

# Preface

Hannah Arendt and Theodor Adorno were undoubtedly among the most influential political theorists and philosophers of the twentieth century. And yet despite the enormous impact the work of these two contemporaries has had on political and social theory, philosophy, and the humanities more generally, this is the first book in English that takes a comparative look at both authors. This has been a long time coming. But the book would not have seen the light of day without the cast of outstanding scholars supporting our project and contributing to this volume. We owe a special debt of gratitude to them for their willingness to present original work in this volume—work cutting incisively across the rigid theoretical boundaries that have existed for far too long. We thank them, additionally, for the enormous generosity of spirit and forbearance they have shown in the face of many, often unexpected, delays. It is our hope that this volume will open the space for many more such studies that seek to compare, explore, and critically appropriate, not only Arendt's and Adorno's work, but also the profound intellectual traditions they embody.

This book is, in more ways than one, a collaborative project. It is a product of several years of the editors' joint work on Arendt and Adorno and of many fruitful discussions between them. In no small measure, the volume has benefited hugely from the intellectual and institutional environments in which it developed, environments without which long-term commitments to projects are simply not possible. We thank Simon Fraser University's Institute for the Humanities, which is approaching its thirtieth year, and the University of Michigan, in particular its Department of Political Science, for funding and institutional support, and for providing the kind of extraordinary spaces and communities in which our work could take hold and flourish.

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