

The Role of Women Throughout the Ages

A presentation in Stuttgart on the occasion of UN International Women's Day

Stuttgart, Germany, 8. March 2014

An audience of 25 gathered in Stuttgart/Germany on March 8th to hear a presentation sponsored by the Women's Federation on the topic 'The Role of Women Throughout the Ages'. The presentation was held in the premises of the UPF (Universal Peace Federation).

Our speaker, Christine Sato, member of the board of the Women's Federation in Germany, came from Giessen, bringing several books that had served as references during preparation for her presentation. We have good memories of Mrs. Sato from her previous presentations such as 'The Dignity of Women' and from book review sessions, and are always ready to welcome her as a speaker.

But to start off, the guests were invited for drinks and a rich assortment of bakeries.

Then followed Mrs. Sato's presentation, to a visual background of several important quotations relevant to the topic. Based on the situation of contemporary women, which in some countries is relatively advanced, in others still deplorable, we learned something about the original role of women in the Neolithic Age. New research shows that this age was a time of a society centered on partnership and motherhood. Women were respected representatives of Mother Earth and peace and wellbeing reigned. Daughters remained in the family and the inheritance passed to the youngest daughter. We can only hazard a guess as to why later society developed into a male dominated patriarchy. Did the climate change lead to the idea of nomadic races and to several waves of invasions? War gods suppressed the picture of feminine creativity. Mrs. Sato chronicled how women were considered inferior and evil by the Greeks, Romans and the early Christians, influenced by Hellenism. Women were subordinated. Eventually the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain led to deprivation for women who lost the possibility to earn a living with farming and had to work very hard for poor pay. Even 19th century science contributed to strengthen the inferiority of women. The 'liberation' of women began in the USA with the struggle for human rights and the emancipation of slaves. In Europe in the 20th century, three waves of the women's movement can be identified. Mrs. Sato drew attention to the role of women in Communism and National Socialism. She closed her presentation with the situation of women today and with a vision for the future; the metamorphosis to a cooperative system without war or exploitation of the environment.

There followed the opportunity for questions and for additional contributions.

An expression of gratitude to Mrs. Sato and a lively discussion rounded off this interesting event.



Mrs. Sato in conversation - The audience listens with interest - A wealth of literature on the topic