

## Reisetagebücher

*F.Kafka*

March 23 - April 1, 2014

*Ein mensch der kein Tagebuch hat, ist einem Tagebuch gegenüber in einer falschen Position. Wenn dieser z.B. in Goethes Tagebuch liest, daß dieser am 11. Januar 1797 den ganzen Tag zuhause mit verschiedenen Anordnungen beschäftigt, so scheint es diesem Menschen, daß er selbst noch niemals so wenig gemacht hat.*

This is a diary note. The collection of diary notes that this thin book constitutes, is somewhat of a disappointment. One gets the impression that those are scraps that have been discovered in his *Nachlaß* and being published because anything to do with Kafka is potentially very interesting. In fact it turns out that those were part of a common project with his friend Max Brod, of putting down their impressions during shared trips. This is surprising. They give instead the impression of being cryptic hurried notes, not unlike those I myself make as a support formy memory, entirely meant for private consultation. They make not much sense (an extensive addition of notes chases every reference Kafka makes), they are coded and need to be elaborated by their author, the only one who has access to the code of associations they are meant to point to. In the end though there are some longer extended passages that can almost stand on their own. Kafka seems to be visiting a Tivoli and taking up with some young girls. Apart from that there are a few sketches that remind me of the mosaics of my friend AB.

Kafka reports on four trips, namely trips made January/February 1911 to Friedland and Reichenberg, August/September 1911 to Switzerland and Northern Italy and concluding with Paris, July 1912 to Harz and Weimar and finally September 1913 to Vienna. It is hard to make out what he is really up to. Kafka makes notes of strangers he encounters in train compartments, hotels and in the street. Occasionally he sketches something with his hand (faithfully reproduced). Tantalizingly he visits a few brothels but gives no particulars at all. In the vicinity of Harz he seems to be residing in a nudist camp. It is all very confusing. Obviously never meant for publication. On the other hand nothing of his *Nachlaß* was after all. But luckily Brod did disobey his instructions, an act of betrayal for which we are very grateful.

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