

Zeitschrift: Badener Neujahrsblätter
Herausgeber: Literarische Gesellschaft Baden; Vereinigung für Heimatkunde des Bezirks Baden
Band: 42 (1967)

Artikel: Baden im Spiegel seiner Gäste
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-322939>

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Baden im Spiegel seiner Gäste

Thomas Coryate

Zum ersten Mal wird hier eine Reiseschilderung in englischer Sprache veröffentlicht, die bisher gänzlich unbekannt war. Sie gehört zudem zu den interessantesten, ausführlichsten und längsten Reiseschilderungen, die wir von Baden, kennen und verdient deshalb, vollständig abgedruckt zu werden. Über den Autor entnehmen wir der Encyclopaedia Britannica folgende Angaben: Thomas Coryate wurde um 1577 in Odcombe, Somerset, geboren, wo sein Vater Rektor war. Er studierte am Winchester College und in Gloucester Hall in Oxford. Er wurde eine Art Hofnarr, vielleicht im Haushalt von Prinz Henry, dem ältesten Sohn von James I. 1611 publizierte er sein bekanntes Werk, die «Crudities» (wörtlich «Unreifigkeiten»), worin er seine im Jahre 1608 unternommene Reise in Frankreich, Italien und anderen Ländern, unter anderem in der Schweiz, schildert. Er veröffentlichte noch andere Reiseberichte, so zum Beispiel auch über Indien, wo er im Dezember 1617 in Surat starb. Coryates Schriften zeichnen sich durch Humor und großes, wenn auch unkritisches, Interesse für Altertümer aus.

In seinem Bericht über Baden nennt Coryates die Bäder von Baden oft einfach die «Bäder vom Hinterhof», weil dieser das größte und angesehenste Gasthaus war. Eines der vornehmsten Bäder in diesem Haus war das erwähnte «Markgrafenbad». Interessant ist, daß Coryate von Dr. Heinrich Pantaleon Kenntnis hatte, der ja selbst eine lesenswerte Schrift über Baden verfaßt hat.

Uli Münzel

Thomas Coryats Crudities, 1611

I departed from Zurich upon a Saturday being the seven and twentieth of August, about two of the clocke in the afternoone (being conducted about two miles in my way by my friends Mr. Thommanus and Marcus Buelerus, who at our final departing bedewed his cheekes with teares) and came to a place nine English miles beyond it called Maristella (Kloster Wettingen), which is hard by the river Limacus, about eight of the clocke in the evening. I passed the river in a boate, and lay that night in a solitary house by the river side. Betwixt Zurich and Maristella I observed a passing faire and spacious country full of excellent faire corne fields. About eight miles beyond Zurich I passed by a certaine Chappell standing by the high way side wherein

was an exceeding massy multitude of dead mens bones and skulles heaped together. These are said to be the skulles of the Souldiers of Charles the Great Duke of Burgundie, (whom I have before mentioned in my notes of Zurich) and the Switzers, who not farre fom this place fought a great battell, in which there was great slaughter on both sides.

I departed from Maristella the next morning being Sunday and the eight and twentieth of August about seven of the clocke, and came to the City of Baden commonly called ober Baden, two English miles beyond it, about eight of the clocke.

My observations of Baden

This City is of some antiquity. For it is mentioned by Cornelius Tacitus, that famous Historiographer that lived in the time of Tiberius Caesar. I passed a bridge over the river at the entrance of the City. It standeth in that part of Switzerland which is called Ergovia, and on the farther side of the river there lyeth the territory of Turgovia. On one side of the town are certaine hilles, and on the other the river Limacus aforesaid that runneth by Zurich, on which river they doe usually passe in boates betwixt Zurich and this City. Againe, the City is so built that it standeth on both sides of the Limacus. It lyeth in the very meditullium of Helvetia, which is the reason that the confederates doe celebrate all their publique assemblies that concerne the whole state in this City. There standeth a Castell upon the toppe of the hill which doth now suffer great dilapidations. One thing I observed in the German Cities that I could not perceive in any place of France, Savoy, Italy, or Rhetia. Namely, the heads of boares nailed upon the dores of dwelling houses of Cities and Townes. The first that I saw in Germany were in this City of Baden. For here I saw many of them hanged upon the dores both at the entrance into the citie, and in the fairest streete. These heads are of certaine wilde boares that the People doe kill in hunting in the forrests and woods of the country. Which hunting of wilde boares is more exercised by the Germans then by any other Christian nation. And it is the custome of the country whensoever they have killed any great boare to cut off his head, and erect it in that manner as I have already spoken. The like I observed afterward in many other German Cities. I was in the fairest Church of the City, which is dedicated to our Lady, where I saw a great many pictures and images, (for this City is wholly Papisticall) and one very curious Altar made of wainscot. On the south side of the Church there standeth a little Chappell, wherein I saw an exceeding multitude of dead mens bones and skulles laid together at the west end thereof. I never saw so many dead mens bones together in all my life be-

fore. For the number of them was so great, that I thinke at the day of iudgement at the least ten thousand soules will challenge them. Surely for what cause they heape together these bones (I confesse) I know not.

This Citie in times past was subiect to a proper Earle of her owne, who was intituled the Earle of Baden. But about the yeare 1180. Henry their last Earle of Baden being dead, the Earledome was translated by the meanes of a certaine Lady to the Earles of Kyburg. Againe, after the death of Hortmannus, the last Earle of Kyburg, who died about the yeare 1260, there rose a great contention about this Earledome. But at last Rodolphus Earle of Habsburg, that was afterward elected King of the Romanes, got the possessions of it, and after his death it was continually possessed by the Dukes of Austria till the Councill of Constance. At what time the Helvetians by the commandement of the Emperour Sigismund first seised upon it, who have ever kept in from that time till, this day.

Thus much of the Citie of Baden

I departed from this City about tenne of the clocke the same Sunday, and tooke my iourney directly towards the Bathes which are within halfe an English mile of the Citie. For Master Hospinian of Zurich did earnestly counsell me to see them, as being a place very worthy my observation. But there hapned such a sinister accident unto me upon the way, that it was very difficult for me to find them out; whereby I verified the old speech, though indeed the same be properly spoken in another sense; *Difficilia quae pulchra*. For by reason that I was ignorant of the Dutch language, those that met me by the way could not understand my speeches, and so gave me no certaine directions to finde out the place. Whereupon I went five English miles beyond it before I could learne any newes of it, even to the famous Monasterie of Kiningsfelden neere the Citie of Brooke. Which accident ministred occasion unto me to see certaine memorable monuments in this foresaid Monasterie, which I had not seene, if this occurrent had not driven me thither. Here I hapned to insinuate my selfe into the acquaintance of an honest sociable Scholler, who very courteously walked with me five miles back to the bathes. For I was stricken with such an ardent desire to see them, that I could not be satisfied before I had beene there, though it were forth and backe ten miles out of my way. Therefore I will first describe them, and after returne to the discourse of the Monastery againe.

My observations of the Bathes of Baden

Certainly this is the sweetest place for bathes that ever I saw, by many degrees excelling our English bathes both in quantity and quality. The antiquity of them is such, that (as a certaine learned man told me in the same place) it is thought they were found out before the incarnation of Christ. The place is called Hinderhoue, being seated in a lowe bottome about a bow shot from the high way, and about halfe an English mile westward from the high way, and about halfe an English mile westward from the Citie of Baden. They are much the more commodiously and pleasantly situate by reason of the sweete river Limacus running by them, which divideth them into two parts, the greater and the lesser. For those on this side river are called the greater, and those beyond it the lesser. The bathes are distinguished asunder by severall houses that are nothing else then Innes serving for the entertainment of strangers. And whereas every Inne hath his proper signe, the bathes have their names from the same signes. As in one Inne which hath the signe of the Beare, the Bathes in the same place being in number sixe are called the Beare bathes, and so the rest of the bathes have their denomination from their peculiar signes. In another Inne called the Sunne are eight, in a place called the Statehoue eleven, at the signe of the Crowne seven, at the Flower three, at the Oxe sixe, in a place called by the same name that is the generall appellation of all the bathes, viz. Hinderhoue, seventeene, in an open court subdio two publike bathes, whereof one is the greatest of them all; in which I told seven and thirtie poore, bathing of themselves. For these two serve onely for the plebeian and poorer sort. So that the totall number of them amounteth to threescore. None are admitted to these bathes in the Innes but the richer sort, and such as doe sojourne in he same. For many of the strangers are tabled there a certain stinted price by the weeke. And some of the thriftier sort onely pay for their lodging, and procure them provision from the Citie. For it is a place of great charge to them that pay for their weekly diet. Although the number of the bathes be so great as I have already spoken: yet the originall fountaines that feede them all are but few, no more then two, which are so hot at the first spring thereof, that a man can hardly endure to touch them with his bare hands, the like whereof I will report hereafter of the bathes of the lower Baden in the Marquisate. Howbeit the water of these bathes themselves is of a very moderate temperature. Here was a great concourse of people at the time of my being there, which was at the Autumne, even the eight and twentieth day of August; as at the same time every yeare many resort thither from Zurich, Basill, Berne, and most of the Helveticall Cities, and from the Citie of Constance, etc. the strangers that are to be seene

in Hinderhoue, amounting sometimes to the number of a thousand persons, besides some few what lie abroad in the country for the bathes sake. Many of those people that lay at Hinderhoue when I was there, were Gentlemen of great worth that repaired thither from the foresaid Cities partly for infirmities sake, and partly for meere pleasure and recreation. Most of the private bathes are but little, but very delicate and pleasant places, being divided asunder by certaine convenient partitions, wherein are contrived divers windowes, to the end that those in the bathes may have recourse to each other, and mutually drinke together. For they reach out their drinking glasses one to another through the windowes. The roomes over head are lodgings for the strangers. Here I have observed the people in the bathes feede together upon a table that hath swimm'd upon the superficies of the water. Also I have noted another strange thing amongst them hat I have not a little wondred at. Men and women bathing themselves together naked from the middle upward in one bathe: whereof some of the women were wives (as I was told) and the men partly bachelers, and partly married men, but not the husbands of the same women. Yet their husbands have bene at that time at Hinderhoue, and some of them in the very place standing hard by the bathe in their clothes, and beholding their wives not only talking and familiarly discoursing with other men, but also sporting after a very pleasant and merry manner. Yea sometimes they sing merily together, but especially that sweet and most amorous song of solus cum sola; I meane another mans wife, and another man naked upward (as I have aforesaid) in one bath. Yet all this while the husband may not be ielous though he be at the bathes, and seeth too much occasion of ielousie ministred unto him. For the verie name of ielousie is odious in this place. But let these Germanes and Helvetians do as they list, and observe these kind of wanton customes as long as they will; for mine owne part were I a married man, and meant to spend some little time here with my wife for solace and recreation sake, truly I should hardly be perswaded to suffer her to bath herselfe naked in one and the selfe same bath with one onely bachelor or married man with her; because if she was faire, and had an attractive countenance, she might perhaps cornifie me. For I might have iust cause to feare lest if she went into the water with the effigies of a male lambe characterized upon her belly, the same might within a few howers grow to be an horned ram (according to a merry tale that I have sometimes heard) before she should return again to my company. Here also I saw many passing faire yong Ladies and Gentlewomen naked in the bathes with their wooers and favorites in the same. For at this time of the yeare many woers come thither to solace themselves with their beautifull mistresses. Many of these

yong Ladies had the haire of their head very yuriously plaited in locks, and they wore certaine pretty garlands upon their heads, many of fragrant and odoriferous flowers. A spectacle exceeding amorous. A certaine learned man that I found bathing himself in one of the bathes, told me that Henry Pantaleon, that famous Philosopher and Phisition of Basill, (who made his abode two or three yeares in this place) hath written a peculiar booke of the vertue and effect of these bathes. Moreover, he affirmed that they are of very soveraigne vertue for the curing of these infirmities, viz. the tertian and quartan ague, the itch, the cholicke and the stone; and it hath one most rare vertue that I never heard of any bathes in all the world. For he told me that they are of admirable efficacie to cure the sterilitie of women, and make those that are barren, very fruitfull bearers of children. A matter verified and certainly confirmed by the experience of many women. The water of the bathes is mingled with great store of brimstone and a small quantity of alum, (as Munster affirmeth, from whom I derive these few lines following concerning the vertue of the bathes) by meanes whereof it heateth and dryeth up all noysome and cold humours. Also, it is good for those infirmities which proceede from the cold of the head, as the lethargie, the apoplexie, the diseases of the eares and eyes. It consumeth the fleame, heateth and dryeth up the stomach, helpeth the digestive faculty, openeth the obstructions of the liver and spleene, asswageth the biting and fretting of the guts, appeaseth the paine of the members that proceedeth from cold, and to conclude, it cleanseth the skinne from spots and freckles. But it hurteth those that have a hot and drie complexion, and such as are weakened with the consumption. But old folkes, of what sexe soever they are, reape no benefit by these bathes. A place that imparteth his vertue after a partiall manner rather to the feminine then masculine kinde. And so finally I end this discourse of the Helveticall bathes of Hinderhoue with that elegant Elogium of Poggius the Florentine, in praise of the same, even that it is a second Paradise, the seate of the Graces, the bosome of Loue, and the Theater of pleasure. Thus much of the Helveticall bathes of Hinderhoue, commonly called the bathes of Baden.