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„Passages“

In different contexts, there are various passages, all of them are in some way interesting for me: because in general, passages signify a connection and the moderation of differences: in space, time, or in condition; – and they facilitate exchanges.

With its position “in-between”, the passage is an ambiguous place, effecting ambivalent positions.

The passage connects the “Before” with the “After”; it is open to both sides and it invites to reflect about the past and the future while observing the present.

In the city, there are various passage: those between the buildings as narrow ways or alleys, and those from one building to another for example by an added bridge. The idea of a “passage” offers a rather comfortable way to the other side. The obstacles which are separating the both sides are overbridged or under-tunneled so that a way – or even a shortcut– gets created.

The *passage* are all the places between the departure and the destination, and it is ambivalently perceived out of the movements. With the movement, the element of time comes in too, and passage means not just the connection from one place to another, it means also the duration of the transit (, the transition or the transformation).

The idea of change of time is leading over to the idea of changing conditions. The city is permanently changing: things use up, decay, they were renovated, remodeled or replaced, – modernized. Different things are often close together, connected even, and the traces of the different intentions of the different people, who shaped those things, describe the *passage* of the city itself, from the old to the more modern one, until that again is changed.

There are also the *passages*, Walter Benjamin referred to in his famous “*Passagen-Werk*”, (Arcades-Project): Those iron and glass covered *passages-arcades* of Paris, built in the 19th century, and which explored the interior of buildings and their courts for commerce by connecting one street with another. Because in the times of Benjamin many of those passages were already decades old, they had become unfashionable, outdated and obscure, the same as many of the shops and stores therein, dealing with strange, curious and astonishing products. – Strolling through those passages-arcades, triggered for Benjamin various associations: In their sum, the passages-arcades represented for him the unfulfilled promises of the past of modernity.

– Seoul has also a few of those remains of an outdated modernity, which often attract my attention.

Passages in Life

There are also passages in life: There are the anthropologic *rites of passage* in their various forms marking the transition of one (social-) condition / status to another. The terms “en passage” in French, or “passing by” in English underline the temporality of experiences. They describe also the activity of the “flaneur”, who is never fully involved.

Some people like to see human life as such just as the passage from birth to an uncertain destination or to the aim of the "eternal existence" if they are more religious.

Passages in art

The artistic creation process has similarity to the *rite of passage*: rather simple material is transformed by the artists inspiration and hands into the artwork, which has a very different status and value than the original material. The artwork consists still of that material but it also represents something beyond that material: the feelings and ideas of the artist his time and culture.

Most times, I discover the motives for my artworks when I just pass by, out of my movement as a passing by observer or a "flaneur". Often certain things catch my attention, which represent with their design, forms and functions the passage of time and condition: as motive for my work I choose buildings, objects, details etc.,

- which are over the time of their existence well preserved,
- or adjusted, modified, changed,
- or abandoned.

By that, those objects express indirectly the changing intentions, needs, desires, expectations and hopes of the people who conceived, build or used them.

During the working process, my paintings change from plain surfaces to abstract compositions and turn then to those illusions, representing those buildings, constructions or details, which the spectator can recognize as something he/she knows. The transformation of my observations into paintings shall not be too perfect, – the images shall not be identical to the reality: The different steps of the manmade origin of the works shall still be perceptible. In my paintings, the illusionistic presentation of objects or places is clear, however, the composition, which is based on abstract principles of proportions, is always strong too. In some cases, the composition ideas dominate the representation.

The bridge-passages between buildings allows to commute easily to the other building, similar to that, artworks can allow the communication from artist to the spectator.

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