

"The problems of violence between peoples, nations, races and the sexes in the 20th century - What is revealed by the thought of Hannah Arendt"

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TITLE OF THE PROJECT: The problems of violence between peoples, nations, races and the sexes in the 20th century - What is revealed by the thought of Hannah Arendt?

The central topic of these 2 years of research has been the question how Arendt, who elaborated her work in the age of hitherto unprecedented wars and revolutions, known as the 20th century, viewed the prospective 21st century. In the present day, with the influence of Arendt's thought reaching into many different areas, it has become possible to pursue this theme from the multiplicity of stances represented by the various researchers involved.

In the first year, in order to renew the mutual understanding between those involved in the research programme, we reinterpreted Arendt's thought from the point of view of feminism based on the theme "Identity, Difference, Politics". As part of this we invited Lisa Dish, one of the leading feminists from Minnesota University in America, to be our guest speaker at symposiums and seminars held in Tokyo (Keio University) and Kyoto (Ritsumeikan University).

Our three Japanese speakers Nishimoto Ikuko, Ito Hironari and Yamashita Yone also raised the global and vital issues that they themselves were confronting in their own research. Lisa's comments in relation to the three speakers' contributions were most illuminating and all those who attended left feeling stimulated and enriched.

In the second year, we proceeded to build on the achievements of the first year and, with the translation of Arendt's works in each country in Asia and the appearance of new young researchers on the scene, we were able to broaden our vision, inviting more guest speakers from abroad and holding symposiums and seminars in Kyoto (Ritsumeikan University) and Okinawa (University of the Ryukyus).

First of all, in the symposium titled 'Politicizing Arendt's Political Thought: How did we read Arendt in the 90's' held in Kyoto, we received reports from You-Kyung Suh of the Kyung Hee University, Jiang Yi-huah from Taiwan National University, Wolfgang Heuer of the Free Berlin University and Kodama Shigeo. Two days later, we reconvened at the University of the Ryukyus to hold a symposium entitled 'The World of Fragmentation and Arendt' with a report from Naminira Tsuneo of University of the Ryukyus, Shimabukuro Jun as guest speaker, and Masuda Kazuo, Chiba Shin and Shimizu Kiyoko giving a joint report.

The perspective of Okinawa, situated both literally and metaphorically on the barrier-like national boundaries of the Japanese state, had a strong impact on the three guest speakers. It was clear that the speakers shared the sentiments of the other participants in feeling keenly that the Okinawan perspective was a new one that created a vital

opportunity for fresh approaches to the problems posed by the exclusive and strongly nationalist Japanese state.

Through the joint research described above we were able to establish an effective network connecting those researching Arendt in Japan. At the same time, we were able to collectively reaffirm the necessity for active involvement in the all pervasive issue of the attack on the World Trade Center and the war on Afghanistan which occurred with such unsettling timing in the first year of the 21st Century. The resolution to do this was felt by all participants regardless of country of origin and the affirmation of this commitment made on this occasion in Japan resonated in our hearts.

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