

Tilgung in der Antwortdimension des Spätwerks in keiner Weise mehr auszumachen ist. Dieser hintergründigen Verschiebung entsprechen auch die zwanghaften Rituale der Abstandswahrung, die die Geschichtsvernichtung des nationalsozialistischen Totalitären eher bestärken als durchbrechen.

In unserer Sichtung erwähnten wir das nachträglich Rückwirkende des Arendtschen Werks auf das Heideggersche Oeuvre. Es ist D. Villa, der in „Arendt and Heidegger, The Fate of the Political“ diese Frage, ausgehend von den in vieler Hinsicht bahnbrechenden Schürmannschen Beleuchtungen der politiköffnenden Entgründungsdimension im Spätwerk Heideggers, zuerst stellt. Er fragt mit Recht: Wäre diese Öffnung überhaupt wahrnehmbar, ohne daß wir mit H. Arendt zum ersten Mal auf eine westliche Geschichte der Moderne gestoßen wären, in der das Anfangen-Können der Freiheit einen konstitutiven Platz gegenüber den Sozialontologien der Höherentwicklung und einer sich von der Vergangenheit abtrennenden Emanzipation innehat?

Die von U. Ludz herausgegebene Brief- und Dokumentensammlung macht das Unerwartete dieses „Zwischen“ aufs Neue spannend und sichtbar. Sie lädt dazu ein und fordert dazu auf, nicht nur Arendt mit Heidegger, sondern auch Heidegger mit Arendt zu lesen: Daß wir uns mit der Wirklichkeit nicht durch ihre Notwendigkeit hindurch versöhnen müssen.

Es ist diese Frage, die wir als Motto vorangestellt haben, die Arendt auf eine Weise, die sich am besten mit dem englischen „anxious“ umschreiben ließe, an Heidegger stellt. Es betrifft genau dies, von dem das Adorno-Wort der „erpressten Versöhnung“ spricht, die noch bei jenen durchschlägt, die meinen, die Geschichtstheologie und auch eine „Logik der Geschichte“ von sich gewiesen zu haben. Die Frage Arendts und die – sie im übrigen beruhigende – Antwort Heideggers darauf, bei der über ihren konkreten Anlaß hinaus (die Klärung einer Textstelle aus „Kants These über das Sein“) hintergründig freilich das „Zwischen“ selbst auf dem Spiel steht, gibt uns einen weiteren Hinweis darauf, aus welchem Stoff dieses „Zwischen“ gewebt ist. [Dok. 97, Dok. 99]

Hans Scheulen, freier Publizist und Übersetzer, arbeitet zu Fragen der politischen Theorie und Philosophie im historischen Kontext; letzte Veröffentlichungen: „Übergänge der Freiheit“, Wiesbaden 1997; zus. mit Zoltan Szankay: „Zeit und Demokratie. H. Arendt und C. Lefort“, in: C. Lefort, *Fortdauer des Theologisch-Politischen?*, Wien 1999.

Zoltan Szankay, Mitinitiator des Vereins „Hannah-Arendt-Preis für politisches Denken“, lehrt an der Universität Bremen (Fachbereich Sozialwissenschaft) zu Fragen politikphilosophischer und psychanalytischer Zugänge zum politischen Handlungsraum; letzte Veröffentlichungen: „The Green Threshold“, in: E. Laclau (Hg.), *The Making of Political Identities*, London/New York 1994; „Arendtsche Denkungsart und Öffnungsweisen der demokratischen Frage“, in: A. Grunenberg/L. Probst (Hg.), *Einschnitte*, Bremen 1996.

Kazuo Sato

Hannah Arendt in Japan 1989–1999

Hannah Arendt had been long forgotten in the Japanese intellectual world.

After the big political change in 1989, the scholars, philosophers and citizens have begun to re-think their own society regardless of the past criterion of right-or-left. In 1994 *The Life of the Mind* was translated for the first time and *Between Past and Future*, *The Human Condition* and *On Revolution* were renewedly published, all of which sold well unexpectedly. Just in the same year Arendt was criticized by one philosopher Tetsuya Takahashi whose main critical point was concentrated on Arendt's interpretation of "the holes of oblivion". Takahashi pointed out the change of her understanding

concerning the "the holes of oblivion" in history. At first Arendt stressed in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* that under totalitarian regimes the extermination of one nation had a very serious danger of resulting in holes of oblivion. Jewish people were e.g. in a very horrible situation of being totally exterminated and forgotten in history. Total extermination and isolation of the victims from others would bring them into oblivion.

But Arendt changed her opinion in her *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, in which she asserted "the holes of oblivion do not exist", for "there are simply too many people in the world to make oblivion possible. One man will always be left alive to tell the story". Takahashi noticed this degeneration very keenly: First, there could be always so many cases in extermination camps which were faced to the holes of oblivion. Second, it is undoubtedly clear that there were in fact many small cases that fell into the holes of oblivion, to say nothing of innumerable anonymous people who were slaughtered unnoticed. Fourth, in such enormous

guilts of massacres in concentration camps, as the crimes were beyond normality of normal world, even the witness find it desperately difficult to express what is beyond words.

Any words are not enough to tell what is incredible but what happened really. Takahashi argued against Arendt because this retreat has much to do with the problems of "remembrance". Though Arendt stressed the importance of remembrance to resist the disappearance into holes of oblivion, her idea of "remembrance" is oriented mainly into the public sphere. That is, only great deeds are worthy of remembrance.

In this sense, Arendt did not pay much attention to the problem of remembrance of what is difficult to be put into the light, i.e. what is beyond speech. This kind of obscurity and darkness can be seen in such people as slaves in ancient Greece, many anonymous victims in concentration camps and "comfort women" in the Japanese army. Takahashi adds the massacres in Africa to these examples. Arendt is, in Takahashi's view, not so interested in these massacres in Africa, because she believes that African natives are "weltlos". His argument against Arendt was so essential that many Arendt researchers like M. Iwasaki refuted him. And Arendt has begun to be re-read through these discussions. Until then Arendt was read only within very small groups of political scientists.

Generally speaking, the main stream of Japanese philosophy was apt to remain apolitical, so that Arendt had been known only among political scientists. Philosophy and politics had been strictly separated and topics had not been treated as philosophical problems directly until recently. The end of cold war made it possible to discuss political issues without being named left or right.

This situation was very favourable to understand Arendt's thought, which had been long judged by many Japanese Marxists as that in favour of the right. After 1989 so many citizens and scholars who

had long intended to be left or Marxist began to read Arendt again. The main point that has attracted them is her attitude towards modern society. Her comment on the disappearance of the political sounds so topical after the radical change of party system in Japan after 1989.

Now Hannah Arendt is in fashion. Especially in these several years, every hot controversy has been caused in connection with the problem of "comfort women", who were forced to be sexual slaves during the Second World War. Even the existence of such women itself had been long denied officially. But in 1991, one Korean lady was brave enough to ask the Japanese government for an apology and reparations by giving herself up as a "comfort woman".

They did it for fear of being forgotten and liquidated from the history. This caused very hot discussions, in which the interpretations of Arendt's thought played a central role. The main point is (in connection with Eichmann's trial), how long is a person responsible for a crime? Since the end of Second World War, more than fifty years has passed, so that the younger generations are not interested in that war for themselves. In one sense, they are not concerned with it. But on the other hand, for victims like the "comfort women" the war has not come to an end. The Japanese government did not accept the existence of "comfort women" itself for a long time.

The new right group even affirmed the deeds of Japanese army in the Second World War and advertised new types of nationalism. Many scholars (e.g. T. Takahashi, K. Shimizu, A. Oogoshi, K. Sato), journalists and other active persons stressed the importance of taking the responsibility for the deeds even if they are not concerned in the war directly. Takahashi stressed the need of judgement even to the deeds of the past in order to restore justice in this situation and to reconcile with "the hurt past". This kind

of judgement is connected with the punishment of the responsible persons of the War. It is necessary to make a new future in which no such deeds can be repeated. Also Sato pointed out how dangerous the decline of judgement is in our modern world nevertheless the danger of this decline is more serious. All these discussions are closely related with the problem of national identity and nationalism in the present radical change toward the globalisation.

We can find many other publications on Arendt in Japan. Among them e.g. "Genndai-shisou" (Review of Contemporary Thought) gave a special number for Arendt (July 1997, Vol. 25-8), which consists of ten treatises, one dialogue and three translations of Arendt's texts. In May 1998, Hannah Arendt was discussed as one of main symposiums in the largest academic society of philosophy in Japan. And in November the discussion was continued under the title Hannah Arendt in consideration of the "comfort women" problem. Now many translations of Arendt's texts are planned and prepared. Among them are e.g. the translation of *Was ist Politik?* and *Karl Marx and the tradition of Western political thought*. At the same time many books and translations on Arendt were published (e.g. Tetsuya Takahashi: *Ethics of remembrance*, Shin Chiba: *Arendt and modernity*) and will be published (e.g. Bonnie Honig: *Feminist Interpretations of Hannah Arendt*).

Also we can even find a Hannah Arendt computer home page, which is written in Japanese. This shows how much the younger generation is interested in Arendt.

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