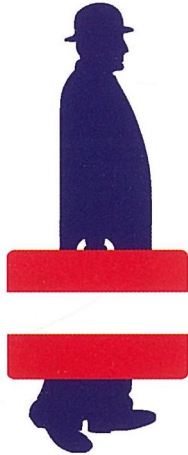


DE VALIGIA
IN AUSTRIA



DE VALIGIA
IN ÖSTERREICH

It is the traveller that takes the suitcase, but the suitcase takes the traveller on a journey.

The subversion of travelling

The journey doesn't exist. Every journey is always just one trip among other trips. The same way as every culture is just one culture among other cultures. The travelling self is splitted into different places and times, identities and states of feeling. It is really the movement that makes us aware of our real identity. The relation between me and someone else bears a new conception of myself, and in so far creates cultural change. Travelling changes the self of the traveller. As children of a boundless culture of communication we are at home everywhere and nowhere. We are people, ambling in this village called world, like strollers in suburbia. We are travellers in this field of tension of the pre-millennium - without descent, without intention, without destination, without hatred, without love, without God.

The famous American author Hakim Bey speaks of the tourist and the terrorist as the two twin-ghosts, both suffering from the same hunger for authenticity. „But whenever they try to come closer to this authenticity, it draws back. At the moment cameras and machine guns stand in the way of love, for which terrorists and tourists secretly yearn for just in the same way. Only one thing is left for them to do: destruction. The tourist destroys meanings, and the terrorist wipes out the tourist.“ Maybe the idea of desire is the most precise, that can be said about authenticity, love and travelling. Desire focuses on something withdrawn, it is the most vehement way of travelling.

Seldom travelling is really successful, most of the time the spiritual horizon stays back by far from the geographic. On the other hand, the geography of thinking not only belongs to mere theory, but rises from the need of the human being to situate himself sensually within this world. Very often one has to go far away from the doorstep to learn something about himself: The wide world as school of life. The moment one starts to wander, the passive biography starts to loose its boundaries, and to assume the active form of a geography of thinking. Henc

within the geo-geography that the bio-geography of the other returns as guest to itself. One has to leave the narrow borders of the sometimes nothing less than uncanny home to find back to oneself. Today it is far more important to become oneself within the geography than to widen the geographical space, far more important to find the auto-geography of the nomad. The biography of the space crosses the geography of the self. Unanswerable stays the question: In which direction does one have to pray in the aeroplane?

For the aesthetic traveller there is always the question for an oppositional strategy, for a vision as a counterpart to the tourist-imperialism. Against the tyranny of the masses the travelling aesthete relies on his own subversive power, even if he's not invulnerable to the congestion at the check-in-desk right before his departure. Important for him on his trip is his ethic-aesthetic position within a global culture, his intercultural standpoint in a new cosmopolitical world. Marcel Duchamp denied himself to be a tourist in forcing himself to make his decision of either going to New York, his second home, or staying in Paris conditional on throwing a coin - head or number.

The artist is the prototype of the yearning one. Who else but the artist of today has this real need of freedom and deviation, for frontier crossing, casting off conventions, the narrowness of our society and the daily routine? His search for new stimuli stands for the restlessness, the departure to constantly new horizons, taking delight in life again. The artist is the perfect complex mixture of desire for the world, of flight from society and himself - the ideal of yearning. The being away of the artist becomes a parable of the human being, his life a voyage: homo viator. If artists (and cultures) want to keep their liveliness, they have to go across borders.

Paolo Bianchi