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Die Stadt hinter dem Strom / Hermann Kasack

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Abstrak

Die Stadt hinter dem Strom (The city beyond the river) is a German language existentialist novel by Hermann Kasack, published in 1947 in Berlin. The novel is about the protagonist is the orientalist Dr. Robert Lindhoff, introduced to the reader just as Robert. He travels by railroad on a mission which is unclear to him to a foreign city, which appears as strange and incomprehensible. He meets people whom he believes to be dead, such as his father and his beloved Anna. Robert receives the order from an invisible authority of the city to write a "Chronik" (chronicle) of the city. Robert is called the Chronicler, and he explores the city, partly on his own, partly guided. The city is a megalopolis under a cloudless sky, full of catacombs, without music. Its people appear more and more strange and incomprehensible to him. The people resemble shadows and perform senseless, repetitive and destructive tasks. Two factories employ many of them, one producing building blocks from dust, one destroying building blocks to dust. Robert feels unable to write the chronicle. The authority who ordered it thanks him anyway for his work full of insight. Back in his home country, Robert travels restlessly, lecturing on the sense of life. In the end he travels to the city, as in the beginning. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Die_Stadt_hinter_dem_Strom)