

Die frechen Frauen von Teheran

von Elisabeth Kinderlein

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„Die Beschäftigung mit Philosophie ist in der islamischen Republik populär geworden, sie wird als Weg des Widerstands gegen politische Ideologien und religiösen Dogmatismus empfunden. Auch Hannah Arendt ist en vogue. "Ihre Bücher erinnern uns daran, dass Freiheit die 'Fähigkeit ist, immer erneut anzufangen' ", sagt eine Studentin. "Und dass das, was alle angeht, öffentlich ausgehandelt werden sollte. Da sind wir doch gut dabei!" Und Richard Rorty, amerikanischer Philosoph und häufiger Ost-West-Dialogpartner in Teheran, ging sogar davon aus, dass von Iran die islamische Aufklärung ausgehen wird.“

Kanan Makiya, the author of the best-seller „**The Republic of Fear**“ (Iraq) in an interview:

„The writing of what became „The Republic of Fear“ took six years. (...) I discovered writers I'd never read before, above all Hannah Arendt. Also Isaiah Berlin, John Stewart Mill, Hobbes: very basic texts that I'd never read. (...) These basic texts I discovered, as I was writing „Republic of Fear“, became very important to me. They changed my whole way of thinking about politics, though they didn't change certain underlying values. I discovered liberal politics. Hannah Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism*, in particular, gave me a model of how to understand, for instance, the Ba'ath front organisations. She analyses the nature of those front organisations, how they work, how power was exercised through them. She had studied how networks of informers functioned in society and how states operate through networks of informers to exercise power. I understood power and political authority in a wholly new way through Arendt.“

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Kanan Makiya is Sylvia Hassenfeld Professor of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at Brandeis University. An Iraqi-expatriate, Makiya left Baghdad in 1967 to study architecture at M.I.T. He later earned an additional degree from the London School of Economics. Writing under the pseudonym, Samir al-Khalil, Makiya published „Republic of Fear“ in 1989.

See also

Makiya, Kanan, An Iraqi discovers Arendt, in: *World Policy Journal*, 23(4), Winter 2006-2007, pp. 83-86