

Course Name: The Life of the Mind

Period: Intensive course, week 19 (9-13 May), spring term 2016

Level: Masters and Ph.D.

Readings:

Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind* (Harcourt 1978)

Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* (University of Chicago Press, 1989)

Description:

Hannah Arendt is considered by many to be one of the deepest political philosophers of the twentieth century. In this course, however, we will concentrate on her philosophy of mind, and the central concepts of thinking, willing and judging. For Arendt, thinking and knowing are distinct notions. To ignore this distinction is to "mistake the need to think with the urge to know" Thinking, for Arendt, is strictly speaking not "about" facts or about the world, but is rather the indispensable source of meaning in all experience. In this sense, it does not "grasp truths", but is rather a prerequisite for such grasping. At the same time, thoughtlessness leads to evil action in the world. What is required for ethical action, then, is judgment. We will work through the Arendtian framework together in a series of lectures and seminars in which participants will present and discuss problems and issues arising from our readings. Participants are expected to have read most of LoM in advance, and selections från LKPP during the course, and submit a final paper within two weeks after the last seminar. The grade will be based on participation, the presentations, and the final paper.

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