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Croaking as an expression of misconduct and human threat: The frog  as an “absolute metaphor”

Frog. Misconduct. Threat. European literary history. Hans Blumenberg. “Absolute metaphor.”

The frog as a literary motif has a predominantly negative connotation in European literary history: it is associated with hubris, boasting, stupidity and cowardice. These representations show overlapping concerning the attached attributes: they not only show the limits of conceptual thinking, but also of human knowledge, they point to aporias and mysteries and provide answers to questions that cannot be answered in principle, whose relevance is simply that they cannot be eliminated because they are not asked in the first place, but find themselves placed within the basis of existence. What becomes obvious when scrutinizing the frog is that its outer appearance reflects an expression of misconduct and threat to the human being. In order to shed light on and support the main idea of the article, selected examples from antiquity to modern times will be used to examine to what extent this animal expresses something that cannot be conveyed through conceptually abstract language and thus functions as an “absolute metaphor” in the sense of Hans Blumenberg.