

Rolf Thiele, *Mamitschka* (1955)

Abstract

Rolf Thiele's *Mamitschka* (1955) was one of very few satirical films produced in postwar West Germany. It caricatured the contemporary narrative of the successful integration of postwar expellees and, in the process, flopped at the box office. "Movie-goers," according to historian Andreas Kossert, "preferred to suppress current problems and the horror of memory rather than see them on screen." The film was critical of West Germans and expellees alike. The film's West German characters were portrayed as suspicious, hostile, small-minded people who only warmed to the Navratils, a family of eight from Bohemia, when they won the lottery. For their part, the Navratils, led by matriarch Mamtschka (played by Mila Kopp) and father Tatinek (Rudolf Platte), came across as dysfunctional. The family was at once too modern (in terms of sexual mores) and too old fashioned (in terms of housekeeping practices) to fit in in the Federal Republic. After struggling to get by in their new environs, and ultimately failing to integrate, the Navratil family decides to make a fresh start in the U.S. with the help of an East Prussian expellee named Paul Wilborn (played by Klaus Behrendt), who had immigrated to the U.S. and then returned to Germany as an American GI.

The film poster below features title character Mamitschka (center) surrounded by other members of the Navratil family, including husband Tatinek (bottom right) and daughter Rosa (bottom center, played by Jester Naefe). The Navratils' haughty landlord, Herr Samthaber (played by Paul Henckels), is shown peering through his lorgnette (bottom left).

Source



Source: Film poster from *Mamitschka* (1955). Deutsches Filminstitut, Frankfurt am Main.

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