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Hannah Arendt and The Faculty of Thinking-

A Partner to Think, a Witness to Act [1]

Bethânia Assy[2]

"Thinking was her [Arendt's] passion, and thinking with her was a moral activity. She was intensely moral, but completely unmoralistic." [3]
(Hans Jonas)

I. A Vision in Thought – The 'Outward Sensible Appearance' of the Mind

The intriguing paradoxical condition of the faculty of thinking allows "the mind to withdraw from the world without ever being able to leave it or transcend it."[4] It justifies in the first place the use of metaphorical language, imagination and re-*presentation*, to quote the terms Arendt uses to articulate the imbrications among thinking, judging, speech, and the visible world. Either in silent critical thought or in judgment, what is at stake are the outlooks and events of the appearing world transposed into ordinary language.[5] In the case of thinking activity, a silent "conceptual metaphorical speech" turns to be its adequate operation, since thinking "must prepare the particulars given to the sense in such a way that the mind is able to handle them in their absence; it must, in brief, *de-sense* them."[6] Thinking is already conceived into speech before it is communicated, spoken out and understood by others. Likewise, thinking requires this same visibility of being heard and understood by others, "just as a creature endowed with the sense of vision is meant to see and to be seen. Thought without speech is inconceivable; 'thought and speech anticipate one another. They continually take each other's place.'"[7] Thought derives from human beings lived experience and therefore must remain tied to them.

The worthwhile feature for us relies on highlighting the bridge of language between the world of appearance and the mind's realm of invisibility. "Thinking is the mental activity that actualizes those products of the mind that are inherent in speech and for which language, prior to any special effort, has already found an appropriate though provisional home in the audible world. If speaking and thinking spring from the same source, then the very gift of language could be taken as a kind of proof, or perhaps, rather, as a token, of men's being naturally endowed with an instrument capable of transforming the invisible into an 'appearance.'" (*LMT* 108-9) In this context, metaphor, imagination, analogy and re-*presentation*, all terms borrowed from a visual terminology, take the deflated meaning of a sort of "mind's language" that makes thinking able to come back to the visible world. This elaborates what can be said through speech, a seeing through 'bodily ears'. As a matter of fact, metaphor calls for the absolute primacy of the appearing world, but at the same time, it attributes thinking with a time-space tense out of order and able to apprehend the visible world apart from the chronological needs and events of everyday life.[8] Thinking interrupts spatial distances and time tenses, inasmuch as it can make present to the mind a past event through remembrance and it can anticipate the future through foreseeing an event as well. "It may well be the region of the spirit, or rather, the path paved by thinking, this small track of non-time which the activity of thought beats within the time-space of mortal men and into which the trains of thought, of remembrances and anticipation."[9]

Calling forth Kafka's parabola from the last chapter, I would say that thinking, in being able to displace the appearing world into an ever-changing time-space, produces what Arendt calls "diagonal forces," providing thinking with its "own self-inserting appearance, created but past and future forces, found a place in time which is sufficiently removed from past and future to offer 'the umpire' a position from which to judge the forces fighting with each other with an impartial eye." (*BPF* 12) The element of an active perception in the case of thinking activity relies on its reflective ability to locate and position human beings through theirs remembrances and expectations. "The mind's faculty of making present what is absent is of course by no means restricted to mental images of absent objects; memory quite generally stores, and holds all the disposition of recollection, what is no more, and the will anticipates what the future may bring but is not yet. Only because of the mind's capacity for making present what is absent can we say 'no more' and constitute a past for ourselves, or say 'not yet' and get ready for a future." (*LMT* 76) Thinking attribute of making present what is temporally or spatially absent holds a prima facie condition to willing and judging, namely the ability to deal with events, situations and persons that are "no

more" or "not yet." In Arendt's point of view the presentation in the mind sustains an active perception capable of leading mental attention to apprehend what the passive sense perception cannot. Such passive sense perception I will further relate to common sense and to the sense that adjusts us to the artifacts' common world; thus, making us capable of recognizing the world as common, distinguished, though from the Arendtian use of the Latin expression: sensus communis. This latter stands as the sense able fit ourselves into the world and to gradually make us able to cultivate public feelings.

By taking Augustine's account of memory -- the so-called by him "the fields and vast palaces of memory" – Arendt ascribes two distinct steps of memory between "what remains in the memory,"[10] the image, and "the vision in thought," in order to describe how thinking activity hold a twofold operation in apprehending the appearing world. "'The vision, which was without when the sense was formed by a sensible body, is succeeded by a similar vision within' (Book XI, ch.3) the image that re-presents it. The image is then stored in memory, ready to become a 'vision of thought the moment the mind gets hold of it; it is decisive that 'what remains in the memory – the mere image of what once was real – is different from the 'vision in thought' – the deliberately remembered object." (*LMT* 77) The remaining of an image in memory is distinct from the actual act of remembering or thinking. Since "what is hidden and retained in the memory is one thing, and what is impressed by it in the thought of the one remembering is another thing."[11] Arendt approaches Augustine's terminology to discriminate the "visible sense-object" from the "image" the memory holds of it, as well as, to distinguish both from the "thought-object," a deliberate act of recollection and remembrance.

In distinguishing the apprehension of an image from the active recollection through thought we can analogically reconsider the distinction between a passive perception and an active perception. "Imagination, therefore, which transforms a visible object into an invisible image, fit to be stored in the mind, is the condition sine qua non for proving the mind with suitable thought-objects; but these thought-objects come 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; in these operations the mind learns how to deal with things that are absent and prepares itself to 'go further', toward the understanding of thinks that are always absent, that cannot be remembered because they were never present to sense experience." (*LMT* 77) Hence, all thinking is in fact a re-thinking, an "after-thought" that requires an "umpire." Thinking is an act of judging under the image; a necessity of a vision-in-thought about the image stored.[12]

The capacity to de-sensitize a sense-object, which in itself never appears to the mind and transforms it into an image, is the role of imagination. Such operation is done by what Arendt calls "a reproductive imagination," which can be identified with the storehouse of memory as a passive perception, or an "elementary ability to de-sense and have present before (and not just in) your mind what is physically absent." (*LMT* 86) On the other hand, it stands a "productive imagination," which though totally dependant upon the reproductive imagination promotes a deliberative selection, a re-location and attribution of meaning to the image. The outstanding power of imagination will be closer analyzed in approaching the faculty of judging, in which man is constantly exercising the enlargement of his capacity to image, to take into account other's persons viewpoints. I will further claim that such capacity of imagination is one of the key features for judging which, in its turn, means a necessary ethical attribute in order to be able to recognize others who are in the public space. Describing such deliberative power of thinking, Arendt writes a sentence that at the first glance would seem odd: "the trouble, however, is that we seem to be neither equipped nor prepared for this activity of thinking." (BPF 13) Inasmuch as this thinking capacity of a productive imagination is an activity, it requires exercise in order to become true.

Therefore, to begin with, I am tempted to say that we have been more accustomed to limiting the world of sense perception to the obvious sufficient step of reproductive imagination. Instead, a productive imagination stands as the object for thinking, thus deciding not only what to remember but also how to remember. Thinking is the capacity to decide what impressions human beings want to produce from within the palaces of memory. "In other words, thinking has become a technē, a particular kind of craftsmanship, perhaps to be deemed the highest – certainly the most urgently needed, because its need product is the conduct of your own life." (*LMT* 154) Hence, how it will be approached latter, "the correct use of imagination", expression borrowed by Arendt from Epictetus, holds the only power of the activity of thinking that is entirely its.[13]

Here lays down the grounding for the three dimensions in which I will consider the faculty of thinking. Firstly, thinking is approached as wonder; an activity that at once sustains the paralyzing interruptions of our everyday activities. Secondly, I deal with thinking as a mode of conscience, in the sense of "to be aware of"- the sense of self-examination. And finally, thinking holds its imbrication with judgment, as an end in itself and searches for meaning out of pre-judgment. In all three understandings I will claim that thinking is mainly an activity to be achieved as an exercise (áskesis), "a way of life" (Lebensform), as a performing play whose plot has its end within itself.

II. Thinking with Socrates: Wonder, Conscience, and Doxa

It not by chance that Arendt chooses Socrates[14] not only to exemplify, but to describe the thinking activity. In the three main accounts I have stated it is implied in Arendt's description of the activity of thinking, wonder, conscience, and doxa, Socrates places a primary key. Arendt's account of thinking is permeated by Socratic assumptions.[15] Arendt searches for a model to portray the activity of thinking, someone able to think without becoming a "professional thinker" (*Denker von Gewerbe*),[16] able to combine such agonistic brace in the history of the Western philosophy and metaphysics, namely, thinking and action. "The best, in fact the only, way I can think of to get hold of the question is to look for a model, an example of a thinker who was not a professional, who in his person unified two apparently contradictory passions, for thinking and acting – not in the sense of being eager to apply his thoughts or to establish theoretical standards for action but in the much more relevant sense of being equally at home in both spheres and able to move from one sphere to the other with the greatest apparent ease, very much as we ourselves constantly move back and forth between experiences in the world of appearances and the need for reflecting on them." (*LMT* 167, emphasis added) Socrates embodies the turning point from a classic-archaic moral thinking to a post-classic-Hellenistic one. This latter Arendt coincides with the beginning of an oblique rapport between philosophy and politics as well. Socrates is then ascribed as "a citizen among citizens," (*TMC* 427) someone capable of feeling at home in both realms. Socrates figures out as a model not based on our philosophical classical tradition, he rather portrays a pre-Hellenic thinking activity mainly described as a continuous flow of asking and answering, making possible the thinking experiment of searching for meaning and understanding in the experiences. Arendt quotes Heidegger's metaphor of a "storm of thought" to describe Socrates: "Throughout his life and up to his very death Socrates did nothing other than place himself in this draft, this current [of thinking], and maintain himself in it. This is why he is the purest of the West. This is why he wrote nothing. For anyone who begins, out of thinking, to write must inevitable be like those people who run for shelter from a wind too strong for them."[17]

Arendt tries to justify her choice for Socrates[18] by characterizing him as a non-professional thinker, in order to emphasize that the faculty of thinking is not a prerogative only of the few so-called scholars and experts, but it is rather accessible to all individuals, regardless of cultural, educational and social conditions.[19]

The first approach of thinking is wonder, best illustrated in Meno, where Socrates was called an *electric ray*,[20] a fish that paralyzes and numbs by contact. This Socratic thinking activity provokes perplexity that set established standards into motion, as if in the first instance one of the basic outcomes of Socratic 'talking through' was to stop daily judging and acting based on unexamined values and principles.[21] Thinking holds the effect of dislodging individuals from their crystallized dogmas and rules of behavior, displacing them from pure epistemic means-ends logically that are based on taken-for-granted habits. As if the faculty of thinking had the potentiality to put man in front of a blank canvas, without good or evil, without right or wrong, but rather activating in him the conditions for establishing dialogue with himself, reflecting by himself and deliberating toward his own judgment about events in his life. Hence, thinking first attribute is described as wonder, provoking perplexity and being able to paralyze and interrupt taken-for-granted accounts on words such as, for instance, justice, courage and happiness. It is outstanding how for Arendt the difficulty started with the usage of "adjectives which we apply to particular cases as they appear to us (we see a happy man, perceive the courageous deed or the just decision)," by turning them into axiomatic concepts and a "non-appearing measure," (aphanes metron) in Solon words, or which Plato "later called ideas perceivable only by the eyes of the mind."[22] In fact, the Socratic thinking enterprise is described as "dialectical and critical because it goes through this questioning and answering process, through the dialogue of dialegesthai, which actually is a 'traveling through words,' a *poreuesthai dia tōn logōn*, whereby we constantly raise the basic Socratic question: *What do you mean when you say …*? Except that this legein, saying, is

soundless and therefore so swift that its dialogical structure is somewhat difficult to detect." (*LMT* 185)

Before dealing with the second feature of Socratic philosophy to the faculty of thinking, its by-product conscience, it is worthwhile to reconstruct Arendt's investigation regarding conscience. In Basic Moral Prepositions, Arendt narrates a historical exegesis of conscience, pointing out four ever-recurring moments, "conscience: as witness; as my faculty of judging, i.e. of telling right from wrong; as what sits in judgment in myself over myself; and, finally, as a voice in myself, an e.g.: the Biblical voice of god from without." Arendt's sort of deconstruction of the meaning and conscience begins with Greek Syn-eidenai, which originally meant only consciousness, released from any specifically moral connotation and described as con-scientia: "I know with my self, or while I know I am aware that I know." As such, conscience is portrayed to confirm existence. Terminological, though, conscientia will be found in Cicero which brings the connotation of a witness to what is hidden, where the two-in-one splitting up into ourselves is presumed. "When I am under oath for something that is hidden for all, I should remember that I have a god as witness, and this according to Cicero means: 'my mind is my witness.' (In De Off. III, 44)."[23] Hence, according to Arendt, in medieval age, Paul mentions conscience "bearing witness and thoughts which are in conflict with each other, 'accusing and excusing one another' (Rom. 2,14)." It was still in the Middle Ages that a sharp distinction took place between conscience as self-witness -- "this knowledge of what no one knows except myself"--, and conscience as the faculty to tell right from wrong according to the voice of God and the innate law. There is a turning point from considering conscience as virtus operandi to iudicandi operandi. It was gathered by this judicatory connotation that conscience was introduced into German philosophy through Wolff to Kant. Here conscience "means both: to sit in judgment and to judge, to tell right from wrong. Whereby it is noteworthy that Kant speaks of 'a double self' a twofold personality in man as the presupposition for sitting in judgment over oneself – otherwise judge and defendant would be one." (*BMP* 024608) In The Life of the Mind, Arendt adds, "this conscience is also supposed to tell us what to do and what to repent; before it became the lumen naturale or Kant's practical reason." (*LMT* 190) As a result, conscience was set up in moral or legal matters. Arendt is making sense of conscience solely as "to know with oneself, by oneself," even pointing out that "it took language a long time to separate the word 'consciousness' from 'conscience,' and in some languages, for instance, in French, such a separation never was made," in such a way that if today we understand conscience in its moral and legal connotation, consciousness turned to be the contemporary word for which conscience prior means: merely "to know with and by ourselves."

It is in this latter sense that the Socratic heritage is recovered. Conscience is described as a voice, from where comes the well known, in vulgar sense, 'voice of conscience": the Socratic *daimonion*[24]. Distinct from con-science, daimonion comes from outside and never tells you what to do, presuming that from it one cannot derive any positive account of moral statements. The second feature of thinking activity is related with its by-product, conscience. The key components of this discussion on conscience rely on the fact that conscience is witness to things of which no one knows accept ourselves. The primary characteristic of conscience is this splitting up of oneself (ego emauto), assigning plurality into ourselves. Even thought conscience in Middle Age attained an overtone of moral obligation and turned into a moral law in Kant's modern philosophy. Still all connotations of conscience reveal a reflective activity in the mode of solitude, of self with self, as intercourse with myself. Hence, the self as the standard is the core in approaching conscience.

It is in Arendt's description of conscience based on Socrates that we find the most detailed portrayal of the self. Arendt's account of Socratic thinking activity as self-examination can be better exemplified by ascribing Socrates as a gadfly in Apology, whose by-product is conscience. "The very word con-science, at any rate, points in this direction insofar as it means 'to know with and by myself,' a kind of knowledge that is actualized in every thinking process." (*TMC* 418) In a certain sense, conscience makes us appear for ourselves, we are to ourselves; inserting plurality into our oneness[25]. It is in that sense that Socrates believed that not by a mere acquisition of knowledge, but by knowing how to think, will better the Athenians, thus making political thought noteworthy.

The third proposition of Arendt's approach on Socrates' activity of thinking leads thinking to doxa, to dokei moi, out of pre-judgment, whose main metaphorical figure is Socrates as the midwife from Theatetus. Although chronological "Philosophy and Politics," written in 1954, holds at once Arendt's most positive account of thinking as well as its imbrication with the activity of judging, and consequently, its relevance to politics. In other words, among all Arendt's approach on Socrates, it is in this 1954 article that the boundary between the good man and the good citizen is underlined. It is remarkable how in this text Arendt reinforces the primacy of communicability, plurality and diverse viewpoints in building up someone's doxa, in how one constitutes ones particular view and uniqueness into the world. The Socratic dialectical questions, -- the dialectics and dialogue of "talking something through"--,[26] lead not his interlocutor to the

point of formulating a conclusion under the shape of a proposition regarding the subject inquired. The aporetic Socratic dialogue has the possibility of concluding and formulating a viewpoint derived from the dialectical practice. In Arendt's combination of Socrates' articulation on thinking with the Kantian dimension of imagination, in both appropriations the place of rationality remains crucial, what remains aside is certainty and universal validity. Arendt's approach on understanding and meaning bears neither irrationality nor an abstract theory.[27] In *Theatetus*, Socrates takes the role of midwife whose queries and interrogations aim to help those interlocutors to come up with their own viewpoints, making them realize that they have just been reproducing posteriori unexamined self-evident principles.[28] Socrates claims "simply for the right to go about examining the opinions of other people, thinking about them and asking his interlocutors to do the same."[29]

To the self as standard – which, as a matter of fact, already assigns plurality into ourselves --, is added the plurality of words and deeds and how we place ourselves into the world. Thinking as building doxai not only provokes perplexity and self-examination -- which in Arendt's own account cannot tell you what to do, but only what not to do. It also promotes, according to each of position, the way in which the world opens to us. As it has been mentioned in the topic on Aletheia, Arendt attributes Socrates with finding out a way of philosophizing that did not oppose truth to doxa. This is later described as the formulation in speech of dokei moi, of what appears to me. It is worth quoting at lengthy the passage Arendt explains doxa: "This doxa had as its topic not what Aristotle called the eikos, the probable, the many verisimilia (as distinguished from the unum verum, the one truth, on one hand, and the limitless falsehoods, the falsa infinita, on the other), but comprehended the world as it opens itself to me. It was not, therefore, subjective fantasy and arbitrariness, but also not something absolute and valid for all. The assumption was that the world opens up differently to every man, according to his position in it; and that the 'sameness' of the world, its commonness (koinon, as the Greeks world say, common to all) or 'objectivity' (as we would say from the subjective viewpoint of modern philosophy) resides in the fact that the same world opens up to everyone and that despite all differences between men and their positions in the world – and consequently their doxai (opinions) – 'both you and I are human.'" (PP 80) The fact that it is the sameness of the world that guarantees commonness and objectivity, recalled as the objective in-between world of artifacts, leads us once more to the assumption that it is not a taken-for-granted certainty from a prior rationality which assures reality. It is my claim that the dignity of the appearing world, with its specific political relevant attributes such as plurality, communicability and viewpoint, do not deny the realm of thinking activity.

At this point regarding the imbrication between truth and opinion, I will only stress that Arendt's portraying of Socrates in "Philosophy and Politics," it takes place no sheer contradiction between truth and doxa, and consequently, between the philosophical language such as dialectics and the political form of speech, respectively, persuasion. Arendt attempts to oppose the figure of Socrates as antagonist to Plato, particularly concerning the antagonism between truth and opinion, linked to the different role dialectics plays in both authors. "The opposition of truth and opinion was certainly the most anti-Socratic conclusion that Plato drew from Socrates' trial." And, Arendt concludes: "In the process of reasoning out the implications of Socrates' trial, Plato arrived both at his concept of truth as the very opposite of opinion and at his notion of a specifically philosophical form of speech, dialegesthai, as the opposite of persuasion and rhetoric. … Although it is more than probable that Socrates was the first who had used dialegesthai (talking something through with somebody) systematically, he probably did not look upon this as the opposite or even the counterpart to persuasion, and it is certain that he did not oppose the results of this dialectic to doxa, opinion."[30]

Arendt would agree that Socrates' desertion of epistemic certainty is the base of his philosophy, taking into account that it neglects neither the material and factual truth nor the responsibility of judgment and opinion, in spite of being the link to the search for knowledge.[31] It recalls the Greek distinction between a knowledge derived from the Socratic dialectical practice and the "verifiable truth certain knowledge, from self-evident principles; deduct[ed] from fundamental axioms. This requires necessity and produces certainty."[32] In Arendt's Socratic articulation of thinking, the place for rationality remains crucial as the criterion of consistence which was in the first place attributed to logics as well.[33] What remains out is the certainty of reason and logic which claim self-evidence and command universal validity and assent.[34] Arendt's approach on understanding and meaning bears neither irrationality and abstract theory nor an arbitrarily atomistic subjective, since plurality, publicity and the others' viewpoint remain at the base of thought. In fact, "the method of doing this is dialegesthai, talking something through, but this dialectic brings forth truth not by destroying doxa or opinion, but on the contrary reveals doxa in its own truthfulness." (PP 81) Truth as aletheia is not opposed to opinion; the former is rather the formulation in speech of how the world appears to each of us. In "Philosophy and Politics," the Socratic maieutic figures out as a political activity, whose results instead of arriving at general truths, leads to the citizen's doxa.

Notas

1- This paper is part of my dissertation "Private Faces in Public Places - Hannah Arendt's *The Life of the Mind* towards An Ethics of Personal Responsibility", defended in the Philosophy department at the New School for Social Research – NY. I am in debt to the comments by Agnes Heller, Richard Bernstein and Jay Bernstein.

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3- Hans Jones, "Hannah Arendt." In *Partisan Review*, Vol. XLII, No. 1, (1976): p.13. Words spoken at the funeral service for Hannah Arendt at the Riverside Memorial Chapel in New York City on Monday, December 8, 1975.

4- Arendt, Hannah, T*he Life of Mind –One/Thinking, Two/Willing.* New York-London: Ed. Harvest/HJB Book, 1978, p. 45. (Hereafter quoted as Arendt LMT). Taminiaux calls attention to this symmetry: "Not only do most of the words in ordinary language refer to the outlooks and aspects of entities appearing in the world, but even our most abstract way of speaking is full of metaphors which transpose to the activity of the mind words which are originally rooted in appearances. Originally, an idea is an outlook, a concept is a capture, a metaphor is a displacement, a reason is a ground, and son on." Taminiaux, "Time and the Inner Conflicts of the Mind," p. 46. It is worthy to call attention to the fact that Arendt is not taking any of those terms taking into account their rigorous conceptual distinctions. See also: Taminiaux, Jacques, "Événement, Monde et Jugement," in *Esprit – Changer la culture et la politique*, "Hannah Arendt," N. 42, 2 édition, Juin, 1985, pp. 135-47.

5- Arendt would agree with Wittgenstein's argument against the private language. In the particular following passage of *The Life of the Mind* it is evident: "In all such reflecting activities men move outside the world of appearances and use a language filled with abstract words which of course, had long been part and parcel of everyday speech before they became the special currency of philosophy." (*LMT* 78)

6- (*LMT 77*) In another passage: "What becomes manifest when we speak about psychic experiences is never the experience itself but whatever we think about it when we reflect upon it." (Ibid, p. 31) Arendt traces a contra point between the life of the soul and the life of the mind. "Conceptual metaphorical speech is indeed adequate to the activity of thinking, the operations of our mind, but the life of the soul in its very intensity is much more adequately expressed in a glance, a sound, a gesture, than in speech." Ibid.

7- (Merleau-Ponty) *(LMT* 32) Regarding the more general discussion on mind's activity towards politics, see: Gray, J. Glenn, "The Winds of Thought," In *Social Research*. New York, (Spring 1977) Vol. 44: 40-62; Ernst Vollrath, "Hannah Arendt and the Method of Political Thinking." In *Social Research*, Vol. 44, N. 1 (Spring 1977): 160 – 82; Jean Yarbrough & Peter Stern, "*Vita Activa and Vita Contemplativa*: Reflections on Hannah Arendt's Political Thought in *The Life of the Mind*," in *The Review of Politics*, vol. 43, N. 3, (July 1981), pp. 323-54; Hans Jonas, "Acting, Knowing, Thinking: Gleanings from Hannah Arendt's Philosophical Work." In *Social Research*. New York, 44/1 (Spring 1977): 25-43.

8- In a longer passage Arendt highlights: "If the language of thinking is essentially metaphorical, it follows that the world of appearances inserts itself into thought quite apart from the needs of our body and the claims of our fellow-men, which will draw us back into it in any case. No matter how close we are while thinking to what is far way and how absent we are from what is close at hand, the thinking ego obviously never leaves the world of appearances altogether. The two-world theory, as I have said, is a metaphysical delusion although by no means an arbitrary or accidental one; it is the most plausible delusion with which the experience of thought is plagued. Language, by lending itself to metaphorical usage, enable us to think, that is, to have traffic with non-sensory matters, because it permits a carrying-over, metapherein, of our sense experiences. There are not two worlds because metaphor unites them." (*LMT* 110)

9- Arendt, Hannah, *Between Past and Future - Eight Exercises in Political Thought*. New York: The Penguin Books, first edition 1961, 1977, p. 13. (Hereafter quoted as Arendt BPF) See: Eslin, Jean-Claude Eslin, "L'Événement de Penser," in *Esprit – Changer la culture et la politique*, "Hannah Arendt," N. 42, 2 édition, Juin, 1985, pp. 7-18.

10- As beautifully put by Augustine: "An so I come to the fields and vast palaces of memory, where are stored the innumerable images of material things brought to it by the senses. Further there is stored in the memory the thoughts we think, by adding to or taking from or otherwise modifying the things that sense has mad contact with, and all other things that have been entrusted to an laid up in memory, save such as forgetfulness has swallowed in its grave." Augustine, *Confessions*. Translated by F.J. Sheed, and introduction by Peter Brown, Indianapolis / Cambridge: Heckett Publishing Company Inc., 1993, Book X, VIII, p. 178. (Hereafter quoted as Augustine, *Confessions*)

11- (*LMT* 77) (Augustine, *Trinity*, Book XI, chaps. III, VIII, and, X) "It is because of the twofold transformation of the thinking 'in fact goes even further,' beyond the realm of all possible imagination, 'when our reason proclaims the infinity of number which no vision in the thought of corporeal things has yet grasped' or 'teaches us that even the tiniest bodies ca be divided infinitely.'" Ibid.

12- "Nor indeed do the things themselves enter: only the images of the things perceived by the senses are there for thought to remember them." Augustine, *Confessions*, VIII, p. 179 Augustine still calls attention to the

fact that since we remember this the memory, we are not disturbed by the emotional qualities of the forth movements (disturbances) of the mind (mens, soul): desire, joy, fear, sadness.

13- See: *LMT* 154.

14- It import to add that we are not taking into account the scholar debate regarding the several levels of validity or disregards of the Socratic sources concerning the earlier, the middle and the later platonic dialogues in Arendt's readings.

15- Concerning my approach on Arendt's Socratic philosophy, it is noteworthy to highlight my dept to Bruno Snell, Pierre Hadot, and Alexandre Nehamas' approaches on Socrates, whose readings are quite elucidative and in several points at the same direction as Arendt's. The similarity of the Arendtian description of Socrates with the Snell's book, written in 1955, as well as, with Hadot's book are particularly remarkable. See: Snell, Bruno, *Die Entdeckung das Geistes*, (Verlag GmbH, Hamburg, 1955); Hadot, Pierre, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie antique*? (Éditions Gallimard, Paris, 1995); Nehamas, Alexander, *The Art of Living – Socratic Reflections from Plato to Foucault*, (Berkeley/ Los Angeles/ London: University of California Press, 1998). See also: Nussbaum, Martha C., *The Fragility of Goodness – Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1868.

16- Expression borrowed from Kant. (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B871/A843). See: Arendt, Hannah, "Thinking and Moral Considerations." In *Social Research*, 38(3), (autumn 1971): pp.417-46 (Hereafter quoted as Arendt, *TMC*).

17- (Heidegger, *Was Heisst Denken*?, Tübingen, 1954, p. 52) Translation cited by Hannah Arendt in Ibid., 174.

18- Regarding the turning of Socrates' historical figure into a model see LMT 167. Hannah Arendt was aware of the difficulty to justify the use of a historical figure as a model, although she agues that by using "ideal-types", as Weber for instance, one is doing the same. Arendt has as a model the historical Socrates, rather then the Platonic one. Regarding Arendt and the use of ideal types see: Parvikko, Tuija, *The Responsibility of the Pariah.* Jyväskylä: Jyväskylä University Printing House, 1996.

19- In *The Life of the Mind*, it is clear that in Arendt's account, "thinking in its non-cognitive, non-specialized sense as a natural need of human life, the actualization of the difference given in consciousness, is not a prerogative of the few but an ever-present possibility for everybody – scientists, scholars, and other specialists in mental enterprises not excluded." (LMT 191) Also in Arendt, "Thinking and Moral Considerations," Arendt highlights "the faculty of thinking, as distinguished from the thirst for knowledge, must be ascribed to everybody; it cannot be a privilege of the few." (TMC 425)

20- Arendt points out that according to Plato "somebody else called him [Socrates] an 'electric ray' (*Meno* 105), a fish that paralyzes and numbs by contact." (LMT 172)

21- See: Villa, *Politics, Philosophy, Terror – Essays on the Thought of Hannah Arendt*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999, p. 159.

22- (*TMC* 429) In this text, Arendt did not consider the notion of doxa, its implications on the relationship between truth as aletheia and a positive account of opinion. Thinking is mostly approached as the wonder provoking perplexity and described as an aporetic activity. Arendt only mentions the word opinion once, and not even brings up any explanation of doxa. Arendt writes, "He [Socrates] purged people of their 'opinions', that is, of those unexamined pre-judgments that would prevent them from thinking – helping them ... to get rid of the bad in them, their opinions, yet without making them good, giving them truth," Ibid., p. 432. This paragraph leads Villa to point out a contradiction in her account of opinion between "Thinking and Moral Considerations," and "Philosophy and Politics. See Villa "Arendt and Socrates," in *Philosophy and Politics and Terror*. I rather consider that here Arendt uses the notion of opinion in its vulgar sense of unexamined pre-judgment, which, at once, also supposes the idea of taking-for-granted concepts, doctrines, definitions and so one. "Socrates submitting this own doxa to the irresponsible opinions." Arendt, Hannah, "Philosophy and Politics." In *Social Research*, Vol.57, No.1(Spring 1990), p. 74. (Hereafter quoted as Arendt, PP).

23- *Basic Moral Propositions*. Unpublished manuscript from 1966, Arendt, Hannah, "Basic Moral Propositions." In: *Lectures 1966*, University of Chicago, Hannah Arendt's Papers, The Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., container 46, p. 024608. (Hereafter quoted as Arendt, BMP).

24- The Socratic *daimon* can still be a case of conscience, though seen as an outside voice it is only able to tell one what not to do, fulfilling it with obstacles, out of any positive prescriptions. In the Middle Age, instead, conscience reaches a positive account of statements, like the voice of God within us, or the *lumen naturale*, already incorporating moral and legal standards and rules. See *LMT* 190.

25- Arendt writes in *The Life of the Mind*, that "Certainly when I appear and am seen by others, I am one; otherwise I would be unrecognizable. And as long as I am together with others, barely conscious of myself, I am as I appear to others. We call *consciousness* (literally, as we have seen, 'to know with myself') the curious fact that in a sense I also am for myself, though I hardly appear to me, which indicates that the Socratic 'being one' is not so unproblematic as it seems; I am not only for others but for myself, and in this latter case, I clearly an not just one. A difference is inserted into my Oneness." (*LMT* 183)

26- See: *PP* In the chapter of Judgment I will deal with the relationship between dialectics and persuasion.

27- Nehamas pays attention to the Greek distinction between a knowledge derived from the Socratic dialectical

practice and the "verifiable truth certain knowledge, from self-evident principles; deduction from fundamental axioms. This requires necessity and produces certainty." (Nehamas, *The Art of Living – Socratic Reflections from Plato to Foucault* p. 74.) He claims that the Socratic form of knowledge has not been theoretically enough articulated, holding then weakness and fallibility. In Arendt combining of Socrates' articulation on thinking with the Kantian dimension of imagination, in both appropriations the place of rationality remains crucial, what remains aside is certainty and universal validity. Thus, Arendt's approach on understanding and meaning bears neither irrationality nor an abstract theory.

28- See: Hadot, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie antique*?. He quotes *Theatetus* 150d.

29- *(LMT* 168). Concerning Arendt's choice on Socrates see Canovan, Margareth, "Socrates or Heidegger? Hannah Arendt's Reflections on Philosophy and Politics," in *Social Research*, Vol. 1 (Spring 1977): 135 – 65; Beatty, Joseph, "Thinking and Moral Considerations: Socrates and Arendt's Eichmann," in *Journal of Value Inquiry* 10 (Winter 1976); Vallée, Catherine, *Hannah Arendt – Socrate et la Question du Totalitarisme*. (Paris: Ellipses, 1999); Villa, Dana, "The Philosopher versus the Citizen – Arendt, Strauss, and Socrates," in *Political Theory*, Vol. 26, No. 2, April 1998, 147-72.

30- *(PP* 75-80) See Villa, Dana, "Arendt and Socrates", in *Revue International de Philosophie*, 2/1999 – n. 208 – pp.241-57; Tassin, Étienne, *Le Trésor Perdu – Hannah Arendt IIintelligence de l'Action Politique*. Paris: Éditions Payot & Rivages, 1999.

31- Vlastos, Gregory, *Socrates – Ironist and Moral Philosopher*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1991. See also, Vlastos, Gregory, *Socratic Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

32- See Nehamas, *The Art of Living – Socratic Reflections from Plato to Foucault* p. 74. I disagree with Nehamas' claiming that by the fact the Socratic searching for knowledge has not been theoretically enough articulated, it holds then weakness and fallibility. I think it would hold weakness and fallibility if the Socratic experience of thinking had claimed the same sort of certainty and universal validity of knowledge based on solid axioms.

33- "Since I am one, it is better for me to disagree with the whole world than to be to be in disagreement with myself." From this sentence attributed to Socrates in Gorgias (482) Arendt points out: "From this sentence both Occidental ethics, with its stress upon being in agreement with one's own conscience, and Occidental logic, with its emphasis upon the axiom of contradiction, took their starting point." Arendt, Hannah, "Crisis of Culture: its Social and its Political Significance," in *Between Past and Future - Eight Exercises in Political Thought*. New York: The Penguin Books, 1977, p. 220.

34- Regarding this passage of displacing truth from identifying it only with sheer logical certainty to turning logic as merely one more tool of thinking can be well illustrated by Wittgenstein' shifting from truth based on *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* to language on *Philosophical Investigations.*