

Osterhase

Der **Osterhase** ist im Brauchtum ein vorgestellter Hase, der zu Ostern Eier bemalt und im Garten versteckt. Die Ostereier werden am Morgen des Ostersonntags von den Kindern gesucht.

Das Motiv des Osterhasen hat sich in neuerer Zeit in der populären Kultur des Osterfestes auch durch die kommerzielle Verwendung ausgebreitet und frühere Überbringer des Ostereies weithin verdrängt. In einigen Teilen der Schweiz war der Kuckuck der Eierlieferant, in Teilen von Westfalen war es der Osterfuchs, in Thüringen brachte der Storch und in Böhmen der Hahn die Eier zum Osterfest.^[1]



Kaninchen mit Ostereiern

Herkunft

Der Osterhase wird zum ersten Mal von dem Medizinprofessor Georg Franck von Franckenau im Jahr 1682 in der Abhandlung „De ovis paschalibus – von Oster-Eyern“ erwähnt. Er schildert für Oberdeutschland, Pfalz, Elsass und angrenzende Gebiete sowie Westfalen den Brauch, dass der Osterhase die Eier in Gärten im Gras und Gesträuch versteckt, wo sie zur Freude und Belustigung der Erwachsenen von den Kindern gesucht werden. Dass der Osterhase die Eier verstecke, nennt er „eine Fabel, die man Simpeln und Kindern aufbindet“.

Die Verbindung des christlichen Osterfestes mit dem Ei als Symbol ist für verschiedene europäische Länder spätestens aus dem Mittelalter bekannt, möglicherweise auch früher anzusetzen.^[2] Es gibt daneben seit Ambrosius auch eine ältere Deutung des Hasen als Auferstehungssymbol.^[3] Die vielfältige christliche Hasensymbolik fand im Mittelalter in vielen Bildwerken ihren Ausdruck, siehe Hase in der Kunst#Christliche Kunst. Die Verbindung des Hasen mit dem österlichen Eierbrauch ist jedoch noch unklar, auch wenn die Fruchtbarkeit der Hasen für sich allein eine enge Verbindung zum Frühling hat. Folgende Hypothesen werden gerne angeführt:

1. Einige frühe bemalte Ostereier zeigen das Dreihasenbild – eine Darstellung von drei Hasen mit lediglich drei Ohren insgesamt, bei denen aufgrund der „Doppelverwendung“ von Ohren dennoch jeder Hase zwei Ohren hat; dies ist heute ein bekanntes Symbol für die Dreieinigkeit (die ursprüngliche Bedeutung ist unklar). Eventuell könnte man von dieser Darstellung auf den Hasen als Eierlieferant gekommen sein.
2. An einer Stelle der Bibel, dem Ps 104,18 [4], wird in älteren Übersetzungen von „Hasen“ gesprochen.^[5] Grund dafür war die lateinische Übersetzung von Spr 30,26 [6], in der Hieronymus das hebräische „schafan“ (Klippschliefer) mit „lepusculus“ (Häschen) übersetzte.^[7] Seit der Spätantike wurde diese Stelle als Symbol für den schwachen Menschen (Hase) interpretiert, der seine Zuflucht im Felsen (Christus) sucht. Diese Auslegung begründete die Hasensymbolik in der christlichen Ikonographie.



Oster- und andere Hasen in allen Variationen in der Sammlung des Osterhasen-Museums im Zentrum für Außergewöhnliche Museen

Glauben an den Osterhasen

Heute gilt es weithin als unschädlich, kleineren Kindern zu vermitteln, der Osterhase bringe Eier und Süßigkeiten zum Osterfest. Nach Auffassung von Psychologen rege diese Illusion die Phantasie an, und unterstütze die kognitive Entwicklung. Allerdings sollten kritische Fragen und Zweifel der Kinder unterstützt werden, so dass der Glaube an den Hasen auch durch Austausch mit anderen Kindern schließlich von selbst verschwindet.^[8]

Osterhase international

Durch deutschsprachige Auswanderer wurde der Osterhase auch außerhalb Europas verbreitet.

Insbesondere in den USA hat er eine gewisse Popularität gewonnen. Im Englischen überwiegt dabei die Bezeichnung „Easter Bunny“ gegenüber der wörtlichen Übersetzung „Easter Hare“, sodass die Figur häufig als Kaninchen verstanden wird. Die moderne Ausprägung des Osterhasen wurde 2011 im Film Hop – Osterhase oder Superstar? aufbereitet.

In Australien wird seit den 1970er-Jahren dem „Easter Bunny“ ein „Easter Bilby“ zur Seite gestellt. Damit soll auf die - nicht zuletzt durch Ausbreitung der europäischen Kaninchen - bedrohte Tierart Großer Kaninchennasenbeutel („Bilby“) hingewiesen und durch Verkauf von Schokoladenbilbies Geldmittel für einen Erhaltungsfonds gesammelt werden.^[9]

Museum

In München gab es im Zentrum für Außergewöhnliche Museen, bis zu seiner Schließung im Jahre 2005, ein Museum über Osterhasen.

Osterhasenpostamt

In Deutschland gibt es, ähnlich wie an Weihnachten das Weihnachtspostamt, an Ostern drei Orte an denen Briefe an den Osterhasen beantwortet werden, wenn sie rechtzeitig an eine der folgenden Adressen gesendet werden:

Liste der Osterpostämter/Osterpostfilialen in Deutschland

Osterpostamt /-filiale	Bundesland	Adresse	Betreiber (mit Website)
Ostereistedt	Niedersachsen	Hanni Hase Am Waldrand 12 27404 Ostereistedt	Samtgemeinde Selsingen (Website „Hanni Hase“ ^[10])
Eibau	Sachsen	Olli Osterhase Oberlausitzer Osterhasenpostamt OT Eibau Hauptstraße 214a 02739 Kottmar	<i>KiEZ Querxenland gGmbH</i> , Seifhennersdorf, Oberlausitz Träger: <i>Querxenland Seifhennersdorf e.V.</i> („Osterhase Olli“ in Eibau ^[11])
Osterhausen	Sachsen-Anhalt	Osterhase Siedlungsstraße 2 06295 Osterhausen	Kindertagesstätte <i>Gänseblümchen</i> mit finanzieller Unterstützung der Stadt Eisleben ^[12] (Hinweis auf die Osterpost-Filiale Osterhausen ^[13] bei eisleben.eu)

Literatur

- Max Höfler: *Ostergewäcke*. Eine vergleichende Studie der Gebäckbrote zur Osterzeit (Zeitschrift für österreichische Volkskunde. Supplement-Heft IV zum XII. Jahrgang 1906). Verlag des Vereines für österr. Volkskunde, Wien 1906.
- Hugo Hepding: *Ostereier und Osterhase*. In: Hessische Blätter für Volkskunde. Bd. XXIV 1927, S. 127-141.
- Albert Becker: *Osterei und Osterhase. Vom Brauchtum der deutschen Osterzeit*. Eugen Diederichs, Jena 1937.
- *Oberfränkisches Brauchtum in alter und neuer Zeit*. Hrsg. von Gustav Schmidt. Bayerische Verlags-Anstalt, Bayreuth 1994. ISBN 3-87052-994-6. Darin: Osterbrauchtum, S. 202-222.

Weblinks

- Osterhase – Hintergrund ^[14]
- Osterhase: Gedichte, Bilder, Brauchtum ^[15]

Einzelnachweise

- [1] Art Osterhase im HWD A Bd 6 Sp. 1329 - google books (http://books.google.com/books?id=t_YY7lpApzoC&printsec=frontcover&dq=intitle:handwoerterbuch+deutschen+aberglaubens#&hl=de&sig=2N6XepriBr81X-muwY9TWuYPX74#PPA1329,M1)
- [2] Art. Ei im LCI (Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie, Freiburg i.B. 1970, ISBN 3-451-21806-2, Bd. 1)
- [3] Art. Hase im LCI a.a.O Bd. 2, Sp. 221)
- [4] <http://www.bibleserver.com/go.php?lang=de&bible=EU&ref=Ps104%2C18>
- [5] in neueren Ausgaben wird korrekt als „Klippdachs“ übersetzt
- [6] <http://www.bibleserver.com/go.php?lang=de&bible=EU&ref=Spr30%2C26>
- [7] Übersetzung wird auch auf die älteren griechischen Übersetzungen zurückgeführt, in denen bereits das Wort Hase verwendet worden sein soll. Hieronymus dürfte genügend Hebräisch verstanden haben, um das Problem zu verstehen; entscheidend dürfte - ähnlich wie bei Luthers späterer Übersetzung - die Tatsache gewesen sein, dass Kippschliefer nördlich des Mittelmeeres nicht vorkommen und die Übersetzer mit bekannten Begriffen auskommen wollten.
- [8] Jacqueline Woolley von der Universität von Texas in [[Austin (Texas)|Austin]], Ute Bayen von der Universität Düsseldorf und Gerd Lehmkuhl, Uniklinik Köln im Beitrag *Glaube an den Osterhasen tut dem Kind gut* in Die Welt online (<http://www.welt.de/gesundheit/psychologie/article106135117/Glaube-an-den-Osterhasen-tut-dem-Kind-gut.html>) vom 29. März 2012, abgerufen am 31. März 2014
- [9] Infos über den Osterbilby (engl.) (<http://www.modnet.com.au/~firefrog/easterbilby.htm>)
- [10] <http://www.hanni-hase.de>
- [11] <http://querxenland.de/de/unser-kiez/osterhase-olli.html>
- [12] *Osterhasen-Postamt eröffnet*. (<http://www.mz-web.de/hettstedt/ostervorbereitungen-in-osterhausen-osterhasen-postamt-eroeffnet,20640988,26480062.html>) Mitteldeutsche Zeitung (mz-web.de), 5. März 2014
- [13] http://www.eisleben.eu/eisleben_website/CMS2Content.nsf/content/post.html?Open&postid=MKNE-9GRFVQ&lang=
- [14] <http://www.jahreskreis.info/files/fruehling.html>
- [15] <http://www.goethezeitportal.de/index.php?id=6699>

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