

**Hannah Arendt Not Among the Germans:
Intellectuals, “Intellectual Fields,” and “Fields of Knowledge”**

**Renate Holub¹
University of California, Berkeley**

**Forum
on**

Seyla Benhabib, The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt. Modernity and Political Thought. Vol. 10. Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. Pp. 247. Richard Bernstein, Hannah Arendt and the Jewish Question. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996. Pp. 233. Elzbieta Ettinger, Hannah Arendt Martin Heidegger. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995. Pp. 139. Dana R. Villa, Arendt and Heidegger. The Fate of the Political Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996. Pp. 329.

I. Theorists and Intellectuals

Over the past six to eight years, scholarship on Hannah Arendt has increasingly evolved into something of an industry. In the United States, scholars who participate in this new reception history typically belong to the disciplines of political science and political philosophy. This is also the case with most of the authors under review here, with the exception of Elzbieta Ettinger, who teaches creative writing and writes fiction as well as biographies. While not all of the intellectuals represented in this forum consider themselves Arendtians, they have, nonetheless, two features in common. For one, they routinely stress that Arendt is the founder of a modern political theory. And for another,

they equally routinely forget to stress that Arendt is also an intellectual. By focusing on Arendt's relevance for contemporary political theory, they separate her theory from the specific locations and times from which it arises. Hence, they do not place her among the Germans. By viewing Arendt primarily as a theorist rather than an intellectual, contemporary Arendt scholars decouple her from the complexity of relations that obtain from her membership in the field of philosophy in the German academy. They also decouple her from her relations to tendencies in German society at large during her formative years. These relations can also be grasped as the "existential conditions" of Arendt's thought.² Readers of these pages might be quick to point out that Bernstein does indeed address relations between Arendt's ideas and historical contexts. Yet the purpose of my review essay is not to simply draw deterministic relations between ideas and socio-historical contexts along Marxist methodological lines. Rather, I am interested in describing both the conditions and the normative implications of Arendt's thought. As a result, I approach Arendt not as a theorist but as an intellectual who, qua participant in a field, engages, whether consciously or not, in the logic of her "intellectual field" and hence also in the position her "intellectual field" holds with respect to other "fields of knowledge" of the Germany of her formative years.³ Arendt's disposition towards the field structure her thought just as the structure of her thought reflects the effects of the field. Among these effects are her perception of power distribution in time, space, and location.

My approach serves several purposes. For one, it will throw light on a series of issues which are still unsettling in the Arendt scholarship, such as the vexata questio pertaining to her relationship with Heidegger after world war two. This issue, which is

explicitly discussed in Elzbieta Ettinger's Hannah Arendt-Martin Heidegger, and Dana R. Villa's Arendt and Heidegger. The Fate of the Political, is also implicit in the remaining two books, albeit their titles would suggest otherwise. I will show how Arendt's return to Heidegger in the fifties is less related to her romantic involvement with him in the twenties, but rather to her identification with the prestige, power, and cultural norms of a specific class in German society: the state nobility of philosophical professoriate. The second purpose of my approach is to reflect on Arendt conceptual and grammatical style. It ties her to "laws of tendency" which effect the geopolitics of conservative intellectuals in early 20th century Germany.⁴ Thirdly, since the Arendt interpreters under review here typically do not address her style but rather her concepts, I want to draw attention to the implications of such practices. By not reflecting on the complexity of relations within which Arendt is embedded, U.S. political scientists legitimate -- albeit inadvertently -- their lack of self-reflection with respect to field mechanisms that govern their own politico-political practices. For by returning to Hannah Arendt "political theory" without acknowledging the now outdated geopolitical dimensions of her thought, they themselves can return to an outdated geopolitical point of view without having to acknowledge it

II. Arendt and "Intellectual Fields"

Hannah Arendt is an intellectual who has been socialized at specific times and in specific cultural spaces. Her initial language of the mind, and of the emotions, was German. As Bernstein put it, "in Hannah Arendt's coming of age, it was German poetry, language, and philosophy that captured her imagination." (15) German philosophical and literary traditions no doubt shaped her mind. Yet Hannah Arendt has also been

academically socialized into a specific knowledge field. She learned to develop, and censor, her philosophical ideas in the context of philosophy, an “intellectual field,” which fulfilled, in the context of the university, a specific function vis-a-vis other “fields of knowledge” and social institutions. Research on “intellectual fields” has indicated that they are based on underlying assumptions which are widely shared by its members but not often explicitly expressed.⁵ Assumptions and tastes determine intellectuals from within an “intellectual field,” as much as intellectuals from within these fields determine assumptions and tastes. Hence “intellectual fields” are not simply a set of ideas or ideologies a group of intellectuals consciously share. Rather, the disciplinary and institutional history of these fields functions as an unconscious which censors the philosophical desires of its members as it regulates the interaction between “member intellectuals” and “non-member intellectuals.”⁶ It is unlikely that Arendt’s philosophical disposition remained unaffected by her institutional environment. And in fact, it did not. The immense status and prestige Germany’s mandarines claimed for themselves at the moment of their objective decline and the ways in which they related to emerging tendencies in German society at large mark Arendt’s thought. She is thus the product not only of thought traditions, such as German philosophy, but also of apparatuses which manage and reproduce the symbolic capital of her field. These forces may be arbitrary and capricious. Yet they do, and did play a role in Arendt’s coming to be who she was, what she wanted, and what she saw. Above all, they did play a role in how she depicted and judged the power relations of her social and political worlds. The complex dynamics which obtain between the power of social location and society at large in the Germany of her formative years shaped Arendt’s

views of the world. Arendt herself may have subordinated, in her own work, the social to more illustrious endeavors, such as the political. Yet the invisible rules that govern the powerful symbolic capital of the “elite communities” of Arendt's Germany affected her identity as a philosopher and her habitus as an intellectual.⁷ And membership in this community defined her style as a thinker.

Arendt had access to Germany's philosophical state nobility.⁸ This group was most privileged because it was a small elite of intellectual leaders of philosophical and humanist training. Since the immense prestige and power of that elite was still recognized in the Germany preceding the student movement, it surely played an even more powerful role in the twenties. When Arendt entered the humanistic wing of the German university, she found herself in the company of men who either already functioned as leaders in German society and culture or who would be expected to do so after completing their advanced studies. Their understanding of their cultural function was far from that of a "free floating intellectual. When Arendt enrolled in her philosophy courses, she became a citizen in the upper echelon of an aristocratic community that represented, roughly speaking, less than 0.6 % of the German population. These 0.6 % of the population were subject to the educators of the educators of that elite, a professorial stratum that constituted about 0.7 % of the overall academic community. Members of that elite community were highly conscious of their elite status and the civic responsibilities such status commanded, particularly since in Germany, where educational systems were centralized and state funded, elites were payed as top level civil servants in the context of powerful state bureaucracies. Arendt shares a disposition common among these elite

intellectuals: that it is their intellectual excellence which bestows them with their class distinctions. While Arendt does not openly express her meritocratic stance, it, nonetheless, comes to the fore in her in her Crises of the Republic. In the context of her version of a federalist model, she states bluntly that whomever cannot express his/her ideas efficaciously should not be chosen to represent a group. And whoever shows no interest should equally be excluded from political action.⁹ Hence her adherence to radical individualism which sanctions inequality on the basis of unequal talent, effort, and desire, disregards processes of socialization in the production of inequality. And in her correspondence with Mary McCarthy, methods of inclusion and exclusion, on the basis of which she deems members of New York intellectual circles worthy of her respect, are quite prominent. Describing a party she attended, she writes: "I saw Nathalie Sarraute on a big party with rather non-big people."¹⁰

When Arendt became a member in the "intellectual field" of philosophy, she gathered experiences as a member of a particular group on both the conceptual and normative level. Group experiences also have an impact on the emotional structures of the individual group members. In these "structures of feeling," the past works with greater and lesser force, according to circumstances it they support or censor normative dispositions towards the present.¹¹ The esprit de corps was extraordinarily pervasive among the philosophical elites, for philosophers were not merely cultural leaders in Germany. The structure of the German university itself had become a model for universities worldwide.¹² Many biographies of European and American leading intellectuals indicate that they spent some of their pre-world war one university years in

the German academy. Croce, Unamuno, Pirandello and W.E.B. Dubois come to mind.¹³ By the same token, non-German intellectuals routinely decried their own university systems.¹⁴

The prestige and status conferred onto the intellectual stratum due to the leadership functions German intellectuals assumed in a national and international framework no doubt colonized the cultural consciousness and unconscious alike of its members. What also colonized their unconscious were conceptions of the superiority of German culture. The mission of the Deutsche Kultur expressed itself in its incomparability to that of other nations, such as the French, who did not produce culture, but merely civilization.¹⁵ It is unlikely that Arendt's "structure of feeling" escaped the principal markers of that disposition: they are based on a radical distinction between "we" and "they," and "us" and "them." These "we" and "they" and "us" and "them" distinctions consist of intra-national dimensions as well as of international dimensions. Germany of the first three decades of this century, the decades of Arendt's "Kindheitsmuster," is a society marked by increasing awareness of the formation of modern mass societies threatening to dismiss social distinctions between proletariat and middle stratas of the bourgeoisie, between "them" and "us." And the Germany of the twenties is a society marked by the effects of world war one, when much collective discourse focused on "why "they" had defeated "us". In this sense the predominant German intelligentsia was political in more than one way. It shared a popular, collective version of "we" and "them," as it constructed its very own elite version of "we" and "them." It is important in that context to remember that one of Arendt's main teachers, to whom she was extraordinarily dedicated, Karl Jaspers subtitled his 1932 book on Max Weber Deutsches Wesen im politischen Denken, im Forschen und

Philosophieren.¹⁶ In a monograph on Descartes, which Jaspers wrote in roughly the same period, the adjective "French" is nowhere to be found.¹⁷ He clearly distinguishes, and not only in this particular book, but also in post world war two publications, between Germanness and non-Germanness. And so does Arendt. Long after her departure from Germany she writes in a letter from Berkeley in the mid-fifties: "Heute Abend habe ich die graduate students der Departments, die mich "quizzzen" wollen. Konnte ich nicht nein sagen, da ich es den Historikern zugebilligt hatte, die immer noch zu meinen besten Studenten gehören. (Der beste natürlich ein deutscher Jude.)"¹⁸ And in another letter she notes: " Komischer ist, dass überall die Studenten of German origin, die hier in Kalifornien geboren, ohne ein Wort deutsch (man erkennt es an den Namen) aufgewachsen sind, herausstechen, wenn es zu philosophischen oder rein theoretischen Fragen kommt."¹⁹ In other words, while Arendt shares with the European elite intelligentsia in general the notion that class distinctions are based on excellence, she shares with the German academic aristocrats in particular the notion that Germans -- and not non-Germans, produce philosophical elites. Patterns of thought, norms, and arguments of her "intellectual field" had successfully disciplined her. Thriving membership in her field commanded that she adhere to the claims of superiority and distinction of the German philosophical spirit and submit to its intellectual imperialism.²⁰ And so she did.

III. Arendt's Return to Heidegger

It is useful to remember Arendt's membership in the dominant wing of the organization of philosophy when assessing the Ettinger volume. It focuses on Arendt's

friendly return to Heidegger after the war. Arendt knew not only of Heidegger's involvement with the Nazi regime, but also of his conspicuous silencio, for the remainder of his life, with respect to the German perpetrations in the holocaust.²¹ Ettinger approached the vexata questio by examining the correspondence between Heidegger and Arendt. In spite of Arendt's condemnation of Heidegger in the thirties and forties, Ettinger concludes, she renewed her fascination for him by 1950. Arendt even considered dedicating to Heidegger the German edition of her The Human Condition. (114) What Ettinger stresses throughout her account is the "ineradicable bond" Arendt felt for Heidegger. Although Heidegger was not particularly supportive of Arendt's expressive drives, Arendt on her part engaged in Heidegger's moral rehabilitation as a leading western intellectual by assisting him with the production and dissemination of his work in American translation. "After the 1950 visits Arendt -- who had only one year earlier vehemently opposed the publication of Heidegger's work -- became this devoted if unpaid agent in the United States, finding publishers, negotiating contracts, and selecting the best translators. Above all, she did what she could to whitewash his Nazi past." (78) Ettinger argues that Arendt's renewed bonding with Heidegger is not only explainable in light of the love affair which the prominent professor Heidegger had initiated with his brilliant student Arendt in Marburg of the twenties. It is above all explainable in light of the role of muse which the aging German elite philosopher-- temporarily without prestige and institutional power -- bestowed onto Arendt in the fifties. That Ettinger is not shy when it comes to morally indicting Arendt who, as a woman of Jewish descent, had renewed friendly relations with a former Nazi should come as no surprise. For Ettinger is also the

author of Kindergarten -- a novel that draws on Ettinger's childhood experiences in the Warsaw Ghetto.²² While it might be more difficult for someone of Ettinger's experiences to forget the fact that Heidegger was a Nazi collaborator, even though he forged an influential new philosophical paradigm, it should be less difficult for critics born after the holocaust to remember that Heidegger's adherence to Nazism, however brief in the opinion of some, is doubly consternating in light of the powerful philosophical paradigm he forged. In this sense I do not share many of the critical responses to Ettinger's volume, who, by decrying her biographical work as unphilosophical, simplistic, and journalistic, avoid to reflect on the relations which specifically located biographies obtain.²³ Not to reflect on the morality of Heidegger's Nazism and Arendt post-war disposition towards him is not a biographical choice every critic enjoys.

Since Ettinger has the right to frame a topic according to preference, I have no problems with her approach. Where I disagree with her is in her depiction of the nature of Arendt's post-war link with Heidegger. No doubt, romantic memories of desire play a part. Yet emotions, Arendt's included, are not as static and one-dimensional, as Ettinger would have it. Arendt's emotional links with Heidegger are tied to complex "structures of feeling" rooted in the "intellectual field" she and Heidegger share. We get a glimpse of the complexity of this issue when we look at one of Arendt's letters addressed to Heidegger: his friendship with Jaspers, Arendt writes, "belongs to the history of philosophy in Germany in our century." (131) If Jasper's friendship with Heidegger belongs to the history of philosophy in Germany in this century, then Arendt's friendship with both, Jaspers and Heidegger, equally belongs to the history of twentieth century German philosophy.

Indeed, to the extent to which Arendt, like Jaspers, and Heidegger, understands herself as a producer of ideas emanating from a distinct German philosophical paradigm, she is, like them, an heir and respondent to the German philosophical tradition. More importantly, to the extent to which Arendt participates in the dissemination of Heidegger's oeuvre in the United States, her intellectual affiliation with Heidegger can only increase her own status and prestige beyond the German borders. Her friendship with Heidegger will then belong to the history of philosophy not simply of Germany, but to the history of western philosophy tout court. While Ettinger hints at Arendt's desire to be affiliated with a great philosopher, she misses an important point. For what Arendt shares with Heidegger is membership not in a general "Gesellschaft" or society of philosophers, but in a very special "Gemeinschaft," that of an elite philosophical community. It is a community which would like to set standards in philosophy and politics not for the non-elites, the "Massenmenschen," with whom they typically do not engage. They would like to set standards for the lesser elites, whom they wish to command. This aristocratic community reproduced itself on the basis of lasting intellectual friendships, by cultivating inclusions, and by securing exclusions. Aristocratic solidarity developed along heterogeneous ideological lines. Indeed, the history of the German intelligentsia of the pre-student movement years is characterized by significant ideological bordercrossings from within its ranks, by meaningful personal relations that transcended political borders. The friendships between Theodore Adorno and Gehlen, or Max Scheler and Paul Tillich, are cases in point. When Arendt resumes her relationship with Heidegger, then she publicly re-establishes her relationship with a community from whose dominant

dispositions she was never really separated. For what the post-world war two correspondence with her husband Heinrich Blücher unmistakably reveals is her evolving need to be re-inserted not into a European intelligentsia, but into Germany's philosophical elite.²⁴ As she decreasingly wrote in German, she increasingly desired to return to Germany's intellectual community. And when it comes down to it, with her own brand of political existentialism, she did not even have to cross significant ideological borders in order to belong to Germany's dominant elite philosophical community of the late forties, fifties, and early sixties.

"Laws of tendency" and "Fields of Knowledge"

By not placing Hannah Arendt's among the Germans, the authors under review here obscure those elements of her thought which tie her to those political and social tendencies which effected the knowledge fields of Germany at large. For one, Germany's public sphere had increasingly become militarized and aristocratized since the 1860'ies.²⁵ As the bourgeois ruling elites adopted aristocratic dispositions, middle class elites increasingly identified with the ruling elites. Hence the most upper stratum of the middle class elites, the university intellectuals, headed by the mandarines, gradually displaced the historical nobility as bearers of national and cultural standards. While maintaining an anti-modern stance, they seized control to access to their state nobility as they excluded from its ranks Germany's most powerful economic class, the managers and technicians from finance and industry. Furthermore, the state nobility assumed the right to speak the language of the historical nobility, that of national and international politics. Consequently, these elites concerned themselves not so much with cultural history but

with political history, not so much with humanist traditions but with the state, not with possibilities in the modern social, industrial, and economic sphere but with the constraints of modernity, not with psychology but with ontology, not with sociology but with philosophy. Above all, they expressed their aristocratic contempt for parliamentary democracy. All of these tendencies are present in Arendt's thought. Yet the "existential conditions" informing Arendt's thought reflect further fundamental shifts in Germany's civil society. The representation of ideas underwent a process of politicization of sorts in so far as the fundamental metaphors underlying the formulation of predominant philosophical ideas were derived not only from the field of politics, but above all from the field of "foreign politics." Predominant philosophical knowledge production uses metaphors which politicize space along the lines of "we" and "they," of inclusion and exclusion, of friends and enemies. Accordingly, danger always already lurks at the borders of the national territory. It is a metaphor Arendt shares even after world war two, after her emigration to the United States. Let me turn to her Was ist Politik?

"Wenn näemlich der einzig relevante Gegenstand der Politik die Aussenpolitik beziehungsweise die Gefahr geworden ist, die immer in den zwischenstaatlichen Beziehungen lauert, so heisst das nicht mehr und nicht weniger, als dass das Clausewitz-Wort, dass Krieg nicht anderes sei als die Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln, sich umgekehrt hat, so dass Politik überhaupt zu einer Fortsetzung des Krieges wird, während der zeitweilig die Mittel der List an die Stelle der Gewaltmittel treten. Und wer könnte leugnen, dass die Bedingungen eines Rüstungswettlaufs, unter denen wir leben und leben müssen, es zum mindesten nahelegen zu meinen, auch das

**Kantsche Wort, dass während des Krieges nichts
geschehen dürfe, einen späteren Frieden
unmöglich zu machen, sich umgekehrt habe
und wir in einem Frieden leben, in dem nichts
ungeschehen bleiben darf, um einen Krieg
immerhin noch möglich zu machen."²⁶**

Germany's non-scientific "fields of knowledge" of the first three decades of this century, are, of course, not limited to philosophy, ontology, antimodernism, the state, political history, and political theory. Yet the predominant wings of the predominant non-scientific field, philosophy, were. Hence the influence of the "political theories" -- however purportedly depoliticized in their existentialist apparel -- on Germany's intellectual mainstream traditions was considerable until at least the early sixties. And in the context of neo-conservative circles, and sometimes in that of new right wing intellectual movements, these "political theories" continued to find followers, and do so to this day. Intermittent enthusiastic reception episodes with respect to Ernst Jünger, Carl Schmitt, or Arnold Gehlen are cases in point. It is not difficult to indicate the extent to which Arendt is involved in a German intellectual tradition which is known as the conservative revolution. For there are indeed a number of elements Arendt and that tradition have in common. Her rejection of Marxism and Kantian metaphysics, as well as her shift towards an ontological politics or a political ontology, are examples. But no matter what we call it, one thing is certain. For Arendt, as for many members of her generation, choosing philosophy as a discipline in the twenties was not devoid of consequences. It required adherence to a specific brand of Neo-Kantianism as well as a specific intellectual attitude towards the social and geopolitical worlds. That attitude is reflected in a specific style of thinking and a specific kind of writing. It is part and parcel of the first and last philosophical sentences

she published.

V. "How" or "What?" The Politicality of Arendt's Style

What is fascinating about the books under review here is that they are very interested in what Arendt says, but not in how she says it. Hence they disregard the politicality of her style. A predilection for “what” a person thinks rather than “how” she or he says it has clearly advantages, since an emphasis on the “what” enables a critic to be selective. As a result, Sheila Benhabib can easily focus on a series of Arendtian concepts which lend themselves to a particular interpretation while ignoring those which do not fit the bill. However, when focusing on “how” a theorist says what he or she says, selective procedures are less successful. For styles permeate the totality of a body of work. Arendt is stylistically an organic product of the conservative wing of the German intelligentsia. What she shares with that wing is her authoritative subjection of the multiplicity of historical, social, and political worlds into the rigid order of a primordial pair of antagonistic concepts. As in the work of Martin Heidegger and Carl Schmitt, the foundational ontological metaphor is one of struggle. If Carl Schmitt states his metaphor explicitly, Arendt, like Heidegger, states the centrality of this metaphor in her overall oeuvre less explicitly. Nonetheless: "Gegenstand der Politik ist die Aussenpolitik - (die Gefahr)," writes Arendt in her Was ist Politik?²⁷ The agonal structure of conservative thought preemptively precludes a third alternative. As Schmitt indefatigably repeats: Tertium non datur.²⁸ This antagonistic style pits concept against concept. The prepositions which grasp these distinctions evoke military positions.²⁹ Politics is in opposition to, that is against history.

"Heroic deeds" of "enchanted epochs" cannot but underscore the "banality of political actions in the age of mechanical parliamentary reproduction." Only "spontaneous revolutions" promise "true liberty." Objections are categorically overruled. Co-existence is ruled out. Double negatives appear in superlative speech. "All" tends to confront "none", the "only" faces "many," the "absolutely existing" that which "exists naturally not at all." Natural necessity is called upon to explain "contingency" and "plurality," as "plurality" and "contingency" are called upon to explain the natural order of things.³⁰

When Arendt's resoluteness weakens, her conservative logic gains strength. It carries her into a moral order where "anything goes." This is surely the case with her notion of "plurality," arguably the center piece of her political theory. For while Arendt hopes that "plural" or diverse group of human individuals will spontaneously get together to discuss political action in consort because individuals are ontologically predisposed to do so, there is no guarantee as to what kind of political action will be decided upon. Hence Arendt's notion of "plurality" promises a degree of applicability to moralities of any kind. An ethics without limits for those with the will to will ultimately crafts her essentialist conceptual style, an ethical voluntarism which parallels Schmitt's will to decide and Heidegger's will to be. For she surely shares with them the omnipotence with which she endows will. What disappears in the pages of the authors under review are these "structures of thought" which Arendt has inherited from Germany's conservative revolution, the attitudes of an aristocratic elite that thinks for lesser elites, imposes its cultural values, belittles the middle classes, and disregards the masses. Arendt speaks with the authority of an oligarchic ruling elite whose knowledge cannot be questioned, whose Eurocentric supremacist values

remain uninterrogated, and judgements are deemed the essential norm. In this sense she partakes in the authoritarian disposition of the German professoriate which the student movement dismantled in the democratization of the German university. It is by decoupling Arendt's style from her theory, that the nexus between style, theory, and history remains obscured.

Admittedly, Bernstein's Hannah Arendt and the Jewish Question does superbly trace the relationship between ideas and experiences in Arendt's life. In particular, he examines those personal experiences in the context of twentieth century history which are directly related to Arendt's Jewishness. Indeed, three major tenets of Arendt's political theory, namely her adherence to a certain kind of republicanism, her call for personal responsibility in the sphere of politics, her insistence on what constitutes the essentiality of a citizen Bernstein sees related to her experiences as a Jewish person. He cites Arendt's direct experience of the mass phenomenon of statelessness triggered by the racial laws of the Third Reich, an experience which evoked the response of a politics built on a minimum of rights: the right to have rights. Since this right to have rights constitutes above all the right to political action, the loss of the right to have rights constitutes the loss of one's humanity. Bernstein argues convincingly that Arendt's experiences as a stateless person in France of the thirties contributed to the formation of her major political ideas. Her notions of natality, spontaneity, plurality, and inindividuality are both responses to experiences of total domination as well as answers to the most basic ontological questions. By the same token, Bernstein emphasizes how for Arendt the absence of thinking reiterates the lack of political action. Non-thinking individuals, namely individuals who are caught in clichés,

stock phrases, conventional languages are not only individuals who do not think. They are also individuals who are capable of inhuman actions. Eichmann is a case in point.

While Bernstein thus ties the formation of Arendt's ideas to her experiences as a twentieth century Jewish woman, he does address the "existential conditions" of some of Arendt's ideas. And Bernstein is far from apologetic when he points to a series of ideas which implicate Arendt's Jewishness. In particular, he cannot share Arendt's judgment of Jewish people as naive and ignorant about the "political realities" of the thirties, an ignorance which precluded effective political resistance to the Third Reich. "The rhetoric of calling for Jews to fight for their rights as Jews might be uplifting," Bernstein writes, "but of a thinker who chided her people for being naive and ignorant about "political realities" one might expect at least an attempt to indicate how the Jewish people might have acted politically in the historical circumstances in which they found themselves." (70) Moreover, Bernstein equally nonconformistically addresses Arendt's take on Heidegger's affiliation with the Nazis. He asserts that Arendt's calling such affiliation an "error" reveals her own blindness. And he dedicates the last chapter of his own monograph to her blindness. (174) What Bernstein does not assert are the conceptual contingencies, the ways of thinking and representation, the logics of a particular paradigm that ties Arendt to Heidegger, to his anti-historicist conservatism, and to Germany's conservative revolution. So when Bernstein states that Arendt is "an independent thinker, a thinker not bound by dogmas and ideologies," (42) he passes his own Rubicon as an independent and non-conformist critic of Arendt's texts by taking sides. Bernstein, for a moment, has to adopt

Arendt's rhetorical strategy. In Arendt's rhetoric, adjectives often appear as nouns or not at all, reducing the multiplicity of experience into a handful of hierarchized categories. Arendt was quite clear about this procedure: "Je entleerter die Realität von allen Qualitäten, desto unmittelbarer und nackter erschienen das an ihr von nun an einzig interessante -- dass sie ist."³¹ While the absence of adjectives may encourage some readers to imagine some, it may encourage other readers to view the world -- next to Heidegger and Arendt -- from a perspective where differentiation and qualifications are sacrificed in the name of authenticity. Here, we can get a glimpse of Heidegger's politicization of conceptual space from which Arendt draws. Arendt surely was eclectic when it came to using traditional knowledge. She deploys from traditional sources whatever serves her purpose. In this sense she does not subscribe to one particular ideological tradition, as Bernstein states. But she surely is not eclectic when it comes to her own politics of global space which supports the military hegemony of post world war two United States. Her famous equation of fascism with stalinism in her The Origins of Totalitarianism which sealed her intellectual success, enabled her to combine the antagonistic structure of her thought with the structure of a new world order. Political structures and mental structures merge into one.³² Its central metaphors reflects an unconscious division of spaces into power and powerlessness along non-historical lines that render invisible the location from which the vision of this division arises. In this conceptual structure, time is transcendental, identical for all people at all times. When it changes it changes for all people. But space is not. For some are included and others are excluded. A third alternative does not exist. As

she writes in her Was ist Politik?

Es bedarf also für die Freiheit nicht
einer egalitären Demokratie im modernen Sinne,
wohl aber einer noch so eng oligarchisch
oder aristokratisch beschränkten Sphäre,
in welcher zum mindesten die Wenigen oder die
Besten als Gleiche unter Gleichen miteinander
umgehen. Diese Gleichheit hat natürlich mit
Gerechtigkeit nicht das mindeste zu tun.³³

Of the authors under review here, Benhabib is more sensitive to the coute-qu'il-coute dictates of Arendt's styles. For why else would she move the furthest away from the Arendtian texts? In almost Arendtian methodological fashion she appropriates those concepts from Arendt's political theory which are useful for her own developments of a critical political theory as she ignores the rest. In that sense Benhabib's The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt is much more a book about Benhabib's own theory, than about Arendt. What she seeks to construct is a radically participatory as well as proceduralist model of democratic life, which can accommodate the concrete particularities which mark an individual's life. These include, for Benhabib, the particularities which characterize the lives of differently traditioned women. By the same token, she would like to redraw the distinction between the public and private spaces so prominent, and so controversial for feminists, in Arendt's political theory. When Benhabib does engage more explicitly with Arendt's concept of the public/private distinction, when she submits, that is, to the boundaries drawn by Arendt herself, the potential limits of their applicability for a more critical political theory emerge. Thus, for instance, when Benhabib attempts to

rehabilitate Arendt's notion of privacy by proposing that it is perhaps in the private sphere where we, as women, can relax from the public sphere, she assumes that women in fact typically have access to or inhabit the public sphere and that the private typically represents for women a space of protection, relaxation, and support. While in the contemporary western world women have gained more access to the public sphere as compared to their mothers and grandmothers, globalization and information technology revolutions have increasingly re-introduced the home as a public workplace for women. In addition, recent empirical research suggests that a large part of those women who do work outside the home prefer to work more hours outside than inside the home, to stay away longer from their domestic obligations, that is, when given the choice.³⁴

While Benhabib circumvents Arendt's penchant for a dyadic inflexibility, Dana Villa, to the contrary, is eager to buy into it in his Arendt and Heidegger. The Fate of the Political. In a framework hostile to history, psychology, and sociology, ideas, rather than socially located intellectuals, engender ideas. The chapters of his book, where thinkers of most diverse spaces and times such as Aristotle, and Nietzsche, Kant and Plato meet up with Heidegger and Arendt, reflect that much. On the surface, it is a book in the tradition of the history of political ideas. Yet the overall sovereign distance between text and interpreter to which Bernstein and Benhabib treated their readers alarmingly disappears from Villa work. He adopts the dualistic world of a political philosophy based on an agonistic model, where friends "naturally" oppose an enemy and where a presumed "good" is challenged by a presumed "evil." Again, as in Arendt's texts, the phenomenological plurality of social and historical worlds, the differences that obtain --

subjectively and objectively - in human experiences due to location in space and time are disciplined in a rigorous dyadic structure to which antagonistic conceptual pairs must submit. For Villa, this coercive classification system becomes the conditions for an antiauthoritarian and antifoundational democratic politics (13). Here are some examples of Villa's classificatory normativity.

Sequence 1	Sequence 2
Violence	Non-Violence
praxis	Poesis
action	instrumentality
political	pre-political
speech	representation
good life (few)	non-good life, (many)
freedom	necessity
virtuosity	banausic qualities
individuality	solidarity
plurality	unanimity
appearance	telos
new beginning	movement in history
disagreement	consensus
participation	observer
actor	spectator
disclosure	correspondence
finitude	antipolitical
contingency	contemplation
worldliness	pretheoretical
ontology	epistemology
zuhanden	vorhanden
groundlessness	inauthenticity
mystery	tradition

While Sequence 1 is typically endowed with positive qualities, Sequence 2 is not. And, moreover, in that Sequence 1 constitutes a "genuine political theory," Sequence 2 necessarily enjoys no such authorization. Thus, it is non-genuine political theory. Finally,

while Sequence 1 appropriates its positive meaning in Villa's argumentation by attributing negative values to Sequence 2, Sequence 1 both logically depends on Sequence 2 as it systematically dominates it. It cannot afford to completely displace it, however, lest it aims at annihilating its own raison d'etre. So it comes that Sequence 2, however banalistic, to use Villa's term, functions as the always already enabling condition for the existence of Sequence 1. A new type of master slave imagery emerges on our horizon, one in which, unlike the one that informs Hegelian dialectics, the slave will not ultimately recognize the contingency of the master's power, develop a double consciousness, and engage in liberational struggles. In the master-slave relations which Villa reproduces against the background of Heidegger and Arendt in his book, it is only the master, and not the slave, who desires to recognize the other: a slave, whom he commands, to whom he consigns space, and who remains without desire. Are we, as readers, on the very basis of the conceptual structure that orders Villa's text, returned to a central metaphor which for some political theorists constitutes the essence of the political? I am referring to the relationship between ruler and ruled, command and obedience, power and domination which for some theorists is a relation that has always been and should always be. And indeed, in Villa's representation of Arendt's and Heidegger's worlds, he imitates their normativity of the ruler/ruled relation. It is based on unequal access to authority and power, unequal divisions of command and obedience, and unequal division of space in the transcendence of a cyclical temporality.

VI. In Conclusion: Political Philosophy in the U.S.

"Words never signify the same thing when used by different groups," Mannheim once wrote, adding that "slide variations of meaning provide the best clues to the different trends of thought in a community."³⁵ In the context of a reception history such as in that of Arendt here in the United States, it would be important to analyze what words, and in particular words belonging to political vocabularies, that order the world in terms of power and powerlessness, mean. By the same token, it would be revealing to analyse the meaning variability of concepts based on the ruler/ruled metaphor with respect to the various "fields of knowledge" in the American academy. It is by examining what specific political vocabularies and political thought traditions conceived in Germany signify to thought traditions written in English and in the United States that I would be able to do more justice to the publications on Hannah Arendt under review here. Clearly, it is not the place here to engage in such an analysis. Nonetheless, I would like to maintain that by predominantly adhering to the notion of "ideas" and "theory", the publications under review here largely displaced Arendt from the fields from which she arises. On the other hand, it probably would have been difficult for most of the authors to link Arendt to her environment. First of all, for studies of Arendt from within the field of political science there exists probably no particularly pressing disciplinary logic to investigate conditions which are socio-historical by nature. One might argue that since political science in the U.S. has historically devoted little attention to its own past as a discipline, an institution, and a science, it stands to reason that such lack of historical desires extends to objects of inquiry as well.³⁶ Interests in the "existential conditions" of an object of study may lead to self-reflexivity and to questions pertaining to the status of research modes.

While political theorists have surely not remained immune to the debates over the past twenty years or so surrounding the historically constructed nature of knowledge production and the construction of reception histories, the fact that Benhabib, Bernstein, and Villa refrain from socio-historical questions that pertain to Arendt's "structure of thought" is probably as much linked to the rules governing political science and political philosophy as it is linked to its major habitus as a community.³⁷ Of the many social science disciplines, political science, more than anthropology, history, and sociology, seems to insist, by dint of its very name, on the scientificity of its endeavors, a scientificity which evokes facts of empirical and predictable worlds over and above practices of methodological self-reflections. Next to economics, political science is probably the least historically inclined discipline, and membership in that community has its dues.

It is, nonetheless, interesting that a wing from within political science, which understands itself as theoretical, and something of an avant-garde here in the United States over the past twenty years repeatedly returns to the Arendtian text. This phenomenon is interesting for many reasons, and I would like in conclusion to briefly focus on two. If political scientists in the nineties are attracted to the conceptual world of Hannah Arendt, then they are attracted by a conceptual world in which time is invariable for that is Arendt's understanding of the human condition. Moreover, her concept of space is divisive. There is space, and thus access to political power for some, and space of powerlessness for others. These metaphors, which are rooted in the geopolitical dimensions of Arendt's thought, accommodate the international division of power seen from the perspective of U.S. America's hegemony of the fifties and sixties. The fact that the "political" in Arendt's

work remains unspecified with respect to its geopolitical dimensions in the texts I have reviewed does not amount to the fact that Arendt's concept of the political lacks a geopolitical dimension. The same is true for the use of the term "political" in the works under consideration here, although they do not acknowledge the geopolitical dimensions of their own concepts of politics. Arendt looked at the world from the unquestioned perspective of a European American of the pre-seventies epoch, for whom the West and North is entitled to rule the East and the South. This geopolitical perspective is, as we approach the year 2000, outdated. As economic expansionism in the era of globalization transforms political institutions on the national level, and as the economic, political, and military leadership of the United States erodes under the pressures of new global realities, one wonders what the renewed interest of political theorists in Arendt means in relation to these new developments. If the past is never simply the past (...) but works with greater and lesser force according to circumstances (...) as an influence on the present, as Elias wrote, then the adherence to Arendt on the part of political theorists is perhaps a melancholic tribute to the power of the past. Yet to continue to adhere to an outdated model also reflects a penchant for a self-imposed isolationism which ever so often erupts in U.S. America's collective unconscious and from which political scientists are not immune. After all, even the weathermaps in our daily newspapers, including the prestigious New York Times, refuse to acknowledge the existence of Canada and Mexico on the North American map. And the San Francisco Chronicle, which, as a West Coast Paper, perhaps intuited earlier than others the challenge from the Asian regions which would change the economic face of the late twentieth century earth, interestingly enough

changed, without much previous publicity, its weather forecast format, which used to be a printed column next to obituaries and vital statistics, at a crucial point. As of April 30, 1964, it changed its format to a weathermap, which symbolically both isolates the United States from its neighbors in the North and South, as it simultaneously project territorial self-sufficiency.³⁸ This period coincides with the end of U.S. American self-reliance on natural resources.³⁹ This period also coincides, as is well known, with the very beginnings of a political resistance of the United States to its economic decline, a resistance which is eminently expressed in its foreign policy: in its decision to escalate the war in Vietnam. If intellectuals are tied to "intellectual fields," whereby ways of feeling and thinking are not decoupled from the general laws of economic and geopolitical tendencies within society itself, then we can raise the question what the relation of the self-appointed avant-gardes from within contemporary political science in the United States to these tendencies are. It is important to raise critical questions about these relations, which are eminently, fundamentally, and in the broadest sense political.

1. I would like to thank Anne Machung, friend indeed, and Andy Markovitz for helping me to reduce an unruly first version of this article. Their editorial advise was most welcome. It helped my writing in ways that goes beyond this particularly piece. I would also like to thank Peter Uwe Hohendahl and Beverly Crawford, who enabled me to give talks on this topic at Cornell University (Nov. 97) and University of California at Berkeley (Feb. 98) respectively.

2. For the notion of "existential conditions" I relie on Karl Mannheim's sociology of knowledge. As he states: "The sociology of knowledge seeks to comprehend thought in the concrete setting of an historical-social situation out of which individually differentiated thought only very gradually merges. (...) Thus, it is not men/women in general who think, or even isolated individuals who do the thinking, but men/women in certain groups who have developed a particular style of thought (...). The second feature characterizing the method of the sociology of knowledge is that it does not sever the concretely existing modes of thought from the context of

collective action (...). See his Ideology and Utopia. An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge (trs) Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1936/1985, original German edn 1929) p. 3. See also his Structures of Thinking (eds) and (intro) David Kettler, Volker Meja, and Nico Stehr, (trs) Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shierry Weber Nicholsen (London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982). See also his "Das Problem der Generationen," in Kölner Vierteljahrshefte für Soziologie vol. VII, no. 2 (1928): 157-85 and vol. 7, no. 3 (1928): 309-30.

3. For the notions of "intellectual field" and "fields of knowledge" I am indebted to Fritz Ringer, Fields of Knowledge. French academic culture in comparative perspective (Cambridge, New York, Port Chester, Melbourne, Sidney: Cambridge University Press and Paris: Editions De La Maison Des Sciences De L'Homme, 1992) as well as to Pierre Bourdieu's work in general. See The State Nobility. Elite Schools in the Field of Power (tr) Laretta C. Clough (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1996, original French edn 1989).

4. I loosely borrow this term "laws of tendency" from Norbert Elias's The Germans, Power Struggles and the Development of Habitus in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries by adding a "subjective" (conscious) and an "objective" (unconscious) dimension to it. (Ed) Michael Schroeter (tr and pref) Eric Dunning and Stephen Mennell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, original German edn 1989), especially pp. 121-71.

5. Ringer, Fields of Knowledge, p. 10.

6. For a detailed account of the functions of censorship within a field see Pierre Bourdieu, The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), pp. 70-99.

7. Bourdieu, The State Nobility, includes a series of appendices that chart the relationship of a group's economic-symbolic capital to type of education, cultural taste, political opinion, political involvement and so forth. Pp. 244-60.

8. In the following I draw from Fritz K. Ringer, The Decline of the German Mandarins. The German Academic Community, 1890-1933, pp. 5-80. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969) as well as from Elias, The Germans, pp. 21-170.

9. See pp. 232-33 of her Crises in the Republic. Lying in Politics, Civil Disobedience. On Violence, Thoughts and Revolution (San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovitch Publications, 1972/69).

10. Between Friends. The Correspondence of Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy. 1949-1975 (ed and intro) Carol Brightman (San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1995) p. 357. See also her correspondence with Heinrich Blücher, where she regularly ranks and even denigrates individuals she meets.

11. The term “structures of feeling” is derived from the work of Antonio Gramsci. See Selections from the Prison Notebooks (eds. and trs) Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971) pp. 321-472. See Renate Holub, Antonio Gramsci. Beyond Marxism and Postmodernism (London: Routledge, 1992) pp. 161-67. For the impact of the past in these structures, see Elias The Germans, p. 53.

12. As Roger Smith as pointed out in his The Human Sciences, Russian, American, Spanish, British and Italian students for decades had travelled to Germany to experience the scholarship and the disciplines which had been pioneered in Germany. The Norton History of The Human Sciences (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997) pp. 371-420.

13. And many private universities in the United States had earlier incorporated the German model of research disciplines. Smith, The Human Sciences, p. 377.

14. Italian intellectuals in the period from 1860's to the 1920's are here cases in point. Tina Tomasi and Luciana Bellatalla (eds) L'Università italiana nell'età liberale (1861-1923) (Naples: Liguori Editore, 1988) p. 13.

15. See Bourdieu, The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger, pp. 7-40.

16. Oldenburg i.O.: Gerhard Stalling, 1932.»

17. See his Descartes und die Philosophie (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter & Company, 1948. Copyright 1937). It appeared in the Revue philosophique in Paris in 1937.

18. See her letter in Arendt-Blücher, Briefe 1936-1968, (ed and intro) Lotte Koehler (Munich and Zurich: Piper Verlag, 1996) p. 381.

19. Arendt-Blücher, Briefe 1936-1968, p. 361. Since Arendt knows when to censor herself even in letter to her husband, her public adherence to the the natural distinctions of the German spirit are the more notable. See her letter comments on Jasper's wife: “Sie haben mich beide rührend verwoehnt. Ueber die Frau liebe muendlich.” P. 189.

20. Berkeley undergraduate Caryn Mandelbaum, who as member of a research project on Anti-Humanism in Italy, France, and Germany compares intellectual currents in various contexts, provided me with the concept of “intellectual imperialism” with the suggestion that Germany may have developed its peculiar form of imperialism due to its lack of significant political and economic colonialism.

21. Heidegger's relations to Nazism are known as the "Heidegger Controversy." A recent publication resumed an analysis of these relations. See Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg (eds) Martin Heidegger and the Holocaust (Atlantic Heights, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1997).

22. Kindergarten (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970).

23. See New York Review of Books vol 43, no. 1, 1996; Library Journal vol. 120, no. 13, 1995; Commentary, Feb. 1996; Society vol. 33, no. 4, 1996; Times Literary Supplement No. 4828, October 1995; New York Times Book Review September 1995, among many.

24. **From that correspondence it is not difficult to make out that in her yearly trips to Europe, where she visited, over a period of roughly twenty years, many European countries such as Germany, Switzerland, France, England, and Italy, twice as many letters she wrote to her husband originated in Germany, or German speaking cities such as Basel, as compared to the letters she wrote from all the other European countries combined. And the lengthy correspondence she maintained with German intellectuals, such as Karl Jaspers, is well documented.** See Lotte Köhler & Hans Saner, Hannah Arendt Karl Jaspers. Correspondence 1926-1969 (trs. Robert and Rita Kimber) New York, San Diego, London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publications, 1992, German edn 1985). See her detailed depiction of the growth of her renewed friendship with Jaspers in a letter of January 3, 1950: "Bei Jaspers bis zur letzten Minute immer vertrauter und auch beinahe vertraulicher. Sie haben mich beide rührend verwoehnt." Hannah Arendt/Heinrich Bluecher, Briefe 1936-1968 (ed and intro) Lotte Koehler (Munich and Zurich: Piper Verlag, 1996) p. 189.

25. See Elias, The Germans, for the gradual militarization of Germany's public sphere.

26. Was ist Politik? Fragmente aus dem Nachlaß (ed. Ursula Ludz, pref. Kurt Sontheimer) (Munich and Zurich: Piper, 1993) p. 133.

27. Arendt, Was ist Politik?, p. 133.

28. **Schmitt, Der Nomos der Erde, im Völkerrecht des Ius Publicum Europaeum** (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1988. Third edn.) Pp. 47-8 where he discusses the "foundational act of ordering space (among those who inhabit it and those that don't) or the "Ur-Akt" of appropriating land by force. This act will rule who decides and what constitutes a friend and enemy. For the constitutive act of power in domestic politics see his Political Theology (tr. George Schwab) (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985. Original edns 1922 and 1934) where he discusses decisionism and sovereignty: "Souveraen ist, wer im Ausnahmezustand entscheidet" who the enemy is. P. 46. See also his Die Diktatur (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1928. 2nd edn) where the control over the decision to decide on the exception (vis dominationis) is at the center of the discussion.

29. For a discussion of Heidegger's use of prepositions and prefixes see Renate Holub, "Cultural

(II)literacy: Humanism, Heidegger, Anti-Humanism." Differentia no. 3-4, (1990): 73-90.

30.To give some examples from the German texts, such Sechs Essays, (Heidelberg:Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1948) p. 51 "eine Zeit, die nu daseine Gute hat, dass alle Zauber versagen;" "Kants Widerlegung des ontologischen Gottesbeweises hat jeden Vernunftglauben in Gott zerstört;"(p. 56) "Kant ist in Wahrheit der Philosoph der französischen Revolution;" (p. 56) "Seit Kant hat jede Philosophie das Element des Trotzes;" (p. 59); "Heine ist der einzige deutsche Jude (...);" (p. 89) See also her Was ist Politik? "diese Gleichheit hat natürlich mit Gerechtigkeit nicht das mindeste zu tun;" (p. 40) "dass frei nur sein kann, wer bereit ist, sein Leben zu riskieren;" (p. 45).

31. Sechs Essays, p. 55.

32. **The Origins of Totalitarianism (San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1948).**

33. Was ist Politik?, p. 40.

34..See Arlie Hochschild, The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work (New York: Metropolitan Book, 1997).

35.In Kurt H. Wolff (ed) From Karl Mannheim, (intro) Volker Meja and David Kettler (New Brunswick (U.S.A.) and London (U.K.): Transaction Publishers, 1993, 2nd enlarged edn, org edn 1971 by Oxford University Press) p. 263.»

36.See John G. Gunnell, "The historiography of American political science," in The Development of Political Science. A Comparative Survey(eds) David Easton, John G. Gunnell and Luigi Graziano (Routledge: London and New York, 1991) pp. 13-34.

37. **For a discussion of the identity debates in various disciplines, including political science, see David A. Hollinger, "The Disciplines and the Identity Debates, 1970-1995," Daedalus, vol. 126 (Winter 1997):333-351.»**

38.I would like to thank my research assistant Jo Ann Johnson, a student of geography and education, for researching the date of the format shift for me.

39. Benjamin R. Barber, **Jihad vs. McWorld. How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World** (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995) pp. 23-33, "The Resource Imperative: The Passing of Autarky and the Fall of the West."