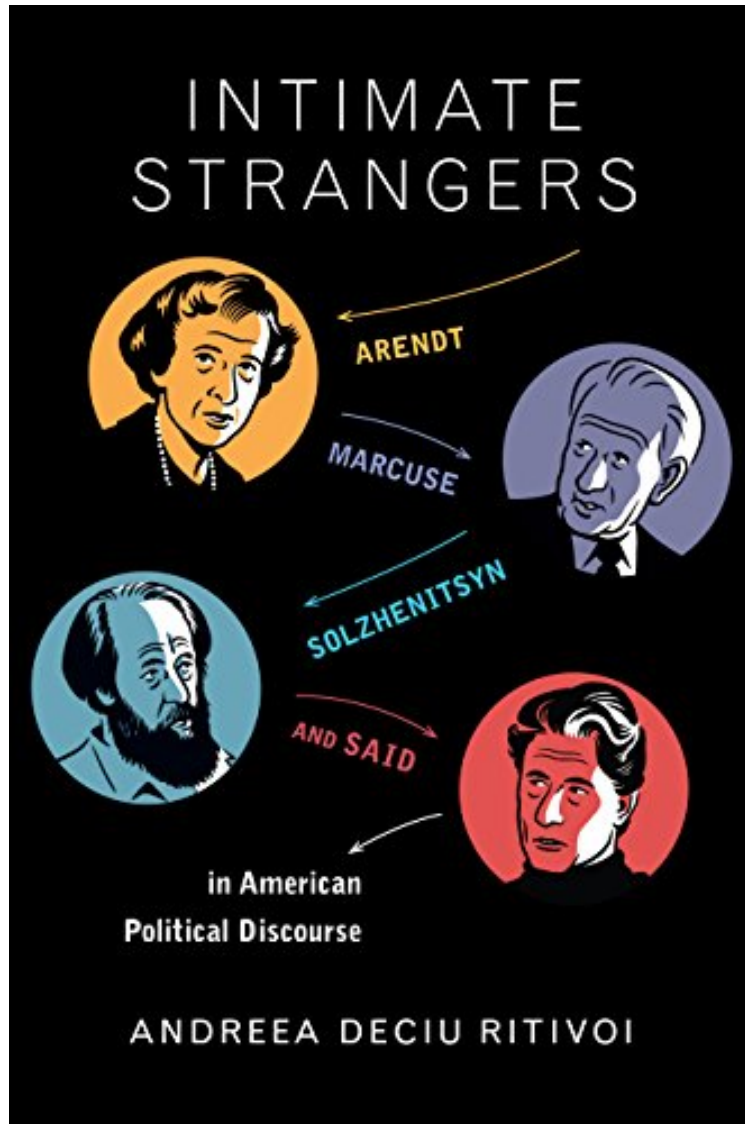


Intimate Strangers: Arendt, Marcuse, Solzhenitsyn, and Said in American Political Discourse

Andreea Ritivoi

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Andreea Ritivoi : Intimate Strangers: Arendt, Marcuse, Solzhenitsyn, and Said in American Political Discourse before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Intimate Strangers: Arendt, Marcuse, Solzhenitsyn, and Said in American Political Discourse:

Hannah Arendt, Herbert Marcuse, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and Edward Said each steered major intellectual and political schools of thought in American political discourse after World War II, yet none of them was American, which proved crucial to their ways of arguing and reasoning both in and out of the American context. In an effort to convince their audiences they were American enough, these thinkers deployed deft rhetorical strategies that made their cosmopolitanism feel acceptable, inspiring radical new approaches to longstanding problems in American politics. Speaking like natives, they also exploited their foreignness to entice listeners to embrace alternative modes of thought. *Intimate Strangers* unpacks this "stranger ethos," a blend of detachment and involvement that manifested in the persona of a prophet for Solzhenitsyn, an impartial observer for Arendt, a mentor for Marcuse, and a victim for Said. Yet despite its many successes, the stranger ethos did alienate many audiences, and critics continue to dismiss these thinkers not for their positions but because of their foreign point of view. This book encourages readers to reject this kind of critical xenophobia, throwing support behind a political discourse that accounts for the ideals of citizens and noncitizens alike.

Ritivoi lends her lucid, careful, well balanced analysis to a topic to which our years of heightened suspicion concede heightened relevance. She offers a wealth of material on the American, German, Russian and Palestinian historical and cultural contexts in a mix organized according to the variety of Arendt, Marcuse, Solzhenitsyn, and Said's stranger personae. I would have titled this book *Hannah and Her Others*, had I written it. But I have not. (Calin-Andrei Mihailescu, University of Western Ontario) Andreea Ritivoi provides a combination of poignant biography with insightful analysis of how the rhetorical strategy of the stranger persona reveals the tightrope that we walk when we converse in the public sphere with those who are part of a social configuration that we enter from the outside. The insight she provides into this insider/outsider relation is bolstered by the rigor and concreteness of her analysis of the public rhetoric of four prominent immigrant intellectuals during their sojourn in the U.S. just before and after the Second World War. (Fred Evans, Duquesne University) This book is important. It is ambitious, thorough and sensitively written by one whom herself is an intimate stranger in America. It is about the discourse of foreign intellectuals and their receptions. *Intimate Strangers* highlights the diverse stories of four iconic figures--Hannah Arendt, Herbert Marcuse, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and Edward Said--and how their "stranger personas" were ambivalently received in America. It says as much about American culture as it does about "foreign" intellectuals. This book is a "must-read" for anyone interested in the politics and challenges of cultural identity. (Michael Krausz, author of *Oneness and the Displacement of Self: Dialogues on Self-Realization*) A superb endeavor to understand the thorny dialectics of uprootedness and the reinvention of intellectuals forced into exile by the ideological follies of the twentieth century. This book is not only a major achievement in intellectual history but also a vibrant invitation to empathy, lucidity, and moral clarity. (Vladimir Tismaneanu, author of *The Devil in History: Communism, Fascism, and Some Lessons of the Twentieth Century*) A finely argued contribution to the discussion of immigration. (Kirkus s) Unusual and illuminating... Essential reading for students of literature, philosophy, and post-World War II American intellectual history. (Library Journal) About the Author Andreea Deciu Ritivoi is professor of English at Carnegie Mellon University. Her research focuses on immigration, exile, political discourse, argumentation theory, and intellectual history. She is the author of *Yesterday's Self: Nostalgia and the Immigrant Identity* and *Paul Ricoeur: Tradition and Innovation in Rhetorical Theory*.