



SIEBENQUELL

»The wish to be spared . . .«

Hilde Domin



SOURCE: ROSEMARIE MONNERJAHN 2014

Recently I encountered in Palestine a woman whose eyes spoke of many tears, but also of trust, love and strength. Her life, and that of her family, is being threatened and fought against for more than 20 years the by the Israeli occupation forces, which wish to take their land and give it to Jewish settlers. Yet, this land, on a hill south of Bethlehem, belongs to them, notarized since ist purchase by their grandfather nearly 100 years ago, and whose name it still bears: Dahers Mountain. It has grapevines, olive trees, apricot and apple trees, and almonds ripen here as well. It is laborious and hard to till and care for the plantations, to irrigate out of containers while water pipes leads to the surrounding Jewish settlements.

Yet, the family – now in the third generation – loves this land, their inheritance, despite the efforts demanded by nature and even despite the harassment of the military authority: when it destroys fruit trees, the family plants twice as many new ones!

They live their lives on this mountain by the sweat of their brow. They know what it means not to live like spoilt children in a blossoming garden (as Genesis 2 describes it), but rather to fashion and form life as adults. They are not spared, and draw strength and creativity from their rootedness in God and the clarity about the realities and tasks.

A poet also won this clarity in her life, who died in 2006 in Heidelberg at a great age:

Hilde Domin, who as a Jew fled from the Nazis with her husband via Rome to Santo Domingo and only returned to Germany in 1954, expresses in her own way what life has taught her. It is no good to have childish wishes for a paradise. What counts is keeping your eye on that which is before you, that it might speak to us of life and that we might mature and heal in our woundedness.

Request

We are immersed
and washed with the floodwaters
we are drenched
to the skin of our hearts
The wish for a landscape
this side of the border of tears
is no good.
The wish to hold on to the blossoming spring
is no good
The wish to be spared
is no good.

What counts is the request
that at sunrise the dove
brings the branch of the olive tree,
that the fruit will be as bright as the blossom,
that even the petals of the rose on the ground
form a shining crown,
and that we, out of the flood,
out of the lion's den
and the fiery furnace,
will be released
unto ourselves
ever anew
renewing ourselves
ever more wounded and ever more healed.

Hilde Domin

Rosemarie Monnerjahn

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