

## Carnets de route

Krassimira Drenska; Travel notes 1980/2014

The irresistible urge to ‚possess‘ the things which happen to fascinate me by a meaning, elusive at a given moment, finds its expression in drawing. Since the early eighties, after I left Bulgaria for Switzerland, notebooks have always accompanied me. There, next to quickly captured impressions of museum’s visits or ideas for future work, one finds text fragments or citations – a testimony of the intense formative process I was going through.

In Bulgaria of the seventies the approach to art matters was paying a heavy tribute to the official ideas propagated by the political authorities. For the young artist, that I was, it was almost impossible to learn about the new developments in Western modern art, let alone to form a personal judgement about them. The student years at the Academy of Fine Arts in Sofia had me cast in a specific mould. Arriving in Basel in the early eighties, I deliberately set up to shed away most of the ideas acquired during this period. The notebooks of this years testify of the deep rupture in my ways of apprehending contemporary art. Minimal Art and Arte Povera, then all the rage in Basel but still new to me, induced avid reading of critical texts in order to absorb and understand the rules governing this development of modern art.

It was a time of euphoria and optimism – new ways seemed to lay open for anybody with an inquisitive mind. If anything, there were too many liberties to choose from!

In the notebooks one finds even descriptions of dreams. Reading them I can still find the traces of the fears and expectations which accompanied the transformation. Having only very seldom dated any of these notes, this activity resembles an archeological reserch of the path of somebody whose way of looking at the world I still carry in me, but who is receding behind a mirror obscured by time.