

*Antonella Besussi*

**A self-contained politics**

This essay considers Hannah Arendt's conception of politics as a self-contained space whose meaning is internally shaped without dependence or recourse to any external source of value. More specifically it is argued that anti-instrumentalism and anti-moralism represent two different but inseparable dimensions of an original and radical version of the "autonomy of politics" thesis.

*Laura Boella*

**Reading Hannah Arendt: A new beginning**

The first two volumes of the Hannah Arendt's *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, which appeared in 2018, will mark surely a turning point in the approach to the philosopher's writings. I consider especially relevant the focus on the bilingual quality of Arendt's writings. From the critical edition will come out a new reading of the "canonical" works, first of all, of *Human Condition*, one of the most multilayered and difficult Arendtian books. Among the numerous threads interwoven in this book, I focus on the conference held in 1954, *The interest in politics in recent European philosophical thought*. Here it is possible not only to see how the reflection about the human condition is connected to the debacle of the philosophical political tradition, but also how in *Human Condition* Arendt puts the basis of a transformation of philosophy, and not simply of a leave from

philosophy in direction of the political theory. This is the great and unexplored legacy of Arendt's "experimental" thinking.

*Martine Leibovici*

**Good works and glorious actions. Hannah Arendt, the ethical and the political**

In *The Human Condition*, Arendt includes good works or *das tätiges Gut* into human activities, but whereas she spends two long chapters analyzing non political activities as labour and works, she only takes moral activity into account to stress an incompatibility between its criterion – goodness – and action's criterion – glory or beauty. Such an incompatibility is related with the intrinsically public character of action, whereas moral action is corrupted when publicly performed. This is what Matthew teaches: «Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them». Moreover, Arendt follows Machiavelli's distrust of any direct irruption of good into the political sphere. However this does not imply that, for her, action is completely separated from ethics. A lot of political actions are motivated by moral motivations. Although rising from a non-public sphere, moral motivations are not purely subjective and, following Montesquieu, some of them are principles enacted by action itself, even if, when performed, action meets questions intractable from a moral point of view. Moreover, whether moral or political, principles are always susceptible to being made public, when somebody is asked to account for what he or she has done.

*Beatrice Magni*

***My thinking is my fighting: Arendt's conception of politics***

In the present paper my concern is to explore the connections in Arendt's work between public life and political thinking, and the ways in which each informs the other. By approaching *The Human Condition* via the Arendt's analytical couple of the "social" and the "barbarism", and analysing in the detail an essay not often treated extensively, *On Humanity in Dark Times: Thoughts about Lessing*, my aim is to demonstrate that in Arendt the source of freedom and the political are identical or one. One the one hand, human freedom in this world is attainable only politically – if we are not to fall into the *worldlessness* trap –, while on the other, freedom is the sole reason for the subsistence and justification of politics. Participation in public life is the essence of human freedom and the *polis* is the realm in which individuals uniqueness is

revealed. Politics stands above subject's private life concerns and their social needs. It is not to be subordinated to other ends nor revolutionary goals. Starting and always confirming the arendtian anti-essentialist position, ultimately the paper suggests that the distinction between liberty and freedom puts Arendt's political thought and her key concepts in a new light and offers elements of a distinctively Arendtian account of politics, and of an earthly political philosophy that still doesn't miss its normative ambition.

