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## Helga Schubert: Die Andersdenkende

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lichen Mitarbeiters der Staatssicherheit, wenn er sich eingestellt, daß er auf der falschen Seite gestanden und nun die Rechnung dafür zu zahlen habe (152). Man versteht das Gefühl des aus der Kriegsgefangenschaft heimgekehrten Arbeiters, der meint, daß die frühen Machthaber in der sowjetischen Besatzungszone und in der DDR herrschten wie eine Besatzungsmacht über eine feindliche und verbrecherische Bevölkerung – die Kehrseite der Antifaschismusideologie, die diese Herrschaft legitimierte. Man sympathisiert mit der Verzweiflung einer Lehrerin, die zweimal im Jahr von ihrem Direktor angehalten war, Bewußtseinsanalysen ihrer Schüler zu erstellen und teilt die Fassungslosigkeit einer jungen Mutter, die von ihrem Arzt in der Mütterberatung angewiesen wurde, die Stillzeiten ihres Säuglings tags und nachts genau einzuhalten, damit das Kind diszipliniert würde. Man erregt sich mit einem Dachdecker, der es nur durch Beziehungen und "gute Gaben" erreichte, daß seine Frau eine lebensrettende Operation erhielt, und man ahnt die Hilflosigkeit hinter der Aggressivität eines jungen Mannes, der sich vom Fußballfan zum Straßenschläger im rechten Milieu entwickelt hatte, wenn er zu Protokoll gibt: "Hier konnten se dich im Prinzip für alles einsperren. Im Prinzip och für nischt" (121). Schließlich könnte man alle diese Erfahrungen in die von Selbstrechtfertigung nicht freien Worte einer ehemals linientreuen Studentin fassen: "Ich begreife langsam, daß die mich einfach beschissen haben" (113).

Wahrlich, Helden waren die meisten in diesem Buch zu Worte gekommenen Leipziger und die, für die sie gesprochen haben mögen, nicht – die bleiben eben weitgehend ausgeblendet. Gibt es eine Pflicht zum Heldenum? Und doch waren es auch diese "DDR-Normalbürger," die durch mangelnden Eifer und nörgelnden Eigensinn die Richtlinien des Regimes unterwanderten. Und es waren auch sie, die endlich durch die immer größer werdenden Demonstrationen in den Städten und Gemeinden der DDR und die immer dreisteren Versuche der Ausreise die sogenannte Wende, den Fall der Mauer, die Einführung der Westmark und die Entscheidung der Volkskammer, die DDR möglichst schnell an die Bundesrepublik anzuschließen, ermöglicht haben. Man wünschte sich nur, sie würden sich auch heute noch an diese Zeit des Aufruhrs erinnern. Diese Leute uns nähergebracht, ihnen aus dem Stereotyp des Ossis hinaus ein Gesicht gegeben zu haben, macht dieses Buch zu einem lesenswerten Zeitdokument.

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**Schubert, Helga. *Die Andersdenkende*. Munich: dtv, 1994. 241 pp.**

*Ich habe für mein Geschriebenes weder im Gefängnis gesessen noch eine Geldstrafe zahlen müssen. Ich wollte dieses System nämlich nicht ändern, sondern ich wollte es überhaupt nicht haben. Ich glaube, das hat mich geschützt.*

This quote found on the jacket of *Die Andersdenkende* not only portrays Schubert's stance toward the GDR, it directs the reader toward her unconditional embrace of unification. This volume of stories, essays, documentary material and speeches was assembled as a testament to Stalinist bureaucratic repression of GDR citizens. It functions to document Schubert's position as *Andersdenkende* in the GDR. *Die Andersdenkende* presents a Schubert who systematically distanced herself from the GDR state and from the so-called failed intelligentsia whose goal it was to reform it.

The volume opens with selections from the 1970s, most of which were not published in the GDR. Foremost are two stories, "Mildernder Umstand," and "Frühere Standpunkte" both of which appeared in *Das Verbotene Zimmer* (1982), published by Luchterhand, but were suppressed in the GDR publication of the same collection, *Blickwinkel* (1984). Both stories have as a theme the psychological struggle of the *Andersdenkende* with ideological manipulation. In one case ("Mildernder Umstand"), the narrative psyche loses out to resignation in a dream-sequence echoing Kafka's *Der Prozess* in which guilt is never directly charged, but assumed. In the other ("Frühere Standpunkte"), the youthful psyche mocks the petty bureaucracy, yet learns accommodation in order to survive. The psychological duress posited in these fictional pieces is given factual substantiation by numerous Stasi documents detailing surveillance of Schubert and declined applications for travel to the West.

In two interviews with GDR citizens, "Eine geheime Biographie" and "Die Andersdenkende," Schubert aims to expose inconsistencies in thought and language created by Stalinist ideology. Both interviewees would have been considered respected members of the GDR, but Schubert constructs their narratives in a light that casts them as ideologues duped by the heroism of their anti-fascist past. In "Die Andersdenkende," for example, Schubert focuses on the irony of a GDR judge who defends her judgments by claiming for herself a sense of justice that mediated the obdurate application of law. In "Eine geheime Biographie," the heroism of the interviewee is juxtaposed to her subordination to (and fear of) an unnamed superior. Both interviews recollect Schubert's work in *Judasfrauen*, both in style and in the conservative conflation of Stalinism, fascism and the GDR. This lack of differentiation

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tion and blurring of contextual specificity is characteristic of Schubert's aesthetic politics.

A seemingly unlikely focus for Schubert's critique of the GDR is Hans Fallada, the Weimar champion of "der kleine Mann" who was lionized in the GDR, and in whose name Schubert was awarded a West German literary prize. Though Schubert was forced to decline the Fallada Prize in 1983, she was able to accept it in 1993. In her acceptance speech (as well as at a workshop of the *Schriftstellerverband* in 1988), Schubert exposed Fallada as an aging and drug dependent wretch who censored the truth (in this case the facts behind the novel *Jeder stirbt für sich allein*) in order to accede to cultural-political expectations. Schubert coins this sad image of Fallada's *Kompromißbereitschaft* to symbolize all writers in the GDR and to criticize East German anti-fascism.

Like the early Fallada, Schubert counts herself among writers who write for "die Nichtgeschützten und die Nichtprivilegierten." When Schubert sticks to that ideal, her fiction is at its best. The story "Die polnische Wirtin" is a gem in the collection. It is reminiscent of "Die Silberkrone" from *Blickwinkel* with its perceptive and sensitive character and milieu portrait that comes from the third-person narration of the character's own words. Schubert's delicate portrayal of country people is poignant in "Landleben," the story of a women who is allowed to visit the West and becomes mad with her desire for freedom.

The semantic play with the term *Andersdenkende*, surely meant to evoke the Rosa Luxemburg quote that became a weapon of the streets in 1988 and 1989, continues in Schubert's post-*Wende* self-portrait. Here she is emphatic in portraying herself as virtually a loner among former GDR intellectuals, for Schubert embraces unification. She embraces individual autonomy. For example, in "Ansprache einer Verstorbenen an die Trauergemeinde," the narrative voice has committed suicide, not out of despair due to a terminal illness, but out of sheer determination to control one's own life. When analyzed carefully, however, Schubert's embrace of autonomy reveals itself as a defense of aesthetic individualism; it is a kind of negative freedom that divests itself of social responsibility. Her idealization of autonomy takes on an obsessive quality, for example, in her suspicion that any thinking in the collective "we" in the post-*Wende* period is an unconscious result of forty years of controlled thought ("Zwischen Anpassung und Autonomie").

Given Schubert's zeal for the possibilities brought about by unification, one might expect to find a more forward-looking volume. Instead, the bulk of the volume is devoted to the past, to a chronicling of injustice, and to a justification of Schubert's present stance. That she feels alone in her embrace of unification, even embattled, is

evident. Perhaps this, too, is part of her GDR legacy: to be condemned to always positing oneself as *Die Andersdenkende*. In the context of unified Germany, however, her ideas are *nicht anders*; that is, they merely fortify the dominant conservative critique of the GDR as a totalitarian state and the celebration of a conservative individualism.

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