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Studied Classical Archaeology at the Università degli Studi di Pisa and the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa

ARBEITSVORHABEN

Die Krankheit der Frauen

The project deals with the representations of giving birth in Ancient Greece, in the literary, technical (medical) and iconographical traditions.

My interest focuses on the ambiguous status of giving birth. The event seems to be too strong and appealing not to be metaphorized and referred to men, which is what has happened since Homer. The metaphor of giving birth is referred to men in order either to communicate a strong pain (e. g. caused by a wound in battle) or to express the labour of philosophical knowledge, which produces "metaphorical children". What is left then to women, who are the ones literally involved in the event? The hypothesis is that the very possibility of metaphorizing giving birth could have in some way - to be researched - required to move the focus of the real, feminine prerogative of giving birth towards the sphere of disease. Literal childbirth as disease is attested both in the literary tradition (e. g. Plato) and in the iconographical one; here women are represented with the iconographical traits of absolute lack of control. This specific iconography was created around the end of the 5th century and the beginning of the 4th: representations of the subject are attested in music, theatre, painting and relief sculpture (function plays a major role here). The irrational, uncontrolled way women have to express pathe (such as giving birth) seems to be paralleled by the way they are represented in love: some traits of the iconography of women in childbed are used for women in love.

My final objective is to enter the very process of the specific ideological moves, of montage, for the creation of one of the most long-lasting prejudices in Western culture; i. e., the idea of women as weak, irrational and uncontrolled in relation to pathe.

Recommended Reading

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KOLLOQUIUM, 20.04.2010

Einige Gedanken zu Frauen im Athen des 4. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.

Die soziale Lage von Frauen im antiken Griechenland ist intensiv untersucht worden, insbesondere seit den 1970er

Jahren. Ich möchte Dokumente und Probleme aus drei Hauptgebieten untersuchen:

1. Der Kontext, in dem das Problem als Frage gestellt wurde. Ich möchte kurz zeigen, wie und wann man sich auf die soziale Lage von Frauen in der Antike zu konzentrieren begann.

2. Einige Kontexte, in denen zwischen 410 - 350 v. Chr. Diskurse über Frauen geführt wurden. Ich möchte versuchen, das Problem der Interaktion zwischen Vorurteilen gegenüber Frauen und bestimmten wissenschaftlichen Beobachtungen zu umreißen.

3. Einige Grabmale, die zwischen 375 und 300 v. Chr. entstanden sind; auf ihnen kommt eine ikonographische Formel zum Einsatz, und es wird ein vollkommen neues Thema eingeführt: Frauen, die während der Geburt sterben.

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