Königinstraße 35a

Anna Louise Neumeyer

née Hirschhorn, born 14.11.1879 in Mannheim, Suicide 17.07.1941 in München

The personality of Anna Neumeyer is appreciated far too little. The wife of professor Karl Neumeyer took an active part in political affairs at the beginning of the 20th century and maintained intensive exchange with the protagonists of the Munich women's movement, Anita Augspurg and Luise Kiesselbach. Through Anna Neumeyer, the house Königin Street 35a in Munich became a center point for liberal-democratically engagement and exchange.

Anna Neumeyer, born on November 14, 1879, came from a respected Jewish family in Mannheim. Her father was a tobacco wholesale owner, city council member, and active in the national-liberal party. In 1900, at the age of 21, Anna married Karl Neumeyer, ten years her senior, he was a lecturer at the Ludwig-Maximilian-University since 1901. Her brother-in-law wrote about her: "Anna was the faithful companion of my brother through her cheerful and mobile nature. She took the most vivid interest in his scientific career and work, nurtured his society, and always had an open house for young people. She was also a writer, and worked on her stories and poems."

Alfred Neumeyer, born on January 7, 1901, the eldest of her two sons, characterized his parents' house as follows: "It was a mold of the financially secure Bavarian civil servants' household that had a humanistic education and a monarchic government, which had... shaped itself similarly in countless other parents' homes of these years. Simple prosperity and civilized order determined it." The younger son Fritz was born on February 23, 1905.

The "order of things" set by the scientific work of Alfred Neumeyer proceeded with the regularity of clockwork. Anna Neumeyer transformed this desired rhythm into the „lived life“. "The passionate, imaginative mother, prone to distractedness, has taken upon herself the order given by the father and founded the life a family could enjoy on it."

Marianne Weber, the widow of Max Weber, painted a touching picture about her friend Anna Neumeyer: "Anna was the radiant power of the house, in all that she did, she had a great deal of enthusiasm, her petite personality emanated extraordinary mental agility... Her critical thinking,
questioning, searching for knowledge were so strong. Her mental intensity was very present in her circle of friends. She attracted people, and young people built off of her. Anna stayed available to the women’s associations as an employee. In addition, political work consumed part of her power. The reactionary currents in Munich and Bavaria stirred them. She was very serious about the struggle for the new democratic polity.”

As early as 1901, Anna joined the Munich „Association for Women’s Interests“, founded by Anita Augspurg in 1899, in which the social forces of the women’s movement joined forces at the beginning of the 20th century to fight for emancipation, equal rights, social equality and women’s suffrage. In 1917 she is elected to the club board, to which she belongs until 1928. Out of her liberal democratic self-image, she is involved in the German Democratic Party, whose women’s group she heads. In 1928 Anna Neumeyer withdrew resignedly from official political work.

When her husband was forbidden to visit public libraries in 1937, Anna wrote to her friend Marianne: “Nobody offered to provide books for my husband. He does not need them at the moment. It is only characteristic of the failure in all human things of our circles. How beautifully simple humans have shown themselves to be.” Like her husband, Anna refuses to emigrate: “We have the opportunity to travel to both Sweden and the United States. This is not possible. One must stay in one’s life style, not become a petitioner to the old days for the sake of mere life.”

On 17 July 1941, Karl and Anna commit suicide together in their home on Königinstrasse. The death of her friends deeply moved Marianne Weber. In the fall of 1941, she writes: “The fact that these old friends from Munich committed suicide due to the utter hopelessness of their situation has severely shocked me. The hardest part of all is the realization that it is a mistake to assume that a certain level of humanity – of being human – can not be left again. No, it’s all the same as in the dark ages. The evil in man is radical. Bestiality can be evoked at any moment and nurtured as a means of power.”

*Text Klaus Bäumler (translation: Olivia Rothstein)*

**Sources:**

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- Anna Neumeyer, Über Parteiprogramme: Ein Wegweiser für die Wahlen, (s.l., s.t. 1919).