Crises of the Republic

Crises of the Republic - Hannah Arendt

Hannah Arendt must be something like the lawyer who practices law, but writes poetry. Her last writing betrays a concern for the Republic of the United States, much as that Southern lawyer's humanity transcended prejudice. Somehow, Arendt manages to be at once inventive, to take strong stands without alienating herself with one or another popular cause.

The most exciting thing about her work is that it is a philosophical analysis, avoiding the bullshit (but usually seems to permeate such scholarly political analysis) in the way it asks us to put our finger on the myths of both the left and the right. In each of these, Arendt shows us the shakers commonly-held myths with her careful, thoughtful analysis.

In "Lying in Politics," Dr. Arendt discusses the issues of deception by the politicians. The Pentagon papers last year. While she follows the path already cleared by many other commentators, she scores those responsible for the planning of the Vietnam war for their own self-deception, she digs a little deeper to seek a cause for their self-deception. She remarks that there is a slippery relationship between lying and acting - this connection is the faculty of imagination. Without imagination, Arendt argues, not only would man be unable to lie, he would be unable to act: without imagination, he would be unable to act; without imagination, he would be unable to act.

In "On Violence," Dr. Arendt makes essential distinctions between power and violence. Power, she notes, can sustain a disharmonious state. Violence, while being the product of diversity, is a product of numbers, while violence depends on the strength and might of the group. "On Violence," in which Dr. Arendt finds Alice and the band

Alice Cooper

This was not an isolated case, however. With all the journalistic bay, favorable as it might be, concerning Alice's last two efforts, Love It To Death and Killer, there was a great deal of fine, high energy, hard rock parody of all. "Below Your Means," they comprise an album which is quite well on the same plane as the first two, the superbizarro-if-somewhat-disharmonious; in fact, there's a lot of sub rosa underwriting. As a result, the album manages to write strongly without transcending prejudice. Somehow, Arendt manages to be at once inventive, to take strong stands without alienating herself with one or another popular cause.

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