**ISF Draft: Individual Research Grant:**

**Phantom Theology: Hannah Arendt and Theodor Adorno between Secularism and Religion.**

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**Scientific abstract**:

The past two decades have been marked by growing scholarly interest in the relation between the modern, secular (mainly “western”) world and religion and theology, as well as in the different social, political, cultural, and intellectual venues in which this relation unfolds. This project will explore this dynamic from a pioneering perspective, focusing on the role of what I term “phantom theology” in the postwar writings of two giants of twentieth-century thought, Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) and Hannah Arendt (1906-1975) (e.g. Arendt, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1969; Adorno, 1950, 1963, 1966; 1970). Phantom theology refers to the theological traditions (i.e., traditions pertaining to God, transcendence, divine law, revelation, redemption, and the like) that these scholars declared missing from the modern world, and that, nonetheless, served as a vital source for their social and political theories. These two highly influential German-Jewish intellectuals were, no doubt, decidedly secular thinkers (Holden 2019; Aschheim, 2008; Mendes-Flohr, 1991). In using the term “phantom theology,” however, the main goal of this project is to present the composite position of theology in their postwar writings: on the one hand for both Arendt and Adorno, theological traditions had “disappeared” from the modern world, and on the other hand, theology remained a key resource for scrutinizing modernity. Mobilizing theology in political and social theory in this way was effectively to recall it as a phantom. In particular, I show that Adorno and Arendt aimed to recover the Judeo-Christian and Roman theological traditions respectively, although such recoveries under modern conditions are, for them, clearly impossible. In both cases, we find an attempt to resituate theology in the face of the impossibility to do so, even though this resituating manifests in different forms, different disciplines, and relating to different religious traditions.

Thinking in terms of phantom theology has not been suggested by other scholarly works dedicated to the relation between modern secular thinking and religion. Moreover, neither Adorno nor Arendt has been approached from this angle. Given this, these two thinkers were selected because of their enduring impact on scholarship in social theory (Adorno) and political science (Arendt) (Jay, 2020; Morris, 2018; Liska, 2017; Aschheim, 2008). Moreover, the focus on their postwar writing is vital because I wish to show how religion has never left the modern or late-modern arena (for late-modern, see Bielik-Robson, 2014). The importance of this project also lies in revising our view of secular modernity: contrary to the common view, modern and secular thinking was characterized by a refusal to fully succumb to being separated from so-called “lost” theological traditions, even after their professed disappearance from modern world. It is this refusal to discard the theological “other” of secular thinking once and for all, and its reverberations in the writings of two leading modern secular thinkers, that I hope this project will make explicit.

**2.** **Detailed description of the research program** **(15 A4 pages max)**

A. Scientific Background

In recent years there has been a growing number of works dedicated to the intricate links between religion and secularism, faith and political action, theology and secular modernity (e.g. Gordon, 2020; Styfhals, 2019; Mendes-Flohr, 2019; Bielik-Robson, 2014; Lazier, 2008; de Vries, 2005). The rise in interest in this topic was prompted by claims of a “religious turn” (Turner, 2010, 652) or, as Slavoj Žižek put it, a religious “return with a vengeance” (Žižek and Milbank, 2009, 4), that have dominated the academic agenda for the past two decades (Bielik-Robson, 2019). These claims induced leading scholars, such as Jürgen Habermas and Charles Taylor, to speak of an “emergent post-secular” society (Habermas, 2008), and “a new age of religious seeking” (Taylor, 2007, 534), which underlined a “resacralization” of a formerly secular “disenchanted,” mainly western, world (Casanova, 1994). In this context, many studies have reengaged with the concept of “political theology” (Schmitt, 2005), presenting the range of ways in which such a concept discloses the redemptive, eschatological, or messianic elements embedded in the political imagination of various modern secular movements and ideologies (e.g., Vega 2017; Hotam 2013; Batnitzky, 2009; Gordon, 2007). Scholars like Talal Asad (2003) and Hent de Vries (2008) have provided new insights into the religious roots of secular society and culture. Other studies have offered a range of in-depth readings of leading modern European intellectuals and of the role of theological language and vocabulary in their approaches to history, society, politics, and culture (e.g., Bielik-Robson and Whistler, 2021; von Wussow, 2021; Styfhals and Symons, 2019; Galili and Steilen, 2019; Schmidt, 2009).

The writings of prominent twentieth-century German-Jewish thinkers such as Hannah Arendt and Theodor Adorno acquired a central position in many of these scholarly investigations, mainly because these scholars played a decisive role in the formation of the social sciences in the twentieth century, generating or deeply influencing diverse disciplines and scientific traditions (including critical theory and political science). This scholarly impact is still felt today (Holden 2019; Morris, 2018; Liska, 2017; Aschheim, 2008; Mendes-Flohr, 1991). Arendt, however, is commonly considered as “the most secular” thinker of her generation. Peter Gordon, for example, underscores a dissimilarity between Arendt’s “non-metaphysical account of the public world” and the common view of her contemporaries, for whom the “political theological predicament” was paramount (Gordon, 2007, 871). In the same vein, Samuel Moyn underlines the secular foundations of Arendt’s political theory (Moyn, 2008), and Micha Brunlik distinguishes between modern Jewish thought, which secularizes theological concepts, and Arendt’s political (by which he means strictly secular) analysis of “Jewish fate” (*das jüdische Schicksal*) (Brunlik, 2003, 74-75). The main argument common to these and many other studies is that Arendt’s “secularism” resists any theological argumentation or metaphysical consideration. Moreover, Arendt’s engagement with Roman religious heritage is sidelined in many studies by leading scholars, including Elizabeth Young-Bruehl (2006), Danna Villa (2006) and Seyla Benhabib (2010), who emphasize the importance of Greek philosophy to understanding Arendt’s thought. Arendt’s reliance on the Roman religious tradition remains notably understudied in scholarly works that focus on her postwar, mainly political, writings (e.g., Dew, 2020; Owens, 2007; Villa 2000), especially when compared to scholarly interest in her approach to philosophical ideas like will, thinking, judgment, and action.

The embedded theology in the progressive-secular project that was associated with critical theory (also appearing in recent years as an antidote of sorts to the dangers of political theology) is receiving increasing scholarly attention (e.g. Gordon, 2020; Byrd, 2020, Richter, 2019; Brittain, 2010). This attention, however, is marked by a disagreement discord. Martin Jay’s recent work (2020) emphasizes Adorno’s Marxism and secularism. Although Gordon (2020) speaks directly to the centrality of theology to critical theory, he argues nonetheless that Adorno’s “migration into the profane” (*Einwanderung ins Profane*) means a secular turn away from “all metaphysical authority” (146). Accentuating the Marxist or the theological aspects in Adorno’s thought is thus marked by an emphasis on his secular distancing from religion. Conversely, other topical accounts of Adorno’s philosophy (e.g., Wolfson, 2015; de Vries 2005) argue for a theologically committed Adorno, an approach that dovetails rather well with Mendes-Flohr’s groundbreaking study of the eschatology of the “Frankfurt School” (1983). Within this scholarly framework, “negative theology” and “*Bilderverbot”* (the biblical prohibition on making idols and images) are two main religious notions associated with Adorno that reflect not the secular but rather the religious components of Adorno’s philosophy (e.g., Pritchard, 2002; Comay, 1997). In particular, these theological concepts are connected with Adorno’s postwar philosophical emphasis on “negative dialectics,” presenting his attempt to free philosophical thinking (and especially Hegel’s dialectics) from its affirmative features and from any idea of progress towards a final “unity” and “oneness” (Adorno, 1973). Negativity, one of the main concepts identified with Adorno’s postwar philosophy, is thus presented as informed by pre-existing theological categories.

B. Research Objective and Expected Significance

The main goal of this project is to propose reading what I term “phantom theology” into the postwar writings of Hannah Arendt and Theodor Adorno. By using this term, I wish to demonstrate how the theological traditions that Arendt and Adorno have considered to be removed from the modern and secular world in fact provide the basis for their different examinations of secular modernity. This is especially marked given the postwar context of the works addressed here (coined by Adorno as “after Auschwitz”). For example, Arendt argues that “the decline of Christian civilization” was the “framework within which the whole of modern history is played out” (Baehr and Gordon, 2012, 379). For Arendt, the sort of theological thinking that characterized past religious traditions “evaporated” from modernity (Arendt, 1968, 14-15). In a similar tone, Adorno writes of the end of images such as transcendence, redemption, and salvation. In the modern world, these fundamentals of Christian (and for him Jewish) theology were completely absorbed “into material existence,” indicating a process of “immanentization” that rendered them invalid (Adorno, 2000, 117). Despite this break with the past that both scholars identify, they simultaneously recover the very theological traditions that they considered to be “lost.” This is a key contribution of this project. Indeed, it argues that, particularly in his writings from the 1950’s and 1960’s, Adorno’s critical theory is informed by what he terms “a conceptualization” of the Judeo-Christian theological concepts (Adorno, 2000, 98), with the objective of “rescuing” (Adorno 2000, 86) them. For example, for Adorno, the process of “immanentization” denotes the interlocking of the disappearance of theology with its new form of presence (Bielik-Robson, 2019). Arendt, somewhat differently, evokes the Roman religious tradition in her political writings from the same period, with the aim of reclaiming it for modern, mainly political, needs. The project aims to demonstrate how, for both thinkers, the theological traditions that had disappeared from the modern world were simultaneously a vital source for their social and political theories. Evoking theology means in this sense recalling it as a phantom.

Thus, this project demonstrates how Arendt and Adorno endeavor to conjure phantom theology in their social and political theories. Accessing this phantom theology entails recovering a mode of theology even though the conditions for such a recovery render it impossible. In both cases, we find the attempt to resituate theology in the face of the impossibility to do so, even though this resituating manifests in different forms, different disciplines, and relating to different religious traditions (Jewish, Christian, or Roman). As such, the project does not aim to demonstrate scholarly collaborations or provide new data concerning personal or conceptual ties between these scholars, though such connections no doubt existed and ties and cross-references will be noted. Instead, the goal is to highlight the shared dependency of these modern scholars on the theological traditions that they consider to be absent from the modern world and the significance this carries. Thus, this project emphasizes a conceptual gesture that was central to their writings, rather than a sociological argument.

As this argument is new, it has potentially broad implications not only for the overlapping fields of modern European and modern Jewish history and philosophy, but also on political science, social theory, and religious studies. The impact of this argument is twofold: first, it provides a new paradigm for understanding the social and political theories of these two seminal intellectuals. Contrary to the common portrayal of a secular Arendt, this project points to the unique theological constellation that underpins her postwar thought. The project also suggests a new way to reconcile the secular and theological aspects in Adorno’s critical theory by proposing to see in Adorno’s clear distancing from religion as a viable way for him to reiterate its logic and symbolism. Thus, while a “migration into the profane” may mean a secular turn away from metaphysical authority that is no longer available, such a turn “away” enables the lost authority to be “rescued.”

Second, and more broadly, thinking in terms of phantom theology will have substantive implications for the way we think of modern secular thought, namely that it was characterized by a refusal to fully succumb to being separated from theological traditions, even after their professed disappearance from the modern world. This aspect of the project elucidates a novel articulation of a mid-twentieth-century secular-religious continuum rather than a split. Focus on the postwar writings of these intellectuals is vital as it demonstrates the need for contemporary arguments concerning the so-called “return” of religion (Turner, 2010; Žižek and Milbank, 2009; Habermas, 2008; Taylor, 2007) to take into account that religion has never left the modern, and late-modern arena (Bielik-Robson, 2014). Where contemporary scholarship often argues that a “return” of religion characterizes the last two decades (Bielik-Robson, 2019), this project demonstrates that religious thought has been exceptional in its changing modes of perseverance.

**3**. **Detailed description of the proposed research**

A. Working Hypothesis

The working hypothesis is that modern, and decidedly secular, intellectuals engaged with religion and theology not only as an object of study (i.e., religion as the subject matter of their research and writing) but also as a vital source for their thinking on modern society and politics. This project attempts to capture their dependence on theology, which, though they had declared it lost, surfaced in different forms, in different intellectual disciplines, and pertaining to different religious traditions. The project aims to understand the relation between “the secular” and “the religious” which lies at the basis of diverse political, social, cultural, and intellectual phenomena. To do so, it exposes the endurance of theology in modern secular thought. The need to probe the relationship between the secular and the religious is deeply rooted in our most intimate engagements with the modern world. However, the continued presence of theological imagination in modern thinking is still heavily debated and demands further research. Illuminating a modern dependence on a theological thinking that is no longer available (i.e., ‘phantom theology’) enables us to propose a new model for understanding the relation between secular thinking and religious traditions, exploring the continuities between them, rather than setting up a great divide between religious and secular. Indeed, how does theology influence the secular intellectual discourse in which it is argued to bear no meaning? And if theology is declared invalid, what might be its mode of existence? Answering these questions allows us to uncover points of connection between modern secular thought and theology that have been hitherto overlooked.

B. Research design and methodology

I will conduct a close reading and textual analysis of Arendt and Adorno’s main postwar publications, alongside additional unpublished material, in order to expose their dependence on theology, and demonstrate the role of what I term ‘phantom theology’ in shaping their thought. The main published texts that reflect Arendt’s engagement with theology, which are thus relevant to this study, are: “Human Condition” (1958), her so-called “political writings” (Arendt, 1963; 1968; 1968b; 1969; 1969b), and her two last works (Arendt 1977, 1992), published posthumously. I also intend to draw on Arendt’s diary (2002), as well as on her correspondence, and additional unpublished material (including lectures, speeches, book manuscripts, and transcripts), written between the years 1945-1975. The main texts that reflect Adorno’s engagement with theology are: *Minima Moralia* (1950; 1974), hiscelebrated “Negative Dialectics” (1966; 1973), his comprehensive study of Hegel (1963; 1993), alongside some of his main classroom and oral addresses from the 1960’s (Adorno, 1970; 2000; 2005; 2006). I also intend to draw on Adorno’s correspondences and unpublished material written between the years 1945-1969.

I will position these texts as “sites” for scholarly inquiry, as suggested by Michel de Certeau (1988, xxvi). Though De Certeau’s motivations are beyond the scope of this project, it will be methodologically fruitful to engage with the “scriptural operation” of texts in such a way that will “bring into view” (de Certeau, 1988, 287) their dependence on theology. This will be accomplished by focusing on the relation between the social context to which the text relates, the concrete discipline in which it is written (what de Certeau calls “analytical procedures”) and the content of the text (de Certeau, 1988, 57). Bringing these issues together, these “sites” may offer new knowledge about some of the most intimate and fascinating engagements of these scholars with religious traditions in the postwar era.

For this purpose, and to make the main argument accessible and coherent, this project brings three issues into dialogue, each of which is central to Arendt and Adorno’s engagement with theology: a. the problem of evil, b. the concept of love, and c. the notion of time*.* These three topics act as case studies that shed light on the nature and operation of ‘phantom theology.’ Moreover, they are interconnected as Arendt and Adorno do discuss them in relation to each other, albeit occasionally.

a. The Problem of Evil: In 1945 Hannah Arendt proclaimed that “the problem of evil will be the fundamental question of postwar intellectual life in Europe” (Arendt, 1945, 134; Bernstein, 1966, 137). Indeed, in the following years, this “problem” became a central theme of her work, especially in her discussion of modern politics. Yet, during the 1950’s and 1960’s Arendt’s work also underwent a shift from thinking in terms of “radical” and “absolute” evil to arguing that evil is “banal.” This shift corresponded with her retreat from a theological definition of evil as “diabolic or demonic” (Arendt, 1963*,* 287-288; Arendt, 2013,48) to an approach to “the problem of evil in an entirely secular setting” (Kohn, 1997, 155). This case study focuses on this shift from a theological definition of evil to a “secular” one by exploring how this shift was informed by Arendt’s return to Roman theology, which she had considered lost. I argue that Arendt’s secular understanding of “banal” evil mobilizes the Roman approaches to the manifestation of divine presence in the world through the work of human beings (Arendt, 1963*,* 214; Arendt, 1968, 122-123). This highlights Arendt’s shift from one mode of theological argumentation to another, rather than her departure from theology altogether, as is commonly argued (e.g. Moyn, 2008; Gordon, 2007; Brunlik, 2003). This shift, however, is not about a simple return to a Roman religious argumentation. Instead, it is a demonstration of a more complicated repurposing of a theological approach that, for Arendt, had disappeared from the modern world.

A theological understanding of evil is also central in Adorno’s work, especially in his postwar writings. In the modern world, Adorno explicitly identifies a “secular” turn away from theological concepts, such as transcendence, God, and redemption, towards a clear belief in human action in this world and within history. However, this process meant that the “immanent” world “receives the aura of redemption even though redemption failed to occur and evil persisted unabated” (Adorno, 2006, 147). For example, Adorno’s concept of “barbarism,” which he associated with the horrors of Auschwitz, represented “the absolute evil of theology” (Holden, 2019). This project engages with Adorno’s clear outlining of the persistence of evil. In particular, I wish to explore the manner in which Adorno articulates evil, and how his concept of negative theology, which was central to his social theory, aims to offer a remedy to evil’s enduring malevolence.

b. The Concept of Love: Love is the second theological concept that is central to both scholars’ examinations of the “modern condition” (Arendt, 1958); both present love as a religious concept that disappeared in modernity. Starting with her dissertation (1929; 1996) Arendt engages with the theological concept of love, which she argues Christianity had absorbed from the Roman tradition. For Arendt, it was Augustine in particular who developed the Roman religious concept of love through Christian theological vocabulary and symbolism. However, the way in which this theological discussion informs Arendt’s postwar scrutiny of modern politics has eluded scholarly attention. In her political writings, Arendt not only points to the modern disappearance of the theology of love. More importantly, she takes this absent theology as a source for her definition of a “togetherness of men in speech and in action” (Arendt, 1946), a “natality” and “freedom” that are central to her own understanding of politics (Arendt, 1958; Biss, 2012). This project will then examine the connections between the fundaments of Arendt’s political theory (i.e. togetherness, natality, freedom) and Roman theology by presenting her treatment of these fundaments not as a simple return to the Roman theology of love, but as evidence of her evoking of this theology as a phantom.

A parallel examination of Adorno’s commitment to the theological concept of love is fitting because he repeatedly, albeit unsystematically, discusses it in his postwar writings and lectures (Kiloh, 2020). Adorno argues that the Christian concept of love (as presented in Kierkegaard’s “doctrine of love”) failed to offer a remedy to the modern “reification of man” (Adorno, 1939). This failure was a result of the fact that the Christian concept of love became “a matter of pure inwardness,” of and within the loving individual, such that it rendered other people superfluous, which eventually left “the world to the devil” (Adorno, 1939; Sherman, 2007, 34). This aspect of the project will unpack how Adorno reengaged with this sort of “demonic love” after its failure had been established. I intend to explore how Adorno’s commitment to the world, central to his social criticism, is associated with holding onto a lost theological concept of love. In doing so, I will demonstrate how this particular sense of holding onto an object of love that is no longer available results in Adorno’s stance that to offer criticism means to love, that is “to belong to *all* people without exception as they exist today” (Adorno, 2005, 202).

c. The Notion of Time: Time is also a central concept for both scholars. For example, the “break in time” and its effect on how we should understand temporality, serves Arendt as a leitmotif in her analysis of the “crisis of modernity” (Arendt, 1968, 11-13; Liska, 2008, 26-27; Cordero, 2014, 249-265). Similarly, time (especially Hegel’s notion of “universal,” historical time) lies at the heart of Adorno’s scrutiny of modernity (Adorno, 2000; 2006; 1963). The novel contribution of this project is that both Arendt and Adorno re-engage with messianic, “fulfilled time” (Benjamin, 1996, 85; Wolfson, 2015, 180), which I encapsulate using the Greek notion of *Kairos*, signifying a decisive, everlasting, present moment that lies on the other side of chronological (i.e. human, sequential, historical) time.

In my analysis of Arendt, I will draw attention to how the evocative image of a “break” in time, which she also articulates as a “gap between past and future,” evokes the theological concept of *Kairos* advanced by Augustine. In Augustine’s theological writings Arendt finds the concept of a “now” to represent the eternally present, divine, redemptive moment that stands “outside time” and guarantees the flow of temporality (Arendt, 1996, 14). Here *Kairos* stands for divine, eternal, fulfilled time because it also indicates the coming of the “kingdom of God.” I will address how Arendt’s concept of a “gap” revisits this idea of *Kairos* that lies “outside time.” For Arendt, *Kairos* had “evaporated” from the modern world. I will then outline how, in Arendt’s discussion of time, she evokes a theological heritage that she declared had been lost, and how she rearticulates a messianic “fulfilled time” in the aftermath of its disappearance.

Adorno’s discussion of Hegel’s concept of time serves as a parallel case for evoking messianism as an aspect of phantom theology. For Adorno, Hegel’s idea of history is a case study in the modern secularization of eschatological, messianic time (Adorno, 1963, 2006). However, such a secularization of *Kairos* denotes the final disappearance of the theological tradition that endows the eternally present, godly, redemptive moment with meaning. Though for Adorno, this theological tradition has been lost, his interest in Hegel’s secularization of *Kairos* represents an attempt to hold onto the messianic moment after its declared disappearance. This case study details how Adorno maintains the messianic idea as a phantom and how this type of reengagement with theology dovetails with what scholars like Elliot Wolfson and Christoph Schmidt have termed the “Jewish passion for the impossible,” which is to say “a fidelity to the idea of redemption that assumes the form of its refusal” (Wolfson, 2015, 180; Schmidt, 2014, 75-86). Thus, while Adorno holds onto “the possibility of redemption” he is bound to the “impossibility of its actualization” (Wolfson 2015, 184). This point is critical because it demonstrates Adorno’s reengagement with messianic “fulfilled time,” evoking a so-called absent tradition.

C. Preliminary Results

I have already presented some preliminary findings regarding Adorno’s postwar writings in “Education between Critique and Theology,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 56.3 (2021): 470-486.In this article, I focus on the role of love in Adorno’s postwar engagement with education, and how this harks back to his early reading of Kierkegaard’s “works of love.” I argue that, particularly in Kierkegaard’s concept of love, Adorno finds a theological source for his educational call for “critical self-reflection.” Simultaneously, I demonstrate that, for Adorno, Kierkegaard’s love ends with a failure to offer a remedy to the modern “reification of man,” with which education must engage (Adorno, 1939). I discuss this tension, suggesting that Adorno’s concept of education is a result of the concurrent holding and dismissing of a theological notion of love – the only possible way to capture love. I have also completed a monograph on the relation between modern forms of critique and theology in the writings of prominent twentieth-century German-Jewish scholars, including Adorno and Arendt.

These works, integrating modern secular thought, religion and theology, have set me up to undertake the project I have proposed here. This project will contribute a systematic examination of the role of phantom theology that characterized the postwar works of Adorno and Arendt to my broader examination of the relation between critical examinations of modernity and theology in this period. As indicated, the role of religion and theology in modern European and modern Jewish thought is my field of expertise. In recent years, I was one of the first scholars to examine the political theology of Zionism (e.g. Hotam, 2007a; 2009; 2013;) and to argue for the central role of Gnosticism in German intellectual discussions during the 1950’s and 1960’s (Hotam, 2007b). My studies of Karl Loewith and Hans Jonas (Hotam, 2009, 2010) illustrated how these scholars integrated theological considerations into their postwar writings. I was also one of the first scholars to bring the post-secular theoretical framework to bear on local and global educational issues (Hotam 2017, 2015). Recently, I have also offered a reading of the mystical origins of Walter Benjamin’s theory of youth, which remained underdeveloped in research (Hotam, 2019).

D. Research Schedule

The research project will be divided into three stages:

a. Collecting the data, Theodor Adorno: In this stage, which will take approximately one year, I will focus on reading and analyzing Adorno’s rich and diverse postwar writings. This stage will include engagement with his main publications, correspondences, unpublished material, and oral lectures from these years, which are available at the Adorno Archive in Frankfurt (<http://www.ifs.uni-frankfurt.de/adorno-archiv/>) and the Walter Benjamin Archive in Berlin (<https://www.adk.de/en/archives/archives-departments/walter-benjamin-archiv/index.htm>).

b. Collecting the data, Hannah Arendt: In this stage, which will take approximately one year, I will focus on reading and analyzing Arendt’s postwar writings, including her central philosophical and political works, her correspondence, articles, lectures, speeches, book manuscripts, and transcripts available online in the “Hannah Arendt Papers” collection of the Library of Congress (<https://www.loc.gov/collections/hannah-arendt-papers/about-this-collection/>).

c. Synthesis and Integration: In this stage, which will take approximately one year, I will synthesize my analyses of Adorno and Arendt, integrating the different dimensions of their engagements with theology into a broader view of their postwar intellectual framework. I will then develop a coherent model that will present their engagements with religious language, vocabulary, and imagination, characterizing these engagements in terms of phantom theologies. This framework will propose a way to abandon the current scholarly fixation on the secular character of postwar scholarship in favor of a much more nuanced understanding of the relationship between modern thought and theology.

\* Budget Justification:

A. Personal

I will need a research assistant (Ph.D. student) for the primary evaluation, selection and organization of the archival materials, as well as for textual analysis, and the editing, scanning, organizing and tagging of documents.

B. Supplies and Materials & Services

My research assistant will need a laptop. I will also need a laptop, a printer, and a scanner (for working with hand-written transcripts, correspondences, and similar archive material). Primary and secondary sources unavailable in Israeli university libraries will be purchased by the PI with this budget (“professional literature”).

C. Other Expenses

Since Adorno’s archival material is in Germany, I will have to travel to Germany for approximately two weeks. In order to properly locate and assess the archival material, it is imperative that I have access to the collections in person. I will also need to pay the relevant database fees. The travel allowance is also designed to enable my research assistant’s participation in academic conferences. In addition, the proposed research will result in a number of papers written in English. As a native Hebrew speaker, I will need professional editing of the final English texts (included under "publication charges in scientific journals").

D. Miscellaneous

Photocopies and office supplies are needed to work with the wide variety of sources in this project. Membership of scientific association will enable my active participation in central academic conferences, including presenting the findings of the project.

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**Time schedule and work-plan**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Beginning** | **End** |
| Collection of data Arendt/Adorno | First Year | Second Year |
| Synthesis and Integration | Third Year | Third Year |

Notes: The research project will be divided into three stages:   
a. Collecting the Data (Theodor Adorno): In this stage (approximately one year), the researcher will focus on the reading and analyzing of Adorno’s rich and diverse postwar writings, including his main publications as well as correspondences, unpublished material and oral lectures from these years.   
b. Collecting the data, (Hannah Arendt): In this stage (approximately one year), the researcher will focus on the reading and analyzing of Arendt’s postwar writings, including her central philosophical and political works as well as correspondence, articles, lectures, speeches, book manuscripts, and transcripts.   
c. Synthesis and integration: In this stage (approximately one year), the examinations of Adorno and Arendt will be undertaken in stages a. and b. will be synthesized, with a focus on integrating the different aspects of their phantom theologies into the broader analysis of their postwar intellectual framework. The researcher will also develop the coherent model that will present Adorno and Arendt’s respective engagement with theological language, vocabulary, and imagination, characterizing these aspects of their work in terms of phantom theologies.