

Johannes Döser (DPV) "Good Friday Food and Fizz Powder - The birth of memory from the artistic gift of fantasizing (Johannes Döser, 2024)

Abstract: Content (EN)

Based on two scenes from the novel "The Tin Drum" by Günter Grass, the role of fantasy and its distorting function ('Entstellung') in the production of memory in the shadow of National Socialism is presented. For the author, abysmal comedy and the spotlights of 'Nachträglichkeit' are important means of processing the fear, disgust and pain in the post-war repression of the Nazi trauma. Literature, sculptural art and poetry become instruments for confronting the traumatic, not least the sexual, the drive, the coercion, so that the fates of relationships become symbolizable and acceptable through their artistic processing: The creative imagination must penetrate reality, and poetic realism must become a bridge to that which alienates us. In a later autobiographical novel, which can be read as a commentary on 'The Tin Drum', Grass compares this quasi-hallucinatory work of remembering to peeling an onion. The eyes of the unreserved enlightener water. Dealing with the pain of the repressed is not only unpleasant, but also uncanny in its ordinariness. And the unbearable reality becomes an almost surreal scene of grotesque events that illuminate the loss, make the absurd appear, let the normal slip away: "Language draws from this ever uprooted root as from a lost well" (Jean Gillibert on the poetic unconscious).

'Günter Grass has made the Federal Republic more civilized, freer and more democratic, in short: more habitable.'

*(Klaus Wagenbach)*