



The Promise of Politics

By Hannah Arendt

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In *The Promise of Politics*, Hannah Arendt examines the conflict between philosophy and politics. In particular, she shows how the tradition of Western political thought, which extends from Plato and Aristotle to its culmination in Marx, failed to account for human action. The concluding section of the book, “Introduction *into Politics*,” examines an issue that is as timely today as it was when Arendt first wrote about it fifty years ago—the modern prejudice against politics. When politics is considered as a means to an end that lies outside of itself, argues Arendt, when force is used to create “freedom,” the very existence of political principles is imperiled.

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Review

"A brilliantly erudite and imaginative book."

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"By insisting that politics remain a promise rather than a threat, Arendt offers a hope that history has yet to justify."

—*The New York Sun*

"Arendt demonstrated, brilliantly, how our habitual view of politics as an instrument in the service of private liberty, material gain, and social prosperity actually increases the dangers posed by the modern world."

—Dana R. Villa, author of *Arendt and Heidegger* and *Socratic Citizenship*

About the Author

Hannah Arendt was born in Hanover, Germany, in 1906, fled to Paris in 1933, and came to the United States after the outbreak of World War II. She was editorial director of Schocken Books from 1946 to 1948. She taught at Berkeley, Princeton, the University of Chicago, and The New School for Social Research. Arendt died in 1975.

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