



Meditaciones

Franz Kafka

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Contemplation, Kafka's first published book (1913), was one of the few to appear in his lifetime. Composed of eighteen short prose poems, the book as a whole displays the full range of Kafka's compact metaphorical style. In this new translation, Blahut has been faithful to the original German while rendering it in a fresh, contemporary English. This edition is complimented by eighteen black & white illustrations, attesting to the lasting inspiration of Kafka's prose.

Meditaciones Details

Date : Published 1998 by EDIMAT (first published 1912)

ISBN : 9788484031574

Author : Franz Kafka

Format : 171 pages

Genre : Short Stories, Classics, Fiction, European Literature, German Literature, Philosophy, Literature, 20th Century, Czech Literature, Poetry

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From Reader Review Meditaciones for online ebook

Harini says

I am so glad to have come across this book. Brilliant read.

You know how your mind wanders at times. Sometimes, you come up with a theory that sounds brilliant to you. Other times, you have these chain of thoughts, meaningful ones or meaningless ones. All your life, you might be doing some things which seemed very insignificant to you, but which can be given some thought over to get insights into yourself.

All of these put together make "Contemplation". Aptly named. You connect to some stories and you are intrigued by some others. You fall in love with some thoughts while you keep second guessing others. Some stories make you laugh at life, others make you sad.

This gives your brain something to eat.

Andrea says

"Ecco perché il miglior consiglio resta pur sempre quello di accettare tutto, assumere il contegno di un corpo pesante e, qualora ci si senta sospinti via dal vento, non lasciarsi indurre a fare un solo passo oltre lo stretto necessario, rivolgersi agli altri con sguardo feroce, senza rimorsi, in poche parole, reprimere con le proprie mani l'ultima parvenza di vita che ci resta, il che equivale a potenziare ancora di più l'estrema quiete sepolcrale e fare in modo che niente possa esistere oltre a quella."

Fabio says

Brief but very enjoyable early Kafka. Personally I like this "observational dread" best on the pieces that are less about personal despair and instead more social. At those points it starts approximating more Baudelaire's Paris Spleen.

My favorite, for example, is the observation about normal people too restricted by their respective illusions to mate with each other. Complemented perfectly by the one about the bachelor, who too afraid to die alone would settle for even less in his old age.

Borja Vargas says

Leí mucho a Kafka en mi última adolescencia y mi primera juventud. Me impactó a unos niveles muy profundos, como a cualquier persona que se exponga sin miedo a la sensibilidad extrema hacia la existencia que poseía y sabía transmitir el autor. Después me he acercado poco a él, quitando una o dos relecturas de *El proceso* o el análisis de algunos de sus textos breves cuando estudiaba filosofía y teoría literaria en la

universidad. Así que me he acercado a este *Contemplación* como si volviera a encontrarme, ya maduro, con un amigo al que sabes que amas, que todavía recuerdas a menudo y que te ha marcado en aspectos muy hondos y fundamentales pero habías olvidado exactamente por qué.

Se ha escrito tanto sobre Kafka que no me parece necesario volver a decir mucho en este momento. Poco es mejor que, sin más, recomendar su lectura atenta, con la mente abierta y, en mi opinión, sin buscarle tres pies alegóricos. Las interpretaciones de la obra de Kafka, aunque algunas son muy interesantes, convierten su literatura en algo un poco más pedestre, atenúan su condición de genialidad y su capacidad visionaria; y es que lo mejor es entender las cosas tal y como él las dejó escritas. Con todas sus contradicciones, sus ambigüedades, sus multiplicidades y sugerencias, su increíble potencia pseudo-simbólica que lleva a percibir la civilización (y la condición) humana como algo absurdo y mágico, terrible y apasionante. Incomprensible, inconmensurable y, en parte por eso mismo, fascinante.

Los textos que componen *Contemplación* son inclasificables, en el mejor sentido de la palabra. Son observaciones y son intuiciones, son puro juego lingüístico y son sutilísima comprensión de lo que supone vivir, son pura vivencia transcrita de la riqueza del mundo y de la ansiedad ante ella, al estar inmersos en ella. Algunos son apenas pequeñas epifanías a medio explotar, otros son ataques completos que derrumban al lector y son capaces de alterar la percepción del mundo que rodea a uno cuando se levanta la vista del libro. Merece la pena leerlos con lentitud, al menos un par de veces y dejarse llevar por el arte único de Kafka, uno de los pocos visionarios auténticos que ha dado la literatura. Y es que lo suyo no es solo literatura, sino que es arte, filosofía, existencia, lenguaje, muerte y vida. Y es contemplación y es sueño.

[Nota personal: Descubro que una parte de mi producción literaria actual son también miniaturas textuales inclasificables que emparentan con este Kafka que no cierra ninguna posibilidad, que habita el lenguaje y lo abre. Supongo que son ecos del impacto que me causó en mi primera formación juvenil, también ecos indirectos de la influencia que ha ejercido en toda la cultura posterior, pero quiero creer que también se parecen por compartir con él una sensibilidad y atención similar al infinito que puede ser la existencia. Ni mucho menos me comparo con este genio, pero es un placer inmenso encontrarse con un alma afín tanto en fondo como en forma, y una gran motivación el leer cómo materializaba con éxito una escritura libre en formatos no estandarizados porque eran los que escogía su creatividad.]

Bailey Alexander says

Franz Kafka. Why not, reminds me of living in Bohemia, which we did, for a year. Compared to living in Bucharest; Prague felt quiet and fine, like it's local author, specifically his book called Meditations. A work of words so fragile you feared they just might fade off the page the minute you turn to the next.

Lesser known than his more famous work; The Metamorphosis and The Trial yet this book called Meditation, 18 contemplations in fact, is so slight, each reads like an idea, written so sparingly some take only half a page to say absolutely everything.

This one is called "Clothes":

Often, when I see clothes with many pleats, ruffles and tassels that fit nicely over beautiful bodies, then I think that they will not remain like that for long, but will become so creased that they can't be smoothed out, attract dust that will lie so thick in the decorations that it cannot be removed, and that no one would want to be so dispirited and ridiculous as to wear each day the same expensive dress from morning to evening.

But I see beautiful girls with many enticing muscles and delicate ankles and tight skin and masses of fine hair, who nevertheless appear day in and day out in the same natural fancy dress, always press the same face

against the same hands and let it be reflected in their mirrors.

But sometimes, when they return late at night from some party, it appears in the mirror worn-out, puffy, dusty, already seen by everyone and hardly fit to be worn any more.

Tyska says

I love how much room for interpretation there is in those texts. Some of the topics themselves were a bit superficial, or maybe just boring - the reader decides.

Hákon Gunnarsson says

This little book surprised me a lot. Before today I had only read Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, and have, like many others, mostly associated him with works dealing with doom and gloom. As a result some works by other writers have been called Kafkaesque if they are "gloomy" enough.

Well, this little collection by Franz Kafka is very far from being Kafkaesque in that way. Some of the stories are light in tone, playful, and funny. I'm not saying that they are all great. I think that some are definitely better than others, but there are a few stories that to me are really great. Two got to me especially well, the flash fiction "The Trees" and the short story "Excursion to the Mountains" both of which deal in a way with people and nature.

I have already read some of these stories more than once, and I only got this book today. I suspect this book will become one of those that I'm going to re read once in a while, at least the stories I like the best.

One thing I would like to add. There are photographs of people from Prague through out the book taken in the years 1865-1890. These photos don't strictly relate to the stories themselves, but I thought they were a nice touch.

Rose says

I always see people telling how great *this* Kafka is. And I always wondered if he *is* indeed. Well, the answer is clear from my rating already. Every short story from this lovely book left me with a smile on my lips..yet, many times I had to go back and reread. Since it was too fast, it felt like a warm breeze through my body. My favorite from all 18 is definitely "Unhappiness." I felt like I understood this one the most.

A super short read. Won't keep you busy for more than half an hour, though you will wish it would've kept you hidden in its pages more. 10/10

Max Levitin says

18 ??????? ????????? ??????? ??????. ?? ?????? ?????? ?????? ? ?????????, ?????? ?? ?????????? ??
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Toon Pepermans says

sometimes reminded me of Robert Walser

Cecily says

This collection of very short pieces is sometimes called Meditation, and under that name, is sometimes included in Metamorphosis.

These pieces are generally lighter than many of his works, though the recurring themes of loneliness, unease, judgement and watching are all present.

This review is really a collection of jottings for reference; don't expect great insights!

Children on a Country Road

A charming picture of carefree children, playing and exploring. Not at all Kafkaesque.

Unmasking a Confidence Trickster

Oppression, manners, unease.

But "the groundless devotion on the servants' faces rejoiced my heart".

The Sudden Walk

Almost a whole page in a single sentence: breaking out of routine by one decisive act.

Resolutions

A short and painful description of a slough of depression: resolving to do something about it, then thinking it would be futile. The ending is startlingly bathetic, humourous, even.

The Excursion into the Mountains

An apparently gloomy plan for a lonely trip, with unexpected levity ("It goes without saying that they all wear evening dress").

The Fate of the Bachelor

Not what Kafka wanted (he was engaged three times to two different women), but certainly what he feared.

He died a bachelor and probably childless (there is some debate about the latter, but little evidence), but young enough that had he lived, he may yet have married.

The Businessman

Left behind; everyone else who matters has gone to America (prescient re his novel, *Amerika?*).
Beauty too: "The banisters of the staircase float down past the panes of frosted glass like a waterfall."

Stray Glance from the Window

A little prose poem that *might* be sinister...

The Way Home

Another window, but this character is a fortunate man, who is even aware of the fact.

The Men Running Past

Fear of following and of intervening (the latter echoing *In The Penal Colony* and *Jackals and Arabs*).

The Passenger

Existential angst, being "entirely uncertain as to my place in this world". But a pretty girl can transform thoughts.

Clothes

No window this time, but a slightly voyeuristic appreciation of women's clothes, coupled with pragmatic concerns about the practicality of pleats.

The Rejection

The narrator imagines all the reasons a girl might ignore a request for a date, by comparing himself with an unrealistic ideal. Self-fulfilling prophesy?

For the Consideration of Amateur Jockeys

Counter-intuitive musings: surely no one would want to be a winner because winning divides friends and makes you look ridiculous to women "because he's swelling with pride" etc! "And finally from the now overcast sky it even begins to rain." Maybe something got lost in translation.

The Window on the Street

The importance of a window to stave off loneliness and to rejuvenate: "the horses down below will drag him into the train of their wagons and their tumult so in the end towards the harmony of man".

Longing to be a Red Indian

Dreams of America, again. But very brief.

The Trees

In total; make of it what you will:

"For we are like the trunks of trees in the snow. Apparently they rest smoothly on the surface and with a gentle push we should be able to shift them. No, that one cannot, for they are firmly attached to the ground. But see, that too is only apparent."

Unhappiness

Misery in one's room, haunted by a child (ghost, imagined or, in some sense, real?) but, once again, "found relief in a glance to the window". The child expected but also not expected; reality shifts:

"How can my not believing help me?... The real fear is the fear of what caused the apparition."

Carla says

18 relatos son tan pocos debido a que estaba teniendo un buen rato hasta que llegue a la última página; quería mucho más.

En 1912 Kafka publica *Contemplación*, un libro con 18 — ¡la vida es injusta! Quería leer un poco más. —

- Niños en un camino de campo
- Desenmascaramiento de un embaucador
- El paseo repentino
- Resoluciones
- La excursión a la montaña
- Desdicha del soltero
- El comerciante
- Contemplación, distraída en la ventana
- Camino de casa
- Transeúntes
- Compañero de viaje
- Vestidos
- El rechazo
- Para que mediten los jinetes
- La ventana a la calle
- El deseo de ser piel roja
- Los árboles
- Desdicha

Cada uno de ellos, algunos breves u otros con más palabras dan un toque grato, porque leer a Franz Kafka siempre me ha sido reconfortarle.

Una lectura rápida pero muy recomendable.

"Aquel que, considerando los cambios del día, del tiempo, del estado de sus negocios y demás, anhela de pronto ver un brazo al cual pudiese aferrarse, no está en condiciones de vivir mucho tiempo sin una ventana que dé a la calle".

(La ventana a la calle)

Citas: <http://hechaensilencio.blogspot.com.a...>

Fernando says

Siempre me atrajo profundamente la literatura del primer Kafka. Este pequeño librito que publica a fines de 1912 con la ayuda de Max Brod le hará dar un pequeño paso inicial en su carrera, que es de las más importantes que nos dio la literatura mundial y que disfrutamos aún en nuestros días.

Tan pronto fue publicado su libro, le llevó a su prometida, Felice Bauer, una copia del mismo, abrumado por una mezcla de medida alegría y sentidas disculpas por los pequeños defectos que contenía el volumen. Él mismo se encargó de indicar el orden en que el tenían que aparecer los relatos y aquí me detengo porque hay que aclarar que son relatos y no cuentos los que leemos en *Contemplación*.

Tengamos en cuenta que Kafka fue el mejor narrador de relatos que dio la literatura (podríamos agregar a otro grande quien también escribiera relatos inolvidables: me refiero a Julio Cortázar). Esto es importante, dado que el relato es un retazo, una parte de algo más grande o extenso y en general inconcluso. Usualmente los relatos están orientados a reflexiones (“La Desdicha de ser soltero”), situaciones en particular (“Decisiones”) o mini narraciones de acciones espontáneas (“Distraído mirar afuera”).

Tal vez, podríamos admitir como cuento al último, llamado “Ser desdichado”, una pequeña narración de un niño y su encuentro con un amigable fantasma que da la sensación de parecer un doble.

Encontramos en *Contemplación* algunas paradojas kafkianas que cobrarán fuerza en sus novelas más renombradas, tal es caso de “Los que pasan corriendo” o “Los arboles”.

En un pequeño ensayo de Jorge Luis Borges que el maestro incluye en su libro “Otras Inquisiciones” y que se llama “Kafka y sus precursores”, nos dice: *“El hecho es que cada escritor crea a sus precursores. Su labor modifica nuestra concepción del pasado, como ha de modificar el futuro... El primer Kafka de **Betrachtung** es menos precursor del Kafka de los mitos sombríos y de las instituciones atroces de Browning o Lord Dunsany.”*

Tal vez sin quererlo, Kafka lo vislumbró en este pequeño pasaje de su relato “Camino a casa” cuando afirma: *“Comparo mi pasado con mi futuro y encuentro que ambos son excelentes, a ninguno de los dos les puedo dar ventaja; y sólo tengo que censurar la injusticia de la Providencia, que me ha favorecido tanto.”*

Yo comencé leyendo a Borges antes que a Kafka sin darme cuenta de que leyendo en el presente al primero, encontré lo que el segundo escribió en el pasado. Esto modificó y anticipó mis subsiguientes lecturas de Borges, que transcurrirían en el futuro.

Nuno says

I swear to God, this man is, definitely, my soulmate.

Haverly says

I bought this in Prague, and the stories and illustrations really "took me back" to the feeling I had while in that magical city.
