Susanne Wiborg, Jan Peter Wiborg
Faith, Hope, Hitler

The demise of Clara S.

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Stettin, spring 1945. War and euphoria, love and death: Clara S is one of the few women who stay on in the Pomeranian capital. With the Soviet Army on the opposite bank of the Oder, the twenty-four-year-old believes she has finally found what she has been looking for: a true “heroic” life and the love of her life. In her own Götterdämmerung of euphoria, this young leader of the BDM, the League of German Girls in the Hitler Youth, creates a unique document of the age, a bundle of letters which survives her disappearance on the island of Rügen in early May 1945.

Rügen, spring 2015: why look for traces of a long-lost aunt, when to do so is to stare into the abyss whose depths no-one wishes to plumb? Can we not now draw a line under this once and for all? No, because Susanne and Jan Peter Wiborg are not looking for their aunt, but for a prototype, for the strange distant shadow, the “something was going on” of almost every German family. They find the female side of fanaticism: an intelligent young woman who simply wants a little more than the role mapped out for her in Eastern Pomerania. What made her such a naïve and faithful supporter of Hitler, even unto death?

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Susanne Wiborg is a journalist and lives near Hamburg. She has worked for Die Zeit and currently writes for Tagesspiegel and kraut & rüben. Her most recent publications are "Gäste in meinem Garten. Bienen, Amseln, Huhn und Star" (Kunstmann 2019) and "Glaube, Führer, Hoffnung. Der Untergang der Clara S." (together with Jan Peter Wiborg, Kunstmann 2015).

Other titles of the author

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Jan Peter Wiborg

Her younger brother, Jan Peter Wiborg, thought differently. Having engaged with the Nazi past of the region as a history student, he was only too familiar with the silence which greeted his enquiries. Born in 1960, Jan Peter Wiborg has continued to explore this field in his professional work as journalist.

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