This article was printed out at: https://www.ndr.de/kultur/buch/Michel-Houellebecq-und-sein-trauriger-Tiefpunkt,houellebecq128.html

Michel Houellebecq and his sad low point

Status: 07/19/2023 08:18 a.m

The book "Some months in my life" has now been published in German translation. In it, the writer talks about his life from October 2022 to March 2023. A very moving period of life.

by Tobias Wenzel

From the winter of last year to the spring of this year, Michel Houellebecq made headlines several times. First came the scandal surrounding his supposedly Islamophobic statements in a French magazine in December. Then the excitement surrounding Houellebecq's participation in a pornographic documentary film. The French writer tried to prevent the film from being released in court. Most recently, an appeals court in Amsterdam then obliged the Dutch director to hand over the film to Houellebecq for review before it was released. Houellebecq has now written a hundred-page report in book form about these

eventful months. The German translation of "Some Months in My Life" was published on July 18th.

Report on his scandals of the past months

"I've been insulted. And I've insulted people. There's no problem." Michel Houellebecq lights a cigarette while lying on the same bed in his Paris work apartment where he was filmed having sex. The French author openly admits that in his new book, a report on his scandals of recent months, he is offended and out for revenge.

Houellebecq apologizes for Islamophobic statement

But first things first: In a French magazine, Houellebecq claimed that the "native French" wanted the Muslims to stop "stealing" from them or else leave. That sounded clearly Islamophobic. Houellebecq now calls this statement "idiotic" in the book: "I'm very sorry. I simplified it so much that something very wrong came out. In reality, Muslims are not particularly thieves or criminals. But they often live in the same disadvantaged neighborhoods."

Participation in pornographic film

But the book is primarily about Houellebecq's participation in a pornographic film by a Dutch artists' collective, for which he was supposed to have sex with young women, allegedly groupies. Director Stefan Ruitenbeek lured him into a trap, Houellebecq claims. There was no sex during the shoot in Amsterdam because the writer and director fell out. Court cases followed. However, Houellebecq and his wife signed a retroactive contract in Amsterdam, probably out of carelessness. Ruitenbeek is now allowed to use what he had previously filmed in the author's Paris work apartment: the Houellebecqs having sex with Jini van Rooijen, a friend of the director.

Houellebecq did not release footage

Houellebecq did not release the material at the time because he feared that he and his wife could be recognized despite wearing masks.

> At the thought of these recordings being distributed against my will, I felt for the first time what seemed to me to resemble the accounts of women who have been victims of rape.

It says in the book. A clear relativization of the rape: "I know that I will be accused of that, but the symptoms are similar." So he was no longer able to wash himself and was disgusted

with sex. "It's better now. I'm having sex again." That is the difference to the often lifelong trauma of a raped woman. Michel Houellebecq apparently lacks empathy. He is highly sensitive when it comes to himself. He felt "like the subject of an animal documentary" during the shoot, he writes, but dehumanizes himself in the book by giving insulting animal names, such as calling van Rooijen "sow" and Ruitenbeek a hundred times "cockroach". This is despicable and justiciable.

Director secretly recorded Houellebecq

However, it should also be justifiable that the director sometimes secretly records people for his films in order to then mercilessly expose them. So Houellebecq rightly fears the worst. His anger that a less talented director, of all people, was able to use Houellebecq's lust for sex with young women to finally gain international attention is understandable. But one has to expect more from the author of captivating social satires than this vengeful and undignified text and explicit explanations.

> [...] she was a below-average blower, made no attempt to actively use her cunt [...] "

The book is Houellebecq's sad low point

"A few months in my life" is the sad low point in Michel Houellebecq's literary work, triggered by the meeting of two egomaniacal children's heads. He asks the Muslims for forgiveness, says Houellebecq. But Ruitenbeek has not yet apologized to him: "Je demande pardon aux musulmans. Lui il ne me demande pas pardon pour l'instant."

Michel Houellebecq's new book "A few months in my life. October 2022 - March 2023" was translated from French by Stephan Kleiner and will be available on July 18th. published by Dumont. The book has 108 pages and costs 20 euros.

Michel Houellebecq publishes new book: From Porn to Islam

A few months in my life. October 2022 - March 2023

by Michel Houellebecq

Page number: 108 pages

Genre: nonfiction

Publisher: Dumont

Order number: 978-3832168315

Price: €20

This topic in the program:

NDR Culture | Classic in the day | 07/19/2023 | 7:20 a.m

portrait | novels | biography

eat.READ.sleep. books for you

Tea with why - the philosophy and us

MORE CULTURE →

→ **80. Jahrestag: Zeitzeugen-Film schildert Luftangriffe auf Hamburg**

→ **Bildschöne Bücher: "Diego Rivera - Sämtliche Wandgemälde"**

Analyse: Warum brechen so viele Lehramtsstudierende ab?

Von mehr als 50.000 Studienanfänger:innen bleiben nach kurzer Zeit nur 32.000 übrig. Über die Gründe kann nur spekuliert werden.

Fußballkapitalismus - Ein Fan wird kritisch

Tee mit Warum: Liebe mit Şeyda Kurt und Platons Kugelmenschen

44 Min

Queere Geschichte vom Kaiserreich bis heute: Historiker im Gespräch

26 Min