

Summaries

Inge Obermayer: *"About writing"*

Inge Obermayer describes how she began writing. Encouraged through her school and a woman teacher she started practising descriptions; these were to be very helpful for her writing later on. Already early on in her childhood, which was shaped during the National Socialist period, she became keen on finding out about the violence of words and deeds. When one asks her if adults write differently than children, she answers no. Only the stories change in the course of time. Her stories are meant to contain messages, but not lessons and commentaries. "I write because writing belongs to me" she says, as a woman and a human being.

Renate Welsh: *"I am supporting it"*

Renate Welsh describes her career as a writer, especially as an author of children's and teenagers' books. She writes about her childhood, her youth and herself as an adult, and about the things which influenced her to start writing. Especially her mother's father roused very early on her interest in stories and in learning how to read. As a first grade pupil she told her "protector" stories and then wrote them down. Later as an exchange student in the United States of America she translated Rilke's "Prayer-book" for a woman teacher. She started translating passionately later on and learned a lot through it about her own writing. Renate Welsh gives us an insight into her "author's atelier", into how gathered impressions and facts are led to an idea which is then developed into a book.

Roswitha Quadflieg: *"Maybe we are originally from somewhere totally different, as midwives say, and maybe also – wait a second!"*

"Life, just that simple!" has brought her to writing, says Roswitha Quadflieg. The author describes how the death of her brother led her to start writing. In her writing she comes to terms with ageing, death and search for an identity. Writing means a lot and almost everything to her. The question about if men and women have equal chances, she answers that it depends on men and women, on their ways of orienting themselves. Whether men and women write differently; she says: "I write by hand, with the right hand incidentally..."

Agnes Chrambach: *"A poem and an interview"*

The self-taught writer and teacher Agnes Chrambach describes how she started writing and what it means to her. She tells how she tries to make writing a regular part of her everyday life. She writes because she enjoys it and it is end in itself. She is not interested so much in worrying about discrimination against women. She acknowl-

edges, however, that women see things differently and hence write them down differently than men.

A Talk with Mirta Yanez: *„El diablo son las cosas“ – Particulars matter a great deal*

Mirta Yanez was born in 1947 in La Havana and wrote her doctoral degree in Romance and Latin American Literature at the University of Havana. She tells how she achieved to become one of the leading writers of short stories in Cuban literature and received many prizes. Moreover she is one the pioneers of feminist literature studies in Cuba. The works of many women writers in Cuba received public attention only after Mirta Yanez carried out studies on these.

Mirta Yanez explains her position concerning the double burden on woman as wife and writer and discusses if women write differently than men. She displays her field of themes as: the ordinary, the past and the contemporary in the everyday life of Cuba, the love, the city, the intrinsic.

She aims to show how human beings – especially women – strive to reach their needs and dreams.

Eva Sigrist: *"Between Light and Shadow"*

(together with the Initiative for "LiBerature-prize" on women writers from Africa, Asia and Latin America)

Eva Sigrist describes the Initiative LiBerature-prize and names the merits of every individual prize winner.

The LiBerature-prize is given to the book of a woman writer from the so-called Third World. The prize demands that the prize winning book should equally open the German public to the literature of an alien culture and also offer ways of defeating existing prejudices.

She discusses in detail the works of the first prize winner Maryse Condé, who received it in 1988. Condé's work "Segu" is an epic story about a family, in which she succeeds to convey the complexity of the African history, from the century predating the start of the French colonisation.

Sigrist shows that the LiBerature-prize is associated not with the needy of the Third World but with world literature of emancipated women. Becoming the first prize winner, Maryse Condé declared that the value of this prize lies in its capacity to differentiate. It is not about reporting female experiences from the Third World but about world literature of emancipated women.

Rosa Elena Maldonado: *"From the shadow to the light: the Latin American way"*

The article shows how already in the 17th century the Mexican nun Sor Juan Inés de las Cruz, as a researcher, thinker and poet, was able to assert herself against the male domination. The article also

displays how many Latin American women writers still today relate themselves to her work.

Inge Nickel: *"The subtle remembrance of the dictatorship in the works of the Argentinean writer Ana Mariá Shua"*

Inge Nickel looks at the Argentinean woman writer Ana Mariá Shua, who establishes links between the efforts to come to terms with history from the point of view of Argentina and the Jewish themes.

Gcina Mhlope: *"Right on Language"*

Gcina Mhlope's poem "Right on Language" was written on occasion of visiting Robben Island, February 1995, and claims that people need the right to express themselves in their own native language. Comparing language with arts the author comes to conclusion that any language is a human right.

Sonja Lehner: *"Ways out of the shadow: African women's literature"*

Sonja Lehner describes the way of African women writers, a way which began with initial autobiographical steps and developed into a powerful and self-confident language, with which women stand up for their culture and way of life.

Britta Jürs: *"Female symbiosis – Assia Djebar"*

Britta Jürs addresses in her article the literary work of the Algerian author Assia Djebar.

According to Britta Jürs, Assia Djebar tries to give women a voice in her novels. She also aims to bring women characters back to the memory; women who are hidden in the historical writings, written and dominated by men. Britta Jürs sees Assia Djebar as a woman writer, whose writing is an act of unveiling and denudation and thinks that a woman who writes can exercise unusual power. This is power which is embedded not in the motherly act of giving birth but in a different way of being woman.

Conversation with Leila Aboulela: *"Reading has changed me"*

Leila Aboulela portrays how she got involved in writing when she was studying statistics. She says that her short stories and her novel titled "Translator" deal with experiences and events in the relationship between Islam and Christianity; these are set always around the relations between a Muslim woman and a Christian man. Aboulela hopes that her texts have some effect, because she herself had been changing through what she read.

Alexandra Hamm & Berenike Hartmann: *"Yvonne Vera - Butterflies in Fire"*

The authors introduce Yvonne Vera and her book "Butterflies in Fire".

Yvonne Vera is a writer from Zimbabwe, who is known especially for her atmospheric dense speech style; she tells the tragic story of a young woman in Zimbabwe shortly after World War II, which was at the time called South Rhodesia. Hamm and Hartmann show that Yvonne Vera in her novel and with her main female character Phephelaphis managed to create a figure, who is not only demonstrating in a special way the emancipation of woman in Africa, but displaying also the general, and despite many setbacks, the struggle for the emancipation of her people.

Dilek Cindoğlu: *"A Sociological Account of Women Writers' Outburst in Turkish Literature in the 1970's"*

This paper focuses on one of the outcomes of the paradoxes within the Turkish National gender ideology. It is an analysis of the growing women writers' literature in the post 1970's era in Turkey, an outcome of the inherent paradoxes within Turkish nationalism with reference to the nature of women's emancipation and patriarchy. The study focuses on women authors-novelists and short story writers who have burst upon the Turkish literary scene in the 1970's and 1980's. The phenomenon is remarkable both in terms of the number of authors and of the literary and popular success of their work. This remarkable fact is studied through in-depth interviews with 19 women writers.