ibid., 44.
“existence.” Our task is thus to analyze why Arendt claims that “existence” cannot be conceived as the “self,” and what she intends to establish by claiming this.

Kant’s synthetic a priori judgment can claim its objective validity because in it “the conditions of the possibility of experience in general” and “the conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience” are unified; the conditions that make it possible for the object to appear. Though it is the pure concepts (categories) that combine the given manifold in judgment that makes the object presentable to us, without sensibility the pure concept is empty. We cannot cognize anything by pure concepts alone. Our knowledge relies on sensible intuition. In other words, in synthetic a priori judgment, the manifold given in intuition is combined with the concept (category), so that the apprehension of the representation of the object is possible.

Now, though the “I think” forms the synthetic unity between the concept and intuition, the “I think” itself is a representation of the transcendental unity of apperception, or, self-consciousness.\(^{251}\) It is that self-consciousness—the unity of the “I”—that makes the unity of the manifold given in intuition prior to its combination with thought.

The crucial point in all of this is that Kant considers the synthetic unity of the manifold of intuitions to be the “basis of the identity itself of apperception.”\(^{252}\) This means that, without a synthesis of the manifold given in intuition, no judgment is possible, and since the synthesis of manifold given in intuition cannot be thought without one identical consciousness, the “I” as the unity, which makes up such consciousness, must “exist,” if thinking takes place. In order for me to judge, I have to have a synthesis of the manifold given in intuition, which is combined with the concept. Since such synthesis necessarily indicates one single consciousness, the representation of the manifold given is mine. Thus Kant posits, “I am, then conscious of the self

\(^{251}\) CPR, B 132.
\(^{252}\) Ibid., B 134.
as identical, as regards the manifold of the presentations given to me in an intuition, because I call them one and all my (re)presentations that make up one (re)presentation.” Consequently, I can combine the given manifold with a concept. That is why Kant says that the “I think” must be “capable of accompanying all my (re)presentations.” Thus, when the “I think” is said to be a representation, which is synonymous with an act of spontaneity, it is in the self-consciousness that the “I” of the “I think” lies. And it is solely on this point, from which her contention that the “I” cannot be identified with the “self” but should be regarded as “thing in itself,” is derived. Thus, we have to look into the nature of that “I” as a thought representation next.

Kant says about the “I” of the “I think” as following:

[T]he proposition I think precedes the experience that is to determine the object of perception through the category in regard to time; and the existence is here not yet a category. The category of existence has reference not to an indeterminate given object, but only to an object of which one has a concept and concerning which one wants to know whether or not it is posited also outside of this concept. An indeterminate perception here signifies only something real that has been given—and given only for thought as such, and hence not as appearance nor as thing in itself (noumenon) but as something that in fact exists and is marked as such in the proposition I think. For we must note that, when I called the proposition I think and empirical proposition, I did not mean that the I in this proposition is an empirical (re)presentation. Rather, this (re)presentation is purely intellectual, because it belongs to thought as such.

As we have seen that the “I think” as the act of spontaneity, which is the judgment makes the synthesis between sensibility and the concept possible, it requires the manifold given in intuition for its act. That is why Kant says that the “I think” is an “empirical proposition.” However, as we also have seen, the “I think,” is impossible without the unity of apperception within which the one and the same “I” lies. Though the proposition “I think” is an empirical one, the “I” of the “I think” itself is not an empirical representation but “purely intellectual”

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253 Ibid., B 135, emphasis added.
254 Ibid., B 132.
255 Kant, CPR, B 423, emphasis added.
representation.\textsuperscript{256} It means that the “I” cannot be thought through the “category of existence,” for the “category of existence” is not a real predicate but the “copula of a judgment.”\textsuperscript{257} By this concept “nothing further can be added” but it is only referring to the subject.\textsuperscript{258} In other words, the subject must be determined, if something is judged through the “category of existence.” It is used for a judgment when we have a “determinate concept and wish to determine whether there is an actual object answering to that concept.”\textsuperscript{259} But the “I” here is an “indeterminate given object” or, an “indeterminate perception.” Furthermore, to think through categories means that the (thinking) subject—the “I” of the “I think”—must also be regarded as the object of categories. However, the “I think” as judgment can use categories only the manifold is given in sensible intuition, and such judgment is possible only where apperception—self-consciousness—unifies the “I” as the same one thinking subject. This means that the “I” is already presupposed in the “I think” as judgment. In other words, without such presupposition of the existence of the thinking subject, the “I think” cannot function, though it is impossible to think the “existence” of the “I” of the “I think” through categories. It means that the “I” of the “I think,” this “existence” never appears. More precisely, it can be thought but cannot be known.

Henry Allison comments on the “I” of the “I think” which echoes with Arendt’s claim. His point is that since the “I” cannot be thought through the “category of existence,” it is not able to be assigned to an individual thinker, and thus the “I think” cannot “issue in a genuine existential judgment.”\textsuperscript{260} The “I” of the “I think” never appears and remains anonymous, cannot be an “individual thinker,” and thus it is “without a life story” as Arendt points out. The “I” is

\textsuperscript{256} Or as Arendt quotes from \textit{CPR}, B 157, “I am conscious of myself, not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am. This representation is a thought, not an intuition.” See \textit{LM}: I, 43.
\textsuperscript{257} Ibid., B 598.
\textsuperscript{258} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{259} Henry E. Allison, \textit{Kant’s Transcendental Idealism} (Yale University Press, 1983), 281.
\textsuperscript{260} Ibid.
nobody, yet it is “not nothing.” The very anonymity of the thinking subject is what Arendt calls the “thinking ego.”

Based on our analysis on the “I” of the “I think,” we need to turn now to our second question. That is, we answer of the question of determining what Arendt is trying to establish in claiming that “the thinking ego (existence) is not the self.” From our analyses so far, what remains is an “indeterminate perception,” which is “something real—given only for thought as such” or, what Arendt calls “not nothing.”

Allison’s interpretation of the thinking ego as the “indeterminate perception” provides us a helpful insight as to what Arendt is trying to articulate. He says that that “something real,” “something in general x”—the “indeterminate perception”—is the “transcendental subject of the thought.”

He suggests two reasons why the “indeterminate perception” as the thinking subject can be understood as the “transcendental subject. The first point is one that we have already discussed. That is, as the subject of apperception it cannot grasp itself as an object, for such attempt negates its character as a subject. It is his second remark that is helpful for our inquiry. He notes that “[A]s that through which alone there can be objects (whether of mere thought of experience), it must be thought as already on the scene, doing the conceptualizing.”

Allison’s remarks capture the nature of the “I” in the “I think” as the nameless or anonymous knowing subject. It cannot be known as the object of its own activity, yet it is already there in the thinking activity “doing the conceptualizing” while without that conceptualizing activity it cannot be aware of itself. He suggests Wittgenstein’s analogy to explain that relation between the thinking ego and its activity: “[J]ust as the eye cannot see itself because it is not part of its own visible field, so the subject of apperception cannot think itself as object because it is not itself part of its

261 Ibid., 292.
262 Ibid.
‘conceptual field.’\textsuperscript{263} The “I” of the “I think” taken as the “self” though it is actually the thinking ego, is the very activity of “conceptualizing.” Without the eye there is no “field of vision” in which the objects appear, but it is the act of seeing by the eye that forms that field. Likewise, the thinking ego as the activity of conceptualizing forms the field of conceptualization. It is in this sense that Arendt is right to suggest that the thinking ego is Kant’s “thing in itself,” for through the viewpoint of that ego, thought does indeed look as if it were “mere representation” of the thinking ego, viz., the concept as the product of the activity of conceptualizing. However, precisely because of that, the “thing in itself” is said to be one of the “metaphysical fallacies” according to Arendt, for the thinking ego is “sheer activity” and not “self.”\textsuperscript{264} Or, to take the thinking ego as the “self” is a “semblance of reason.”\textsuperscript{265}

It is in this respect that Arendt’s claim, that Kant’s distinction between \textit{Vernunft} (reason) and \textit{Verstand} (intellect) makes room not for faith but for thought, takes shape in the introduction of \textit{LM: I}.\textsuperscript{266} We need to recall that Arendt indicated that the origin of the “metaphysical fallacies” is derived from equating the “meaning,” which is the quest of reason, with the model of “truth,” bequest of intellect.\textsuperscript{267} Arendt’s claim there was that Kant and his successors paid no attention to “thinking as an activity and even less to the experiences of thinking ego.”\textsuperscript{268} Arendt’s claim in this chapter, the “thinking ego is not the self,” then, is her actual demonstration of what she has claimed at the very beginning of the same text. That is, the “metaphysical fallacy” arises when philosophers demand the kind of certainty that we experience in our cognition from reason and the activity of thinking. Arendt reveals why the “certainty”

\textsuperscript{263} Ibid., 292-293. 
\textsuperscript{264} Ibid., 44.  
\textsuperscript{265} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{266} \textit{LM: I}, 14. 
\textsuperscript{267} Ibid.,15. 
\textsuperscript{268} Ibid.
experienced in thinking activity is different of that of cognition. Since the “I” itself is not an object of (determinative) judgment, the certainty of my existence is not derived from perception but from thinking activity. To put it more strongly, what Arendt is doing here is to cast doubt on the basis of the validity derived from the certainty experienced by the thinking ego, or, “existence” as “purely intellectual representation.”

Now let us recall the conditions that make possible the claim of the objective validity of Kant’s synthetic a priori judgment. The objective validity of the synthetic a priori judgment can be claimed due to the conformity between the “conditions of the possibility of experience in general” and the “conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience” according to Kant. The conformity of those conditions is particularly important in understanding Arendt’s contention here, for her contention challenges the conditions regarding to the nature of the “I.” That is, since the objective validity of the synthetic a priori judgment is derived from the conformity between the “conditions of the possibility of experience in general” and the “conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience” for Kant, and since that synthesis is possible due to the unity of the “I” (one self-consciousness), the judgment, which confirms the existence of the apprehended (or perceived) object, also must refer back to the “existence” of the judging agent, viz., the thinking ego. Needless to say, the crucial point is that the conditions, which make it possible for us to cognize, are also the conditions that make the object appear to us. It means that the way we know of the existence of the object prescribes how things are to be. In other words, if our way of cognizing the object allows us to know that the object exists, the

269 Ibid., B.197.
270 “Understanding—speaking generally—is the power of cognitions. Cognitions consist in determinate reference of given (re)presentations to an object. And an object is that in whose concept the manifold of a given intuition is united. But all unification of (re)presentations requires that there be unity of consciousness in the synthesis of them. Consequently the reference of (re)presentations to an object consists solely in this unity of consciousness, and hence so does their objective validity and consequently their becoming cognitions. On this unity, consequently, rests the very possibility of the understanding.” Ibid., B 137.
same conditions should allow us to know our existence as well. However, as we have argued above, “existence” (thinking ego) is an unknowable, non-appearing, anonymous “indeterminate perception.” It means that there is a discrepancy between the criterion of the certainty of the “existence” of the thinking subject (ego) and that of the existence of the object. Yet, as we have seen in Kant, the certainty of the “existence” (thinking ego) solely depends on the manifold given in intuition, even though that “existence” itself is unknowable. Consequently, it means either the objective validity of the synthetic a priori judgment is invalid or the account of the “existence” as knowing subject is invalid. Denouncing the “I” of the “I think” as not being the “self” raises the question as to who is that judging agent to whom the existence of the apprehended object is supposed to refer back. Putting it differently, by pointing out the “I” of the “I think”—the “I” lying in self-consciousness—is a “thought representation,” and by suggesting that Kant contradicts himself about the objective validity of the synthetic a priori judgment, Arendt questions the modern philosophical account of human existence, which is derived from reflection on the thinking activity.

This is all the more striking when we take into consideration what we have learned about Arendt’s claims such as “Being and Appearing coincide” and appearance determines the “whole existence.” On the one hand, by pointing out that to follow Kant in taking the “thinking ego as the self” is to commit a “metaphysical fallacy,” Arendt challenges the account of human existence given in the modern philosophical tradition by professional thinkers whose concern is primarily thinking. At the same time, this denunciation contains her implicit intention to propose an alternative account of human existence based on her understanding of appearances. It is in Arendt’s discussion on the thinking dialogue in LM:I. 18, “The Two-in-One,” that her intention becomes clearer in this regard. It is in this chapter where we can find further evidence that
Arendt’s dismantling of metaphysics is her attempt at dismantling thinking reflection and the “feeling of certainty” aroused in that reflection as the basis of the self. Such dismantling is carried by contrasting the self (human existence) as an appearance.

In \textit{LM: I}, 18, “The two-in-one,” Arendt again takes up her analysis of thinking activity. Here, Arendt asks what the harmony that Socrates insisted on keeping within himself suggests; her answer is that the harmony has been understood as a model of conscience in the philosophical tradition. The harmony—the thinking dialogue between me and myself—is the reflection held in the thinking activity, which is the thinking ego analyzed previously. Following this claim, our immediate concern is to trace further her accounts of both the origin of the “metaphysical fallacy” and of the self based on appearances in her explanations of the nature of the thinking dialogue, viz., the “two-in-one.”

At the same time, there is an equally important, if not greater, theme in this chapter that we must suggest. This will help us to articulate Arendt’s overall intention of \textit{LM: I} and its relation to \textit{LKPP}, noted at the beginning of the chapter, namely, the issue that attending Eichmann’s provoked in her: determining the relation between the ability to think and to make a judgment.

Let us first inquire into Arendt’s introduction of the issue of the harmony she found in Socrates. Arendt quotes two examples of from the dialogue, \textit{Gorgias}. First, “[i]t is better to be wronged than to do wrong.”\textsuperscript{271} Second, “[i]t would be better for me that my lyre or a chorus I directed should be out of tune and loud with discord, and that multitudes of men should disagree with me rather than that I, being one, should be out of harmony with myself and contradict

\textsuperscript{271} \textit{LM: I}, 181.
Arendt argues that the first is a “subjective proposition.” That is, what at stake here is not about being against the law of the city but being against for myself. Socrates’ position is not that of citizen but a person who is “chiefly devoted to thinking.” “If you are in love with wisdom and philosophizing,” then harmony between me and myself is required. If you do have harmonious relationship between you and yourself, then you prefer to suffer from someone’s wrong-doing than commit a wrong-doing by yourself. It seems that a moral proposition arose “out of the thinking experience as such.” The “seeming” is one of our clues to analyze what Arendt is trying to accomplish in this chapter. To reformulate it, the question is this: is it really the case that the moral precept is based on thinking; or, in what sense can we say that thinking is a pre-requisite for moral feeling?

In order to answer this question, Arendt sheds light on the nature of “being one” in the second proposition. The “being one,” which indicates the harmonious relation between “me” and “myself,” is not merely one, but is constituted by two, for “nothing that is identical with itself, truly and absolutely one, as A is A, can be either in or out of harmony with itself.” It suggests that in the thinking dialogue the “I” is split into two, by which “difference” is introduced in my Oneness. The phrase “being one” means I am myself and for myself, and thus I am with myself, i.e., “a difference is inserted into my Oneness.” For Arendt, the decisive point lies the relation between “myself” and “for myself,” which is considered to form a “unity” in the thinking dialogue. In order for us to say that the “I,” who is conscious of “myself,” and

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272 Ibid.
273 Ibid., 181-182. From the viewpoint of the common world, whether you commit a wrong-doing or you suffer from someone’s wrong-doing does not make any difference, according to Arendt. “What counts is that the wrong had been done(,)”
274 Ibid., 182.
275 Ibid.
276 Ibid.,183.
277 Ibid.
278 Ibid.
“for myself” are the “being one” forming a unity, we have to be able to say that the “I” and “for myself” are the same and different at the same time. Thus, the nature of a difference “inserted into my Oneness” plays a key role in understanding the “I” as a unity, viz., “being one.” The two-in-one, the unity of the I in “being one” is what we call consciousness. The question is where that inserted difference comes from, or if what is inserted is “difference” at all. It is on those points that Arendt further proceeds to examine the relation between the self and thinking activity.

We should pay close attention to the fact that in order for her to carry out her examination of the relation between the self and thinking activity, Arendt looks to Heidegger’s interpretation of Plato’s *Sophist*.²⁸⁰

The Stranger in the dialogue states that of two things—for instance, rest and motion—‘each one is different [from the other], but itself for itself the same” (hekaston heautô tauton). In interpreting the sentence, Heidegger puts the emphasis on the dative, heautô, for Plato does not say, as we would expect, hekaston auto tauton, ‘each one itself [taken out of context] is the same,’ in the sense of the tautological A is A, where difference arises out of the plurality of things. According to Heidegger, this dative means that ‘each thing itself is returned to itself, each itself is the same for itself [because it is] with itself…Sameness implies the relation of ‘with,’ that is a mediation, a connection, a synthesis; the unification into a unity.’²⁸¹

Arendt explains that Heidegger’s interpretation comes from the part where he is examining Plato’s notion of the “community” of the Ideas, particularly that of Difference and Identity.²⁸²

The opposite Ideas, e.g. “rest” and “motion,” are not different from each other in comparison of each other. Rather each Idea is in itself and at the same time for itself by partaking the Idea of

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²⁷⁹ Ibid.
²⁸¹ Ibid., 183-184, emphasis added.
²⁸² Ibid., 184
Difference insofar as they “refer back” to itself.\textsuperscript{283} The point Arendt tries to make in analyzing Heidegger’s interpretation is that the “difference” does not come from outside (of itself) “but is inherent in every entity in the form of duality, from which comes unity as unification.”\textsuperscript{284} In saying this, Arendt objects to Heidegger’s interpretation of the “difference.”

What is her objection? When I reflect on my own thinking activity, my thought becomes the object of my thinking, i.e., it becomes for me. Even though Arendt herself does not differentiate the terms, what she means is that when I reflect on my own knowing (cognitive) activity, my apprehension of the object, viz., the concept, becomes the object of my thinking activity. Her own example is the work of art. A chair and the painting of that chair are not the same. Van Gogh’s apprehension of the chair he had in his room allows him to grasp the object as a chair, whereas his painting of the same chair doesn’t merely represent van Gogh’s chair but has been transformed to reveal the “meaning” of the painting. The work of art is the result of thought’s transformation, whose end is the meaning, i.e., a “thought thing.”\textsuperscript{285} The word “for” suggests that the object of cognition has gone through a transformation to prepare a “thought object,” so that the thinking activity can think about the meaning. In other words, thinking has taken possession of what was represented in the cognitive activity.\textsuperscript{286} Arendt writes, “[W]hat is being transformed here is the experience of the thinking ego to things themselves.”\textsuperscript{287}

Arendt explains how thinking “takes possession” of the cognitive activity through the power of re-presentation, i.e., imagination. The “thought object” is prepared by the twofold transformation of the imagination. Imagination de-sense the given object, thus creates the

\textsuperscript{283} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{284} Ibid., 184.
\textsuperscript{285} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{286} Ibid., 185.
\textsuperscript{287} Ibid.
“image” (or, representation) from which the thinking “goes even further” to prepare the “thought object” (or, concept). The “thought object” is always physically “absent” and is “never present to sense experience.” It comes into being “only when the mind actively and deliberately remembers, recollects and selects from the storehouse of memory whatever arouses its interest sufficiently to induce concentration.” \(^{288}\) From the viewpoint of the thinking ego, this experience of engaging with the “thought object” as if the invisible Being,” which had been concealing, had come forward revealing itself “only to the mind.” \(^{289}\) Of course, that is an illusion or, a “metaphysical fallacy” according to Arendt, for even what is called “productive” imagination is entirely depend on the “reproductive” imagination. We will take up this issue later in our attempt to reconstruct Arendt’s theory of imagination in Chapter 4.

It is at this point that we can trace how what Arendt has dealt with in \textit{LM}: I, 6 is now re-introduced and the discussion in \textit{LM}: I, 18 (“The two-in-one”) and forms a thematic unity. As we have demonstrated through our analyses of \textit{LM}: I, 6, Arendt’s contention there was the issue of taking the thinking ego as the “self.” The thinking ego—the “I” of the “I think,” the non-appearing purely intellectual representation—is considered to be the “existence” of the “self” or, the thinking subject, which is presupposed to reside in consciousness. Without this presupposition, synthetic a priori judgment is impossible, since the “existence” of the “I” in consciousness is the sole reason why all representations are brought to me as my representations, which is the pre-requisite for the synthetic a priori judgment for Kant. The “I” (the “existence” of myself) is the activity of “conceptualizing” without being itself conceptualized, thus it is the “I” that is the basis of all synthesis. As the conceptualizing activity, the “I” is considered to be the concealed source of the forming field of conceptualization. What Heidegger’s interpretation

\(^{288}\) Ibid., 77.
\(^{289}\) Ibid., 87-88.
of the relation between the identity and difference in the *Sophist* offers is an explanation how the relation between the “self” (“existence”) and the concept forms a unity. It is in this relation between the “I” (“self”) and the concept that thinking is considered to form the synthesis between “myself” and “for myself.” Arendt explicitly challenges such an understanding of the “I” in *LM*: I, 18 by suggesting that not only is the thinking ego not the self but also the “thought object” cannot be identified with that ego. “[I]t is not the thinking activity that constitutes the unity, unifies the two-in-one; on the contrary, the two-in-one become One again when the outside world intrudes upon the thinker and cuts short the thinking process. Then, when he is called by his name back into the world of appearances, where he is always One, it is as though the two into which the thinking process had split him clapped together again.”\(^{290}\) Arendt’s contention is that the thinking activity does not constitute the unity of the self, but, instead, the appearance of the particular individual person constitutes that unity.

The “I” or the “self,” which makes conceptualization possible is actually a “sheer activity,” and that “sheer activity” is not the “self” but is the “thinking ego” according to Arendt. Taking the sheer activity as the abiding “self” allows one to claim that the thinking activity forms the unity, for the unity, which the thinking offers, is derived from an illusory duality. The duality, which is believed to form the unity in the thinking reflection, does not point out the synthetic unity between the concept and the intuition, which makes it possible for a person to perceive the object. Rather, it points out the relation between the purely intellectual representation and the concept (“thought object”), i.e., the relation to something it is not,” viz., the transcendental object or, according to Allison’s interpretation, the transcendental subject. It is in that relation that the Idea of God is said to be “for us.”

\(^{290}\) Ibid., emphasis added.
In other words, what this duality does is to create a space in which the ego alone can exist. Even the duality, which can be termed a “space,” is only a metaphor, since there is nothing permanent in the thinking ego as a sheer activity, and since the ego never appears in space nor is knowable as an object. Thus, Arendt insists that taking the pure intellectual representation as the “existence” of the (knowing) “self” is a “metaphysical fallacy,” for it contradicts the very conditions by which the objective validity of Kant’s synthetic a priori judgment is derived. It seems that by interpreting the “I” lying in consciousness as the “existence” of the “self,” it becomes possible to claim that it is thinking activity that ultimately provides the basis for cognition and its objective validity. But self-consciousness, in which the “I” is presupposed to “exist” as the abiding “self,” and by which alone Kant’s “I think” can function and claim its objective validity, merely points out the reflexive nature of thinking activity.

Instead, Arendt proposes a counter-argument about the origin of duality in the thinking dialogue based on her account of the human existence which is determined through appearances. Arendt agrees that thinking dialogue or, thinking reflection, is consciousness. More precisely, it is a “specifically human actualization of consciousness.” It means that what is actualized in that reflection is “difference and otherness,” which are “outstanding characteristics of the world of appearances.” Because things exist in the world and human beings never exist alone but live in plurality, we can differentiate among things and other human beings. Without the plurality of things and human beings, there is no difference, otherness, and identity to be

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291 Ibid., 187. “[T]his ego—the I-am-I—experienced difference in identity precisely when it is not related to the things that appear but only related to itself.”
292 Ibid., 186.
293 Ibid., 187.
established in thinking activity. Arendt reaffirms this point by reminding us that the act of consciousness is “intentional,” which refers to cognitive activity.\(^\text{294}\)

As we have seen in our analysis of the “intentionality of appearances,” Arendt’s account of human existence is fundamentally rooted in the world of appearances as being of that world. In her account of appearance, the act of perceiving always presupposes perceiving and being perceived by others who share the world as a common basis. Intentionality, as the act of consciousness, is thus embedded in the intersubjective nature of the world of appearances. Each person is different from the others yet shares something in common with them, which allows us to communicate with each other and allows us to differentiate each other as unique individuals. It is through appearances that the uniqueness of the individual is manifested, viz., one’s own existence. Because we are all uniquely different, the mode of our individual being is always “it-seems-to-me”—\(\text{dokei moi}\).\(^\text{295}\) Every act of consciousness acknowledges both the partiality of one’s own perspective and the possibility of other perspectives at the same time. What is actualized in thinking reflection is the difference given in consciousness whose act has its root in the world of appearances. When Arendt suggests that “[w]hat thinking actualizes in its unending process is difference, given as a mere raw fact (factum brutum) in consciousness,” she reminds us that thinking reflection is put in motion only after cognitive activity ceases. It is not thinking activity that makes perception possible by its ability to form the field of conceptualization. Rather, it is the appearance and its mode of being as “it-seems-to-me”—\(\text{dokei moi}\)—that makes perception possible. Through her dismantling of metaphysics, Arendt proposes that the basis of our perception is found not in thinking activity, as Heidegger claims, but in human existence, whose being is always being of the world in plurality. In other words, what makes perception

\(^{294}\) Ibid.

\(^{295}\) Ibid., 20.
possible, synthesis, is the world of appearances we are all a part of. That is what Arendt means when she writes that “Socratic two-in-one heals the solitariness of thought; its inherent duality points to the infinite plurality which is the law of the earth.”  

Based on our analyses of Arendt’s discussion on the nature of the “two-in-one” (the thinking dialogue), we need to return the topic on the relation between thinking and judgment. To remind us, our question with regards to this is: is it really the case that the moral precept is based on thinking; or, in what sense can we say that thinking is a prerequisite for moral feeling? Does Arendt offer an answer for that question?

Our analyses suggest that, by her critical analysis of the nature of thinking activity and its reflexivity, Arendt shows that the very reflexivity of thinking activity is derived from our being of the world of appearances. She denounces Heidegger’s claim that it is the reflexivity of thinking that makes perception possible. Rather, the thinking reflection is by its nature an “after thought,” which comes after cognitive activity. It is in this sense that thinking dialogue can be claimed as the source of the moral feeling, i.e., “conscience” for Arendt. This means that by her critical analyses of thinking activity, Arendt re-establishes the connection between thinking and the world of appearances, as we have demonstrated. By suggesting that the origin of the thinking reflection is the world of appearances, Arendt claims that the harmonious relation between “me” and “myself,” which forms the “being one,” is a harmonious relation between me and the world of appearances. That is the reason why Arendt claims that consciousness and conscience are interrelated, and judging is “the by-product of the liberating effect of thinking, realizes thinking, makes it manifest in the world of appearances.”  

One’s conscience calls a person to be a person who has a harmonious relationship with the world of appearances, since that relationship

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296 Ibid., 187.
297 Ibid., 193.
suggests that one is a part of the world with other human beings. This means that by her critical analyses of thinking activity, Arendt intends to re-establish the connection between thinking and the world of appearances, as we have demonstrated.

Based on what we have demonstrated, we can point out that what Arendt is trying to propose with her notion of appearance is twofold: One is her theory of perception which is fundamentally based on intersubjectivity. The other is her account of human existence which lives with others. In other words, it can be said that her notion of appearance is her attempt to laying ground for truth or, objective reality which unifies between object (the perceived) and subject (the perceiving). Our question is if she offers any coherent theory or at least a possibility of such theory to give an account for her notion of appearance. This leads us our next and last chapter in which we shall demonstrate how Arendt’s “dismantling of metaphysics” is her critical response to Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination as theory of productive imagination, and how we can possibly reconstruct her notion of appearance as her own theory of reproductive imagination.
Chapter 4: Toward a Reconstruction of Arendt’s Theory of Imagination

In Chapter 3, we have focused on what Arendt calls the “dismantling of metaphysics” and the “metaphysical fallacy” as ways to articulate further her notion of “appearance” and its intersubjective nature. By doing so, we have suggested that this “dismantling of metaphysics” is her attempt to open a new linkage between the world of appearance and that of thinking, which also serves to answer the question she had ever since she witnessed Adolf Eichmann’s “thoughtlessness”: what is the relation between thinking and making a sound judgment? On the one hand, Arendt denies the tradition that constructs the activity of thinking on the model of that of knowing, or, cognition. As a result, she rejects the idea that it is thinking that serves as the basis of synthesis. Rather, she claims that it is in the appearance that the synthesis is established. Reflection occurs in the thinking activity, thus indicating that the thinking activity is not the basis of the synthesis, but, instead, the “infinite plurality” in the world of appearances. By such an understanding of the world of appearances, Arendt offers a new perspective on the origin of conscience in human consciousness, i.e., the origin of our moral feeling in the world of appearances of which we are active parts. In other words, we have demonstrated the possibility that Arendt’s peculiar understanding of human existence as appearance in the plurality of the world of appearances is her own phenomenological account of perception rooted in intersubjectivity, and that morality stems from this account – it is the basis for the judgment as the manifestation of thinking.

Chapter 4 shall be an attempt toward a reconstruction of Arendt’s account of appearance as her phenomenological investigation of perception. However, to delineate fully Arendt’s account of the appearance as her theory of perception is beyond the scope of this study. Instead, Chapter 4 aims at offering a brief sketch of Arendt’s criticism of the claim that thinking activity
forms a synthesis that can be read as her critical response to Heidegger. More precisely, what we have seen as Arendt’s “dismantling of metaphysics” in Chapter 3 can be understood as her criticism of Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination as manifested in his work, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. As such, our purpose in Chapter 4 is twofold. First, to demonstrate that Arendt’s dismantling of thinking activity in the *LM: I* is her implicit criticism of Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination as productive imagination in the Schematism. Second, in contrast to Heidegger’s interpretation, we shall offer a possible way to reconstruct Arendt’s theory of imagination by focusing on the fact that imagination is primarily *reproductive* for Arendt, in that she claims that, in the judgment of taste, the example plays a similar role to the Schematism, and in her appeal to the “exemplary validity” for the judgment of taste.

In *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, Heidegger interprets Kant’s first *Critique* as the laying the ground for metaphysics, or, what he means by a fundamental ontology. Heidegger’s main contention is that what are transcendental (*a priori*) conditions for Kant’s epistemology in *CPR* can be read as ontological knowledge. Kant provides a theory of *a priori* conditions, which prescribe how the knowing subject and the object known are related to each other, and upon which the objective validity of human knowledge is revealed, along with its limitations. In short, Kant rests the objective validity of his transcendental epistemology on the agreement of a set of conditions. That is, “The conditions for the possibility of experience in general are *at the same time* conditions for the possibility of the objects of experience.”

Heidegger, in his ontological interpretation on Kant’s epistemology, pays attention to the same

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299 *CPR*. B 197, emphasis added.
set of conditions but specifically focuses on the “at the same time.” He suggests that, in order for us as finite beings to know something, the object must appear to us, or, be for us. What makes the act of experiencing possible is what at the same time makes the object able to be encountered by us possible, viz., it makes the object “experienceable.” It means that, since our way of knowing allows us to encounter the object, it is in our knowing activity that the condition of the be-ing of the object is revealed. As finite beings, our knowledge depends on the object that we did not create and the way in which we encounter that object. In other words, Heidegger interprets the conditions of human knowledge as a way to form self-consciousness as the horizon of experience, and as such he proposes viewing self-consciousness as the Being of the self. Ontological knowledge is not the knowledge of the object as such; rather, what Heidegger means is that self-consciousness, by which an object becomes experienceable for us, can be understood not only as knowing activity but also as the activity of the self, viz., the Being of the self. In this context, knowing, for Heidegger, primarily means Being and what Kant means by “knowing” is mere thinking. And it is at this moment that Heidegger reverses Kant’s epistemology into ontological knowledge. Thus, a pure synthesis means the formation of the horizon in which the correlation between the Being of the being and our way of knowing as finite beings is revealed. Heidegger calls this revelation “transcendence.” He transforms transcendental knowledge, which ascribes what we can know, into ontological knowledge, which reveals how these two sets of conditions are synthesized in a pure synthesis, and consequently how such a synthesis reveals the Being of the self.

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300 KPM, 84.
301 “[W]hat makes an experiencing possible at the same time makes possible the experienceable, or rather experiencing [an experienceable] as such. This means: transcendence makes the being in itself accessible to a finite creature.” Ibid.
302 KPM, 81.
303 Ibid., 86.
At this point, we need to examine if there are parallels between Arendt’s “dismantling of metaphysics,” which we have dealt with in Chapter 3, and Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant. The first parallel that we can trace is between her understanding of the origin of the “metaphysical fallacy” and Heidegger’s account of knowing. Arendt posits that the “metaphysical fallacy” arises by interpreting reason through the lens of the cognitive model (intellect). It is derived from philosophers who blur the boundary between thinking (reason) and knowing (intellect) by “demanding the kind of results and applying the kind of criteria for certainty and evidence that are the results and the criteria of cognition” of thinking.\textsuperscript{304} In contrast, as mentioned above, through his interpretation Heidegger proposes that a pure synthesis forms the horizon of ontological knowledge. It is in his ontological interpretation that Heidegger redefines what the knowing activity is. He claims that his account of knowing makes manifest how an object becomes experienceable for us, on the one hand, and what it means for us as finite beings to be, on the other. For that reason, Heidegger posits that truth is twofold: “the unveilingness of Being” and “the openness [Offenbarkeit] of beings.”\textsuperscript{305} Thus, he claims that “[i]f ontological knowledge unveils the horizon, then its truth lies precisely in [the act of] letting the beings be encountered within the horizon.”\textsuperscript{306} In other words, truth lies in “the act of” knowing, which means in the Being of the self, for Heidegger. It is not difficult to trace Heidegger’s account of truth and knowing in Arendt’s criticism on “metaphysical fallacy” in \textit{LM: I}.

When Arendt points out the origin of the “metaphysical fallacy” in interpreting reason by using a cognitive model, her contention is that “truth” and “meaning” are not the same. “Truth”

\textsuperscript{304} \textit{LM: I}, 13.
\textsuperscript{305} \textit{KPM}, 87.
\textsuperscript{306} Ibid., emphasis added.
is the object of knowing (*intellect*) derived from cognition, whereas “meaning” is that of thinking (*reason*). It is noteworthy that Arendt specifically mentions Heidegger’s name in this matter. She writes: “The least and in some respects most striking instance of this occurs in Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, which starts out by raising ‘anew the question of the meaning of Being.’ Heidegger himself, in a later interpretation of his own initial question, says explicitly that “[the] ‘Meaning of Being’ and ‘Truth of Being’ say the same.”\(^{307}\) We can suggest that the first parallelism lies between Heidegger’s account of knowing and *truth* and Arendt’s criticism of the “metaphysical fallacy” in her claim that it originates in equating the thinking activity (*reason*) with the cognitive activity (*intellect*). What this all means is that if in fact Arendt’s “dismantling of metaphysics” is aimed at Heidegger’s ontology, evidence to support such a view must be traced in her discussions and remarks on the “metaphysical fallacy,” which can be understood as her criticism of Heidegger’s identification of *truth* with Being.

This leads us the second parallelism, which contrasts Heidegger’s account of the self in *KPM* to Arendt’s insistence that the thinking ego cannot be conceived as the self in *LM*: I. As mentioned in the first parallelism, what marks Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant’s epistemology is the analysis of the ontological implication of forming the horizon. The crucial point for us is that Heidegger interprets the forming of the horizon as being an activity of knowing, which is equal to the Being of the self. Before getting into detailed analysis, let us overview the locus of the issue in the second parallelism.

Heidegger’s claim is that the synthesis of the transcendental imagination, viz., the synthetic *a priori* judgment, which takes place in the Schematism, forms the horizon where a set of conditions for the objective validity of knowledge coincide: “The conditions for the possibility

\(^{307}\) Ibid.
of experience in general are \textit{at the same time} conditions for the possibility of the objects of experience.” Heidegger understands the forming horizon to be the integration of time in self-consciousness, in which an object is grasped as the determination of time. It is in the synthesis of the transcendental imagination (i.e., in the activity of forming the horizon through the “I think”) that the “I” of the self is “necessarily apparent,” according to Heidegger.\textsuperscript{308} He claims that both the “I think” and the “I” lie “in ‘pure self-consciousness,’” which “can only be elucidated based on the Being of the self.”\textsuperscript{309}

As an aside at this point, Arendt’s criticism – that taking the thinking ego to be the self is a “metaphysical fallacy” – can be understood as raising the question of whose activity is Heidegger’s knowing, really? It asks that, if forming the horizon fulfills a set of conditions for establishing objective validity, then can we really say that that activity manifests the “I,” as Heidegger claims? In short, Arendt’s criticism of taking the thinking ego to be the self, addressed against Heidegger’s account of the self, is tantamount to asking \textit{who is Heidegger’s self.}

 Returning to Heidegger, the pivotal point for his ontological interpretation is his equating Kant’s transcendental imagination with time, by seeing it as the common root of both understanding and intuition. Ontological knowledge is a pure synthesis that forms the horizon and occurs in the Schematism in which intuition and understanding are unified.

Heidegger’s “self” is the horizon that integrates different tenses into one continuous time succession, viz., “Self”-consciousness. It is understood as the Being of the “self,” since Heidegger interprets the pure synthesis as forming the time-horizon. What makes it possible for

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{308} Ibid., 105. \\
\textsuperscript{309} Ibid.
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Heidegger to claim that this account of the “self” is valid is derived from his interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination as productive, as is articulated in §33 of *KPM*; The Inner Temporal character of the Transcendental Power of Imagination. Here, he articulates three different tenses—present, past, and future—as the three different modes of the pure synthesis of the imagination. The first synthesis is “pure apprehension,” by which he means the pure synthesis of the manifold as an immediate grasp of the now or, “this-here.” It “produces—the immediate look of the now as such.” The second one is “pure reproduction,” which designates the formation of the past; “it brings the horizon of the earlier into view and holds it open as such in advance.” The third one is “pure recognition,” which designates the future.

All of this plays a central role for our current discussion. Heidegger claims that “pure recognition” as a mode of synthesis of transcendental imagination is the synthesis of the “sameness” ahead of the previous two modes of synthesis, and thus is the ground for them. The “sameness” is derived from the concept, or more precisely from the synthesis “in concept, for the concept is indeed the representing of the unity which as selfsame ‘applies to many.’” It is this mode of the pure synthesis of imagination (“pure recognition”) that allows the unity of “one consciousness,” since it is the synthesis in concept that “unifies the manifold.”

The third mode of the synthesis of transcendental imagination (“pure recognition”) has crucial importance here. Heidegger’s position is that this synthesis is a synthesis in concept that is characterized by its “sameness” (i.e., universality). Even though the first synthesis enables us to grasp the immediate presentation in intuition, without the aid of the concept it is a sheer mass.

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310 *KPM*, 125.
311 Ibid., 126.
312 Ibid., 127.
313 Ibid., 130.
314 Ibid.
315 Ibid.
of indeterminate impressions. The key point is that the synthesis in concept comes ahead of the
given manifold. Pure concept as the articulation of the same is “already oriented in advance
toward the being.” 316 Heidegger interprets the characteristic of the third mode of synthesis as
future-oriented: “It explores in advance and is ‘watching out for’ what must be *held before us in
advance* as the same in order that the apprehending and reproducing synthesis in general can find
a closed, circumscribed field of beings within which they can attach to what they bring forth and
encounter, so to speak, and take them in stride as beings.” 317 In other words, because of the third
mode of synthesis of the transcendental imagination, the present and the past are *unified* into the
one selfsame “self”-consciousness as one continuous time succession. More importantly, though,
this synthesis carries the sameness in advance, so that the *returning* synthesis of reproduction can
attach to the *same* consciousness, which allows the apprehension. 318

Interpreting the transcendental imagination as three different modes of the synthesis of
transcendental imagination leads Heidegger to posit that the pure synthesis forms the time-
horizon. From the viewpoint of the object, it means that the object becomes experienceable on
that horizon, since the pure synthesis integrates the different modes of time into one continuous
time sequence, i.e., the object that is to *be* for us. Since knowing means to form this horizon,
which in turn unifies different times—past, present, and future—into a continuous time
succession, and since to form the horizon is to unify the given manifold, i.e., intuition according
to rules, into pure understanding, it is through such unification (i.e., the synthesis) that the given
manifold is unified and appears as the object to us. However, from the viewpoint of subject, it

316 Ibid.
317 Ibid., emphasis added.
318 That is his answer for the question he raised: “[W]hen the mind again returns from its going-back into the past,
when it returns again to the directly present being in order to set the former in unity with the latter, who then tells it
that this being which is now present is the same as that which is previously abandoned, so to speak, with the
fulfillment of the visualization?” Ibid., 129.
means that through such a synthesis the unified “self” as “self-consciousness” is formed. This, in turn, allows him to claim that the horizon is the “ground of the selfhood.”

Now, we need to examine the nature of the “self,” which is described as the Being of the “self” or “self”-consciousness by Heidegger in order for us to demonstrate that Arendt’s criticism of taking the thinking ego to be the self is aimed at Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant. The issue at stake is the relation between Heidegger’s equation of the “I” and the “I think” with respect to forming the horizon.

As we have seen in §33 of KPM, to interpret the transcendental imagination as productive plays a pivotal role for Heidegger. It is particularly important for our purposes that Heidegger assigns the synthesis in concept as exploring the horizon in advance by representing the sameness. That representing the sameness is the “I think,” which Heidegger understands as the regulative representation. It proposes the “represented unities” in advance. It means that Heidegger interprets the “I think” as a “pre-forming of the horizon of unity which represents ‘from out of itself.’” The “I think,” as a rule-giving representation, provides a framework for how the horizon should be formed. The key here is that Heidegger says that rule-giving is “from out of itself,” and as such it is understood as “self-orienting toward…. “ He writes,

In such an orienting-toward…, or rather in the “self” which was ‘thrown out’ with it, the “I” of this “self” is necessarily apparent. In this way, the “I propose” “accompanies” all representing.—The “I” “goes with” in the pure self-orienting. To the extent that it is itself only what it is in this “I think,” the essence of pure thinking as well as that of the I lies in “pure self-consciousness.” This “consciousness” of the self, however, can only be elucidated based on the Being of the self(.).

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319 Ibid., 134.
320 Ibid., 130.
321 Ibid., 106, emphasis added.
322 Ibid., 105, emphasis added.
What Heidegger is referring to in the citation above in regards to Kant’s epistemology is that the “I think” is the “act of spontaneity” or “pure apperception” whose unity is the “transcendental unity of self-consciousness” in the Transcendental Deduction.\(^{323}\) According to Kant, the unity of self-consciousness comes prior to the combination, and as such it makes the manifold of a given representation possible to claim as mine. The difference between Kant and Heidegger is that while Kant assigns “understanding” as the power of all combination in the second edition of CPR, Heidegger sticks with the first edition, in which Kant assigns the same power to the transcendental imagination. The result of Heidegger’s choice is his ontological interpretation of transcendental imagination, which plays a significant role for forming the horizon.

Forming the horizon as integrating the different tenses into one time is equal to forming “self”-consciousness, according to Heidegger. Through the “I think,” the rule of how the horizon should be formed is given. Yet, “self”-consciousness’ relation to the rule is not passive, since the rule is given within itself or, “from out of itself.” The very act, the “I think” itself, is considered to be the representation of the rule. Whatever the “I” is, the “I” is taken as the origin of the rule whose representation is the “I think.”

Nonetheless, Heidegger does not suggest that the “I think” is a mere representation of the “I.” Rather, what he is suggesting is more like the split of the “I” that brings about the “I think.” More precisely, he suggests that the “I” and the “I think” form an identity, and it is in that identity that “self”-consciousness is formed. Thus, when he claims that “self”-consciousness must be understood as the “Being of the self,” he means that the “self” as knowing activity per se is understood as forming the identity out of the relation between the “I” and the “I think.” In other words, Heidegger’s account of the “self” is established in the relation with itself. He

\(^{323}\) CPR., B 132.
derives his understanding of “self”-consciousness as the relation of the “I” with the “I think” from two different sources, though he claims that, in the end, they are the same: time and reason.

Heidegger claims that both reason and time can be understood as “self”-affection. Insofar as they are taken as coming out of the self and affecting the self, the essential components of Heidegger’s account of the “self,” they should be recognized as being the same. Both of them provide the theoretical explanation why forming the horizon is the Being of the self. The difference between the two lies in the fact that Heidegger’s reading of reason claims that forming of the horizon (knowing) is the action (Being) of human being. In its essence reason is the very foundation of human freedom for Heidegger. We shall return to this point later on, contrasting it with Arendt’s account of aesthetic feeling. For now, let us focus on how Heidegger finds the role of reason in terms of forming the horizon.

In Chapter 30 of KPM, Heidegger lays out “what and how” the “self,” which lies in the “self”-consciousness or the Being of the “self,” “manifest[s] itself by explicating the structure of the practical reason.” Heidegger posits that the moral I is the “authentic self.” The core of his argument for our purposes is that Heidegger pays attention to respect as the moral feeling, which functions as a “way of Being-self-conscious.” According to him, feeling is a “self-feeling of that which feels: “The manner in which self-feeling from time to time makes the self manifest, i.e., the manner in which it lets it be, will always be codetermined essentially through the character of that for which the feeling [being], in the self-feeling, has a feeling.” In other words, Heidegger asserts that feeling is a way we feel ourselves, and thus that which “makes the

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324 For reason, see KPM, 111. For time, see KPM, 133.
325 Ibid., 109, emphasis added.
326 Ibid., 110.
327 Ibid.
328 Ibid.
Following Kant, Heidegger says that respect is the moral feeling. Since feeling is “self-feeling of that which feels,” having a moral feeling suggests that feeling makes the law manifest.\textsuperscript{329} It in turns means that my having a feeling of respect for the law manifests the way I \textit{am}. Since “[e]verything which is possible through freedom is practical,” and “insofar as freedom belongs to the possibility of theoretical reason,” my having a moral feeling suggest that it manifests both myself and the law as the ground for my freedom, viz., action.\textsuperscript{330} Thus, not only in my moral feeling as the ground of my action (freedom) do the law and \textit{reason} coincide, but myself and \textit{reason} coincide. It means that submitting myself to the law is the “self-affection” that is found in my feeling: “The submitting, self-projecting onto the entire basic possibility of what authentically \textit{exists}, which the law gives, is the essence of the acting \textit{Being-itself}, i.e., of practical reason.”\textsuperscript{331} The important point is that, by identifying \textit{reason} as the foundation of authentic existence, the way one should \textit{be}, Heidegger prepares his theoretical account as to why forming the horizon can be understood as “self”-consciousness, i.e., the \textit{Being} of the self. It means that by finding the coincidence between \textit{reason} and the “self” in the moral feeling, Heidegger is able to provide his theoretical explanation as to why the “I think” as regulative representing is the rule-giving out of itself, and thus why forming the horizon is equal to forming the “self”-consciousness. In other words, for Heidegger, forming the horizon as the activity of knowing is the “manifestation of the self” through its action.

Next, let us examine how \textit{time} as “self”-affection is outlined in \textit{KPM} §34. According to Heidegger, to form the horizon means to make an object experienceable \textit{for us}. It is on this horizon that object is represented, or, the object is made to appear. The representation of an

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{329} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{330} Ibid., 111.
\item \textsuperscript{331} Ibid., 109.
\item \textsuperscript{332} Ibid.
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object allows the object to appear against to us, which he calls the “letting-stand-against.” The to signifies “to pure apperception, to the I itself.” Forming the horizon is the synthesis of intuition and concept, and as such it involves time, which we have seen in §33. Time as pure intuition and as transcendental imagination is “self-affecting” when there is no object to experience. What he means by this is that time as the pure form of intuition “contains nothing but relations.” In other words, as pure form, time suggests only how the human mind operates. Thus, Heidegger posits that time is the way that the mind affects itself. It is in Heidegger’s interpretation of the Schematism with these two accounts of “self”-affection—one in his interpretation of moral feeling and the other that of time as pure form of intuition—that we can finally see why Arendt’s criticism of taking the thinking ego to be the self is actually meant to be her criticism on Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant.

To summarize at this point: we have demonstrated that Heidegger claims that ontological knowledge lies in forming the horizon. That is, it is in the synthesis as knowing activity that the Being of the knowing subject is revealed. Such a synthesis occurs in the Schematism, which is consequently the center of his ontological interpretation of Kant. Putting it differently, it is in his interpretation of the Schematism that we can see how Heidegger interprets knowing activity as the “self” on the one hand, and its issue, on the other. Heidegger explains how intuition and concept are unified in the Schematism, which he calls “‘making-sensible’ or intuitable [of concept].” That is, to form the horizon is to create the schema-image, which is to form the “pure-look (image)” out of itself. It is the “representing of the rule.” When we perceive

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333 Ibid., 132.
334 Ibid., 133, emphasis added.
335 Ibid.
336 Ibid.
337 Ibid., 65.
338 Ibid., 85.
something, a glance of it is taken from a specific position. It means that every appearance is determined by how it appears, seen from a specific position. “Making [the concept] sensible” in the Schematism means to form the “how” through the representing of the rule, i.e., the “range of possible appearing as such.”340 “If the concept in general is that which is in service to the rule, then conceptual representing means the giving of the rule for the possible attainment of a look in advance of the manner of its regulation.”341 In other words, in creating the schema, the “self” as reason, the faculty of Ideas, projects itself as a regulative representation that is universal and by which the range of possible appearances is given.

It is at this point, in conjunction with his account of reason and time, that what Heidegger means in the “I think,” “self”-orienting toward, and the “I” of the “self” becomes apparent and clear. The “self” as knowing activity forms a “schema-image,” which means to form the horizon. The “I think” as regulative representing (of the rules) prescribes how the horizon should be formed. It means that the horizon, as what makes an object possible to appear, is laid out by looking from a specific standpoint. The very movement of the “I think,” i.e., synthesis, necessarily refers back to the point where the horizon is looked at. It is in this sense that Heidegger can say that “the ‘I’ ‘goes with’ in the pure self-orienting.” For Heidegger, it is the same “I” that “proposes” a look and “accompanies” it, which allows making a claim that all representations are mine.342 That is why Heidegger points out that the “I think” and the “I” lie in the “self”-consciousness whose elucidation is based on the Being of the “self.” “Self”-consciousness is the horizon, the very activity of the “self,” the time-field in which an object is experienced as a determination of time. The rule as to how such a time-field should be formed is

339 Ibid., 69.
340 Ibid., 67.
341 Ibid., 67.
342 Ibid., 105.
derived from itself, and it is the time-field that forms all relations, since Being oneself is a “self”-affecting activity. The “I” acts according to the laws, which is the only way that the “I” can be authentically; at the same time, the “I” as time suggests that the “I think” as rule-giving is my relation to myself insofar as it forms the horizon that is understood as the Being of the “self.” That is, forming the horizon signifies establishing an identity, viz., the “self.”

We can examine if Heidegger’s account of the “self” is actually the thinking ego and thus if Arendt’s “dismantling of metaphysics” in LM: I is actually aimed at Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant. The issue at stake in terms of Arendt’s criticism can be observed in Heidegger’s claim that the “I” becomes apparent when the “I think” proposes the outline of the horizon through its regulative representing.

We should, at this point, recall our analysis of LM: I.6, Thinking ego and the self: Kant from our Chapter 3 of this dissertation. There, our analysis was that the “I” of the “I think” was a thought representation, a pure intellectual representation, or, to use Arendt’s phrase, an “indeterminate perception.” We mentioned there that Henry Allison understands this “indeterminate perception” to be Kant’s transcendental object, without which there is no object to be experienced doing the conceptualizing thought itself that is not the object of such a conceptualization. It is like the eye of the field of vision. We argued there that Arendt’s contention was that the “I” was not the self but a sheer activity, i.e., the thinking ego, since the “I” never appears and remains nameless, ageless, and anonymous, lacking a life story. Most importantly, we need to recall Arendt’s insistence that taking the thinking ego to be the self contradicts the fulfillment of a set of conditions for objective validity in Kantian epistemology.
It is clear that these points, as outlined in our analysis of Arendt’s criticism of taking the thinking ego to be the self, go against to Heidegger’s account of the “self.” We have demonstrated that, for Heidegger, forming the horizon is to make an object experienceable, and at the same time it can be understood as the activity of the “self” or, the Being of the “self.” He derives this ontological interpretation of the synthesis from Kant’s conditions for objective validity. For Heidegger, the activity of knowing is possible not only when the “I” splits into the “I think,” but also in the two forms identity. It is the identity formed between the “I” and the “I think” that allows Heidegger to offer his ontological elucidation of the Schematism as forming “schema-image.” It is the “I” that provides a specific standpoint ahead of which the horizon is formed. The “I” goes with the “I think”; in that way it is proposing, “self-orienting toward…” But that “I” itself never appears in the way that objects do in the horizon, since the “I” lies in pure “self”-consciousness, or, in the movement of forming the horizon. In other words, the “I” becomes apparent in the way that Heidegger claims only because the “I think” gives the framework of the horizon through its being a regulative representing. But the only way to trace “self-orienting toward…” is when some object actually appears on the horizon, i.e., when that object is conceptualized. It is through the conceptualization of the object that the “I think” makes the “I” apparent, but becoming apparent is not same as appearing. So when Heidegger claims that the “I” of the “self” is necessarily apparent in the “I think,” what he really means is that the “I” is apparent to the eye of the mind, since he understands the “self” as an activity, not as a being. If the “I” of the “self” as activity or, more precisely as that of knowing becomes apparent in the “I think,” that is so because of a mental inspection of such activity.

Thus, when Arendt points out that the thinking ego is a “sheer activity” in LM: I.6, what she means is not the knowing activity (i.e., judgment), but thinking activity. It is in this
suggestion that we can see an implicit criticism of Heidegger’s “self” as the Being of the “self.” Furthermore, in her claim that the thinking ego exists only in a duality created in the thinking reflection, we can recognize the relation between the “I” and the “I think” in Heidegger’s account of the “self.” These points remind us of her discussion of the origin of conscience in self-consciousness in *LM*: I.18, “the two-in-one,” in which she takes up Heidegger’s interpretation of Plato’s *Sophist*.

Let us recall that the issue at stake for Arendt in Heidegger’s reading of *Sophist* is his claim that thinking forms the unity, or, synthesis. Arendt inquires into how Heidegger comes up with the notion of identity.

The Stranger in the dialogue states that of two things—for instance, rest and motion—‘each one is different [from the other], but itself for itself the same” (*hekaston heautō tauton*). In interpreting the sentence, Heidegger puts the emphasis on the dative, *heautō*, for Plato does not say, as we would expect, *hekaston auto tauton*, ‘each one itself [taken out of context] is the same,’ in the sense of the tautological A is A, where difference arises out of the plurality of things. According to Heidegger, this dative means that ‘each thing itself is returned to itself, each itself is the same for itself [because it is] with itself…Sameness implies the relation of ‘with,’ that is a mediation, a connection, a synthesis; the unification into a unity.’

With his emphasis on “with,” Heidegger claims an identity is established between the itself and “for itself.” Yet, Arendt finds Heidegger’s reading erroneous, for there is no “difference” in the relation between itself and “for itself,” as he claims. Rather, she points out, what Heidegger claims as being an “identity” between the two is actually a “relation to something it is not.”

The “not” signifies the thinking ego’s relation to itself, according to Arendt. Our concern here is to ask by pointing out that the “not” signifies the thinking ego, what Arendt really means. If

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343 *LM*: I, 183-184, emphasis added.
344 Ibid., 184.
345 Ibid., 187.
we pay close attention, the issue at stake for Arendt is Heidegger’s interpretation of the horizon as “self”-consciousness as horizon, or more precisely as *correlatum*.\(^{346}\)

Horizon is understood as *correlatum*, since it correlates subject and object as the horizon of experience, and as such Chapter horizon is *not* something or, *not* a being according to Heidegger. Rather, Heidegger identifies the *correlatum* or horizon, with object in general x, viz., Kant’s transcendental object, since though it is not a being without it there is no experience possible for us and at the same time there is no object experienceable. It is the knowing activity itself, which as we’ve seen, is the Being of the self for Heidegger. Heidegger also calls this *correlatum*, “nothing.”\(^{347}\) Meanwhile, the transcendental object immediately reminds us of the fact that Arendt claims that Kant’s thinking ego is the transcendental object as a purely intellectual representation, the non-appearing I engaging in conceptualizing, whose Characteristic we traced in the role of the “I” in forming “schema-image” in Heidegger. As far as Arendt’s criticism on Heidegger’s account of identity is concerned, we can see that what she is arguing here is indeed the relation between the “I” and the “I think” in Heidegger’s interpretation of Schematism. Heidegger understands “self”-consciousness as horizon or, *correlatum*, which he identifies with transcendental object. For him, transcendental object is the Being of the “self,” the knowing activity as such. Whereas Arendt criticizes such interpretation that what Heidegger takes as “self”-activity—knowing—is actually thinking activity. Thinking activity cannot be taken as the self but is thinking ego, since it does not appear at all. (In other words, we can boil her claim down to her criticism of the validity of Heidegger’s ontological reading of Kant’s epistemology—that is, Kant’s transcendental philosophy as forming the horizon of experience is understood both as the being of an object and the Being of human being.

\(^{346}\) *KPM*, 86.
\(^{347}\) Ibid.
In other words, there is a difference regarding their understanding of the relation between the self and self-consciousness at the bottom of the second parallelism.\textsuperscript{348} It leads us to take one step further from what we have demonstrated so far to examine how her notion of the intentionality of appearance can be taken as her criticism of Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of “self”-consciousness in regards to their respective account of the self. 

In her criticism on Heidegger’s reading of Sophist regarding to his account of “identity,” we can see that Arendt is challenging his understanding of “self”-consciousness as the horizon for experienceablity of object and the Being of the self. In response to his claim, argues to the contrary, that “consciousness is not the same as thinking,” for the act of consciousness is “intentional” and thus “cognitive act” whereas thinking activity is “dialectical.”\textsuperscript{349} It can be understood as addressing her criticism to Heidegger’s ontological account of “self”-consciousness, since Heidegger himself says the schema-image as a look is “intention.”\textsuperscript{350} If what Heidegger is doing to interpret cognitive (knowing) activity ontologically and thus his interpretation offers only a different description of knowing activity as he claims, it should reveals who is engaging such activity. In other words, if a look is “intention” which manifests the intended or, object becomes experienceable in the “self”-consciousness as the horizon, the horizon should also reveal the intending. But as we have discussed, the “I” of the “I think” never appears, is never the object of experience. Heidegger still may insist that at least what he claims as knowing activity forms identity of the “self.” Yet, according to Arendt, Heidegger’s way to claim identity is erroneous and invalid, since it merely suggests the relation between the “I” and the “I think” or reason and application of rules as regulative representing.

\textsuperscript{348} That is, the parallelism between Heidegger’s account of the self in KPM and Arendt’s insistence that the thinking ego cannot be conceived as the self in LM: I.
\textsuperscript{349} LM: I, 187.
\textsuperscript{350} KPM, 70.
In her discussion of the intentionality of appearances, Arendt reaffirms that the nature of intentionality is that “[w]hatever appears is meant to for a perceiver, a potential subject no less inherent in all objectivity than a potential object is inherent in the subjectivity of every intentional act.” She simply means that in the intentional act both subjectivity and objectivity are built-in. The crucial point is that she claims that the certainty of one’s perceptions rests upon others’ acknowledgement that the same object is also perceived by them, it becomes clear that her position does indeed differ greatly from his.

Her remark suggests that in order for us to understand an object, it is not enough to apply universality or the concept to it. Putting it differently, Arendt suggests that, if perception means to apprehend an object, this apprehension is not derived from deduction. It in turn means that she objects to Heidegger’s interpretation of the Schematism as forming a schema-image. A schema-image is produced by a look that sees from a specific standpoint. But what determines that standpoint is the rules, what Heidegger calls pure understanding. As long as a look originates from the same universal viewpoint, intentionality as perception does not require others’ acknowledgement, as Arendt points out. In other words, Heidegger’s understanding of “intention” and consequently his account of the apprehension of object leaves no room for the existence of others. But if that is the case, the how we know who we are, or even if we exist? Thus, Arendt insists that without acknowledgement by others, “we would not even be able to put faith in the way we appear to ourselves.” And she continues to say, “This is why all solipsistic theories—whether they radically claim that nothing but the self ‘exist’ or, more moderately, hold

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351 Ibid., 46.
352 Ibid.
353 Ibid.
that the self and its consciousness of itself are the primary objects of verifiable knowledge—are out of tune with the most elementary data of our existence and experience.”\textsuperscript{354}

Her statement seems to be addressed to Heidegger, and against him, Arendt claims “plurality is the law of the earth.”\textsuperscript{355} We are all the same, insofar as everyone is a different being; at the same time, we are all different from each other, for we can express ourselves and distinguish from others.\textsuperscript{356} That is why Arendt insists that thinking dialogue is the “specifically human actualization of consciousness,” which suggests difference and otherness Characterizing the world of appearances.\textsuperscript{357} If thinking dialogue, or, thinking reflection, forms a unity between me and myself, it is so not because the origin of identity is located in a solipsistic subjectivity, as Heidegger claims, but because every subject is embedded in human plurality, according to Arendt.

Arendt’s criticism of Heidegger, though it is addressed very implicitly, is threefold. First, Heidegger’s claim that his interpretation of Kant’s epistemology does not describe the same phenomenon only from an ontological viewpoint is false. Second, “intention” as the act of consciousness is a cognitive activity that cannot be applied to the movement of the “I think” as long as the “I” of that movement is apparent in thinking reflection. Third, to claim that thinking activity is knowing activity, by which Heidegger claims that the Being of the “self” is revealed, is a “metaphysical fallacy.” In other words, Being and thinking cannot be the same, as Heidegger insists in his ontology.

To sum up for the second parallelism: we can say that the two philosophers’ accounts of the self as outlined in their respective understandings of human consciousness reveal the

\textsuperscript{354} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{355} Ibid., 187.
\textsuperscript{356} HC, 176.
\textsuperscript{357} LM: I, 187.
different philosophical views where the crossroad between epistemology and ontology occurs. The difference between Arendt and Heidegger regarding to how each of them seeks that crossroad can be examined in their understanding of time and transcendence which leads us to the third parallelism.

The third parallelism can be found in Heidegger’s claim that the “self” is “original time” and Arendt’s objection to it. By identifying time with the “self,” Heidegger transforms the “I think” into “the act of determining my existence” at the ontological level. As a result, in Heidegger’s interpretation, “existence,” which is the pure intellectual representation, is understood as self-affection, viz., forming the horizon of selfhood itself.

We argued that Heidegger understands that the “I” is the knowing activity that forms the horizon in which the “selfhood” is revealed. Thus, in this reading, time and the “I think” are the same, since the “I think” as the representation of the “I” is the knowing activity that forms the horizon; they are both “for itself.” Time is understood as the “self,” or, “self”-consciousness, and thus forming the horizon is taken as creating a “play-space” for the “self” out of itself. In other words, creating the “play-space” means forming “self”-consciousness as one continuous time succession through which the “I” becomes apparent. Though the “I” never appears, the “play-space” is considered to be the dwelling of the “I.”

358 Ibid., 135, emphasis added.
359 Ibid., 134, emphasis added.
360 Ibid., 138.
However, Arendt argues that Heidegger’s “play-space” is not a space at all, but is instead the duality created through the reflexivity of thinking; the duality is created by reflecting on the cognitive activity through the perspective of the thinking ego. Heidegger’s “self” is “nowhere.”

Philosopher love this ‘nowhere’ as though it were a country (philochōrenin) and they desire to let all other activities go for the sake of Scholazein (doing nothing, as we would say) because of the sweetness inherent in thinking or philosophizing itself. The reason for this blessed independence is that philosophy (the cognition kata logon) is not concerned with particulars, with things given to the senses, but with universals (kath’ holou), things that cannot be localized.

From the perspective of thinking ego, a space seems to be created by the relationship between the non-appearing “I” and the “I think.” thought-object.

Echoing this remark on the dwelling of the “I” as “nowhere,” we find another passage that further suggests that Arendt’s analyses of taking the thinking ego as the “self” are aimed at Heidegger’s “self.”

An “inside self,” if it exists at all, never appears to either the inner or the outward sense, since none of the inner data possess stable, relatively permanent features which, being recognizable and identifiable, Characterize individual appearance. “No fixed and abiding self can present itself in this flux of inner appearances” as Kant observed repeatedly. Actually it is misleading to speak even of inner “appearances”; all we know are inner sensations whose relentless succession prevents any of them from assuming a lasting, identifiable shape.—Emotions and “inner sensations” are “unworldly” in that they lack the chief worldly property of “standing still and remaining” at least long enough to be clearly perceived—and not merely sensed—to be intuited, identified, and acknowledged; again according to Kant, “time, the only form of inner intuition, has nothing permanent.” In other words, when Kant speaks of time as the “form of inner intuition,” he speaks though without being aware of it, metaphorically, and he draws his metaphor from our spatial experiences, which have to do with outside appearances.

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362 Ibid.
363 Ibid, 39-40, emphasis added.
The central point that Arendt is suggesting here is the fallacy of identifying time with the non-appearing “I,” for without appearing in (physical) space nothing can be claimed as even relatively permanent, such as Heidegger’s non-appearing “self,” or the “fixed and perduring I.” It is opposite of what Heidegger claims about the “self” and the horizon. As Arendt repeatedly brings up elsewhere in *LM*: I, time, as an inner intuition, does not have anything to hold on to without the aid of the outer senses. Thus, to identify time with the “I” (the “self”) as the Being of “self”-consciousness raises the question of how we can know of the “existence” of such a “self” in the first place. If that “existence” produces the “I think” through which the horizon is formed and the object is thus able to be experienced, as Heidegger posits, then it means that the non-appearing “I” causes the experience. But that does not fulfill Kant’s principle of the objective validity as we have already demonstrated. From this point of view, it is indeed a step closer to committing a “metaphysical fallacy” than to consider the duality created by the thinking activity as a kind of “space.” However, the third parallel does not stop there, for Arendt actually provides her own analysis of the nature of the non-appearing “I” and its dwelling. Let us look at this next.

Against Heidegger’s account of “fixed and perduring I” as an enduring time-unity, Arendt proposes that the dwelling space is not a physical space but the gap of time, which she explains by using Kafka’s parable “HE.”

He has two antagonists; the fist presses him from behind, from his origin. The second blocks the road in front of him. He gives battle to both. Actually, the first supports him in his fight with the second, for he wants to push him forward, and in the same way the second supports him in his fight with the first, since he drives him back. But it is only theoretically so. For it is not only. For it is not only the two antagonists who are there, but he himself as well, and who really knows his intentions? His dream, though, is that some time in an unguarded moment—and this, it must be admitted, would require a night darker than any night has ever been yet—he will jump out of the fighting line and be
promoted, on account of his experience in fighting, to the position of umpire over his antagonists in their fight with each other.\textsuperscript{364} Arendt interprets Kafka’s parable as the “inner state” of the thinking ego regarding to time.\textsuperscript{365} It is important for us to understand that her analysis has its basis in her criticism of Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of knowing activity, since, as shown previously, Arendt points out that what he offers is an interpretation of thinking activity as seen from the thinking ego.

Now, the two antagonists “HE” is facing are past and future. In the thinking reflection, past and future are equally present, since thinking is primarily after-thought (i.e., reflection.)\textsuperscript{366} It means that in the thinking reflection, the object of its activity is derived from the recollection of what was once physically present but is no longer. And due to its backwards glance as thinking reflection, the future is also not present, i.e., it is not yet. Thus they are equally absent from our senses.\textsuperscript{367} Yet, in the thinking ego’s inner sensation “no-longer” (past) and “not yet” (future) are both present, since the ego emerges only when we are committed to the thinking activity, i.e., in withdrawal from the world of appearances. It simply means that whatever is present in thinking activity is either a thought-object or a mere image, and as such the thinking activity can think of anything beyond the tense restriction. That is why Arendt points out that the region in which the thinking ego resides is the “gap between past and future [that] opens in reflection.”\textsuperscript{368} From the viewpoint of the thinking ego, where “he” is felt as being the gap, i.e., the “present.” Let us examine why Arendt thinks that Kafka’s parable captures the thinking ego and its relationship to time and why her explanation can be read as her objection to Heidegger’s account of the “self.”

\textsuperscript{364} Ibid., 202.
\textsuperscript{365} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{366} The backwards glance of thinking reflection here is echoing to Walter Benjamin’s “angel of history,” which Arendt mentions in her essay on him. “[T]he ‘angel of history,’ who looks at nothing but the expanse of ruins of the past, is blown backwards into the future by the storm of progress.” See MDT, 165.
\textsuperscript{367} Ibid., 203
\textsuperscript{368} Ibid., 206.
Since the activity of thinking is past-oriented—that all thoughts are after-thoughts—the thinking ego’s glance is backwards by nature. Speaking metaphorically, in “his” time sensation, “he” is facing towards the past, which is described as behind “his borrowing spatial image.” It is felt as if the past is rushing toward him, even though it is “he” who is casting his glance backwards to the past by reflection. The point here is that “he” (the thinking ego) does not know that “he” occurs in the thinking reflection. Consequently “he” feels as if the past is pushing him toward the future and that the future is felt pushing him toward the past. We argue that what Arendt is doing with Kafka’s parable is illuminating the time construction of Heidegger’s understanding of thinking activity, which he claims is an ontological interpretation of the knowing activity. In the knowing activity, which Arendt claims is intentional, we are facing to future. It does not mean that she agrees with Heidegger’s projective nature of human existence; instead, it simply means that our daily life continues from yesterday to tomorrow. From our everyday life viewpoint, the two vectors (the forces of past and future) that are described in Kafka’s parable are pointing out opposite directions. The past continuously stretches out behind us and the future is ahead of us. Kafka’s parable is said to describe that “he” is located between the two antagonists, both of which are coming toward “him,” showing the thinking ego’s unawareness that its glance is backwards. In other words, “he” “himself” believes that “he” faces toward the future in the same way that Heidegger describes the nature of the “self” as being fundamentally “projective,” i.e., future-oriented.

Arendt’s reading of the parable is directly against Heidegger’s “self” in terms of its relation to time. We have to recognize at this point that Heidegger’s “self,” with its future-oriented characteristic, is precisely the reversal of time sensation of the thinking ego that Arendt explains with Kafka’s parable. As fundamentally future-oriented, Heidegger’s “self” is moving
forward by facing to the future in his understanding. The moment this “self” recalls something from the past, he moves forward, and by the time what has been recalled is fetched and is returned to him, he is no longer where he was. But because the synthesis in concept is a priori, the sameness of his “self” prescribes the horizon in advance, and thus what returns to him still can find him as the same “self.”

His image as to how “self”-consciousness integrates the different tenses into one continuous time succession based on his interpretation of transcendental imagination as productive is, of course, derived from our everyday life experience.

In direct contrast, Arendt’s interpretation of Kafka’s parable as the “inner sensation” of the ego suggests that what Heidegger proposes as the “self” through his interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination does not unify the different tenses of time as one consciousness, as he claims, since what Heidegger describes as the knowing activity is that of thinking, and thinking is, by nature, not future-oriented but past-oriented, contrary to Heidegger. In a different place in the same text Arendt writes:

The faculty of anticipation the future in thought derives from the faculty of remembering the past, which in turn derives from the even more elementary ability to de-sense and have present before (and not just in) your mind what is physically absent. The ability to create fictive entities in your mind, such as the unicorn and the creature, or the fictitious characters of a story, an ability usually called productive imagination, is actually entirely dependent upon the so-called reproductive imagination.

The quotation suggests not only that our contention that Arendt’s interpretation of Kafka’s parable is a counterargument to Heidegger’s “self” is correct, but also that it is supported by

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369 “The reproductive synthesis should effect and maintain what it brings forth in unity with the being which is revealed directly in perception. And yet, when the mind again returns from its going-back into the past, when it returns again to the directly present being in order to set the former in unity with the latter, who then tells it that this being which is now present is the same as that which is previously abandoned…?” (129) “It [synthesis as pure recognition] explores in advance and is ‘watching out for what must be held before us in advance as the same in order that the apprehending and reproducing synthesis in general can find a close, circumscribed field of beings within which they can attach to what they bring forth and encounter, so to speak, and take them in stride as beings.” (130), KPM.

370 LM: I, 86.
Arendt’s and Heidegger’s contrasting accounts of imagination. That is, not only does Arendt criticize equating the activity of thinking with the cognitive model, viz., knowing and the consequent interpretation of the thinking ego emerging in the thinking reflection as the self, but she also criticizes the interpretation of imagination as being primarily productive. In short, we argue that all of this evidence indicates that Arendt’s “dismantling of metaphysics” is aimed squarely at Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant. Moreover, this evidence suggests that she develops her dismantling of metaphysics on the basis of her understanding of imagination as being primarily reproductive. As such, her account is most likely more theoretically thorough than scholars have generally believed up to this point.

But this is not the only evidence that we can bring to bear here. In fact, there is another piece of evidence that can be found to support our view in the same Chapter in which Arendt deals with Kafka’s parable. Arendt notes that the place where Kafka’s “he” is located is the gap between past and future, which is the present, i.e., “his” battleground. This battleground is “an in-between, an extended Now on which he spends his life.” At first glance, to articulate Arendt’s intention is somewhat difficult. While she is explaining the nature of this gap as being the “inner sensation” of the thinking ego, which is meant to serve as her counterargument against Heidegger’s account of the “self,” she also describes this gap as “man’s home on earth” which, of course, means the life in the world of appearances. However, with careful reading we can trace that what she is doing here. In short, she inserts into her own account of the gap the claim that the gap is the life of a person who appears to the world of appearances. Let us examine this further.

There are two accounts of the gap (what she calls “the in-between”), which Arendt describes by using Kafka’s parable. The first one we have already analyzed. This account of the
“nowhere” in which the thinking ego dwells, and offered as a critique of Heidegger. Arendt offers another response to this account in the same Chapter, only this time in the form of an allegory by Nietzsche from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

The parable of Kafka and the allegory by Nietzsche do not add any significantly new insights in terms of Arendt’s explanation about the nature of the gap, except in one sense. That is, Arendt mentions that Heidegger has his own interpretation of the allegory in his *Nietzsche*. She quotes Heidegger: “The Clash is produced only for the one who *himself* is the now….—This is the authentic content of the doctrine of Eternal recurrence, that Eternity *is* in the Now, that the Moment is not the futile Now which it is only for the onlooker, but the clash of Past and Future.”

It is hard to think of any reason as to why Arendt has to introduce Nietzsche’s allegory here – so similar to Kafka’s parable in many respects – except to allude further to the relation between the gap and the thinking ego, which she is discussing in this Chapter. This parable and allegory are meant to be her criticism of Heidegger’s account of the “self” and its relation to time. Only in that way does what she suggest in the following paragraph that we will analyze next make sense.

In the last paragraph on page 204 of *LM*: I and the first paragraph of page 205, Arendt proclaims that the gap, the present, the battleground, which is an “in-between,” an “extended Now,” is the “metaphor for man’s home on earth.” As we have seen, when it comes to Arendt’s discussion of the nature of the thinking ego, the whole point has been that it cannot be considered as the self, for it remains anonymous and ageless without a life-story, a “who” who does not *appear* to the world of appearances. Thus, the battleground, an “in-between,” and

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371 “Two paths meet here; no one has yet followed either to its end. This long lane stretches back for an eternity. And the other long lane out there, that is another eternity. They contradict each other, these roads; they offend each other face to face—and it is here, at this gateway, that they come together. The name of the gateway is inscribed above; “Now” [“Augenblick”]….Behold this Now! From this gateway Now, a long eternal lane leads *backward*; behind us lies an eternity [and another lane leads forward into an eternal future]. Ibid., 204.

372 Ibid.

373 Ibid., 205.
“extended Now,” “the present,” which Arendt associates with man’s “home on earth” cannot be the same as the gap of “nowhere” in which the thinking ego dwells. Without giving a clear sign, Arendt shifts the key of her melody here. She is quietly inserting her account of the present. In fact, we find the following lines in the next paragraph:

That we can shape the everlasting stream of sheer change into a time continuum we owe not to time itself but to the continuity of our business and our activities in the world, in which we continue what we started yesterday and hope to finish tomorrow. In other words, the time continuum depends on the continuity of our everyday life, and the business of everyday life, in contrast to the activity of the thinking ego—always independent of the spatial circumstances surrounding it—is always spatially determined and conditioned. It is due to this thoroughgoing spatiality of our ordinary life that we can speak plausibly of time in spatial categories, that the past can appear to us as something lying ‘behind’ us and the future as lying ‘ahead.’

Here we can sense the second account of the gap, i.e., Arendt’s own account of the present. Against Heidegger’s “self,” whose Being synthesizes and apprehends the manifold and thus is time itself, Arendt claims that the integration of time as continuous succession depends on our everyday life in the world of appearances. Without the aid of the outer senses, time as inner sense cannot claim anything to be fixed. Thus, time integration occurs not on the side of the invisible, non-appearing mind, as Heidegger claims; quite the contrary, it occurs on the side of the world. It means that we can claim the “fixed and abiding” self as the condition for temporality insofar as it appears. For that reason, though she agrees with Heidegger that the insertion of a human being into eternity is what makes temporality possible in the first place, and thus the existence of the human being is the present, Arendt nonetheless claims that the present as the gap between past and future must be the life in the world of appearances. Arendt’s statement can be seen as her objection to Heidegger’s account of transcendence.

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374 Ibid., 205-206
Heidegger claims that his ontological interpretation of Kant uncovers the essential structure of the Being of the being by reexamining Kant’s transcendental philosophy as ontological knowledge. It means that by interpreting the synthesis ontologically, he would reveal how the ontological correlation between the conditions of the possibility of experience and the conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience is established. That is, the “possibility of the preliminary understanding of Being” is at the same time the “constitution of Being of being.” He calls such ontological knowledge “transcendence,” which enables him to elucidate the relation between Being and being by going beyond the limit of being toward uncovering of Being. Putting it differently, it is in the elucidation of the possibility of experience that the structure of transcendence becomes clear. As such, Heidegger claims that truth lies in elucidating how the horizon is formed and what it means ontologically.

In contrast, Arendt disagrees with Heidegger by pointing out that his elucidation is not of the knowing activity but that of thinking, and his “self” is merely a thinking ego. The thinking ego, unlike the self, does not unify time but creates the gap in which past and future constantly crash to it. The thinking ego as a sheer activity is “relentless motion,” which transforms all Being into Becoming “instead of letting it be and thus incessantly destroys its being present,” according to Arendt. She points out that by interpreting the thinking activity under the model of cognition, Heidegger contributes to metaphysics. That is, by granting thinking activity as Being, which means “self”-consciousness as the horizon for object becoming experienceable, whatever appears on that horizon is understood as merely a being. Thinking is not a cognitive activity, but is, in its essence, reflective. What Heidegger claims as the effect of the “I think,”

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375 KPM, 10.
376 Ibid., 83.
377 Ibid., 87.
378 Ibid.
which is supposed to reveal beings in the horizon by its regulative representing, is actually preparation of the object for reflection, i.e., thought-thing. As we noted in our analysis of Arendt’s criticism of Heidegger’s account of identity established through the relation between the “I” and the “I think,” the thought-thing is a representation of reason, i.e., a concept. In other words, the object of the thinking reflection is thought, and what thinking is looking for is meaning. When thinking is interpreted as if it is cognitive activity, truth as the object of knowing and meaning as that of thinking are mixed up. The result of such confusion leads us to think that there are two classes of existence: Being and being. From Arendt’s viewpoint, Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant’s epistemology commits a “metaphysical fallacy.” In short, Arendt sees that interpreting transcendental imagination as productive causes such a dichotomy.

It is at this point that the two philosophers’ interpretation of transcendental imagination manifests where each of them stands philosophically in terms of their different accounts of transcendence, especially illuminating why Arendt emphasizes reproductive imagination. Heidegger’s productive imagination makes him claim that it is in thinking where Being and being coincide, according to Arendt’s viewpoint. His interpretation stems from his interpreting thinking activity by means of a cognitive model. Arendt’s view of Heidegger, in turn, suggests to us that she thinks that the moment at which Being and being coincide insofar as knowing is understood as cognitive activity not a speculative thinking as the case of Heidegger. In other words, it is in perception as cognitive activity that Being and being coincide. Truth can be claimed in perception. It is in this context that her claim that “Being and Appearing coincide” in the world of appearances must be understood. 379 It means that we need to examine if

productive imagination in Heidegger and reproductive imagination in Arendt shows a parallelism, and if in this parallelism we can point out a theoretically-coherent structure to support Arendt’s claim that “Being and Appearing coincide” as the ground of the synthesis.

Based on our analyses and discussions of Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant, particularly of transcendental imagination as productive, in this fourth and last parallelism we shall sketch out a few key factors which may help to reconstruct Arendt’s reproductive imagination. Let us start with suggesting a parallel between Heidegger’s interpretation and Arendt’s example, which is the basis for her employing “exemplary validity” for her interpretation of Kant’s aesthetic judgment. Arendt’s discussion of the example appears in her seminar note “Imagination,” which is included in LKPP. It is in this lecture note that Arendt claims that the example for reflective judgment plays a similar role as the schema does in the determinative judgment.\(^\text{380}\) Crucially, Arendt states that “[P]roductive imagination [genius] is never entirely productive” to mark what imagination is on the opening page of her seminar notes.\(^\text{381}\) “The schema, as a product of the transcendental imagination, produce a “kind of image” in the mind that presents to the mind the universal trait of a certain thing, e.g., a “table.”\(^\text{382}\) “It makes us able to communicate such simple commands as “Bring me a table.”\(^\text{383}\) While a determinative judgment subsumes the particular under a general rule, reflective judgment “derive[s] the rule from the particular.”\(^\text{384}\) She notes that “[t]he example is the particular that contains in itself, or is supposed to contain, a concept or a general rule.”\(^\text{385}\) For instance, in the case of courageous person, one may recall Achilles as an example by which to judge her. If

\(^{380}\) Ibid., 84.
\(^{381}\) Ibid., 79.
\(^{382}\) Ibid., 83.
\(^{383}\) Ibid.
\(^{384}\) Ibid.
\(^{385}\) Ibid., 84.
someone is good, we “have in the back of our minds the example of Saint Francis or Jesus of Nazareth.”\textsuperscript{386} It works the other way around as well. For instance, though Napoleon Bonaparte was as a particular man, Bonapartism makes him an example. Arendt says that “[t]he judgment has exemplary validity to the extent that the example is rightly chosen.”\textsuperscript{387}

It is not difficult to see a parallel between Arendt’s understanding of the example with Heidegger’s interpretation of the schema-image in the Schematism. While a schema-image is created by looking from a universal and non-appearing standpoint in Heidegger, Arendt’s example is a person. As a particular person lives in the world, s/he stands in a particular place in the world. S/he is a part of the world in the way that s/he sees and acts based on where s/he stands. Her or his way of seeing things and acting upon them makes her/him appear and recognized by others, by which s/he becomes an example. The example in reflective judgment plays a similar role as the schema do in determinative judgment means that a particular person, who becomes an example, reveals the particular viewpoint from which s/he saw things and acted upon them. This person is not an anonymous non-appearing “I” as is the case under Heidegger’s interpretation, where the Schematism is based on productive imagination. The particular and actually living or having lived person sets an example as to how certain things should be seen and understood.\textsuperscript{388} For instance, Nelson Mandela set an example for forgiveness and reconciliation in contrast to the long history of oppression by the white minority in South Africa, and built a new South Africa as an egalitarian nation. In Mandela’s case, he literally opened a new space. As an example, he opened a new horizon for understanding what “forgiveness” can be. Those who come after Nelson Mandela will look to him as an example of “forgiveness” in

\textsuperscript{386} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{387} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{388} By “actually” here, of course, we mean the life as an action which is actualized by means of power or, \textit{dynamis} as we have discussed in Chapter 2.
order to overcome hatred and to achieve reconciliation for the sake of different people living together.

Heidegger’s interpretation of the Schematism is to form a schema-image from a universal viewpoint, since it is his identification of the “self” with reason that provides the point at which a look is formed. It is through creating the schema-image that the “self” is said to be one continuous time succession and thus the “I” is said to be the “original time.” In other words, the specific position, from which a look projected, is the beginning, i.e., the “original time.”

Heidegger’s schema-image arises by looking from a universal viewpoint, viz., reason. From where that look is projected can be said to be a beginning, though not in Chronological order, for the “I” is time itself, not in time. Rather, it is a beginning because that is from where the “I think” is projected, and by which conceptualization is possible. And it is through such conceptualization that the “self” as standing against what is conceptualized is revealed. Putting it differently, it is in forming identity between the “I” and the “I think” that the “self” as freedom is manifested. That is, in knowing activity reason and the “self” coincide. The productive imagination in Heidegger initiates the “Self” as activity out of itself, and it is in such activity that the “I” of the “self” becomes apparent. Heidegger’s account of knowing activity initiated through forming identity between the “I” and the “I think” is understood as “original time,” since he interprets transcendental imagination as productive imagination, which is the forming faculty

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389 KPM, 139.
390 “[I]f time as pure self-affection allows the pure succession of the sequence of nows to spring forth for the first time, then this, which springs froth from it and which, so to speak, comes to be discerned for itself alone in the customary ‘Chronology, essentially cannot be sufficient to determine the full essence of time.” Ibid., 135.
391 “In respect before the law, I subordinate myself to the law. The specific having-a-feeling for...which is found in respect is a submitting. In respect before the law, I submit to myself. In this submitting-to-myself, I am as I itself.—In submitting to the law, I submit to myself as pure reason. In this submitting-to-myself, I elevate myself to myself as the free creature which determines itself.” KPM, 111, emphasis added.
to allows time to spring forth. As a result, “self”-consciousness is understood as the horizon in which objects become experienceable, i.e., objects are experienced as determination of time. “The pure schemata as transcendental determinations of time are what form the horizon of transcendence.” In other words, it is because of the beginning of a look that temporality is brought about.

Our question is if we can detect a similar structure in Arendt. We need to examine if Arendt’s example not only reveals a particular viewpoint, but if it can be also said to be a beginning. According to Arendt, example reveals a general meaning without losing its particularity. Someone becomes an example through not only her action but also because this action has been recognized and understood. It brings us back our analyses in Chapter 2 about Arendt’s account of action and understanding and their mutual relation found in Aristotelian notion of mimêsis. We analyzed how putting actions of the main character together in the plot presents her life as an action and reveals its meaning within its context. It is through emplotment that the beginning of such a life story is made manifest on its own. The meaning of the main character’s action is revealed to the eyes of spectators as something universal, though that universality is not derived from reason but is brought about by what Jacques Taminiaux calls “tragic theôria.” Additionally, before our analyses of Arendt’s treatment of tragedy, we also discussed and analyzed her notion of action as freedom and as a new beginning which Arendt identifies with time with the help of Augustinian notion of initium. Given these, it is quite relevant to remind us here that for Arendt action as a new beginning is beginning of time, which is actualized in plurality: Individuation of the self occurs in plurality.

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392 Ibid., 131.
393 Ibid., 139.
It is in light of these analyses that we can point out evidence that Arendt’s notion of the example indeed has a similar structure to Heidegger’s interpretation of the Schematism, but with the critical difference being that hers is a reproductive imagination. Their difference in interpreting transcendental imagination, for Heidegger productive and for Arendt reproductive, can be understood as different account of transcendence in the two philosophers respectively. Similar to Heidegger, Arendt’s beginning, too, is a beginning of temporality, which is presented by her notion of natality or, *initium*; a linear movement cutting across the eternal circular movement of the universe. Yet, Arendt’s beginning is actualized in interaction with others, unlike Heidegger who understands beginning as the relation of the “self” with itself whose essence is ontologically interpreted knowing activity *per se*. Though action as a new beginning reveals the meaning of action and consequently who one is, such action is not derived from the self as relation to itself. Rather, who one is, her identity, is disclosed through her action being understood by others. This similarity can be further traced in how Heidegger comes to explain the Schematism as a synthesis of imagination. Heidegger interprets both intuition and understanding as different modes of the synthesis of the transcendental imagination, i.e., present for intuition and future for understanding, and thus places transcendental imagination as the common root of them both. We can suggest a very similar structure in Arendt’s notion of action and understanding. A life as an action or an activity, which we analyzed in Arendt’s adaptation of Aristotelian notion of *mimèsis*, is an “in-between, an extended Now” on earth for Arendt, as we discussed through her interpretation of Kafka’s parable.394 Unlike Heidegger who interprets concepts as future oriented due to productive nature of transcendental imagination, for Arendt understanding is the past as history. It is in this sense that Arendt’s imagination is reproductive. Meaning is not revealed by projecting the concept in relationship with reason as forming identity between the “I” and the “I

394 *LM*: I, 205.
think” in the case of Heidegger but by reflecting on what happened. For her, forming the horizon, where truth is revealed by understanding what happened, is the world as human history. Such a horizon indeed reveals the Being of the self as an appearance, for it is action that makes manifest who one is, to appear among one’s fellows. It is in this sense, transcendence for Arendt can be said that in the world of appearances where “Being and Appearing coincide.” The truth revealed in historical understanding is fact whose revelation is the meaning of particular event. It is grasped within its own context by what we typically find in historian’s backwards glance. The backwards glance is thinking for Arendt. In other words, thinking and Being correlate or, thinking is Being for Arendt only insofar as Being is understood as worldly existence in human plurality. While Heidegger understands freedom—the “possibility of action”—as thinking activity, Arendt understands freedom as a mutual relation between action and understanding. As Heidegger calls forming the horizon, the production of the “play-space,” Arendt calls her horizon—the world as history—the “space of appearance.” And thus, it can be also said about her notion of dynamis (power) as the actuality qua potentiality borrowed from Aristotle. The possible nature of power which keeps opening the space of appearance is derived from imagination, for what she means by power is forming the horizon as the world (of appearances).

The mutual relation between action and understanding, which Arendt points out as two sides of the same coin of imagination in the essay, “Understanding and Politics” in EU, now can be understood as the result of taking reproductive imagination as the common root of action and understanding. Based on our analyses, we can suggest that the mutual relationship between action and understanding, which can be observed in Arendt in different works from various periods, is Arendt’s own interpretation of transcendental imagination shaped through her critical response to Heidegger. For Arendt, imagination is primarily reproductive, since she understands
human being as worldly existence living among people. It means that both knowing and thinking activities have its basis in the intersubjectively woven world.

At last, Arendt’s understanding of time can also explain her account of “originality,” which we discussed in Chapter 1. There, we suggested that Arendt’s account of “originality” means the ability to transform what is sensed to sensation, in which one’s self and others’ perspectives coincide. We need to recall that Arendt calls the sensation “inner sense.” In Chapter 1, we only understood this claim as referring to sensing oneself. However, based on the parallel between Heidegger and Arendt with respect to time as beginning, it can be suggested that sensation in Arendt’s conception of judgment is time. For Heidegger, “original” is understood as a look-formation. Such a “look-formation,” viz., the production of a schema-image, is possible by identifying the transcendental imagination (productive imagination) with reason and time. That is, original time is understood as “self”-affection. Arendt’s sensation, brought about by the reproductive imagination, is taken as “inner sense” insofar as beginning (time) is actualized by interaction with others. It does not mean to claim that presence of others in one’s imagination is merely subjective; I merely imagine how others see things. Quite to the contrary, Arendt claims it is a sheer fact that not Man but men live in the world. From Arendt’s viewpoint, it is rather difficult to think that imagination can function in pure singularity. Since we are of the world (of appearances), our perception is always already contextualized. It is probably impossible for us to know that how a person, who exists alone from her birth through her life till her death without any human contact, sees and understands. It is in this sense that Arendt’s “inner sense” as sensation must be understood in contrast with Heidegger. That is, when Arendt claims that “inner sense” as sensation in terms of her interpretation of taste, she

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395 KPM, 92.
means that “inner sense” as the form of intuition which suggests relation with others contrary to Heidegger who understands time as pure form of intuition shows mind’s relation to itself.
Conclusion

Based on what we have demonstrated through these four major parallels between Heidegger and Arendt, we conclude not only that Arendt’s “dismantling of metaphysics” is intended to criticize Heidegger’s ontological reading of Kant and his transcendental imagination, but that it suggests that her account of appearance is shaped as her critical response to Heidegger in her rejection of his reading of imagination as productive. Instead Arendt quietly and implicitly suggests that her own interpretation based on reproductive imagination is a way to give a theoretical account for her notion of appearance.

In Chapter 3, we analyzed what Arendt’s calls the “metaphysical fallacy” and her “dismantling of metaphysics” as a way to articulate her account of the appearances. Our analyses have suggested that, for Arendt, one of the major issues at stake is to overcome the dichotomy which metaphysics has offered as its world view, that is, the dichotomy of Being and appearing and its consequence of putting Being over appearing (being). Arendt sees that the origin of this dichotomy lies in the distinction between reason and intellect, and the problem of interpreting thinking activity is based on a cognitive model and its standards. In the end of Chapter 3, we came to conclude that her “dismantling of metaphysics” is meant to bring thinking activity back from the world of the invisible to the world where we live our everyday lives. Such an attempt is backed by her question on the relation between thinking and judgment raised through witnessing Eichmann’s trial. In other words, Arendt’s quest for finding an account for her notion of appearance is based on her lucid realization for the need of finding the basis of morality, or simply to search for where we can find the ground for human freedom and the responsibility for action led by human freedom. Arendt’s rejection of viewing thinking activity within the framework of the cognitive model is the first step toward that inquiry, and at the same
time it sheds light on the account of the perceptual truth in her notion of the appearance. Instead of interpreting thinking activity as if it is cognitive activity, Arendt propose the primacy of the world of appearances as the basis of perception and thinking as reflective activity upon the meaning of what happened in that world.

Our question to answer in all of this inquiry was whether or not Arendt has any coherent theoretical framework to support her account of the appearances. That led us to examine more deeply in her “dismantling of metaphysics” in the second part of this Chapter. In Chapter 4, we laid down how Arendt’s “dismantling of metaphysics” – particularly her critical analyses of the thinking activity and the thinking ego in LM:I – can be read as her critique of Heidegger, and more precisely his ontological interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination in KPM. By demonstrating the parallels between Heidegger and Arendt within her criticism of him, we have attempted to point out in Arendt’s criticism how her account of appearance and the related notions such as action, freedom, aesthetic feeling, the self (the who of the actor), understanding, time etc., can be formed and developed as her counter-interpretation of Heidegger’s ontological reading of Kant. That is, there is more than a mere probability that Arendt’s description of the political life centered in her account of appearance indeed has a coherent theoretical framework, which can be reconstructed as her theory of reproductive imagination. And her unfinished project of judgment could be the center of such theory. We believe that our series of analyses held in this thesis has strongly suggested that Arendt’s treatment of judgment in LKPP was not intended either to deal with judgment as merely a mental faculty or to aestheticize the political life. Rather, Arendt’s treatment of judgment is meant to provide her phenomenological understanding of reproductive imagination which bridges the mental life and the political life of human existence of those who live in the world of appearances as being of the world.
We have to admit that what we have offered in this thesis only achieved a preliminary examination of Arendt’s account of appearance as that of intersubjectivity, which is most likely derived from her interpretation of Kant’s transcendental imagination as reproductive shaped through her critical dialogue with Heidegger. The contrast between Heidegger’s productive imagination and Arendt’s reproductive imagination can be boiled down to the reflexivity of thinking for Heidegger and that of knowing for Arendt. One may wonder if the reflexivity that we observed as the result of reproductive imagination should be addressed as that of judgment, not knowing. Such concerns and/or objections seem(s) correct, particularly when we know that our analysis in this thesis has started from Arendt’s interpretation of Kant’s aesthetic judgment. Indeed, we are not dismissing judgment altogether. Rather, what we are trying to suggest as a part of our concluding remarks is that a possibility of further investigation on this topic in future.

We have demonstrated that how Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant is developed by taking the Being of the “self” as being thinking activity. Our analyses also demonstrated how Arendt objects to Heidegger’s interpretation by claiming it to be a “metaphysical fallacy.” We believe that her objection comes from Heidegger’s insistence that Being and thinking are the same, if not belonging together, and truth lies within the relation between the two. For Arendt, such a claim deprives us of our sense of reality. Arendt’s concern is manifested in her analysis of laws and legality in terms of totalitarian rule, which we dealt with in Chapter 2. Once one claims the independence of an idea from common sense—what Arendt terms “the sixth sense,” to fit in with our five bodily senses into the world and guaranteeing our sense of reality—anything can be placed not as a premise but as if it is a fact. Once the world lost its ability to offer this “sixth sense,” the only way to prove an idea as a fact is to actually carry a mere premise into a course of action and turn it as a fact accordingly. That is the danger of speculative
thinking, according to Arendt. It is in that sense that Arendt considers Heidegger’s thought to be potentially dangerous. And in fact, Heidegger, one of the greatest philosophers in the 20th century, failed to see what Nazism was about.

We need to remember that Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of Kant is an interpretation of Kant’s theory of judgment. Heidegger interprets judgment as being thinking activity. But he is doing so claiming that what he is doing is an ontological interpretation of knowing activity. In other words, Heidegger insists that his ontological interpretation only reveals the other side of cognitive activity. As we demonstrated, Arendt disagrees sharply with him in this; in fact, she offers an alternative interpretation based on her account of reproductive imagination. It is not difficult to see that her reproductive imagination is her way to demonstrate how the appearance in which “Being and Appearing coincide,” reveals truth. In other words, by claiming that imagination is primarily reproductive, Arendt tries to suggest how perception as cognitive activity is fundamentally intersubjective. That is the reason why we suggest that reproductive imagination in Arendt can be understood as the reflexivity of knowing activity. It is rather cliché, but it could be said that Arendt’s reproductive imagination is her attempt to re-retrieve Kant’s judgment from Heidegger.

In such a context, judgment is knowing. It is in this sense that we can suggest that sensation (representation) and reflection (judgment) in Arendt’s interpretation of Kant’s aesthetic judgment could be claimed as being the same operation. It suggests that Arendt’s account of reproductive imagination can be further investigated as her interpretation of Kant’s aesthetic judgment as a phenomenological investigation of judgment, viz., perception. Such a possibility can be suggested in that both Heidegger’s productive imagination and Arendt’s reproductive imagination aim at elucidating what is horizon or, transcendance. Jacques Taminiaux elucidated
that Heidegger’s transcendence can be understood as his ontological transformation of Husserlian theory of intentionality. Likewise we would like to suggest the possibility of elucidating Arendt’s reproductive imagination as her transformation of Husserlian intentionality. Though we left it in open-ended, Arendt’s intentionality of appearance seems to indicate such a possibility.

Lastly, we would like to make a remark on Arendt’s method. Arendt’s method and process of dismantling of metaphysics is fierce and often seems to be done too freely to the eyes of those whom are trained in the history of philosophy. It has been a part of our challenge in this thesis to do justice in delineating her intentions. That is so particularly since Arendt herself almost never talks about her method or her theoretical intention straightforwardly. Not only that, as we have mentioned many times throughout this thesis, Arendt often uses her criticism toward certain philosophers and their notions as a way of addressing her own thoughts, which against the common impression that she often gives to her reader, is not sporadic but is backed with a thorough theoretical framework. This is clearly a part of her method in both her thinking and writing style. Due to such characteristics, tracing and reconstructing Arendt’s own thought is not easy. She seems to believe that her intention and method should be apparent to the eyes of her reader.

Let me now at the end of these long reflections draw attention, not to my “method,” not to my “criteria” or, worse, my “values”—all of which in such an enterprise are mercifully hidden from its author though they may be or, rather, seems to be quite manifest to reader and listener—but to what in my opinion is the basic assumption of this investigation.396 Her belief is that that her “method,” “criteria”, or “value” would be apparent to her reader. That is her practice of reproductive imagination, which enables to synthesize different perspectives in

396 Arendt. LM:I. 211.
appearance. In other words, though her style and method are not as easy as she thinks they are to follow, she simply trust in the power of expressing, “it-seems-to-be” (dokei moi) as the mode of appearance. To find appearance qua appearance as the sole ground of our sense of the reality and human freedom means to believe in the possibility that we can always start something new and think critically even after we’ve lost our yardstick or the thought framework, religion, authority and tradition, the trinity of the thread of tradition is broken.397

The loss of this trinity does not destroy the past, and the dismantling process itself is not destructive,; it only draws conclusions from a loss which is a fact and as such no longer a part of the “history of ideas” but of our political history, the history of our world. — What you then are left with is still the past, but a fragmented past, which has lost its certainty of evaluation.398

Because what is left with us is the “fragmented past,” we need to practice (reflective) judgment and re-productive imagination to treat it and think without the yardstick. Arendt leaves with her favorite lines from The Tempest:

Full fathom five thy father lies,
Of his bones are coral made,
Those are pearls that were his eyes.
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change399

Arendt warns, “If some of my listeners or readers should be tempted to try their luck at the technique of dismantling, let them be careful not to destroy the ‘rich and strange,’ the ‘coral’ and the ‘pearls,’ which can probably be saved only as fragments.”400  We hope that we ourselves have not destroyed the “rich and strange” in Arendt’s works.

397 Ibid., 212.
398 Ibid.
399 Ibid.
400 Ibid.
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