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Rosemarie Zeplin: Der Maulwurf oder Fatales Beispiel weiblicher Gradlinigkeit

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zu lenken, um andere, besser "verpackte," "durchzubekommen."

Wie vielschichtig die Beziehungen zwischen Zensoren und Zensierten waren, beschreibt Bernd Wagner: "Natürlich waren die Hauptschurken bekannt, und die Verführung ist jetzt groß, sich selbst ausschließlich als Opfer zu sehen, aber im Grunde dominierte das Gefühl, daß alle im gleichen Boot saßen. Und jeder hatte Verantwortung für den Kurs, den dieses Boot nahm. [...] Keine Zensur, nur eine Art kollektiver Verantwortung, die das gesamte soziale Leben beherrschte und verhinderte, daß der einzelne wirklich Verantwortung übernimmt. Und für die Literatur die Verhinderung dessen, was Schiller vom Dichter fordert: sich so früh wie möglich zu kompromittieren" (28).

Zwischen diesen Erscheinungen und dem totalen Verweigern des Sich-Eingliedern in den offiziellen Literatur-Betrieb, wie es die Herausgeber der "Malerbücher" (189ff.) praktizierten, zeigt das Ausstellungsbuch eine ganze Bandbreite von Verhaltensweisen bei Zensoren und Zensierten durch 40 Jahre DDR.

Bekannte Spitzen des Eisgebirges sind die Diskussionen um *Nachdenken über Christa T.* (85f.), die langen "Erscheinungsgeschichten" von Volker Brauns Büchern (151ff.), die Schriftsteller, die auswanderten oder ausgewandert wurden (125ff.).

Die Funktion des Schriftstellerverbandes und seiner Präsidenten (9) wird beleuchtet, was besonders interessant erscheint im Zusammenhang mit dem Brief Hermann Kants, der im *GDR-Bulletin* (Spring 1990) abgedruckt wurde.

Meiner Meinung nach ist dieses Buch ein gelungener Versuch, die Verletzungen, die durch die Zensurpraxis bei den Autoren und den entmündigten Lesern entstanden sind, zu diagnostizieren. Ob dadurch eine Heilung eintritt, bleibt abzuwarten. Neue Wunden brechen auf, wie etwa die vermutliche Stasi-Mitarbeit Sascha Andersons (*Spiegel* 52, 1991, S. 28f.), die den Gedanken nahelegt, daß eine ganze Szene von der Stasi gelenkt und kontrolliert wurde. So bleiben Empörung, Trauer und Wut die Wegbegleiter in den "Fünf Neuen Bundesländern."

Christine Hoffmann
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Zeplin, Rosemarie. *Der Maulwurf oder Fatales Beispiel weiblicher Gradlinigkeit*. Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1990. 181 pp.

The intriguing title of Rosemarie Zeplin's latest work lets the reader know that *Der Maulwurf* does not share the utopian vision of much of the *Frauenliteratur* of the former GDR. As Eva Kaufmann has indicated, Zeplin's writing is not motivated by a sense of mission, but rather by the desire to depict "dessen was ist." (See *GDR Bulletin*, Fall 1991 and *Women in German Yearbook* 7.)

Completed during the summer of 1989, *Der Maulwurf* includes a number of references to Christa Wolf's *Sommerstück* and to Sarah Kirsch's *Allerlei-Raub*. Indeed, one could read the work as Zeplin's own "summer-piece": It focuses on a group of intellectuals who form their own salon at a summer house in Mecklenburg. Like Kirsch, Zeplin describes her work

as a chronicle. One sees Wolf's influence on Zeplin—already evident in the title the latter's first work, a collection of short stories entitled *Der Schattenriß eines Liebhabers* (1981)—in the often ironic use of such images as "der blinde Fleck," "der Selbstversuch," and "der Maulwurf."

Yet one cannot view Zeplin as an imitator of her better known counterparts, for her work serves as a challenge to their more idealistic perspectives. As in "Die kleine Seejungfrau," from the *Schattenriß* collection, *Der Maulwurf* deals with the situation of women in GDR society. Judith, a single mother, finds her life divided into a number of irreconcilable roles. Characterized by "Zielstrebigkeit," Judith's sense of responsibility towards her son, Timmi, creates a situation in which there is no "Basis für Verständigung" between her and those around her. Timmi's alarm clock, a gift from Judith's "Lebensgefährte" Albrecht (in whose life there is always "Spielraum für Entschlüsse"), represents the manner in which Judith's life is organized around her son. Trapped in a situation which leaves her few alternatives, Judith's "weibliche Gradlinigkeit" leads to the "tragedy" at the end of the work.

As in her novel, *Alpträume aus der Provinz* (1984), Zeplin is interested in more than the theme of women in society. The depiction of intellectuals and their relationship to the working-class is another central aspect of *Der Maulwurf*. Fascinated by Burghard, who appears to be a member of an alien species, Albrecht invites this *Arbeiter* to join the salon. Ironically, it is Burghard, and not the intellectuals with whom he is surrounded, who continues to believe in the value of the classics of Marxist ideology and in literature in general. His digressions on Marx earn him a "Redeverbot" in the salon, and his postcards with quotes from works of literature find their place next to a telephone book.

Burghard receives his nickname, "the mole," following a postcard with a quote from Hegel which describes the "Geist" as "ein wackerer Maulwurf, [denn] der Geist gräbt oft wie ein Maulwurf unter die Erde fort und vollendet sein Werk." Burghard thus becomes the bearer of the tidings of German idealism. But like the mole which appears in Wolf's *Sommerstück*, this spirit is half decayed, and its call for change is drowned out by the necessities of everyday life. When Burghard decides to distribute flyers calling for a revolution, Judith, whose primary interest is her child, is forced to report him to the authorities in order to keep her job.

Despite this outcome, Zeplin avoids all pathos in the narration of her chronicle, turning instead to irony. It is with this irony that she depicts her characters, male-female relationships, and the role of *die [alternative] Szene* in GDR society. This technique relieves the work of its occasionally tedious insistence on realistic depiction. More importantly, it leads the reader to a deeper understanding of the subtleties of human interaction in the former GDR. Finally, it is out of this irony that questions arise regarding the new German state: In what ways do women continue to be entangled in a network which forces them to choose "Gradlinigkeit" over "das Spielerische"? What role will the intellectual play in the new German state? What role, if any can and should literature play? Hopefully, Zeplin will provide us with further works in which she examines these questions.

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