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CLIL PHILOSOPHY

Hannah Arendt and her political theories

by

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- Hannah Arendt was born into a Germany-Jewish family in Hannover in 1906.
- She studied philosophy, literature and theology with Heidegger and Jaspers.
- She was arrested for doing research on anti-Semitic propaganda and she fled to America.
- She died in New York in 1975.

Works

- In New York she published *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951).
- She published The Human Condition (1958).
- Her most famous work is *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1963).

Philosophy and Politics

- Hannah Arendt has influenced the progress of modern political theory.
- According to Arendt, philosophy is not about epistemology, but about politics.
- This totalitarian way of thinking negates the plurality of lifestyles and cultures.

The Origins of Totalitarianism

The work is divided in: «Antisemitism», «Imperialism» and «Totalitarianism».

According to Arendt, anti-Semitism was a consequence of the declining importance of Jews, the rise of the nation-state, and the emergence of a new type of nationalism in which the Jews were perceived as an alien

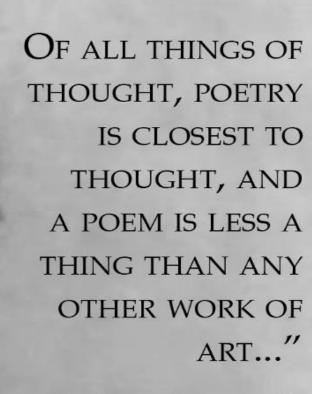
element in the nation.

Totalitarianism

- Society is reduced to One Man or a single, undifferentiated Mankind as a condition of a «perfect totalitarian government». They were available to follow a leadership that allowed them to gain identity in a mass movement.
- Terror is the essence of totalitarianism.
- Totalitarian movements must strive to eliminate the capacity for political action, and any form of spontaneous human relations.

The Human Condition

- The apex of human achievement is not thought but active life.
- This divides into labour (repetitive but sustaining life), work (creating objects and a human world), and particularly action (new, especially political, activity involving shared enterprises).
- Her account of Eichmann's trial (1963) presented the idea of the «banality of evil»: Eichmann simply drifted with the times and refused to think critically about his actions.



- The Human Condition, 170

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