

Abstracts

The location of politics: problems in using Arendt's work **Herman van Gunsteren**

Although the author does not follow her in some of her ways and ideas, for him Arendt is exemplary, because she succeeded without interruption to think about politics. She does not succumb to the temptation 'to think politics away' (as Plato and some planners did) and neither to thoughtless 'realism' (Eichmann, utilitarianism, behaviorism). Contrary to what she thinks, politics in Arendt's sense need not exclusively be limited to the public sphere and its concerns. Political action concerns precisely creating a connection between the public sphere and real problems in other spheres of life.

Disciple or dissident? The confrontation of Arendt and Heidegger in French philosophy **Jozef Keulartz**

In this study an overview is given of the Arendt-reception in contemporary French philosophy. This reception is shaped by the confrontation with the work of Heidegger, who in France enjoys the status of a 'master thinker'. It is argued that it is precisely in this confrontation that both the specific character of Arendt's work and the actuality of her political philosophy show themselves most clearly.

Politics and the virtue of 'consideration' **William Denayer**

For Arendt action consists of a combination of the articulation of a worldly interest and the formulation of a principle. In *The Life of the Mind*, she explains that the abstractions of the thinking ego become manifest in the life-world through representative thinking and the mediation of the faculty of judgement. Ideally, these processes exclude both ideological commitments and the articulation of mere self-interest from the public space. Politics has to do with the realisation of citizenship. The author argues that, for Arendt, the realisation of citizenship implies a distributive reform-policy and also that her plea for localism can fruitfully be coupled to the work of Melucci and Habermas on the new social movements and the 'remaking of everyday life'.

Utopia as the death of politics **Hans Achterhuis**

In many aspects Hannah Arendt's judgement about the modern world was that of a 'realised utopia'. We can detect structural resemblance between her critical analyses of modern society in *The Human Condition* and the descriptions from, for instance, Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, the most influential utopia of the nineteenth century. Arendt's reflections about politics sharply contrast with the most important principles of utopian thinking, making and controlling, the means-ends scheme and the realising of harmony and consensus. As far as these utopian principles are realised in our present-day society, her critical judgment, based on the category of 'action' holds good. It is argued, however, that this is not completely so. In another – less critical and more positive – interpretation of the modern world, the idea of 'action into nature' opens up new possibilities for understanding the societal functioning of science and technology.