



Pia Sójka

Writing Travel, Writing Life
Reisen schreiben Leben
Écriture, le voyage ou la vie

Ars Vivendi and the Travelling Narrations of Ella Maillart,
Annemarie Schwarzenbach and Nicolas Bouvier



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Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.dnb.de/> abrufbar.

Universitätsverlag Potsdam 2022

<http://verlag.ub.uni-potsdam.de/>

Am Neuen Palais 10, 14469 Potsdam
Tel.: +49 (0)331 977 2032 / Fax: -2292
E-Mail: verlag@uni-potsdam.de

Die Schriftenreihe Potsdamer **Bibliothek der WeltRegionen** wird herausgegeben von Prof. Dr. Ottmar Ette, Institut für Romanistik der Universität Potsdam.

Dissertation, Universität Potsdam, 2021.

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Satz: text plus form, Dresden
Druck: docupoint GmbH Magdeburg

ISSN (print) 2629-2548
ISSN (online) 2629-253X

ISBN 978-3-86956-537-8

Zugleich online veröffentlicht auf dem Publikationsserver der Universität Potsdam
<https://doi.org/10.25932/publishup-55879>
<https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:kobv:517-opus4-558799>

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Le point de non-retour

*C'était hier
plage noire de la Caspienne
sur des racines blanchies rejetées par la mer
sur de menus éclats de bambou
nous faisons cuire un tout petit poisson
sa chair rose
prenait une couleur de fumée*

*Douce pluie d'automne
cœur au chaud sous la laine
au Nord
un fabuleux champignon d'orage
montait sur la Crimée
et s'étendait jusqu'à la Chine
Ce midi-là
la vie était si égarante et bonne
que tu lui as dit ou plutôt murmuré
'va-t'en me perdre où tu voudras'
Les vagues ont répondu 'tu n'en reviendras pas'
Trébizonde, 1953*

Nicolas Bouvier, Le dehors et le dedans

1 Idea

One might argue that the golden age of travel literature ended over a century ago. There is no doubt that changes in mobility and methods of spreading news changed travel literature. People have travelled nearly everywhere, and there does not appear to be any need for more reports from yet another travel writer describing unknown places if numerous pages of pictures and descriptions can already be found on the internet. In fact, travel literature can give us so much more than that, especially those texts defined as travel narrations in this thesis (and examined as *travelling* narrations in chapter three). Reading the travel text as a narration opens up a text with a complex structure whose content includes much more than observations made on a journey. Besides the discourse of historical and factual accuracy in the report, the narration addresses topics such as transnational and transcultural dialogues, which probably makes travel literature more important today than ever before. Its purpose is not to enumerate top places as a template for future tourist trips. The travel narration offers many opportunities to look behind facts and superficial descriptions, to look at the text from other perspectives: not at the biographical figure of the author but at what the narrators and the travellers within the text tell their narratees. Travel literature remains a decisive transmitter of knowledge in other, newer ways, no longer in the overtly ethnographical, biological, or geographical way of earlier centuries. Travel narration can communicate knowledge of inter- and transcultural dialogue to the reader as well as knowledge of life, of living together and of survival, of an understanding of the world, and the importance of art conveyed through art.

This research combines the studies of transcultural narratology¹ with the knowledge of life in transarea studies² and thereby opens a new approach in academic research on travel literature. The travel book as such is not only a work of art (the author's art of life), but its content functions as a transmitter of *ars vivendi* to its readership.³

Method

To define the motifs of *ars vivendi* in travel literature, different travel narrations will be compared to each other. The study will include the works of three Swiss authors from the 20th century: Ella Maillart, Annemarie Schwarzenbach and Nicolas Bouvier. The corpus is focused on, but not limited to, three of their books, written after the travel authors' experiences of a journey from Geneva to Kabul by car: *The Cruel Way* by Ella Maillart, first published in 1947 after the death of her travel companion Annemarie Schwarzenbach; Nicolas Bouvier's *L'Usage du monde*, first published in 1963, ten years after starting the journey with his friend, painter Thierry Vernet; and *Alle Wege sind offen*, a collection of Annemarie Schwarzenbach's texts written on said journey to Kabul with Ella Maillart, chosen and edited by Roger Perret in 2000.

At first glance, a reader may expect similar books from all three authors. All are from the same country of origin with the same geographical goal and the same methods of transportation, and all are travelling in the same century.

The constellation of the three authors is inspired by Roger Perret's *Bleu immortel – Unsterbliches Blau*, a book in which pictures of the three authors and excerpts of their texts appeared side by side. In this comparative study, however, the three authors were not chosen with the intent to compare authors of the same nationality or the similar road that they travelled. The main *tertium comparationis* does not lie in the obvious fact of a common nationality, especially because their literatures can be considered *literatures without a fixed abode*, "a 'Writing-between-Worlds'

1 Several publications on that topic, especially in Muslim travel literature, can be found in the research of Bekim Agai, professor at the University of Bonn.

2 This theory refers to the knowledge of life in the research on life science by Ottmar Ette.

3 *Ars vivendi* is mostly looked at and interpreted with aid of Wilhelm Schmid's research on the philosophy and with a new philosophy of *ars vivendi*.

that oscillates among different worlds” (Ette, 2016b:9); nor is the common road to Kabul a main interest.

The *tertium comparationis* lies in the *ars vivendi* motifs⁴ of the travel narrations, which can be observed in the plot of each narration, even if they are experienced and expressed in different ways. The theory will be strengthened by looking at the travellers’ narrations of other journeys to different countries such as Japan, Sri Lanka, Turkmenistan, the Congo, the U.S.A., or the Aran islands, and if one looks at other travel narrations from authors born in different countries around the world, it can quickly be observed that phenomenon of *ars vivendi* in travel narration is not specific to any one nationality.

Transarea and ‘Lebenswissen’

Can travel literature transmit important knowledge about the world and living on our planet? The world is on the move, and with it, its literatures. Knowledges of languages, cultural habits, and historical and religious understanding have all become more important in today’s phase of globalisation, in which cultures are constantly blended and confronted with each other. In the words of Ansgar Nünning, our life and world consist of more than just:

Atomen, Datenbanken, Genen, Gesetzen, Wirtschaftswachstum und Zahlen. Im Mittelpunkt des Lebenswissens der Literatur und der Literaturwissenschaften stehen demgegenüber Menschen, Sprache(n), Texte, Bewusstsein und Unbewusstes, Geschichte(n), Normen, Aufführungen, Lebensformen und Lebenskunst sowie Inszenierungen und Rituale, die das Leben erst lebenswert und reichhaltig erscheinen lassen (Horatschek et al., 2008:112).

This “Lebenskunst” that Nünning mentions in this fragment, among others, this art of life that makes our lives colourful and worth living, is to be examined in this work.

Every journey can be interpreted as an individual life. The idea of the journey is born. It is lived and survived, and at some point, it always comes to an end. The travel narration reflects more than an art of travelling, it reflects an art of living,

4 The motifs stated in the main chapter are not listed in order of their importance. They do not have to be read chronologically, as they all interact with and depend on one another.

as well as an art of life, an art of survival or – summarised in one term – an *ars vivendi*.

If we look at Ottmar Ette's sentence, "Literature's knowledge may be replaced by no other: it is knowledge of life, from life, within life" (Ette, 2016:6), where are we supposed to find better examples than in a literature, which is, using William H. Sherman's words, literally "putting the world on paper" (Hulme and Youngs, 2002: 17)? This research follows Ottmar Ette's life science studies as well as transarea studies and tries to give possible responses to what travel narrations can contribute to our present and future way of life: "What, then, does literature want? What can it do? And what can it contribute to meet globalization's challenges to find new, imaginative answers that will lead the way out of the blind alleys of thought?" (Ette, 2016:4).

Travel literature reveals the importance of cultural diversity as much as the experience not only of meeting landscapes, cultures and societies that differ from one's own, but also of experiencing the other as the self and the self as the other.

Wilhelm Schmid's approach to an *ars vivendi* is the key concept used to read the travel narrations. The topics discussed by Schmid in his works *Philosophie der Lebenskunst* and *Auf der Suche nach einer neuen Lebenskunst* have been applied to the examined travel narrations of Ella Maillart, Annemarie Schwarzenbach and Nicolas Bouvier. The most influential and frequently discussed topics regarding travel have been selected, compared, and interpreted under the theory of *ars vivendi*. Earlier researchers write about *ars vivendi* from psychological, philosophical, and cultural-historical perspectives.⁵ In this work, *ars vivendi* will be put into a literary context, more precisely the context of travel narration. The motifs chosen are important components of the narration's plot and belong to the topics that Schmid discusses in his *Philosophie der Lebenskunst*.

Narratology

Scholars continuously struggle to categorise travel writing or travel literature and to define genres and forms. The numerous terms as well as the lack of clear definitions on the one hand, and the flexibility of each term on the other, make it more difficult to arrive at a common answer. Much-discussed problems of the genre dis-

5 See Lauster, 1983; Imhof, 1992; Schmid, 1998.

pute include the questionable distinctions of truth and falsehood, fiction and facts, and the author's position within the text. Other than the (initially informative and adventurous) travel literature of earlier centuries, travel literature of the 20th century is described by various theorists as a process of self-discovery and is often reduced to the personal experience of the traveller as the author. The consequence: Travel narrations are found in the bookshelves of the autobiography section, where they run the risk of an equalisation between author, traveller, and narrator and of placing an unnecessary focus on the accuracy of biographical and historical facts, as many studies about the three authors have done. The approach of this research furthers and supports the research on travel literature as literary text, instead of focusing on the author as most studies on travel literature tend to do, even in textual analyses.⁶

In order to respect the text as a literary oeuvre and leaving behind biographical aspects, it is useful to look at the text from a narratological perspective, in which author, narrator, and protagonist, in this case the traveller, need to be terminologically and analytically distinguished.⁷ I argue that travel literature, and especially travel narration, is much more than a literary reproduction of a traveller's past ex-

6 Walter Fähnders, for example, criticises the biographical interpretations of Schwarzenbach's oeuvre in Carbone, 2010:37: "hier ist entscheidend, dass ein literarischer, fiktionaler Text wie der zitierte allein biografisch ausgedeutet und ausgebeutet und nicht als autonomer Text gewürdigt wird. Dabei ist der zitierte Satz unschwer als fiktional zu erkennen. Ein elementarer Kurzschluss folgert, dass ein in der Tat autobiografisch grundlegender Text auch biografisch gelesen, auf seinen empirischen, biografischen Tatsachengehalt hin abgeklopft und entlarvt werden müsste, anstatt ihn als Text zu respektieren und in seiner *intentione operis* wahrzunehmen, anstatt also gerade das auch autobiografische Schreiben gerade bei Annemarie Schwarzenbach als literarisches Konzept zu akzeptieren und analysieren". Also look at Decock, 2010:13–14.

7 See Nünning in Gymnich et al., 2008:25: "Wie in der Autobiografie ist auch im Falle des Reiseberichts davon auszugehen, dass Autor, Erzähler und Protagonist zwar personal identisch sind, dass es aber durchaus sinnvoll ist, terminologisch zwischen dem tatsächlichen Autor (als historisch-biografischem Subjekt und Textproduzenten), dem Reiseschreiber (als dem im Text in Erscheinung tretenden Erzählsubjekt des Reiseberichts) und dem Reisenden (als einer erzählten Figur in der Welt, in der die Reise stattgefunden hat) zu unterscheiden. Bei dem Reiseschreiber handelt es sich, wie vor allem Alfred Opitz (1997) überzeugend herausgearbeitet hat, um eine genretypische Figur der Gattung des Reiseberichts, mithin selbst um eine Gattungskonvention und nicht einfach um den Verfasser selbst."

periences. It is a narration, usually by a first-person narrator, who tells the reader a story of a journey and thus, a story of life.

With the aid of narratology, the examined texts that have been described in the past as travel reports, literary travel reports, travelogues or *récits de voyage*, etc. will be defined as travel narrations (and after chapter three as travelling narrations). The role of the narrator and the narratee as well as intermediality and intertextuality as characteristic styles for the travel narration will be examined from a narratological point of view. To stick to the theme of travel, the narratological observations on the texts will be described as different “landscapes”: narrative landscape, intertextual landscape, iconic landscape, and phonic landscape. In the narratological landscape, the focus lies on the distinctions between author, narrator, and traveller, but even more on the autodiegetic narrator as a method of authenticity and other narratological methods characteristic of the travel narration.

In the intertextual landscape, it will be considered that travel writers have always been inspired by the routes of previous travel authors and that this prefiguration has an influence on the texts. That is why the works of Maillart, Schwarzenbach and Bouvier contain many references to each others’ work and to other texts by (travel) writers such as Xuanzang, Montaigne, Gertrude Bell, Hafis, Michaux and Hedayat; Bouvier knew Ella Maillart, and the women’s journey had inspired him. Furthermore, they have been role models for upcoming generations of young writers and travellers.⁸

The intermedial landscape will discuss the iconic and phonic elements of the travel narration not only as methods of authenticity but as necessary for accessing the ineffable, which arouses the writer to put the experience down on paper.

The focus, however, will be on the plot of the travel narration, which is not the story of an adventurous odyssey but of narrations separated by different headings that usually communicate the geographical space in which the traveller finds him or herself. The separate narrations form one narration, including specific moments

8 See Guyader, 2010:53: “Les livres de Nicolas Bouvier m’ont fait partir en voyage. Le voyage puis le retour m’ont fait entrer en écriture.” or Roche, 2005:22: “Admirer quelqu’un, s’inspirer de son parcours, c’est avant tout grandir et devenir soi. Et voilà qu’au travers de ce récit, carnet de voyage un peu particulier où m’accompagne une femme d’exception, je souhaite lui rendre un sincère hommage.”

or in Nicolas Bouvier's words, "instants souverains", which create a coherent single narration, structured chronologically like the path of a completed journey.

I claim that the travel narration, which in book form may itself be interpreted as an *ars vivendi*, is a transmitter of an *ars vivendi* through ten motifs.⁹ These motifs appear interactively, not chronologically, within each of the travel narrations examined. The narratological perspective creates the possibility of seeing Maillart's book as an oeuvre in its own right and looking at Schwarzenbach's texts not separately but at a distance from her suffering and drug addiction. *Ars vivendi* in the travel narration can be experienced and described in ten motifs, often expressed by the autodiegetic narrator in the *instants souverains*, in the ineffable, intertextual, iconic, and phonic landscapes.

The Structure

This dissertation is not just about itinerary studies but is itself a journey. The main chapters are named after the common steps of a journey: The first chapter, the idea, (which has already been introduced) is followed by the preparation of the journey, i.e. chapter two. This chapter will briefly introduce the authors, their works, and their motivations to embark on a lifelong journey. Here, the authors' ways of travelling and their itineraries will be discussed, as will the choice to compare their books about a journey to Afghanistan through Turkey and Iran. As many studies have already been conducted about this introductory part, particularly in Mathilde Jegou's dissertation *Le Corps à l'ouvrage*, also comparing the three authors, this portion will be limited to the most necessary information. It is, however, still important to understand the prefigurative components within the narration. Chapter three, the departure, tries to offer clarification on the generic terminologies of travel literature, which are very controversial. The overview of clear definitions proposes a possible classification of travel genres with the aid of their narratology and will show why *L'Usage du monde*, *The Cruel Way* and *Alle Wege sind offen* are examined as travel narrations. The second part of this chapter will thus investigate the narratology of the travel narration, especially regarding the narrator and narratee-figure, intertextuality, and intermediality.

9 Compare to Vladimir Propp who dismantled the tale in 31 functions to find its structure. Propp, V. (2015), *Morphology of the Folktale*. Manfield Centre, Martino Publishing, pp. 3–15.

The main chapter of this research, the implementation of the journey, is chapter four, entitled: 'On the Road'. Here, the ten motifs of *ars vivendi*, which the travel narrations transmit, will be carefully examined and compared to each other. They will cover the following topics:

Motif One Culture: Culture is defined as peoples' various ways of life, traditions, and habits, as well as their heritage. The travellers' respective perceptions of the known and unknown culture will be discussed regarding this motif. How do these perceptions reflect the places travelled to? What does culture mean to the auto-diegetic narrator? The changing narrative perspective from the "I" narrator to the "we" narrator is considered here as well.

Motif Two Crossing borders: What types of boundaries do the autodiegetic narrators encounter? How do they understand and perceive boundaries in the fourth phase of globalisation? This motif will focus on the diversity of the landscape, language, and behaviour of the people etc. encountered by the protagonists when crossing a border, not only geographically but also physically and psychologically.

Motif Three Freedom: At the beginning of the journey, freedom is one of the values directly expressed as a motivation for travel. On the journey, however, it turns out that the journey itself does not keep its promise about unlimited freedom on the road. Rather, the traveller becomes aware of the importance of this value, which turns out to be unreachable after all.

Motif Four Time and Space: Names on the map suddenly gain importance when the knowledge of a place fuses with the traveller's experience involving all his senses. Seeing a place with his own eyes, touching it with his hands, smelling and tasting it. The journey not only makes names come alive but enables a different understanding of distances from a spatial and temporal point of view. Travellers have the feeling of being reborn with every departure, and a journey of a few months becomes a life event. While the traveller becomes aware of the limitations of time, he expresses the feeling of gaining time.

Motif Five Landscapes: Seeing and meeting the landscape on a journey is like meeting the five elements: the mountains, the sky, the sea, and the beauty as well as the love of the divine Mother Earth. The landscape descriptions in the travel narration create a specific aura which renders them "alive" for the reader through the use of various narratological methods.

Motif Six The Other: One aim of travelling is getting to know the world and its

inhabitants better. On the other hand, the traveller's figure is marked by separation from family and friends. How does the traveller experience meeting people on the journey, and how do they communicate? What role does friendship play in a traveller's life? How is the Other represented, and how does the traveller himself become the Other to detach from a Eurocentric way of thinking?

Motif Seven Writing and Reading: Within the narration, the creation of the text itself is a component in all three works. Writing is a way to live and survive, a way to remember and forget at the same time. In the travel narration, writing about writing is also a narratological method to say what cannot be said, to write what cannot be written. Reading is not only thematised indirectly and prefiguratively by intertextual references but is mentioned actively by the narrator as an action important to life.

Motif Eight Home: One might think that for people who travel most of their lives, home plays a secondary role. The meaning of home, however, unfolds during the journey. The importance of a place of reference, where all of the different lives lived while travelling can connect, grows throughout the journey. Home is a motive for movement; it may function as a port, which symbolises home and departure at the same time. Not only will the different types of home, like static or portable homes, be discussed in this chapter, but the questionable meaning of home in a globalised world will also be examined.

Motif Nine Religion and Spirituality: The travellers continuously include religious references, most but not all of them referring to the Bible, although they also try to connect different religions of the world. They visit numerous holy sites and experience the sacrum, or the world's and the individual's path in the world created and led by something more powerful than human hands.

Motif Ten Journey: It is not the goal but the path itself, with its unforgettable moments full of all kinds of emotion, that makes the journey an indispensable life experience for the travellers. That is why the journey can be a representation of life. The departure is seen separately as a climax of the journey; it not only includes the beginning of a new life (a birth) but also a death (the end of an episode). The journey is usually a one-way narration. The return is either not mentioned at all or described very briefly and insignificantly.

These ten motifs are also found in Wilhelm Schmid's research on *ars vivendi*. Therefore, they not only serve as a suitable framework for comparing travel narrations with each other, they also present themselves and their appearance to the

reader in the context of *ars vivendi* in travel literature and travel literature as *ars vivendi*. The three texts, which all discuss those motifs, are defined in the following as travel narrations. Instead of speaking about a report with a well-narrated story, the texts are treated as travel narrations to become more independent from their authors. By examining the travel narration with narratological methods and the ten motifs as returning aspects within the narration, one may find characteristics for a travel narration as a genre. This is not to fix and limit the text to a specific category but is simply one way of reading the text and gaining more from it than biographical coherence with the authors. The last chapter is named “Arrival – Pit stop”. As on the journey, the road is the aim. The conclusion will only briefly summarise the main results of the research and try to open ideas of how to examine these subjects further. Thus, even this journey is not more than a stage, waiting – like the end goal of the journey once it has been reached – for the next opportunity to depart:

Reisen ist Aufbrechen ohne Ziel, nur mit flüchtigem Blick umfängt man ein Dorf und ein Tal, und was man am meisten liebt, liebt man schon den Schmerz des Abschieds. Es gibt eine Art des Reisens: mit dem Baedeker in der Hand und dem fertigen Programm in der Tasche, da ist die Strecke zwischen der Kathedrale von Chartres und dem berühmten Seebad Biarritz nur eine lästige Unvermeidlichkeit, und man weiss, was einem die Unternehmung wert ist und was man von ihr erwarten darf. Aber der Zauber, unterwegs zu sein, das Geheimnis der Namen, die sich erst mit Inhalt und Leben füllen, das Wirklichkeitwerden eines Traums, das Entzücken an der Entdeckung! (Schwarzenbach, 2016:15).

It is this magic: the secrets of names, the power of the journey and how travelling, writing, and reading can contribute to a fulfilled life, which will be discussed in this work.

2 Preparation

*“Denn solche Reisen [...] verlangen
sorgfältige Vorbereitungen.”¹⁰
Annemarie Schwarzenbach*

To explore, to own, to colonise, to study, to work, to globalise, to escape, to travel, to go on holiday – the journey – and thus the traveller going on the journey – has many faces. Like every journey, every text needs preparation. That is why this dissertation’s path ahead begins with this chapter. For a better understanding of this upcoming investigation and its prefigurative connotations, it is useful to become familiar with the authors and texts and with the genre the reader of this thesis is confronted with as well as to have clear definitions of the major terms used, such as *ars vivendi*.

10 Schwarzenbach, 2000:97.

2.1 The Authors

The authors themselves have little influence on this research. Thus, there is no need to delve deeply into their biographies, which have already been discussed intensively.¹¹ Authors' biographies lead the reader to assume that their narrations are based on true occurrences; of course, this is highly likely, as we know that the authors were travellers and that they travelled the road they describe. For this reason, the reader easily falls into reading the text as a traveller's autobiography. Although the texts may be a reproduction of past experiences of the journey, examining the truth and accuracy of the narratives is not the aim of this research, making it undecidable what autobiographical aspects should be further explained in this preparation. The texts open new possibilities if the reader treats them instead as narrations with autodiegetic narrators. For those who are unfamiliar with the authors, the following lines give a brief and superficial summary of their lives as travellers and writers. If this were the end of the discussion, one could question the necessity of this segment and any information related to the authors, if it were of no interest from a narratological perspective. However, Nünning's model, which builds on Ricœur's concept of the 'circle of Mimesis' to describe the relation between literature and 'Lebenswissen', reveals that the author cannot be totally left out. He speaks about the three terms "Präfiguration", "Konfiguration" and "Refiguration" (Horatschek et al., 2008:92) in the context of the travel narration:

Um weder in den Fallstrick des kulturellen Determinismus noch des Kulturrelativismus zu geraten, stellt das dreigliedrige Konzept Paul Ricœurs der Präfiguration, Konfiguration und Refiguration eine wichtige Hilfestellung dar, die von Ansgar Nünning und sodann von Agai und Stephan Conermann für die narratologische Analyse von Reiseberichten angewendet wurde (Ansgar Nünning in: Kara, 2019:40).

It therefore appears necessary nevertheless to have a brief look, at least, at what prefigurative baggage the authors bring with them on their journey.

¹¹ See Georgiadou, 1998; Miermont, 2012 and Linsmayer, 2008. For the portrait of Bouvier see: Laut, 2008. For Ella Maillart see Weber, 2003.

2.1.1 Ella Maillart

Ella Maillart, born 1903 in Geneva, died 1997 in Chandolin, Switzerland, was the eldest of the three authors. Unlike Schwarzenbach and Bouvier, she did not grow up in a wealthy family and did not enjoy the financial security that they did. Before working as an author, journalist, and photographer, she was a passionate and professional sailor and skier and took several journeys by boat on the Mediterranean Sea. On Maillart's first journey in 1930, described in her first book, *Parmi la jeunesse russe* in 1932, she travelled to Russia on her own. The journey was followed by a journey to Turkestan, again on her own, after which she published *Des monts célestes aux sables rouges* two years later. On her third, longer journey, she was accompanied by the English writer and traveller Peter Fleming and published the book *Oasis Interdites* in 1937. *De Pékin au Cachemire – Une femme à travers l'Asie central en 1935*. Thus, Maillart is already a well experienced traveller when she begins the journey from Geneva to Kabul with Annemarie Schwarzenbach in 1939. It is her first time going on a journey by car, however, and the first time she is accompanied by another woman. After they arrived in Kabul, Maillart continued the journey to India alone, where she stayed for the next five years until the end of World War II in 1945. *The Cruel Way*, the book that describes the journey from Geneva to Kabul, was written in 1943, while she was in India, but was revised and published after Schwarzenbach's death in 1947. Maillart translated her own text into her mother tongue, French, under the title *La voie cruelle*. Before *The Cruel Way* appeared, she published three more books in English: *Gypsy Afloat* (1942), her autobiography *Cruises and Caravans* (1942), and *Ti-Puss* (1951). Another work of hers, a photo collection with written commentary called *The Land of the Sherpas*, speaks about the Sherpas of the Himalaya. The four books written in India were her last oeuvre. In 1945 she travelled back to Switzerland, where she settled in the village of Chandolin. From there she continued travelling to India for shorter periods as a travel guide. During her twenty years on the road between 1925 and 1945, she remained in close contact to her parents, especially to her mother. Their communication can be retraced from the letters they exchanged at that time, which have been edited by Anneliese Hollmann in the book *Cette réalité que j'ai pourchassée*. Maillart wrote letters in both French and English. In the preface, Olivier Bauer writes: "Pour beaucoup, elle est d'ailleurs bien plus 'périgrine' qu'écrivain. Et pourtant, en lisant attentivement ses missives, on se rend compte du travail élaboré d'écriture" (Hollmann, 2013:12). The latter part applies

not only to her letters but also to her travel books. Looking at Maillart's biography, one cannot deny that her narrations consist of her real-life experiences, and this dissertation does not aim to do so. However, the focus lies on the text, which is to be read and interpreted as a narration without trying to reconstruct an author's life, instead trying to figure out what the text itself can transmit. For this reason, although the majority may see the author as more of a traveller than a writer, distinctions between the travel writer and the writer who travels will not be made in this paper, as it is primarily the text that will be examined.

2.1.2 Annemarie Schwarzenbach

Born in Zürich in 1908, Annemarie Schwarzenbach grew up in a wealthy family. Before she became an author, journalist, and photographer, she earned her Ph.D. in history and worked as an archaeologist. Schwarzenbach distanced herself from her family in her young-adult life, as her parents drifted towards National Socialism. She became close friends with the twins Erika and Klaus Mann and exchanged numerous letters with them.¹²

Schwarzenbach was 25 years old on her first journey to the Middle East. She travelled to Iran four times, which was still called Persia during her first journeys in the 1930s. For Schwarzenbach, this country was not a short-term destination on a round trip as it was for other travellers in this period, for example Clärenore Stinnes, the first woman who drove around the world by car (Hertling, 2013:21). Schwarzenbach stayed and worked in Persia for a couple of months (Hertling, 2013:219). On her second trip to Persia, she met Claude Clarac, whom she married on her third journey to the Middle East. Thanks to this marriage, Schwarzenbach received diplomatic status, which facilitated her crossing of the border. She wrote two books about Iran during her lifetime directly after her journeys: *Winter in Vorderasien*¹³, published in 1934 and *Das glückliche Tal*¹⁴, published in 1940. The books *Bei diesem Regen*¹⁵, about the journey to Iran in 1934–1935, and

12 The letters have been edited by Uta Fleischmann in 2015 under the title: *Wir werden es schon zuwege bringen, das Leben: Annemarie Schwarzenbach an Erika und Klaus Mann. Briefe 1930–1942*. Wiesbaden, Springer VS. See also Fleischmann, 1993.

13 Title of the English translation: *Winter in the Near East – A Travel Diary*.

14 Title of the English translation: *The happy Valley*.

15 Title of the English translation: *Under this rain*.

*Tod in Persien*¹⁶, about the following journey in 1935/1936, appeared in the 1980s and 1990s after Schwarzenbach's death. These works were edited by Schwarzenbach-specialist, Roger Perret. He also edited the book *Alle Wege sind offen*¹⁷, which includes texts about the journey from Geneva to Kabul that this thesis will focus on. *Die vierzig Säulen der Erinnerung* is also a collection of texts from this specific trip with Ella Maillart, edited by Dominique Laure Miermont in 2008. The focus of these two works is mainly on the Afghanistan journey; in Schwarzenbach's case it not only includes a posthumous paratext, but the order of texts that make up *Alle Wege sind offen* and *Die vierzig Säulen der Erinnerung* was determined by the editors. They chose to order the texts chronologically, which is the most common order for travel narrations. The text will be treated independently from the author in this dissertation so that this "created" travel narration can offer answers to the research question, just as Maillart's and Bouvier's texts do. While the motifs of travel narrations and *ars vivendi* create the plot of the narration, the chronological structure of the single texts is not decisive. It must be said, though, that the book is defined as a travel narration, just like Maillart's and Bouvier's respective books, and only the connection of the individual texts creates the narration, which usually starts with the beginning of a journey and ends when a destination is reached. Rather atypically for the narration, Perret included two short chapters about returning home. It can only be assumed that Schwarzenbach would have published her texts as a travel narration about this last journey, had she not died only a few years later, especially taking into account that after each of her trips to Iran, she wrote a book. Besides the journeys to the Middle East, Schwarzenbach also travelled to the United States¹⁸ and to the African continent, which she wrote about in her book, *Das Wunder des Baums*. The work has been categorised as a novel and was published posthumously by Sofie Decock, Walter Fähnders, and Uta Schaffers in 2011. She wrote three more books in the span of her relatively short life that would not be considered travel narrations but still thematise the journey: *Freunde um Bernhard*, *Lyrische Novelle* and the biography *Lorenz Saladin*,

16 Title of the English translation: *Death in Persia*.

17 Title of the English translation: *All the Roads are open*.

18 Reports and photographs of this journey to the U.S.A. were collected and published in 1992 under the title *Jenseits von New York, Ausgewählte Reportagen, Feuilletons und Fotografien aus den USA 1936–1938*. Basel, Lenos Verlag.

Ein Leben für die Berge. Many works on and interpretations of Schwarzenbach's texts are traced back to her drug addictions, her homosexuality, and the complicated relationship she had with her mother.¹⁹ Mathilde Jegou writes following the author's portrait:

A. Schwarzenbach incarne la rebelle. Si elle est une image exemplaire de la femme combative mais brisée, son image de voyageusedésespérée ne fait pas rêver. À l'inverse, c'est en tant que voyageuse et incarnation de l'aventure qu'E. Maillart continue de faire des émules. [...] Les voyageuses comme Ella Maillart seront des exemples qui enchanteront sa génération, celle de ces jeunes gens qui après les dévastes de la seconde guerre mondiale veulent pour-tant rêver aux mêmes défis que leurs aîné(e)s (Jegou, 2008:42).

Schwarzenbach's travel narrations do have a certain heaviness, especially if one reads them with an understanding of the traveller's biographical background. Looking at the text from a narratological perspective and with Schmid's approach to *ars vivendi* in mind facilitates new findings, which, just like Maillart's text, enchant new generations, not with a narrow-minded perception of the world, but with visions of the world in all its facets.

2.1.3 Nicolas Bouvier

Nicolas Bouvier, born 1929 in Lancy and died 1998 in Geneva, went on his first long journey with his friend, the painter Thierry Vernet, from Geneva to Kabul. For Nicolas Bouvier, it was the first journey in this direction, the first long journey of his life. *L'Usage du monde* was written after this trip. The notes he took on that journey were lost;²⁰ thus, he had to rewrite the narration from memory while in Sri Lanka after his time in Japan, as he explains to Lichtenstein-Fall:

19 The life of the dying angel has aroused interest and besides biographies, two biographical novels appeared: Mazzucco, M. G. (2012) *Lei così amata*. Turin, Einaudi; Moeschler, V. (2000), *Annemarie Schwarzenbach ou Les fuites éperdues: roman d'une vie*. Lausanne, L'Age d'Homme; and Mathias Enard's protagonist in *Boussole* published in 2015 is looking for traces of her idol, Annemarie Schwarzenbach.

20 The narrator also recounts how he lost manuscript, which will be interpreted in chapter 4.7.

J'ai écrit une soixantaine de pages que j'ai perdues à Quetta, l'année suivante, et j'ai dû tout réécrire de mémoire deux ans plus tard à Ceylan. Donc, en fin de compte, au lieu d'avoir une histoire, j'en ai eu trois: j'ai écrit ce texte, je l'ai perdu, ensuite j'ai écrit comment je l'avais perdu et finalement je l'ai réécrit parce qu'une revue littéraire de Colombo me demandait un papier sur l'Azerbaïdjan. Au Japon, je n'ai pas eu beaucoup de temps pour penser à cette longue route parce que des journaux japonais m'ont demandé de longs papiers, de trente, quarante feuillets en m'envoyant en balade dans le pays (Bouvier, 2004:78).

Like most of Bouvier's work, it took him several years to finish and publish the book. *L'Usage du monde* was first published in 1963, ten years after he had begun the journey. Vernet and Bouvier parted ways in Kabul; Vernet flew to Sri Lanka straight away, which was still called Ceylon at that time, to meet his fiancée, whereas Bouvier continued the journey by car through India and finally to Sri Lanka as well, to meet up with his friend once more. He wrote about his time in Sri Lanka for over twenty years in his book, *Le Poisson-scorpion*. The journey continued from Sri Lanka and ended in Japan in late 1956. While *L'Usage du monde* is a very colourful book in which the journey needs to overcome different phases, *Le Poisson-scorpion* is a rather depressive, loaded book, its journey dominated by diseases. He recovers in Japan and stays there for an entire year. Bouvier is so impressed by the country that he even returns to Japan and dedicates two books to the country. The first is *Japon*, which he revises and publishes again in 1989 under the title *Le Vide et le plein*. The second book, which he entitles *Chronique japonaise*, describes three journeys to Japan: The first of these journeys took place in 1955–1956, the second with his wife and children in 1964, and the third in 1970.²¹ If this journey from Geneva to Japan is viewed as one journey lasting nearly four years, those four books describing this journey (*L'Usage du monde*, *Le Poisson-scorpion*, *Le Vide et le plein* and *Chronique japonaise*) mirror Oberg's four phases of culture shock: the honeymoon phase, the rejection, the recovery, and the adjustment.²²

21 See Jegou, 2008:45.

22 US-American anthropologist Kalvero Oberg first used the expression of culture shock and divided it into these four phases during a presentation in Rio de Janeiro on 3rd August 1953. He put it into writing in his paper "Cultural Shock – Adjustments to New Cultural Environments", published in 1960.

It has already been observed that Bouvier had a special interest in islands, which may explain his journey to Aran and Korea, after which he published *Journal d'Aran et d'autres lieux*, a book about the Aran islands, Korea, and Xi'an in China. Besides the travel narrations, Bouvier published photography and poetry about travelling in *Le dehors et le dedans*.

His numerous intertextual references may be rooted in his early connection to books. His father was Auguste Bouvier, the director of the university library in Geneva: “à dîner à la maison, il recevait, entre autres, Ian Fleming, Musil, Marguerite Yourcenar” (Ivan Farron, in: Bouvier, 1996c:15).

The three authors have not only been chosen as best practice examples for travel literature and *ars vivendi* but also to strengthen travel literature as a “genre [which] is heavily gendered” (Forsdick et al., 2006:42). On this road, two women lead the way, and their journey has inspired the two men, Nicolas Bouvier and his companion, Thierry Vernet, to follow their own paths. Nicolas Bouvier knew Ella Maillart, wrote several prefaces and comments on her books and was a great admirer of her personality and her works.²³

2.1.4 Research on Maillart, Schwarzenbach, and Bouvier

In 1999, a photographic exhibition of Maillart's, Schwarzenbach's and Bouvier's journey to Afghanistan was showcased in Zurich, Switzerland. During the following years, the exhibition travelled to seventeen different locations in Switzerland, Italy, France, and Germany. Consequently, Roger Perret edited the intermedial book *Bleu immortel – Unsterbliches Blau* four years later, in which he put a selection of pictures taken on the travel authors' journeys into context using fragments of their texts, translated into French or German.

Aside from the exhibition and essays by Roger Perret connecting Maillart, Schwarzenbach and Bouvier, there has been little academic research comparing the three Swiss authors. The most comprehensive and most recent study, *Le Corps à l'ouvrage*, was published by Mathilde Jegou in 2008. Jegou compares the representation of the body within the travel literature of Maillart, Schwarzenbach, Bouvier, and Lorenzo Pestelli. Common discussions and topics are addressed in Jegou's work, such as the Other, the Self, the journey and religion. However, Jegou

23 See Jegou, 2008:43 and Bouvier, 1996b:117–134.

stays focussed on the figure of the author, drawing from biographies, autobiographies, and letters. She speaks, for example, about “un art de raconter” (Jegou, 2008: 85), in which the question is primarily whether the authors are writers or travellers. Jegou discusses the accuracy of the texts as reports but shifts to an analysis of the narrator figure in other texts, such as *Das glückliche Tal* by Schwarzenbach, in which Jegou mainly interprets the encounter with death. Jegou’s work differs from this dissertation significantly, as she draws only few connections to *ars vivendi* or the narratological perspective. In her conclusion, she speaks about an art of extremes, a category from which she excludes the works of Ella Maillart:

Le voyage, et le voyage en Orient en particulier, leur apparaît comme un moment privilégié pour remettre le corps à l’ouvrage. Le récit de voyage est le témoignage concret, la preuve écrite que quelque chose de l’ordre du désir et du fantasme peut s’accomplir à condition d’accepter le défi d’aller jusqu’au bout. Le ‘contre-voyage’ est un art de l’extrême, une ‘connaissance par les gouffres’ disait H. Michaux; et A. Pasquali peut remarquer que c’est ‘comme si Pestelli prenait à la lettre la leçon de Michaux’, au dépend de sa propre santé physique et mentale. Il n’est pas le seul. Du physique ou psychologique, les textes font l’inventaire des dégâts. Seule exception dans ce tableau: Ella Maillart. [...] Rien, et pas même l’expérience ambivalente du voyage, ne la détourne de cet esprit manichéiste. Lorsqu’après quelques années sur les routes, son corps ne lui donne plus entière satisfaction, elle le supprime de l’équation. C’est la fin des voyages. Elle plonge alors dans l’hindouisme et travaille son mental. Étonnamment, cette conversion change très peu de choses à son raisonnement. Ses textes restent les mêmes, recensent des données, des résultats, avec beaucoup de pragmatisme, peu d’intellectualité. C’est une prose de l’évidence que celle d’E. Maillart (Jegou, 2008:495–496).

It is remarkably interesting to compare this more biographically loaded perspective (which is also mirrored in this quotation and may strongly influence one’s reading of the texts) to the following approach of the travel narration. Jegou’s work has nevertheless been an immensely helpful pattern for the research on this work.

Besides Jegou, Arzu Etensel Ildem, professor at the University of Ankara, wrote a short article, “Quatre Suisses en route vers l’Afghanistan”, comparing the rep-

resentation of women in Afghanistan in the works of Maillart, Schwarzenbach, Bouvier, and his friend, painter Thierry Vernet. In her conclusion, she mentions the importance of the authors' works regarding the contemporary political and economic situation: "Les voyageurs posent avec acuité la problématique de la modernisation et du progrès, et ils ne pensent pas que le développement résoudra les problèmes de l'Afghanistan" (Ildem, 2008). A conference at the University of Peloponnese in October 2015 titled "Voyage et Idéologie. Les politiques de la mobilité" proves that there are works concerning interdisciplinary research on travel literature and politics.

Scholarly interest in Schwarzenbach began with Roger Perret's new edited books published in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1998, a symposium of sixteen Schwarzenbach specialists met in Switzerland and published their articles in the book *Anne-marie Schwarzenbach – Autorin – Reisende – Fotografin*, edited by Elvira Willems. Behrang Samsami has investigated the motivation of European travelling to the Orient and its representation in the works of Hermann Hesse, Armin T. Wegner, and Annemarie Schwarzenbach. Samsami observes a lack of academic research on Schwarzenbach's book *Winter in Vorderasien – Tagebuch einer Reise*, with the exception of Teres Dällenbach's bachelor thesis *Wir reisen um uns selbst zu finden*, in which the author compares the book with Maillart's *Turkestan Solo* and *Die Südtore Arabiens* by Freya Stark.²⁴ Isabelle Yèn-Chi Chappuis published her master's thesis *Ella Maillart: de l'exotisme au voyage intérieur* in 2008. Chappuis' research focuses on Ella Maillart herself, her biography, and her attitude towards the journey and writing. She recognised the relation between the three Swiss authors but did not focus on a comparison. Sofie Decock and Uta Schaffers compare the two female travellers with another traveller of the early 20th century, Freya Stark.²⁵

The articles in these studies primarily address the genre debate by posing the problematic question of whether or not the text is autobiographical with regard to the division between literature and journalism and the inclusion of photography in the texts. Not only academic studies but also texts by the author published posthumously from the late 1980s until today show that there is a continued

24 See Samsami, 2011:219–220.

25 See Holdenried et al. 2017:65–79.

interest in Schwarzenbach and her literature.²⁶ The existence of further unpublished text material in Schwarzenbach's estate indicates that further editions will appear. Two documentaries and one film focusing on Schwarzenbach have been made in the 21st century,²⁷ and as recently as September 2020, another exhibition showing around 7,000 of Schwarzenbach's photographs called *Aufbruch ohne Ziel. Annemarie Schwarzenbach als Fotografin* opened in the exhibition hall *Paul Klee* in Bern. Most Schwarzenbach studies and further additions appeared in 2008, when Schwarzenbach would have been 100 years old. After these studies were published, she became a popular and widely discussed author in Belgium, Germany, Austria, Portugal, and Switzerland and is now one of the most discussed Swiss authors of the last century.²⁸

Nicolas Bouvier, who managed to arouse the interest of the public even during his lifetime, is also still a highlighted and talked-about author in Europe. Recently, in 2018, Bouvier became the topic of the revue "Roman 20–50 – Revue d'étude du roman des XXe et XXIe siècles", in which 18 articles focus on Bouvier's *L'Usage du monde*. The festival of travel literature "Étonnants Voyageurs" in Saint-Malo, which has taken place every year since 1990, awards a prize called "Le Prix Nico-

26 Again, Walter Fähnders has given an overview of the edited books after Schwarzenbach's death in: Fähnder and Rohlf's, 2008:312–313. After this publication in 2008, three more text editions appeared with French translations of chosen texts on the Afghan journey: Miermont, D. L. (ed) (2008), *Les Quarante Colonnes du souvenir – Die vierzig Säulen der Erinnerung*. Noville-sur-Mehaigne, Esperluète Editions; Fähnders, W. (eds) (2010), *Orientreisen – Reportagen aus der Fremde*. Berlin, edition ebersbach; and Perret, R. (ed) (2016b), *An den äussersten Flüssen des Paradieses. Porträt einer Reisenden*, Basel, Lenos Verlag.

27 In 2001 the documentary by Caroline Bonstein, *Annemarie Schwarzenbach – Schweizerin und Rebellin*, and the film based on the journey from Geneva to Kabul, *Die Reise nach Kafiristan*, which thematizes a homosexual relationship between the two women on the journey, as well as another documentary film, *Je suis Annemarie Schwarzenbach*, shown at the Berlinale in 2015.

28 See Carbone, 2010:21;25 and Obermüller, 2008:1.

There is a long list of academic research on Schwarzenbach, an overview has been given in: Fähnders, W. and Rohlf's, S. (2008): *Annemarie Schwarzenbach – Analysen und Erstdrucke*, Bielefeld, Aisthesis Verlag, pp. 338–342. In the same year, two more editions discussing Schwarzenbach and her texts appeared and another one in 2010: Decock, S. and Schaffers, U. *Inside out*, Bielefeld, Aisthesis Verlag; Carbone, M. (2010), *Annemarie Schwarzenbach – Werk, Wirkung, Kontext*, Bielefeld, Aisthesis Verlag, and Decock, S. (2010), *Papierfünfchen auf einer imaginären Weltkarte – Mythische Topo- und Tempografien in den Asien- und Afrikaschriften Annemarie Schwarzenbachs*. Bielefeld, Aisthesis Verlag.

las Bouvier” to the best récit de voyage as an homage to the travel writer. Both the photographs he took and the music he heard on the journey are contextualised in his texts and manuscripts in the book *L'Oreille du voyageur – Nicolas Bouvier de Genève à Tokyo*, published in 2008.

Ella Maillart is often overshadowed by her travel companions Schwarzenbach and Fleming. Published in 2006, Sara Steinert Borella's book *The Travel Narratives of Ella Maillart* focuses on Maillart's literature primarily from the biographical perspective. However, several articles that discuss Maillart among other travel writers show a growing interest in the author.²⁹ In the past, her texts have been reduced to a more reportage-type character than Schwarzenbach's or Bouvier's:

Maillart – like the oceanographer, Anita Conti, lionized at the Saint Malo festival in the final year of her life – is granted an ambiguous status somewhere between doyenne of the present movement and anachronistic remnant of a tradition of eccentric Victorian lady travellers (Forsdick et al., 2006:42).

The impression of the “Victorian lady traveller”, which has a certain negatively charged undertone, should be quickly refuted if one is familiar with Maillart's literature. This image may have been aroused by the journey made with Peter Fleming or from pictures shot on the journey, but it does not reflect the text of *The Cruel Way*. While *L'Usage du monde* is called a: “livre de grâce et de sagesse” (Jaton, 2011:32), Schwarzenbach's work is restricted to the pain and suffering of the protagonist (or the author, as many researchers do not differentiate between the two of them³⁰), and Maillart's texts:

29 Recently, in 2019, the TV channel 3Sat streamed a documentary on Ella Maillart called *Die außergewöhnlichen Reisen von Ella Maillart* by Raphaël Blanc. See also Gorshenina, S. (2003), *Explorateurs en Asie centrale: voyageurs et aventuriers de Marco Polo à Ella Maillart*. Geneva, Olizane Eds; and several articles, such as: Maley, W. (2013), “Afghanistan as a cultural crossroads: Lessons from the writings of Ella Maillart, Annemarie Schwarzenbach and Nancy Hatch Dupree”. In: *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 44, pp. 215–230; and Schaffers, U. and Decock, S. (2017) “... such are the joys of travelling when you do not speak the language of the country you are passing through: Zugänge zur anderen Kultur in Reisetexten von Frauen der 1930er Jahre”. In: Holdenried, M. (2017), *Reiseliteratur der Moderne und Postmoderne*. Berlin, Erich Schmidt Verlag.

30 See Georgiadou, 1998.

[...] restent les mêmes, recensent des données, des résultats, avec beaucoup de pragmatisme, peu d'intellectualité. C'est une prose de l'évidence que celle d'E. Maillart ou, comme le résume O. Bauer: 'De ses voyages, Ella Maillart tire les récits d'une réalité, non une œuvre' (Jegou, 2008:496).

This dissertation aims to contribute to the travel discourse and to offer new perspectives on the three authors' work apart from their biographical characters. Thanks to translations in different European languages (Spanish, Polish, Dutch, Czech and Croatian), the books of Maillart, Schwarzenbach and Bouvier are also accessible to the non-English/French/German speaking public.

2.2 The Motivation to go on a Life's Journey

*“Mais c'est le propre des longs voyages
que d'en ramener tout autre chose
que ce qu'on y allait chercher”³¹
Nicolas Bouvier*

Dennis Porter described Baudelaire's motivation to go on a journey as a “promise of happiness” (Hanne, 1993:64) – a promise that cannot easily be accomplished by the journey, although *ars vivendi* still comes close to something that could be defined as happiness, namely the satisfaction of having gained numerous and various experiences. Motivation is a factor before every journey, but certainly, the motivation of the first journey is different than the motivation of the second, third or thirty-fourth journey. The authors and travellers turned their backs on their prosperous lives in Switzerland, perhaps in search of extremes, a nomadic life, or an escape from a world of consumption. They probably also left to see things with their own eyes, just like Humboldt strove to draw from multiple disciplines to create his own idea of the world:

31 Bouvier, 1991:77.

Humboldt wollte nicht vom Standpunkt einer ‘eigenen’ Einzeldisziplin aus dem Austausch mit anderen Disziplinen und deren Vertretern suchen, sondern sich aus der Kenntnis möglichst vieler Disziplinen ein eigenes Bild, eine eigene Anschauung von der belebten wie der unbelebten Welt machen (Ette, 2004:30).

Maillart, Bouvier and Schwarzenbach wanted to see, to get to know multiple countries and cultures and by getting to know the other,³² get to know themselves: “J’étais parti pour rencontrer des gens” (Bouvier, 2004:71), here Bouvier mentions a motif previously seen in Schwarzenbach’s and Maillart’s motivations:

Gemeinsam mit Ella Maillart dagegen, deren Art zu reisen immer ein tiefes Eintauchen in die jeweilige Welt war, öffnet sie sich dem Orient auf ganz andere Art und Weise, was nicht zuletzt an der Natur dieses Unternehmens liegt, denn beide Frauen wollen den Kontakt mit der afghanischen Bevölkerung auf der Suche nach einer ursprünglichen Lebensweise und einer Freiheit, die es in Europa nicht mehr gibt (Georgiadou, 1998:192).

They already understood what Ette describes about convivence: “Ohne die Einführung des Sinnlichen, der Lust, gerade in die Diskurse der Geistes- und Kulturwissenschaften ist ein solches Zusammenleben in Differenz weder möglich noch vermittelbar” (Ette, 2004:147). This desire is experienced on the journey by learning every day: “Wissen ist mit Genuß, mit Lust verbunden” (Ette, 2004:53), but also by experiencing the places visited with all five senses. They are not travelling for economic benefits. Bouvier is working on the road to finance the journey, not only as a teacher or writer but also as a photographer.³³ Maillart lives off of her writing, and Schwarzenbach has a comfortable financial background but also earns additional money writing newspaper articles.³⁴ Jatou names multiple reasons for Bouvier to depart:

32 See Guissard, 1997:5: “La soif de comprendre l’autre, le refus de l’exotisme, si souvent – et d’ailleurs avec excès – suspecté chez Pierre Loti, sont manifestes chez Ella Maillart”.

33 See Jegou, 2008:483.

34 The numerous published articles are listed in Fähnders and Rohlf, 2008:315–335.

Ses raisons de voyager sont multiples [...]. A l'enfermement bourgeois, protestant et genevois s'ajoute un sentiment plus vague de clausturation psychologique provoqué chez beaucoup des jeunes gens de sa génération par la Seconde Guerre mondiale, qui avait verrouillé hermétiquement les frontières. Mais ce qui pousse avant tout le futur écrivain sur les routes, c'est une curiosité intellectuelle sans limites, une soif de voir et de savoir qui l'habitait depuis son enfance, et enfin la conviction intime et essentielle qu'au fond 'on voyage se passe de motifs' (Jaton, 2011:29).

Pasquali also refers to this 'curiosité intellectuelle': "Ce qui se met en place chez Bouvier est une véritable éducation, avec sortie de soi et abandon au monde qui en saurait davantage sur la personne que le voyageur lui-même" (Pasquali, 1996: 71). The ten motifs of *ars vivendi* will show what this curiosity can contribute to.

2.2.1 The Geneva–Kabul Route

Susan Zerwinsky reflected on the image of Afghanistan in Europe during the first half of the 20th century in her article "...am Ende der Welt' – Literarische und mediale Imaginationen im Werk von Annemarie Schwarzenbach":

Mit der ersten glanzvollen Europareise des afghanischen Königs Amanullah und seiner Frau Soraya 1928 in die europäischen Metropolen Rom, Berlin, Paris und London wurde Afghanistan dann endgültig einer breiten Bevölkerung bekannt. Das Land am Hindukusch mit seinem prachtvollen orientalischen Herrscherpaar war plötzlich en vogue (Carbone, 2010:211).

En vogue, too, because travellers hoped to find a country that had not previously been colonised by the West. It was also appealing in its difference and 'wildness', which was perceived positively from the German perspective and associated with freedom and originality.³⁵ Maillart let her narrator experience such a feeling, and she reminds the reader in her narration that Afghanistan had barely been colonised by Western countries and that she hopes to discover the values of people

35 See Carbone, 2010:212.

living in a completely different system. The idea behind travelling through Iran and Afghanistan was to better understand Europe by finding its routes but also to free oneself from Eurocentrism: “Le choix de sa destination implique entre les lignes – et parfois même explicitement – un refus serein de l’eurocentrisme et du judéo-christianisme dominant dans notre culture” (Jaton, 2011:28). The two women shared this attitude: “Denn darin, daß Europa und seine Zivilisation keinerlei Zukunft mehr zu bieten hatten, waren sich beide Frauen einig” (Georgiadou, 1998:189). This does not mean a radical turn against their home continent:

il ne suppose aucunement une opposition radicale à un Occident soi-disant corrompu et décadent. [...] mais là tentative constante de récupérer ce que chaque culture peut offrir de positif. Dans le cas de l’Occident, [...] c’est une musique sublime qu’aucun autre endroit de la planète n’a pu faire connaître à l’humanité. Nicolas Bouvier n’est pas de ceux qui ont un intérêt exclusif pour les cultures étrangères et ignorent la leur: au contraire, il consacrera à la réalité historique, culturelle et artisanale de son pays de nombreux textes à la fois chaleureux et très informés (Jaton, 2011:28).³⁶

A Europe in times of war and a Europe after World War II, when Bouvier followed their road a decade later and, according to him, shared the same historical ambition: “Pour moi, il y avait la grand-mère, qui était l’Asie, la mère, l’Europe et la fille, l’Amérique. [...] Il y a une chronologie de la connaissance et il faut commencer par le plus ancien” (Bouvier, 2004:72–73). The metaphorical connection to generations of a family not only tightly fuses the continents of the world, but implies a hierarchical order of importance and the respect from the “oldest” and its history and the “youngest” and its upcoming future.

36 The interview with Irène Lichtenstein-Fall reveals Bouvier’s inspiration of an earlier journey to the Balkans in which the music he got in touch with on the road fascinated him in particular. See Bouvier, 2004:67–69; and in the interview presented in *L’Oreille du voyageur – Nicolas Bouvier de Genève à Tokyo*, Bouvier speaks about this passion for Balkan music as well.

While looking for open roads on which to get far away from Europe, it is interesting that Schwarzenbach names Afghanistan the “Switzerland of Asia”³⁷ in one of her articles written on the journey and published in the *Züricher Illustrierte*³⁸. This comparison to Switzerland can stand for a geographical and political parallel, as Barbara Stempel examined: “Beide Länder liegen, abgeschottet von einem Zugang zum Meer und durch hohe Gebirgsketten gesichert, im Zentrum eines Kontinents. [...] Afghanistan (und England) fürchten einen russischen Einfall. [...] In der Schweiz rechnete man täglich mit dem Einmarsch deutscher Truppen” (Carbone, 2008:269–273). But the numerous comparisons with places in Switzerland³⁹ could also stand for a symbolic search for home on the journey. The quest of finding or being at home while on a journey appears contradictory at first glance, but it carries significant weight and is an *ars vivendi* motif, as discussed in the main chapter.

Bouvier had been inspired by the two women's route. “J'ai rencontré Ella Maillart en 1952 pour lui demander des avis sur la route Genève-Madras qu'elle avait faite à deux reprises et que nous comptons, un ami et moi, emprunter” (Bouvier and Maillart, 1991:7), but changes the itinerary in Turkey by travelling via Ankara instead of via the sea-route and by entering Afghanistan from the South: “C'est à Téhéran que nos itinéraire ont divergé: la et Anne-Marie était entré en Afghanistan par le nord et Hérat; nous avons pris la route sud par Zahidan et les oasis du Balouchistan” (Bouvier and Maillart, 1991:124–126).

The journey to Afghanistan also fits the different way travellers and authors thought in the 20th century, for example Henri Michaux, who Bouvier refers to several times in his oeuvre, as Pasquali has previously summarised:

37 So does Maillart in *The Cruel Way*: Maillart's narrator compares Afghanistan to the Asian Switzerland, to her country of origin: “You've come to a country that has never been subjugated – neither by Alexander the Great nor by Timur the Lame, neither by Nadir nor by John Bull. It is the Switzerland of Asia, a buffer-state without colonies or access to the sea, a country whose great hills shelter five races speaking three totally different languages, a country of simple hillmen and well-bred citizens...”, see Maillart, 2013:117.

38 *Züricher Illustrierte*, Nr. 11, 15.3.1940 pp. 284–285.

39 See Carbone, 2010:259: “zahlreiche Ähnlichkeiten und Vergleiche mit heimischen oder vertrauten Orten oder Landschaften”.

Plus tard, au tournant du XXe siècle, une conscience occidentale à l'optimisme épuisé prend acte de la domestication de la planète, qui n'est plus à découvrir et à explorer, mais à partager. Face à un présent inacceptable et un avenir incertain, les textes de Segalen, Gide, Leiris, Michaux, ou Lévi-Strauss plus tard, déplacent leur attention vers diverses formes de l'origine, insituables historiquement. S'en suit la remise en question radicale, non seulement de l'ethnocentrisme européen, colonisateur et réducteur, mais aussi de la conscience individuelle tiraillée entre 'centre et absence' (Pasquali, 1996:69).

The problem regarding the European-created Orient cannot be left out, of course, when three Swiss travel authors write travel narrations on the road to Afghanistan while in the past, colonies were created out of travellers' tales, as Said says:

For even as Europe moved itself outwards, its sense of cultural strength was fortified. From travellers' tales, and not only from great institutions like the various India companies, colonies were created and ethnocentric perspectives secured (Said, 2003:117),

and travel literature strengthened the Orientalist discourse:

[...] imaginative and travel literature which strengthened the divisions established by Orientalists between the various geographical, temporal and racial departments of the Orient. Such neglect would be incorrect, since for the Islamic Orient this literature is especially rich and makes a significant contribution to building the Orientalist discourse. It includes work by Goethe, Hugo, Lamartine, Chateaubriand, Kinglake, Nerval, Flaubert, Lane, Burton, Scott, Byron, Vigny, Disraeli, George Eliot, Gautier. Later, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, we could add Doughty, Barres, Loti, T. E. Lawrence, Forster (Said, 2003:99).

Said, of course, opened up a very important discourse here that was both highly influential and heavily criticised, but travel literature can also be viewed from another side: outside of the colonial or postcolonial context, namely, to help to find solutions to overcome this way of thinking, to mobilise people to experience

the world with all their senses and to contribute to a coexistence, a convivence on the planet, as this work intends to do.

2.2.2 The Traveller: A Figure in Between

People have always been on the move for a number of reasons (nomadism, tourism, refuge, exile, migration, study or work, partnership) and with various purposes: to feel safe, to go sightseeing or on adventures, to colonise, to expand, to conquer, to get out of a routine, to relax, to gain experiences or knowledge. The reason for Maillart's and Schwarzenbach's journey to Afghanistan in 1939 and 1940 could easily be seen as refuge from Europe shortly before the start of World War II, which surely did play a role in the case of the two women. However, the three travel authors' main purpose can be described in a few words using the title of Bouvier's most famous book and the most discussed work in this dissertation, *L'Usage du monde* – to get to know the world, to learn from it, to see the world as one, to participate in exchange within this world. These reasons, which are simultaneously purposes, distinguish the traveller from the tourist, whereas the tourist, according to MacCannell's third edition of *The Tourist*, may also contribute to a convivence:

If the tourist simply collects experiences of difference (different peoples different places etc), he will emerge as a miniature clone of the old Western philosophical Subject, thinking itself unified, central, in control, universal, etc., mastering otherness and profiting from it. But if the various attractions force themselves on consciousness as obstacles and barriers between tourist and other, that is, as objects of analysis, if the deconstruction of the attraction is the same as the reconstruction of authentic otherness (another person, another culture, another epoch) as having an intelligence that is not our intelligence, then tourism might contribute to the establishment of a utopia of difference (MacCannell, 1999:xxi).

In the use of the two words as synonyms “a good tourist (some would say traveller)” (MacCannell, 1999:xii), the tourist and the traveller already become close. Even from Maillart's and Bouvier's biographies, this can be expected, as both authors went on to work as leaders of tourist groups in their old age after their long journeys, Maillart mainly in India and Bouvier in Japan. They had, however,

undergone an exceedingly long training period: training in how to be a traveller. Daniel J. Boorstin speaks about the lost art of travelling in his book *The Image or What Happened to the American Dream?* when he writes about the traveller becoming a tourist:

What is remarkable, on reflection, is not that our foreign travel has increased so much. But rather that all this travel has made so little difference in our thinking and feeling. Our travels have not, it seems, made us noticeably more cosmopolitan or more understanding of other peoples. The explanation is not that Americans are any more obtuse or uneducable than they used to be. Rather, the travel experience itself has been transformed. Many Americans now 'travel' yet few are travelers in the old sense of the word (Boorstin, 1961:79).

His further etymological discourse briefly describes the most significant distinction between the traveller and the tourist:

Formerly travel required long planning, large expense, and great investments of time. It involved risks to health or even to life. The traveler was active. Now became passive. Instead of an athletic exercise, travel became a spectator sport. This change can be described in a word. It was the decline of the traveler and the rise of the tourist. There is a wonderful, but neglected, precision in these words. The old English noun 'travel' (in the sense of a journey) was originally the same word as 'travail' (meaning 'trouble,' 'work,' or 'torment'). And the word 'travail,' in turn, seems to have been derived, through the French, from a popular Latin or Common Romanic word *trepalium*, which meant a three staked instrument of torture. The journey – to 'travail,' or (later) to travel – then was to do something laborious or troublesome. The traveler was an active man at work. [...] Significantly, too, the word 'tour' in 'tourist' was derived by back-formation from the Latin *tornus*, which in turn came from the Greek word for a tool describing a circle. The traveler, then, was working at something; the tourist was a pleasure-seeker. The traveler was active; he went strenuously in search of people, of adventure, of experience. The tourist is passive; he expects interesting things to happen to him (Boorstin, 1961: 84–85).

This short fragment explains from an etymological point of view that the traveller and the tourist actually have little in common. In practice, the association of free time with sunbathing at hotel pools, flying from one destination to another or 24-hour-sightseeing may apply to the imaginations of some tourists, but not to that of a traveller.

Who is the traveller?

This becomes clear from reading the travel narrations of Maillart, Schwarzenbach or Bouvier.

Even if each of them made the voluntary decision to go on a lifelong journey, that journey is partially arduous, sometimes to the point of torture. The efforts they go to and the troubles they encounter during their journeys imply that the reader is dealing with “real” travellers of the “ancient” kind. Furthermore, this chapter will introduce not “one-time” travellers but three travellers who were – using Sabine Boomer’s expression – *permanent* travellers, or travellers who are continuously on the road. This definition is already much more distant from that of the tourist and more closely linked to the nomad. What, then, distinguishes the permanent traveller from a nomad?

The narrator of a travel narration is usually a writer and a traveller. While the writer is described in brief as an author of prose and journalistic articles who puts his or her experiences from the road onto paper and struggles with his or her occupation at times, the figure of the traveller requires further explanation. The traveller is stalked by the tourist and aims to become a nomad. Catherine Mee noted that “the travel in travel writing is closer to tourism than to immigration” (Mee, 2014:60) and discusses a third option, the immigrant. But Mee sees the traveller as more related to tourism and argues that:

Despite their antitourist rhetoric, travellers use the same facilities as tourists, the same restaurants and hotels – commercial establishments managed by the hospitality industry. As a result, their travel experiences are subject to the same limitations as those of tourists (Mee, 2014:60).

Mee’s statement is surprising; especially as her corpus includes the works of Bouvier, whose traveller in *L’Usage du monde* spent nights in prison, not because he

was arrested, but because it was offered to him as a “hotel replacement”. The same traveller worked as a French language teacher and a journalist and earned money by painting the walls of a bar. Surely the traveller also falls back on touristic travel methods, but he should not be categorised under this term, as travelling from a travel author’s perspective is more of an occupation without holiday breaks than an everlasting holiday.

It is conspicuous that the writers’ lives are often described as nomadism: “et continuer sa vie de nomade au Japon” (Hassanpour, 2016:5). Bouvier, Maillart and Schwarzenbach do indeed mention the life of nomads, which is admired by the travellers in their narrations. It is the traveller who wants to break down the social order derived from the end of nomadism: “Mit dem Ende des Nomadentums ist die gesellschaftliche Ordnung auf der Basis festen Eigentums hergestellt” (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2006:20). A particularly good example of the traveller’s attitude can be seen in the texts of the Italian travel writer Tiziano Terzani:

Perché ovviamente tu non sei il tuo nome, tu non sei la tua professione, non sei la casetta al mare che possiedi. E se impari a morire vivendo, come hanno ben insegnato i saggi del passato – i sufi, i greci, i nostri amati rishi dell’Himalaya – allora ti abitui a non riconoscerti in queste cose, a riconoscerne il valore estremamente limitato, transitorio, ridicolo, impermanente. Se la casa che ti sei comperato al mare un giorno – vrumm! viene portata via dalla marea; [...] allora capisci che non è possibile che tu sia quelle cose che scompaiono così semplicemente. E se, vivendo, incominci a capire che non sei quelle cose, allora piano piano te ne stacchi, le abbandoni (Terzani, 2006:12–13).

It is thus the spirit of the nomad that the traveller shares or that he or she longs for. Still, there is also a significant difference between the traveller and the nomad. Joon mentions one of the crucial points, the journey itself, in the definition of a traveller:

They say that ‘life is a journey,’ or ‘the world is an inn and life is a traveler.’ Traveling means leaving home more often than returning. A traveler is someone who has left his own place. Therefore, a traveler is a stranger. A traveler has not only left behind his family, house, or work. He has left behind all daily routines and an unfamiliar world, a traveler turns into a marginal man seeking

the path to self-discovery to rebuild himself. [...] Traveling that used to be a means of life has now become a goal of life (Joon, 2006:11–12).

While for the traveller, to move is a goal of life, for the nomad it is a necessity. The traveller leaves home, the nomad has no static home. Although Bouvier, Maillart and Schwarzenbach are all leaving their homes, they still have their houses in Switzerland, which they can and do return to. It is true that they leave behind their families, friends, and work, but they are not leaving those things behind for good; there is always the option to return, although as another person, and they do indeed regularly come back to their houses in Switzerland.⁴⁰ It is also interesting to note that all three authors died in the respective regions where they grew up. While Schwarzenbach's sudden death in a bike accident in the Engadin is still contested, Maillart and Bouvier chose to settle in their houses in Switzerland,⁴¹ where they both lived until their deaths. Nevertheless, nomads are present in travel reports and viewed as role models by the traveller, not at least because the journey carries a specific myth that awakens a nomadic desire in modern times:

Diese Dialektik der Moderne zeitigt einen spezifischen Mythos des Reisens, der sich auf die in der westlichen Hemisphäre etablierten Vorstellungen vom Reisen zurückführen lässt und sich neuerdings im Phantasma eines unendlichen, gleichsam nomadischen Unterwegsseins artikuliert (Boomers, 2004: 54).

In those parts of the narrations where the narrator speaks about nomads, one can find a few of the *ars vivendi* motifs, for example, freedom: “Ces nomades, dans *L'Usage du monde*, sont incontestablement une *force* entraînante, une métaphore du voyage et de la liberté dans laquelle l'écrivain-voyageur se projette tout en revendiquant son propre désir d'altérité” (Moussa, 2003:12); time and a human

40 See Ivan Farron in: Bouvier, 1996:18.

41 It is also interesting that Bouvier mentions Maillart's house in the book *Voyage vers le réel*, dedicated to Maillart on her 80th birthday. See Lombard, 1983:19: “Plus de quinze ans après être partie à sa recherche, Ella Maillart a trouvé sa ‘Vallée de la Lune’ en 1946 sur le flanc est du Val d'Anniviers et son Tibet au village de Chandolin”.

being's basic needs: "die Nomaden dieser Gegend sind meistens arm. Es ist fast unbegreiflich, wie sie in solcher Abgeschlossenheit existieren können. Doch sie sind anspruchlos, und Entbehrungen bedeuten ihnen nichts; sie haben ja Zeit" (Schwarzenbach, 2016:65); border crossings: "Du suchst Uebergänge, [...] einen vielleicht von ortskundigen Nomaden benutzten Pass" (Schwarzenbach, 2008: 145). These motifs are thus part of this myth of travelling. Besides immigration, tourism, and nomadism, pilgrimage is also part of a journey that includes a religious motif. The travel narrations include many spiritual places and lines of questioning.

Bouvier's narrator describes the status of the traveller as protected by hospitality: "Les voyageurs, c'est différent; l'hospitalité les protège, et ils divertissent" (Bouvier, 2014:186). This does not count, though, when the traveller is recognised by the locals as a tourist:

"L'étranger, qu'il soit d'Osaka, de Tokyo ou de Denver (USA), y est considéré comme un mal nécessaire: cheptel touristique que l'on fait paître en hâte avant de le diriger par troupeaux sur la gare du départ" (Bouvier, 1991:170).

From the perspective of the narrators, the figure of the traveller – different from the figure of the writer – is not questioned by the people the autodiegetic narrators meet on their road, whereas the narrators sometimes do question their own roles as travellers.⁴²

The travel narrations of Maillart, Bouvier and Schwarzenbach reveal that the traveller is a tourist, nomad, migrant, and pilgrim all at once. Just as the genre itself, the traveller plays a wide variety of roles. Apart from the motifs of their journey, their modes of movement, their attitudes, their time on the road and the sometimes long periods they stayed in one place all are factors that create a new type of traveller:

What emerges from these two aspects of Bouvier's work – *lenteur* and *panne* – is a new type of traveller (perhaps tentatively to be identified as 'post-Orientalist') who avoids both the Romantic or colonist overtones inherent in the journeys of the 'sovereign individual' and the imperialist nostalgia of the anachronistic, bathetic, would-be Victorian adventurer (Topping, 2004:343).

42 See for example Schwarzenbach, 2000:66, Maillart, 2013:162 and 172 and Bouvier, 1996:105.

Klaus Mann, who spent many years in exile and who was a close friend of Schwarzenbach, may have had this new type of traveller in mind when he spoke of a cosmopolitan of instinct and need:

Wird aus diesem Kriege eine Welt entstehen, in der Menschen meiner Art leben und wirken können? Menschen meiner Art, Kosmopoliten aus Instinkt und Notwendigkeit, geistige Mittler, Vorläufer und Wegbegleiter einer universalen Zivilisation, werden entweder überall zu Hause sein oder nirgends. In einer Welt des gesicherten Friedens und der internationalen Zusammenarbeit wird man uns brauchen; in einer Welt des Chauvinismus, der Dummheit, der Gewalt gibt es keinen Platz, keine Funktion für uns. Wenn ich das Kommen einer solchen Welt für unvermeidlich hielte, ich folgte noch heute dem Beispiel des entmutigten Humanisten Stefan Zweig (Mann, 1993:604)

– a statement he did not leave unfulfilled. Here, travelling is also described as a necessity. The cosmopolitan – the nomad of the future – is not only questioning his position and affiliation in the world during times of war, but also attempting to determine the meaning of home or of being at home in a globalised world. Home is a topic the traveller must deal with constantly, which also makes it one of the indispensable motifs belonging to an *ars vivendi* of the travel narration. Given the importance of home within the travel narration, the traveller cannot be equated with the nomad, nor with the cosmopolitan or migrant. Instead of saying that cosmopolitans “werden entweder überall zu Hause sein oder nirgends” (Mann, 1993: 604), will be at home everywhere *or* nowhere, the travel narrations reveal the issue that the traveller is at home everywhere *and* nowhere.

2.2.3 Reading (-) Travel (-) Writing

“to travel [...] is to write [...]

*and to write is to travel”*⁴³

Michel Butor

Travelling and writing have been associated with one another since before Christ, as in, for example, probably the most famous example of all, Homer’s *The Odyssey*, but also in earlier literature. The traveller’s tale can be traced back to be “as old as fiction itself” (Hulme and Youngs, 2002:2). Michel Butor’s text *Travel and Writing* summarises the connection of the two verbs very well:

I have always felt the intense bond that exists between my travels and my writing; I travel in order to write – not only to find subject matter, topics or events [...] but because to travel, at least in a certain manner, is to write (first of all because to travel is to read), and to write is to travel (Butor, 1974:2).

Robin Magowan distinguishes travellers who write and writers who travel often.⁴⁴ For the writer, the journey may serve as inspiration, for the traveller, the journey evokes the need to communicate its events. Not only the influential journeys and great works of Christopher Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci, Marco Polo, Mandeville, or Alexander von Humboldt have proven this statement. Numerous blogs and online reports about individual backpacker trips or holidays express the need to put the journey on paper, the unavoidable connection of the two acts travelling and writing. No matter which action comes first, to travel and to write are interactions that evoke one another.

A possible reason for this connection between writing and travelling could be the absence of the known and the meeting with the unknown. According to Roland Barthes, “le langage naît de l’absence” (Barthes, 1977:22), absence evokes language, or writing. One can also find examples of this phenomenon in the writings of the three authors discussed in this work, e.g. Olivier Weber following the traces

43 Butor, 1974:2.

44 See Magowan, 2008:55.

of Ella Maillart, Mathias Enard's *Boussole*, in which the protagonist's great love is looking for traces of Annemarie Schwarzenbach, or the French author Ingrid Thobois, who travelled the same way as her idol, Nicolas Bouvier, and describes her development during the journey: "Les livres de Nicolas Bouvier m'ont fait partir en voyage. Le voyage puis le retour m'ont fait entrer en écriture" (Guyader, 2010:53) and "Je me croyais voyageuse. J'allais me découvrir écrivain" (Guyader, 2010:53). Balzac compared the writer with the traveller as follows: "D'ailleurs, l'auteur qui ne sait pas se résoudre à essuyer le feu de la critique ne doit pas plus se mettre à écrire qu'un voyageur ne doit se mettre en route en comptant sur un ciel toujours serein" (Balzac, 1976:29).

The journey is often seen as an allegory for freedom. This could be a second explanation for the connection between the two actions of travelling and writing. Stefan Zweig, who travelled voluntarily as an internationally recognised writer from Austria and as an exiled man during World War II, said: "Kunst wie Kultur kann nicht gedeihen ohne Freiheit" (Zweig, 2004:412). Freedom may be thus a fertilizer for producing texts, and it also belongs to one of the motifs that creates *ars vivendi*. Luigi Marfè has observed the connection very well in Bouvier's *L'Usage du monde*: "Il movimento nello spazio e quello sulla pagina sono i due modi attraverso i quali esprime la propria meraviglia per la bellezza del mondo e la propria ironia per la sua vanagloria" (Marfè, 2009:85). The beauty of the word ties into the concept of *ars vivendi* well. This beauty is not understood as an aesthetic masterpiece of an idealistic best practice model of a perfect life. It rather describes the *usage* of the world, getting to know the world in all its facets. The travel writer or the reader of travel literature becomes sensitised to having a different perception of the beauty of the world. The beauty is to experience and get to know, to see, feel, hear, and taste the world. Further on, Marfè paraphrases Bouvier: "Un viaggio senza scrittura – secondo Bouvier – è incomplete" (Marfè, 2009:86). Rather than merely being connected, writing and travelling seem to interact with each other and even depend on each other. While the journey according to Bouvier is only completed once it is written down, travel literature inevitably needs a journey, whether experienced or imagined. It is thus not surprising to discover that the narrator of travel narrations is a traveller who often thematises the need to write and the difficulties regarding this process. Inevitably, writing and travelling belong to the motifs of *ars vivendi*:

Writing became a possible place for the traveller who narrated as a form of privately auto-defining herself in the intimate space of immersion in writing that allowed her to come to be. A double journey, the transit to the East and her writing are ways of crossing the world by “creating” experience (Almarcegui, 2008:244).

Creating experience is how the travel narration is read in this dissertation. Instead of a reported experience of happenings on the journey, the text is examined as a created experience told to the reader. The result of this created experience, which is the travel narration on paper, is *ars vivendi*, per se. The basis of that experience is not only travelling and, following that line of reasoning, writing, but also reading: In his article about *ars vivendi* in Nietzsche’s oeuvre, Tobias Brücker concludes that: “Schreiben und lesen sind insofern nicht nur Grundmodi der Erkenntnis, sondern auch des Erlebens” (Brücker, 2014:211). Although in brackets, Michel Butor’s statement, “(first of all because to travel is to read), and to write is to travel” (Butor, 1974:2) cannot be left without comment. It introduces a third activity, *reading*, which remains one-sided in this fragment, even though it can interact in just the same way: ‘to travel is to read’ and ‘to read is to travel’.⁴⁵ In the case of travel literature, it is not only a metaphorical journey with and through books, (the writers themselves had a little library travelling with them), but a journey the reader can follow. Instead of replacing each other, these actions evoke one another – reading *made* them travel, etc. The travel narration – the three authors, with their numerous intertextual references and comments on reading as an act itself – will prove in this research that reading belongs to the basics of *ars vivendi*, the *Grundmodi*, as Brücker calls them. Reading creates a foundation of knowledge transmitted by books which, it should be emphasised once more, is no replacement for the other two actions, but is equally part of an *ars vivendi* represented in the travel narration.

45 See also Mikkonen, 2007:289: “Philippe Dubois has suggested that Butors analogy between reading (or writing) and travel creates in effect a metaphorical matrix in which general equivalences are assumed in a triangle of writing, travel and reading. Through the concept of travel, certain equivalences are also established between writing and reading – for the reason that both can be identified as travel.”

2.3 *Ars Vivendi* – The Term and its History

Ars vivendi (greek: *peri bíon téchne*, latin: *ars vitae*, *ars vivendi*) is a term from ancient Greek that can be found in sources such as Socrates and the Sophists as a synonym for philosophy,⁴⁶ or rather as one of philosophy's leading motifs for existing.⁴⁷ In his article “Das Leben als Kunstwerk – Versuch über Kunst und Lebenskunst und ihre Geschichte von der antiken Philosophie bis zur Performance Art”, Wilhelm Schmid gives a brief overview of the term as well as of its use and understanding during different époques, which in the 20th century led to a re-sumption of the romantic understanding of *ars vivendi* as fighting against modern rationalisation and seeing the subject and life itself as a part of art:

Der heimatlos gewordenen philosophischen Lebenskunst aber wird schließlich Asyl gewährt von den Künsten, den künstlerischen Avantgarde der Moderne des 20. Jahrhunderts. Dass die Lebenskunst bei ihnen heimisch werden kann, hat mindestens zwei Gründe: Zum einen nehmen sie, bewusst oder unbewusst, das Vorhaben der Romantik wieder auf, das Leben mit Kunst zu verknüpfen und sich mit dem romantischen Projekt einer Lebenskunst der Vereinnahmung des Lebens durch die moderne Rationalisierung entgegenzustellen. Zum anderen liegt es zweifellos in der Konsequenz des schwindenden Objektbezugs in den modernen Künsten, nicht mehr nur darauf zu verzichten, irgendwelche Natur ‘nachzuahmen’ und stattdessen Autonomie zu exerzieren und Subjektivität zum Ausdruck zu bringen, sondern nun das Subjekt und sein Leben selbst als Gegenstand der Kunst zu betrachten (Schmid, 1998b:4).

Ars vivendi becomes vivid again in the 20th century, and the fact that travel literature always has to be read in the context of the time of its formation already provides a first hint of the connection between literature and *ars vivendi*.

Different languages offer different translations and understandings of the Latin term *ars vivendi*. It is important to point out the difference between the ‘art of life’

46 See Wohlfarth, 2015:13.

47 See Schmid, 1998b:1.

(Schleiermacher) and ‘art of living’ (Novalis). The German term ‘Lebenskunst’ and the English expression ‘art of life’ describe the former, whereas the French ‘savoir vivre’ tends to focus on the latter. In the travel narration, both ‘the art of life’ as well as the ‘art of living’, and last but not least, the ‘art of survival’ are relevant, which the upcoming chapters will show. That is why the more flexible Latin term will be used throughout this thesis.

The idea of “travel literature as *ars vivendi*” follows Ottmar Ette’s *Literaturwissenschaft als Lebenswissenschaft*. This approach focuses on the part of *art* to point out the connection of life to the production of the text, which is found in the examples of travel literature that are about to be discussed. Knowledge plays an inevitable role, but speaking about *ars vivendi* does not exclude the knowledge of life, for it is already enclosed in the concept. According to Schmid, *ars vivendi* consists of the ability to live and the knowledge of life:

Kunst meint dabei ein Wissen und Können; ein Wissen, da die Kenntnis von Zusammenhängen – dessen, ‘was ist’ – die Voraussetzung zur Ausübung von Lebenskunst darstellt, und ein Können, da die Kunst in der Erschließung von Möglichkeiten und in der Anwendung von Techniken – sachkundig handeln zu können und dies auch wirklich zu tun – besteht. Das Wissen aber kann im Begriff des Könnens inbegriffen sein, und zwar auf verschiedenen Ebenen: 1. Auf einer kreativen, erfinderischen Ebene meint Können, den Horizont der Möglichkeiten zu eröffnen, ihn experimentell auszumessen. In der Tat muss ein Gestaltungspotential zuallererst geschaffen werden, sei es durch eine Idee, durch Vorstellungskraft, durch die Arbeit des Wissens oder durch die faktische Befreiung von beengenden Verhältnissen, in jedem Fall durch einen schöpferischen Akt, bei dem es darum geht, Möglichkeiten aufzufinden und zu erarbeiten, auch diejenigen Möglichkeiten, die es erlauben, mit Bedingungen zurechtzukommen, zu denen bis auf weiteres keine Alternative ausfindig zu machen ist (Schmid, 1998b:6).

It is possible to interpret these lines as the idea and the preparation of a journey. The travel authors plan to break out of the existing structure of their lives in Switzerland. They literally want to broaden their horizons from a geographical point of view, but also to get to know various people, cultures, and lifestyles. They want to liberate themselves from their daily lives. The possibilities mentioned here,

which may help them deal with inevitable conditions of life, can range from rules in society such as clothing, values, and daily routines to diseases and death.

2. Auf einer regelgeleiteten, technischen Ebene ist mit Können die Realisierung von Möglichkeiten gemeint. Dadurch wird das Potential aktualisiert, die Potenz wird zum Akt, und dies ist nicht möglich ohne 'Know-how', ohne praktisches und technisches Wissen-Wie und dessen Umsetzung. 'Ich kann das' bedeutet nun nicht mehr nur, über Möglichkeiten zu verfügen (was möglicherweise auch eine leere Behauptung sein könnte), sondern sie zu konkretisieren und mithilfe erlernter und eingeübter Methoden, Praktiken und Techniken eine Vorstellung oder Idee zu realisieren: Können als Kompetenz und Können als praktischer Vollzug (Schmid, 1998b:6–7).

This know-how turns from theory into practice during the departure. Ideas and plans for the journey are implemented at the moment of departure. Both sides of ability apply to the travel writer, such as the requirements for going on the journey, the knowledge of driving and automobile repair, knowing about the history of the destinations and the cultural habits practiced there, the languages spoken etc., as well as the ability to depart and take action.

3. Auf der Ebene der Ausgestaltung und Verfeinerung tritt das Können als kunstvolle Realisierung von Möglichkeiten in Erscheinung, 'gekonnt' im gebräuchlichen Sinne des Wortes. Die Voraussetzung dafür ist die vertiefte Kenntnis der Strukturen dessen, 'was ist', die gesteigerte Reflektiertheit und die große Vertrautheit mit allen Aspekten des jeweiligen Gegenstandsbereichs, die genaue Kenntnis selbst der filigranen Details, die ausserordentliche Fertigkeit in der Anwendung von Bearbeitungsmethoden (Schmid, 1998b:7).

This third meaning of ability, the artistic realization of the two preceding steps, is reflected in the journey and in writing:

Alle diese Momente schwingen mit im Begriff des Könnens und durchdringen das Leben, so wie es gelebt wird, mit Kunst: Können als Verfügung über ein Potential, als Aktualisierung im Akt des Vollzugs und schliesslich als ge-

konnte Umsetzung, die der Gestaltung die Finesse verleiht, die sie zum herausragenden Kunstwerk macht (Schmid, 1998b:7).

Schmid's summary of knowledge and ability can be read as the three main steps of the journey: idea, preparation, and implementation. Further on, he describes the subject's freedom of choice:

Entscheidend aber ist jeweils die Wahl, die das Subjekt der Kunst und Lebenskunst bewusst und reflektiert für sich selbst trifft: Dies zu machen und nicht jenes, in dieser Form und an diesem Ort, mit diesem Material und jenen Mitteln, ernsthaft oder ironisch, allein oder gemeinsam mit Anderen. Jede Kunst, so auch die Lebenskunst, ist eine Abfolge von Wahlakten: Die Kunst kann darin bestehen, eine bestehende Struktur zu durchbrechen und eine andere Ordnung der Dinge zu inaugurieren, gemäß einer frei gewählten Regel auch noch dort, wo eine bestehende Regel durchbrochen wird. Vieles wird dabei freilich nicht vom Subjekt geschaffen, sondern, unter etlichen Umformungen, anderen Zusammenhängen nur 'entliehen'. Von einem Geniesubjekt kann insofern die Rede sein, als es in jedem Fall um eine geniale, nämlich erfindnerische, gekonnte und eigenständige Tätigkeit, um ein Zeugen und Hervorbringen, ein Wachsen- und Werdenlassen (griechisch *gennān*) geht (Schmid, 1998b:7).

The traveller chooses the destination, methods of travel, the length of the journeys and his or her companions. The creative part may represent the writing process. The fruit of writing is the author's travel literature, visible to the public after publication. The described path turns the travel author and his or her journey into an artwork of life. If one looks at the text, the same paradigms can be found within the narrations; there are autodiegetic narrators who tell their stories as travellers and writers. Therefore, the act of writing and the finalisation of the travel book is not seen as a result of an author's personal *ars vivendi* in this research, rather the texts are treated as *ars vivendi* or as transmitters of *ars vivendi* to their readership. It is important to keep in mind that the dissertation is not about the respective authors' biographies, but rather about the autodiegetic narrator of each respective travel narration that can be traced back to the individual authors. By reading a travel narration, the reader is actively involved in the process of *ars vivendi* because

only the reader can ensure the transmission of information by gaining knowledge and ability from *ars vivendi*:

Sobald wir zu lesen beginnen, verlassen wir die gewohnte Welt und treten in ein anderes Leben ein. [...] Gleichsam beiläufig eignen wir uns neue Sichten an und gewinnen neue Möglichkeiten der Gestaltung unserer selbst und unseres Lebens. Das Lesen wird zum Instrument der Lebenskunst. Und es wird zu einer Heimkehr (Schmid, 2012:88).

The last word continues the metaphorical journey of *ars vivendi* by concluding the sentence with the return back “home”. The return is a part of the journey that is hardly present in the travel narration, but is still inevitable, because after any arrival, the journey needs to continue or be concluded by going home. This makes the reader indispensable to a conclusion of *ars vivendi*. If reading is an instrument of *ars vivendi*, then so are writing and, according to Michel Butor, travelling. Schmid’s *reading* can be exchanged, or rather, completed with *writing* and *travelling*:

Sobald wir zu lesen (schreiben und reisen) beginnen, verlassen wir die gewohnte Welt und treten in ein anderes Leben ein. [...] Das Lesen (Schreiben und Reisen) wird zum Instrument der Lebenskunst. Und es wird zu einer Heimkehr (Schmid, 2012:88).

Such an exchange could also be made in the following example:

Denn Literaten wie Lesern geht es in Wahrheit um eines, nämlich jeweils sich selbst. [...] Gestaltend werde ich gestaltet, durch das Fabrizieren fabriziere ich mich selbst. [...] Lesend (schreibend/reisend) gestaltet der Leser (Autor/Reisende) sich selbst. In beiden Fällen hat Literatur mit Lebenskunst zu tun, also mit der Gestaltung des Lebens und des eigenen Selbst, die letztlich auch zu einer Gestaltung des Lebens mit anderen und deren Selbst beiträgt (Horatschek et al., 2008:Prologue).

A life – writing – journey told to its readership, shaped by culture and nature, borders and freedom, time and space, the “other” and home, by life, writing and the journey itself: This is an *ars vivendi* in travel narration.

2.3.1 Research on *Ars Vivendi* and Literature

*“Im Mittelpunkt des Lebenswissens der Literatur
 und der Literaturwissenschaften stehen [...]
 Menschen, Sprache(n), Texte, Bewusstsein
 und Unbewusstes, Geschichte(n)
 und Metaphern, Erinnerungen
 und Gedächtnis, Kulturen, Sinn(stiftungen),
 Werte und Normen, Aufführungen, Lebensformen
 und Lebenskunst sowie Inszenierungen und Rituale,
 die das Leben erst lebenswert
 und reichhaltig erscheinen lassen”*
*Ansgar Nünning*⁴⁸

While *ars vivendi* is primarily discussed in psychological, philosophical, and cultural-historical studies,⁴⁹ the term *ars vivendi* has been put into a literary context, for example, in studies of Goethe’s works⁵⁰ or of British novels from the Victorian era to postmodernism.⁵¹ Foucault speaks about *ars vivendi* as a technique that needs to be trained.⁵² Sabine Boomers has commented on that, saying that writing is an important part of this training. She gives the example of the meaning of writing in Christian asceticism,⁵³ but even Bouvier himself speaks about this training, which he calls a training of disappearance, in which he beautifully combines travelling, writing and life: “pour moi quand l’écriture approche de ce qu’elle devrait être, elle ressemble comme une sœur au voyage, parce que comme lui, elle est un exercice de disparition” (Borer et al., 1992:44). Elmar Schenkel combines *ars vivendi* and literature in Chesterton’s works:

48 Horatschek et al., 2008:112.

49 See Lauster, 1983; Imhof, 1992; Schmid, 1998.

50 See also Wohlfarth, 2015.

51 See also Horatschek et al., 2008.

52 See Foucault, 1983:55: “This *techne tou biou*, this art of living, demands practice and training: *askesis*”.

53 See Boomers, 2004:46.

Die Offenheit zur Kommunikation, die jede Schöpfung ausmacht, ist aber zugleich ihre [Kunst] Begrenzung. Sie darf nicht in sich selbst versinken, sie muss Medium sein. Auch diese Einsicht aus der Kunst gerät zur Lebenskunst, wenn ihre psychologische Komponente erkannt und umgesetzt wird (Horatschek et al., 2008:247).

Schenkel opens an important discussion here, asserting that the limits of art and art as a transmitter of *ars vivendi* (and thus, the art in *ars vivendi*) can be interpreted as transmitters of life, just as the travel books functioning as works of art may function as transmitters of *ars vivendi*.

Konrad Gross examines *ars vivendi* in A. A. Milne's *Winne-The-Pooh* and refers here to Urs Thurnherr's article 'Philosophie und Lebenskunst': "Man kommt einer kindlichen *ars vivendi* vielleicht näher, wenn man Lebenskunst unter einer 'eudämonistischen' Perspektive sieht, die nicht sagt, 'wie wir leben *sollen*', sondern 'wie wir leben *können*'" (Horatschek et al., 2008:225). Those words lead to the next point, in which the research on *ars vivendi* and travel literature will be examined taking into consideration what Gross called "child-like" *ars vivendi*. The focus of the travel narration is on the concept of life in its art and beauty: the moment of happiness that has evoked the "aesthetics of the moment". As mentioned earlier, the beauty of life is not to be interpreted as beauty in a "perfect" way that follows a specific ideology, because,

Es geht nicht mehr um den Ausschluss des Widersprüchlichen aus dem Werk, das das Leben ist; es geht nicht primär ums Gelingen in einem vordergründigen Sinn, schon gar nicht um eine 'Vollendung'. Das Scheitern kann ein Bestandteil dieses Werkes sein. Es ist eine falsche Annahme zu glauben, mit der Gestaltung des Lebens und des Selbst müsse zwangsläufig ein Gelingen oder gar eine Perfektionierung beabsichtigt sein. Für die Kunst und Lebenskunst sind [...] Gelingen und Misslingen grundsätzlich gleichberechtigt (Schmid, 1998b:11).

An examination of the ten motifs demonstrates this strong connection and equalization of success and failure. Each one of them will show the interaction of the terms – that there is no *other* without the self, that there is no memory without forgetting, no home without homelessness, no sacred without the profane, no

awakening without departure, no life without death and vice versa. It will show that the open road is not equal to freedom, that development is not always progress, that without diversity there is no commonality and that borders are not there to just divide but also to be crossed. The dark side of the journey became popular no later than the publication Levi-Strauss' *Tristes Tropiques* and his critique of the journey and of globalisation. Enzensberger's anthology *Nie wieder* (made up exclusively of male authors) includes two texts by Nicolas Bouvier, among others, and reflects the two faces of the journey:

Der Titel der Anthologie, *Nie wieder*, hat allerdings einen doppelten Boden. Es handelt sich keineswegs um den 'perversen Reiz' von abschreckenden Horrorgeschichten, wie uns der Klappentext weismachen will, denn der Leser entdeckt hier einige der schönsten und vergnüglichsten neueren Texte über das Reisen [...]. Von da aus gesehen sind Realitätsbezug und Wahrheitsgehalt der Berichte intertextuelle Variablen, die es immer wieder erlauben, scheinbar unmittelbare Bilder zu ganz unterschiedlichen Zusammenhängen von einer paradiesischen bis zu einer total finsternen Welt auf eine Art und Weise zu ordnen, die das *Nie wieder* so schnell vergessen läßt wie das Versprechen eines neugierigen Kindes, das schon auf die nächste Gelegenheit wartet, wieder nach draußen zu entweichen (Opitz, 1997:29–30).

In terms of the historical connection between *ars vivendi* and travel writing, it is important to note that traveller and writer Michel de Montaigne rediscovered the term *ars vivendi*.⁵⁴ World traveller Georg Forster previously combined the two terms: "Georg Forster aber schlägt [...] einen theoretischen Kurs ein, der schließlich in den Ansichten vom Niederrhein dazu führt, den Reisebericht als Kunstform und den Reiseautor als Künstler zu etablieren" (Jost, 2005:117). Pasquali places the focus of travel literature on 'itinéraire': "Mais de fait, nous pouvons tenir tout récit de voyage pour l'inscription, la représentation et la configuration narrative d'un itinéraire et d'un guide. Chateaubriand le savait déjà, quand il donne pour titre à l'un de ses voyages *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem*" (Pasquali, 1994:6). The path can be seen as either the route itself but also as a life path. The

54 See Wohlfarth, 2015.

path that the traveller takes automatically has an impact on his life path; this results from the voluntary choice of the traveller's destination. Opitz summarises Posselt's *Apodemik* from 1795:

[...] 'die noch schlummernden Geistesfähigkeiten des Menschen' würden sich am besten durch Reisen entwickeln, und diese 'Art von Studium' könne 'durch Lesen selbst der besten Bücher' nicht ersetzt werden. 'Wer reist, der liest im Buche aller Bücher, d.i. im Buche der Natur und der Welt; nur muß er auch die Kunst besitzen, es zu lesen und verstehen zu können' (Opitz, 1997:34).

Chapter two started with Butor's quotation from *Travel and Writing*, and it is helpful to have a second look at it at this point. He wrote: "it is a question of finding a *modus vivendi*".⁵⁵ What he calls "modus vivendi" becomes *ars vivendi* through the creation of a journey that is taken directly from lived experiences and put to paper. According to Bessière's understanding of travel as "the representation of the mutual knowledge travellers need to elicit from their encounter with the Other" (Bessière, 2002:7), the art of expressing this mutual knowledge can be found in travel literature. Jost says that Georg Forster has started to see the travel report as a work of art: "Georg Forster aber schlägt [...] einen theoretischen Kurs ein, der schließlich in den Ansichten vom Niederrhein dazu führt, den Reisebericht als Kunstform und den Reiseautor als Künstler zu etablieren" (Jost, 2005: 117). The idea of the traveller as an artist is shared by Adorno: "Noch in der entscheidenden Distanz vom Dasein, als Kunst, bleibt es unehrlich; die es praktizieren, werden zu fahrenden Leuten, überlebenden Nomaden, die unter den seßhaft Gewordenen keine Heimat finden" (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2006:25). Adorno already implies here one of the issues, (namely homelessness), which will be examined in '4.8. The meaning of home'. If one considers Wilhelm Schmid's statement that the question of *ars vivendi* arises when relationships break down, connections disband and the individual is confronted with completely unknown situations,⁵⁶ a line can easily be drawn from this starting position of *ars vivendi* to the traveller's motivation in starting his or her journey. Furthermore, Schmid writes that *ars vi-*

55 Highlighted by P. S.

56 See Schmid, 1998:9.

vendi arises when tradition and values are no longer compelling, and individuals start taking care of themselves.

The description above matches the traveller's profile perfectly. However, an individual – in this case the traveller – is not just taking care of him- or herself, but is starting to care about others, as Wohlfarth describes in his book *Genie in der Kunst des Lebens – Geschichte eines Goetheschen Gedankens*:

Diese 'Kunst des Lebens' folgt also offenkundig ästhetischen Prinzipien. Sie ist außerdem, im Unterschied zu den meisten antiken Konzepten von Lebenskunst als 'Sorge um sich', nicht vornehmlich als das 'sich' des ausübenden Individuums, sondern auf andere, auf 'die Welt' gerichtet. Sie ist die Kunst, 'die Welt zu behandeln', nicht nur mit sich, sondern mit anderen Menschen umzugehen, sie ist keine individualistische, sondern eine soziale oder sozial-ästhetische Kunst des Lebens – die gleichwohl Individualität als ihre notwendige Voraussetzung einbegreift (Wohlfarth, 2015:42).

In terms of this “care for the world”, *ars vivendi* as not only worrying about oneself but also about others, is exactly what we find in travel narrations and what probably best describes the title of Bouvier's most famous and successful travel report *L'Usage du monde*.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, Ottmar Ette writes in an article about Humboldt: “weeterschreiben hieß weiterleben” (Ette, 2015:141). For Humboldt, writing was an essential part of living and surviving.⁵⁸ Ette's quotation for the three travel authors can be replaced or rather completed by adding travel: “weiterreisen hieß weiterleben”: both words always imply writing and travelling, taking into account the earlier discussion that to write is to travel and vice versa. The modern understanding of the art of life/living assumes the planning of one's own life as a piece of art, which can be assumed is what the three authors decided to do when they left their homes with a pencil and paper.

The idea of travel literature and *ars vivendi* goes beyond just travelling or writing. *Ars vivendi* cannot be reduced to travelling nor writing; that is why we do not

57 It is interesting to look at the different European translations of the book title: *Die Erfahrungen der Welt*; *Il polvere del mondo*; *Oswajanie świata*.

58 Writing as survival goes beyond travelling literature and is especially present in war and post-war literature, e.g. Semprún, J. (1994), *L'écriture ou la vie*. Paris, Gallimard.

speak about the art of the text/art of writing or the art of travel/art of traveling. As Olivier Hambursin writes in his article *Sur les traces Nicolas Bouvier: Portrait et perspectives critiques*: “on peut essayer de dégager puis de proposer une forme d’art de voyager’ selon Bouvier” (Hambursin, 2005:226). He compares the art of travel to “la lenteur”, “la volonté de faire écho à une bonne partie des déroutes et des défaites ressenties”, “l’exercice de disparition”, “la volonté de se mettre à la place de l’autre”, “de toujours relativiser”, “la connaissance de la langue”, “la curiosité”, “etc.” (Hambursin, 2005:228–229). Those aspects – as he calls them – do not stay confined to the art of travel. The art of travel will be transformed into a more pragmatic *ars vivendi* whose instruments consist of travelling and writing but cannot be restricted to those concepts.

It is not the aim here to look for *ars vivendi* in literature as, for example, Isabell Ludewig does in her book *Lebenskunst in der Literatur* (2011), but instead to look at literature, and more precisely, the travel narration as an art of life. In that way, it is not only the traveller that experiences *ars vivendi*, but also the reader. Instead of looking for travel literature in the concept of *ars vivendi* or vice versa, producing travel literature (writing) will itself be examined as *ars vivendi*, and travel literature as a transmitter of *ars vivendi* (reading). The acts of writing and travelling, but also further aspects that this research will discuss, are an art of life, an art of living and survival, which perhaps leads us to *the* art of life, art of living and survival in a world of globalisation, exchange and coexistence, *convivence* between cultures. This is not to proclaim the chosen travel narrations as *the good* example of living. Rather, as Ansgar Nünning states in Eliot’s *Middlemarch*, literature provides the reader with a range of different models.⁵⁹ Travel narrations reveal such different models, but all with the same strategy: to travel and to write. In the examples of Maillart, Schwarzenbach and Bouvier, the reader is not only often introduced to many people from different places in the world but also sees the protagonists in various circumstances – participating in different ways of life.

This leads to the idea of linking the word “art” to its German counterpart and false friend, “Art”, namely *manner*, or *way* in both its meanings (manner and itinerary), which connects back to the journey. Thus, the travel narration is not only an art, but also a way of life, as can be found at first glance in the titles *Alle Wege sind offen*

59 See Wohlfarth, 2015:91.

and the *The Cruel Way*, which perfectly underline the double meaning of the word “way”, in the sense of both *mode* and *road*.

On the modern way of *ars vivendi*, Wohlfarth says: “Dabei geht es nicht so sehr um das Schaffen und Erfinden von etwas Neuem außer sich, sondern darum, in der Welt sich selbst zu (er)finden” (Wohlfarth, 2015:141) – and with the self, the other.

It may thus be essential for today’s time to look at travel literature as a concept of *ars vivendi* in terms of the art, way, and knowledge of life. Schwarzenbach’s well-known friend Klaus Mann wrote:

Menschen meiner Art, Kosmopoliten aus Instinkt und Notwendigkeit, geistige Mittler, Vorläufer und Wegbegleiter einer universalen Zivilisation, werden entweder überall zu Hause sein oder nirgends. In einer Welt des gesicherten Friedens und der internationalen Zusammenarbeit wird man uns brauchen (Mann, K. 1993:604f).

Not only is the cosmopolitan *in* a world of peace and international cooperation, he stands *for* a world of peace and international cooperation, *for* a successful convivence – as does travel literature of the 20th century. Herbert Kessler writes in his book *Philosophie als Lebenskunst*: “Jedes Individuum muß sich im Kampf um das Dasein behaupten, sein Leben fristen und seine Existenz sichern. Die Lebenskunst verlangt zusätzlich die allmähliche Steigerung der personalen Werte und den Einklang zur Person” (Kessler, 1998:301). Instead of speaking about an increase or development of personal values, I would rather suggest that there is a change or an alteration of personal values that will be observed in the main chapter ‘On the Road’. Wilhelm Schmid said about the new understanding of *ars vivendi*,

Daß die Lebenskunst erneut zu Frage wird, indiziert wohl fundamental veränderte Bedingungen und Möglichkeiten der Existenz in moderner und post-moderner Zeit. Herkömmliche Ethiken und Morallehren haben entweder an Verbindlichkeit verloren oder halten keine Antwort bereit auf die Frage des Individuums, das nach neuen Möglichkeiten der Haltung sucht und sich in einer Vielzahl neuartiger und fremdartiger Situation zu verhalten hat. Angesichts der universellen Zerstreuung, die den extensiven Möglichkeiten der

Existenz entspricht, stellt sich die dringlicher werdende Frage nach existenzieller Reduktion und Formen von Intensität. [...] Es handelt sich um den neuerlichen Versuch zur Verknüpfung von Denken und Existenz, um die Reflexion und das Experiment eines Andersdenkens und Anderslebens, das auch alle außerphilosophischen Bereiche umfaßt (Schmid, 2000:19–20).

The traveller of the 20th century is continuously confronted with these extensive possibilities, with numerous choices that he or she needs to make. In travel literature, one can observe how the individual struggles and deals with these choices and how the traveller practices the reduction of the necessary, which was also observed by Paul Klee at the very beginning of the 20th century:

Existentielle Reduktion, um die unüberschaubare Vielfalt des Erlebten zu reduzieren auf das, was für das eigene Selbst als wesentlich erscheint; einfach zu werden, Ballast abzuwerfen, 'bis nur sehr wenig mehr da' ist, nämlich das, was die Grundzüge der eigenen Existenz, die charakteristische Linie des persönlichen Stils ausmachen soll (Schmid, 1998b:5).

This reduction of the necessary can be easily explained at first glance using the example of the limited baggage that a traveller can take with him on a journey. This already demands a strict reduction of the consumer goods the individual may be accustomed to using at home.

2.3.2 The Ambiguity of *Ars Vivendi* and the Travel Narration

Ambiguity is not only characteristic of the travel narration. Modernity in general is also shaped by contradictions, as this long quotation about *ars vivendi* reflects:

Eine Lebenskunst kann es vielleicht überhaupt nur dort geben, wo die Widersprüche dazu zwingen, ihre Abgründigkeit mithilfe der Gestaltung von Lebensformen zu überbrücken. Analog zu den Künsten, die vorzugsweise am Schnittpunkt von Widersprüchen entstehen, geht auch die Kunst des Lebens aus der Spannweite widersprüchlicher Perspektiven hervor und durchmisst den Kreis der unterschiedlichsten Aspekte des Lebens. Werden Widersprüche aber negiert und aufgehoben, gerät schon ihre leise Andeutung zur Tragödie.

Hat man sich erst daran gewöhnt, in einer widerspruchsfreien Welt zu leben, trifft jede Erfahrung eines aufbrechenden Widerspruchs schon den Nerv des Selbst: Die hysterische Verfassung des Selbst im Alltag der Moderne lässt sich so erklären. Wenn dies sich so verhält, kann die Lebenskunst nur darin bestehen, einen *Modus vivendi* zu finden, der Widersprüche zumindest koexistieren und nicht, selbst im Falle der unversöhnlichen Situation des Widerstreits, in wechselseitiger Vernichtung enden lässt. Die anspruchslose Grundform dieses *Modus* ist die bloße Aufrechterhaltung bestehender Widersprüche, des *Status quo* – ein statuarisches Verständnis der widersprüchlichen Verhältnisse. Seine Steigerungsform aber ist der Übergang zu einem transformativen Verständnis, das die spezifischen Widersprüche in ihrer jeweiligen Gestalt nicht als dieselben belässt, sondern sie, nach Maßgabe der skeptischen Veränderung, zu modifizieren und überhaupt neu zu fassen versucht. Zwischen einer zu großen Bereitschaft zur Hinnahme bestehender Widersprüche beim statuarischen Verständnis, und einer zu ausgeprägten Neigung zur Nichthinname beim transformativen Verständnis gilt es die Balance zu finden. Die anspruchsvollste Form aber ist die Harmonie des widersprüchlichen Verhältnisses – nicht im Sinne einer Leugnung oder Glättung von Widersprüchen, sondern im Sinne ihres perfekten Zusammenspannens, das nach Aussen hin den Eindruck einer Einheit vermittelt. Nur zwischen Widersprüchen, die sich auszuschließen scheinen und die vollendet ineinanderwirken, besteht die Spannung, die die größte Intensität des Lebens spürbar werden lässt (Schmid, 1998:111–112).

Both *Ars vivendi* and travel literature need that interaction of ambiguity, which is a known phenomenon of life, as Katrin Lehnert shows: “Dieser Automatismus ist bekannt: Wer einschlafen will, bleibt schlaflos. Wer etwas vergessen will erinnert sich gerade dann schmerzhaft” (Willems, 1998:110). She refers here to Schwarzenbach taking refuge on the journey from her home in Switzerland, the place where she felt most comfortable, as described in the prose texts *Lyrische Novelle*, *Das glückliche Tal* and *Bei diesem Regen*. Ambiguity is not new to the travel narration. Scholars describe Schwarzenbach as a “figure in between”.⁶⁰

60 See Carbone, 2010:99; Decock and Schaffers, 2008:8–10.

Vilas-Boas writes about Schwarzenbach's poetry: "Die Gedichtzyklen dagegen bleiben ein Geheimnis. Sie schwanken zwischen Hoffnung und Verzweiflung, Klage und Gebet, Dunkelheit und Helligkeit. Der Leser wird mit einer von konträren Elementen erzeugten, starken Spannung konfrontiert" (Carbone, 2010: 94). His examples prove his thesis, but aren't these characteristics of the whole Schwarzenbach oeuvre? Or is it possible to speak about an even wider context? The following chapter aims to prove that this is not exclusively a phenomenon of Schwarzenbach's literature, but of all the examined travel reports in this dissertation. And if one looks at other travel narrations, could this game of contradictions be characteristic of an entire genre?

But these pieces succeed not by virtue of the details they report – exotic as they are – but by the contrivance of their reporting. They are all informed by the sheer glee of story-telling, a narrative eloquence that situates them, with wonderful ambiguity, somewhere between fiction and fact. There is of course nothing new in this kind of ambiguity, although travel writing seems to be its purest expression – purer even than the New Journalism of the sixties and seventies to which it bears more than a few similarities. But if there is a revival in travel writing, this ambiguity – this generic androgeny – is partly responsible for it. Travel writing is the beggar of literary forms: it borrows from the memoir, reportage and, most important, the novel. It is, however, pre-eminently a narrative told in the first person, authenticated by lived experience. It satisfies a need. A need for a fiction answerable, somehow, to the world. Or perhaps I've got it wrong. Perhaps it's a need for a world answerable to our fictions (Buford, 1983).

Thus, ambiguity plays an important role not only for *ars vivendi* but also for the travel narration. As is typical for Charles Forsdick, the word travel is used: "with this tension in mind, aware of the risks inherent in the extremes" (Forsdick, 2005:xi). Forsdick brings up Bouvier's *L'Usage du monde*, saying that, "In constructing through his work a 'monde-mosaïque', he explores instead the tensions that can be contained in his particular art form between such imagined unity and the experience of everyday discontinuity" (Forsdick, 2005:148). Further on, he writes: "in Bouvier's work, the mosaic seems to offer travel literature a middle course between representations of place and culture that are (on the one hand) fixed, essen-

tialized, hierarchical, and (on the other) chaotic, entropic” (Forsdick, 2005:149). Location and culture are two of the motifs that belong to the plot of the narration. However, this mosaic plot is composed of more motifs, as is characteristic of the travel narration. Ten motifs that are pivotal in the three discussed works have been chosen and summarised under the following expressions: Culture, crossing borders, freedom, time and space, the Self and/as the Other, landscapes, writing and reading, the meaning of home, the journey, spirituality, and religion. Some of these characteristics and the two faces they each have can be found in Hulme’s introduction to *The Cambridge Companion on Travel Writing*:

In particular, Homer’s Odysseus gave his name to the word we still use to describe an epic journey, and his episodic adventures offer a blueprint for the romance, indirection, and danger of travel as well as the joy (and danger) of homecoming. Societal attitudes to travel have always been ambivalent. Travel broadens the mind, and knowledge of distant places and people often confers status, but travellers sometimes return as different people or do not come back at all (Hulme and Youngs, 2002:2).

The ambiguity of the journey is omnipresent within the motifs in the main chapter. All of them could be formulated the other way around, as they always show “the other side of the coin” as well.

2.3.3 *Ars Vivendi and Ars Moriendi*

Michel Butor said: “To travel is to live once again” (Butor, 1974:6). He shared in the 1970s what Bouvier experienced in the 1950s: “Je pensais aux neuf vies proverbiales du chat; j’avais bien l’impression d’entrer dans la deuxième” (Bouvier, 2014: 11). Differently expressed, but with the same intention, Schmid speaks about *ars vivendi*: “Alle Arbeit, die sie [Lebenskunst] abverlangt, ist nichts im Vergleich zu dem Genuss, den sie verspricht: Ein vervielfachtes Leben in einer einzigen Existenz” (Schmid, 1998:270). The first two examples, however, do not only reveal the new life of the traveller but also the end of his or her life. If travelling is to live once again, it also means to die once more. Beginning the second life of a cat implies ending the first. Bouvier describes this death inside the traveller as an exercise of disappearance. Olivier Hambursin comments on this: “Pour Bouvier, il est en effet impossible d’espérer voir, découvrir le monde ou rencontrer l’Autre,

sans perdre un peu de soi, sans perdre de sa corpulence” (Hambursin, 2005:228). The multiple lives in one existence that Schmid talks about do not necessarily mean multiple deaths. However, they may suit what Park calls a *marginal man* and creates another issue: “Ordinarily the marginal man is a mixed blood, [...], but that is apparently because the man of mixed blood is one who lives in two worlds, in both of which he is more or less of a stranger”⁶¹ (Park, 1928:893).

Maud Perrioux speaks about a philosophy of existence that Bouvier creates: “Sa conception du voyage et du monde construit une philosophie de l’existence modelée par le vide et tournée vers l’acceptation de la mort” (Hambursin, 2005:251). Luigi Marfè calls it the sense of existence: “la vita di Nicolas Bouvier è tutta dedicata a indagare – nello spazio, nella lingua, nelle immagini – il senso dell’esistenza” (Marfè, 2009:78).

The sense of life is an existential question of *ars vivendi* – maybe the question of *ars vivendi* that always comes first: “Die entscheidende Grundfrage zielt dabei noch nicht einmal auf die Möglichkeiten der Gestaltung und auch nicht auf die Einzelheiten ihrer Ausführung, sondern stellt von vornherein deren Sinn in Frage: *Warum überhaupt gestalten?*” (Schmid, 1998:88). The final argument brought up as a result of that question is the limitation of time. Death is therefore an inevitable part of *ars vivendi*, which cannot exist without *ars moriendi*. Death is the condition of life and vice versa, so *ars moriendi* must be a condition of *ars vivendi*. As a result, the terms do not function as contradictions but are inseparably linked and are thus part of an entire concept: “Was wir dem Tod verdanken, ist demnach die Begrenzung des Lebens. Würde es diese Grenze nicht geben, wäre die Gestaltung des Lebens gleichgültig” (Schmid, 1998:88). That is also the reason why borders play an important role in *ars vivendi* in general, as it can only exist within the consciousness of borders and limitations: “Der Tod als Grenze des Lebens fordert sie [people] auf zu leben und auf erfüllte Weise zu leben. Dazu bedarf es keiner Fixierung auf den Tod, sondern nur eines Bewusstseins der Grenze” (Schmid, 1998:89). Further on, Schmid states: “Es ist die Grenze des Todes, der die Freude am Leben zu verdanken ist. Philosophieren heisst, im Bewusstsein dieser Grenze leben zu lernen” (Schmid, 1998:89). Therefore, death is an essential part of the travel narration and not separable from *ars vivendi*:

61 The question of identity is further discussed in 4.6. and 4.8.

Die Lebenskunst geht mit der Kunst des Sterbens einher, das Lebenswissen mit dem Sterbenwissen, à savoir bien mourir et bien vivre. Der Tod überschattet nicht das Leben, er ist ein Bestandteil des Lebens, er ist die Regel, die das Spiel ermöglicht und nicht außer Kraft gesetzt werden kann. Er mag das Ziel unserer Laufbahn sein, aber Ziel nur im Sinne des äussersten Punktes, auf den das Leben zusteuert, nicht im Sinne eines Zweckes (Schmid, 1998: 351–352).

Death plays an important role in the travel narrations, but death belongs to life – not the other way around, whereas in Schwarzenbach's travel novels *Das glückliche Tal*, the edited edition *Tod in Persien* as well as in Bouvier's novel *Le Poisson-scorpion*, death may predominate. Death, however, is not the engine of the journey in the narrations or the novels, rather it is the understanding of the limitations of time. The journey teaches the traveller about their existence and brings him or her into contact with death. The aforementioned training, which Bouvier calls an exercise of disappearance, is such a preparation for death, as “La vie m'apparaît comme une aventure drolatique et pathétique qui se conclut par une disparition” (Borer et al. 1992:53). That is why the representation of life, but also that of death, is omnipresent in the ten motifs, especially in the chapter “time and space”. Both life and death are needed to combine *ars vivendi* with the travel narration.

3 Departure

This part of the dissertation will dive into the text. Before the main part comparing and examining the ten motifs, the genre discussion will be examined and the types of the texts the reader of this dissertation is confronted with will be addressed. The genre discussion will lead to the narratological perspective and thus to narratological methods from Genette's theoretical approach: the narrator figure, the narratee, intermediality and intertextuality of the texts. This is, of course, just one aspect of narratology, the examination of which could easily make up a separate dissertation. It is not the aim of this research to give a detailed narratological interpretation of the three travel narrations discussed, but it is nevertheless necessary for the arguments that follow to look more closely at the narrator figure in particular, as it can assist in understanding the typical uncertainty of fact and fiction in travel literature, which will come up in the genre-discussion.

3.1 Travel Literature as a Non-Genre

Travel literature is, simply put, literature about travelling. Scholars have extensively discussed the generic affiliation of travel literature. Various expressions have developed through this discussion, and it has been attempted to bring these expressions into different genres such as *genre of travel literature/travel writing* or *récit de voyage* – expressions which are now used without a second

thought.⁶³ The issue of the discussion, though, is visible, considering that two terms are linked to each other across a large spectrum. The difficulty arises not only from the term “literature” itself,⁶⁴ but from the connection with a verb that can be understood in many ways, as has been discussed directly above. How can the term “literature” itself refer to a genre in the Aristotelian sense? If one speaks about children’s and young adult literature, it is not the discussion about a genre, but about a section or category which consists of the same genres that exist outside this category, such as fantasy, novels, diaries, autobiographies, or poetry. The same applies to travel literature, however, scholars continue to speak about travel literature as a *genre* that is difficult to define. A possible difficulty lies in the fact that the category, or “section”, as one may call it, is often confused with the individual categories within this literature. Carl Thomson, for example, uses the term travel writing:

[...] travel writing has seen its literary status rise in recent decades. [...], travel writing has acquired a new relevance and prestige, as a genre that can provide important insights into the often fraught encounters and exchanges currently taking place between cultures, and into the lives being led, and the subjectivities being formed, in a globalising world (Thomson, 2011:2).

This brings us to the components of what we call travel literature: The texts can vary across all forms/genres/categories that literature has to offer: from reports to novels to poetry.

Greenblatt and Ette describe travel literature as literature between national and world literature, “literally ‘literature without a fixed abode’” (Greenblatt, 2009: 120).

Mary B. Campbell writes about travel literature as a “self-consciously artistic genre” (1991:4).

63 See Pasquali, 1994:92: “Il est un domaine pourtant sur lequel la critique a constamment buté, ou alors elle l’a tenu pour allant de soi, et c’est bien sur la définition d’un genre du récit de voyage, alors que l’expression ‘genre du récit de voyage’ est communément utilisée.”

64 Jean-Marie Schaeffer opens this discussion in his book *Qu’est-ce qu’un genre littéraire?* by speaking about the problem of the definition of literature (1989:9).

On the one hand, scholars define the genre as mixed,⁶⁵ a collage of different genres which then forms the main characteristics of the diverse genre that is travel literature, as expressed in French as the *récit de voyage*:

Le genre comme totalité n'est pensable que comme montagne de genres. L'un des traits distinctifs majeurs du récit de voyage pourrait d'ailleurs bien être sa capacité à accueillir cette diversité de genres et de types discursifs, sans le souci de les homogénéiser (Pasquali, 1994:12–13).

What is described here and translated by Charles Forsdick as a travel narrative,⁶⁶ has been used to describe *L'Usage du monde*:

Bourlinguer de Cendrars utilise plusieurs types de discours pour imbriquer différentes profondeurs temporelles non linéaires; et rien que dans l'Usage du monde de N. Bouvier, nous repérons facilement, outre des pans narratifs et descriptifs, des fragments de Journal, des poèmes, des morceaux de chroniques historique ou mythologique, des notes infrapaginales, etc. Ainsi, à l'égal de tout intitulé générique, l'expression 'récit de voyage' (Pasquali, 1994:107).

Pasquali refers here to J. M. Schaeffer's *Qu'est-ce qu'un genre littéraire?*: “ce n'est jamais le texte total qui est identifié par un nom de genre, mais tout au plus un acte communicationnel global ou une forme fermée” (Schaeffer, 1989:130). By saying that many forms can be found in Bouvier's book, Pasquali defines the *récit de voyage* as a genre that embraces many genres and therefore creates a new one. The genre's variety is one of its defining characteristics and leads to the creation of the separate genre called “*récit de voyage*”. So far, the travel narrative and its French pendant *récit de voyage* seem overall to be suitable for describing the genre, in which *L'Usage du monde*, *The Cruel Way* and *Alle Wege sind offen* could be categorised. This definition, however, is suitable for travel literature in general, not just the travel narration, which the terms used in *The Travel Narratives of Ella Maillart*

65 Compare to Jonathan Raban 1988: 253–254: “travel writing is a notoriously raffish open house where different genres are likely to end up in the same bed” and Forsdick, 2005 and 2006.

66 See Forsdick et al., 2006:34.

by Sara Steinert Borella also shows. Here she describes *Gypsy Afloat* as “the first of the narratives” (Borella, 2006:115), *Ti-Puss* as “not a conventional travelogue” (Borella, 2006:116) and *Cruises and Caravans* as an autobiography (Borella, 2006: 114), while speaking about “her travels and travel writing” (Borella, 2006:21) or “Maillart’s accounts of her travel writing” (Borella, 2006:6).

That may have caused the issue that the translation of the French term “*récit de voyage*” into other languages is not consistent. It has also been understood as an all-encompassing term, such as “travel literature” or “travel writing”.

Before this topic is examined further, it must be clarified how the term “genre” itself is understood in this discussion. If the understanding of the genre itself differs, travel literature could at some point be understood as an overarching genre or as the exact opposite, a sub-genre. How genre is understood depends on the definition of the term genre:

[...] considera a Literatura de Viagens como um subgênero literário, no sentido de esta ser uma modalidade, interdisciplinar, do gênero narrativo, que ele assim conceitua: Por Literatura de Viagens entendemos o subgênero literário que se mantém vivo do século XV ao final do século XIX, cujos textos, de carácter compósito, entrecruzam Literatura com História e Antropologia, indo buscar à viagem real ou imaginária (por mar, terra e ar) temas, motivos e formas (Contatori Romano, 2013:38).

If travel literature is a subgenre, what, then, is the main genre? And how many sub-sub-genres would follow?

On the other hand, scholars try to disqualify genres in order to get closer to the one they want to describe.⁶⁷ Pasquali denies calling travel literature a genre or sub-genre, taking into account that books about travel appear in various genres, such as reports, novels or poetry. Charles Forsdick also speaks about a literary form: “that traditionally relies on the existence (or construction) of an ‘elsewhere’” (Forsdick, 2005:2) and a “trans- or intergeneric form” (Forsdick et al., 2006:22). Pasquali, however, denies changing the term *genre* into *form* in the following: “Il ne s’agit pas de recourir à la notion de forme pour éluder celle de ‘genre’, dont nous croyons

67 Compare: Forsdick et al., 2006:22.

avoir montré le peu de fiabilité pour caractériser les pratiques textuelles rangées sous l'appellation de 'récit de voyage'" (Pasquali, 1994:143). Forsdick suggests another solution when he speaks about travel literature as a category: "Travel literature accordingly avoids the prescription attached to fixed notions of genre, and exists as an often unpredictable category in which is assembled a variety of texts" (Forsdick, 2005:xii). Similarly, Jan Borm argues: "I shall argue here that it is not a genre, but a collective term⁶⁸ for a variety of texts both predominantly fictional and non-fictional whose main theme is travel" (Hooper and Youngs, 2004:13). The discussion is a prime example of the importance of a common understanding of terms. The fact that scholars have different understandings of the genre leads to this complication.

This is not surprising, taking into account that putting a text into a genre means nothing but "making patterns of meaning relative to particular communicative functions and situations" (Frow, 2015:91), to simplify the understanding of a text before and while reading it. Thinking in genres is, however, not just simplifying but also influencing the understanding of a text. This can be observed very well in the example of travel texts.

If *L'Usage du monde*, for example, is given the title of travel report, the text can easily be read as an autobiography of a traveller who drove from Geneva to Kabul. It is about breaking this "non-fictionalising" of the text and focussing on the text apart from the author, in order to read it as a travel narration.

3.1.1 (Non-)Fictional

The distinction between real and fictional journeys has previously been looked at critically,⁶⁹ and still, the discourse of fictional and non-fictional categorising needs further examination. Following Fludernik, there cannot be a division between fic-

68 See also Charles Forsdick, 2005:xii: "Defying the critical judgements that customarily divide texts into discrete generic categories, 'travel literature' depends more on a sense of dynamic genericity that presents the material to which the label relates in terms of inter-generic uncertainty or transgeneric vogueing between different forms. 'Travel literature' accordingly avoids the prescription attached to fixed notions of genre, and exists as an often unpredictable category in which is assembled a variety of texts. What these share in common is their representation of journeys, actual and/or imagined, through places with which those undertaking them are unfamiliar – or with which they had thought they were familiar, but through travel discover they no longer are."

69 See Pfister, 1993:11, Nünning, 2008:25, Agai and Conermann, 2013:17.

tion and non-fiction at all: “narrative is fictional per se, not because it is ‘made up’ or deals with fantastic occurrences, but because it is based on the representation of psychological states and mental perceptions” (Fludernik, 2009:60). As a result of this way of thinking, the travel narration of Ella Maillart would be equalised with any travel novel that has never taken place in the “real” world. Richard Walsh however argues that narrative should not be equalised with fiction, nor is a fiction necessarily full of inventions:

The categorical distinctiveness of fictionality does not imply an all-or-nothing view of a narrative’s relation to verifiable fact. Fictions are often not entirely fictional, and in principle may not be fictional at all. There are various circumstances in which nonfictional material, whether avowed (the historical novel), surreptitious (the roman à clef), or entirely adventitious, may inhabit a fictional narrative. But these circumstances, and the compound motives implied by the first two, are consistent with a narrative’s final claim to be received and interpreted under the regime of fictionality. Similarly, a pragmatic approach to fictionality does not tie the categorical absolute to any historical essence: not only are the conventional forms of fiction subject to change, but the rhetorical scope and import of fictionality itself are both historically and culturally variable. Fictionality is the product of a narrative’s frame of presentation, of the various possible elements of what Gérard Genette has described as the paratext (Walsh, 2003:115).

In order to nevertheless find a distinction between the two terms, Ette suggests the term ‘friction’ instead, which, as will be discussed in this dissertation, applies to travel narrations in particular, as these will be looked at as narrations with auto-diegetic narrators of journeys that have taken place and been experienced by the authors in reality. Ette also directs the reader’s attention to the reception of both fiction and reality, which do not necessarily need to be defined as contradictions: “Nicht der Gegensatz zwischen Realität und Fiktion, sondern das Spannungsfeld (und wechselseitige Verschränkung) von Vorgefundenem, Erfundenem und Erlebtem” (Ette, 2012:164). This field of tension is not only created by the question of whether literature is fiction or non-fiction, but also by the other mediums used in the narration, for example, photographs taken on the journey and included in the books. Walter Fähnders directly reveals these difficulties using Schwarzenbach

as an example, whose texts are often 'reduced' to her biography. The confusion becomes clear especially in the analysis of Linsmayer's commentary on a Schwarzenbach quotation from *Death in Persia*.⁷⁰

Travel literature is also seen as a result of personal experiences, as it is in the book *Le discours du voyageur*:

[...] la textualité d'un discours personnel (le plus souvent à la première personne) rendant compte de l'expérience d'une rencontre avec l'Autre, c'est-à-dire d'un voyage réel. Cette définition exclut tous les voyages imaginaires, allégoriques, romanesques, utopiques, etc. (Wolfzettel, 1986:5).⁷¹

That does not indicate that travel narrations are a truthful narration of an experienced journey. The question of the truth has been previously discussed in research on autobiographies.⁷² Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson say:

Any utterance in an autobiographical text, even if inaccurate or distorted, is a characterization of its writer. Thus, when one is both the narrator and the protagonist of the narrative, as in life writing, the truth of the narrative becomes undecidable; it can be neither fully verified nor fully discredited (Smith and Watson, 2010:16).

As Smith and Watson have shown in their book, *A guide for interpreting life narratives – Reading Autobiography*, both the issues of truth and of the author, narrator and protagonist are seriously questioned in the autobiography and have their problems in the genre context too.⁷³ Travel literature would fall under the category of Smith's and Watson's definition of *self life writing*. Smith and Watson name the travel narrative as one of the sixty genres of life narrative:

70 See Fähnder's article: "Zwischen Biografik und Werkanalyse: Die Schwarzenbach-Rezeption seit den 90er Jahren" (Carbone, 2010).

71 Here the author speaks about the travel report, not all travel literature. The differences between the terms will be discussed in the following chapter.

72 See Misch, Glagau, Gusdorf, Lejeune in: Niggel, 1998.

73 See Smith's and Watson's conclusion, 2010:18.

Travel narrative. This broad term encompasses multiple forms: travelogue, travel journal, (pseudo)ethnography, adventure narrative, quest, letter home, narrative of exotic escape. Travel narratives have a long history, extending in the West back to the Greeks and Romans and employed by travellers in Arabic and Chinese lands long before the printing press. Travel narratives are usually written in the first person and focus, in progress or retrospectively, on a journey. Subordinating other aspects of the writer's life, they typically chronicle or reconstruct the narrator's experience, displacement, encounter, and travail and his or her observations on the unknown, the foreign, the uncanny (Smith and Watson, 2010:284–285).

Considering the book title, this once more implies that the travel narrative is autobiographical, as are the *récit de voyage* and travel writing, as the description is similar to the definitions of those two terms, which the previous chapter has shown.

On the other hand, at the end of his book, *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel*, Percy G. Adams concludes by connecting the *récit de voyage* to the novel as well: “finally, the *récit de voyage*⁷⁴ cannot be a literary genre with a fixed definition any more than the novel is; it is not even *sui generis* since it includes so many types both by form and by content. For, like other forms just as amorphous, it evolves and will continue to evolve” (Adams, P. G., 2014:282).

The dubiousness of the truth also appears in travel literature. Richard Brathwaite wrote in *The English Gentleman*: “Travellers, poets and liars are three words all of one signification” (Hanne, 1993:3). A possible reason for this could be the fact that autobiography and fiction, in the same manner as fiction and travel literature, cannot be divided: “Eine Grenzlinie zwischen fiktionaler Literatur und Reiseliteratur lässt sich nicht bestimmen” (Ette, 2020:131). And why should a line be drawn? This is probably what makes travel literature so special. Hulme and Youngs have clearly observed the “wonderful ambiguity, somewhere between fiction and fact” in Bill Buford's introduction to the *Granta Book of Travel* (Buford, 1983).

74 The term *récit de voyage* seems to be used as a synonym for travel literature at this point. More about terms and definition will be discussed in the following chapter.

Ette underlines the frequently-made mistake of dividing fiction and nonfiction texts by creating the term “frictional”, which combines “fiction” with “reality”:

The travelogue is a hybrid form not only referring to the ingested genres and its variety of speech, but also in regard to its characteristic of evading the opposition between fiction and diction. The travelogue wears off the boundaries between both fields: it is to be assigned to a literary area that we might term frictional literature (Ette, 2003:31),⁷⁵

and as Ette wrote, “speaking with Goethe’s words between ‘Poetry and Truth’”.⁷⁶ Fähnders holds this opinion. In his epilogue of the book *Orientreisen*, he names Schwarzenbach as one of the travel authors who combined the journalistic reportage and the travel report:

In einer Art Doppelrolle hat Annemarie Schwarzenbach einerseits ihre vielen vereinbarten Auftragsarbeiten für die Schweizer Presse zuverlässig abgeliefert, andererseits hat sie es wie kaum eine andere Autorin unternommen, dabei die Gattungskonventionen von Reportage und Reisebericht zu durchbrechen und Schreibräume des Erzählerischen, des Fiktionalen zu eröffnen, um moderne, aktuelle Krisenerfahrungen ästhetisch fassen zu können (Schwarzenbach, 2010b:174).

Jost searches for a very hermeneutical explanation by questioning the generic term an author chooses. Does he see the travel report as a mostly empirical or objective genre (which should, most importantly, provide information about the ‘discovered world’)?⁷⁷ In the eighteenth century, in fact, travel writing of one kind or another

75 See also Oliver Lubrich’s article in Holdenried et al. 2017:39–40: “Reiseliteratur ist ein *hybrides* Genre. Sie vereint Anteile faktualer und fiktionaler Gattungen. Sie tendiert dazu, formal vielfältig zu sein”.

76 See Ette et al., 2015: “die mit Goethe gesprochen zwischen ‘Dichtung’ und ‘Wahrheit’ liegt”.

77 See Jost, 2005:67: “Grundlegend ist zunächst, welchen Gattungsbegriff der jeweilige Autor verfolgt. Betrachtet er den Reisebericht als vorwiegend ‘empirisches’ bzw. ‘ob-

rivalled the novel as the most popular genre,⁷⁸ while interest in autobiographies grew in the enlightened age when J. J. Rousseau wrote his *Confessions*, named after the first autobiography in Western history, Augustine's *Confessions*.

Review literature teemed with discussions of how travel books ought to be written in an enlightened age, the two main tensions being between 'naïve' (popular) and lettered writing, and between informational and experiential writing. Stylistic debates as to relative values of 'embellishment' and 'naked truth' often reflected tensions between the man of science and the man of sensibility, or between the lettered and popular writer (Pratt, 1992:87).

Recent discussions about travel literature suggest a narratological approach to the texts, which may become more popular and decisive in the 21st century.

3.1.2 Travel(ling) Literature, Travel Writing, and Other Terms

The previous chapter featured different terms such as "travel literature", "travelogue" and "travel book". It has been observed that one of the reasons for the generic confusion is the amount of terms that are not properly defined. Travel literature has previously been defined as a categorised term. Besides the generic confusion, the word "literature" in travel literature begs the question: "what is literature"? Thus, an even more general term, "travel writing", has been created to avoid this problem and to include so-called "non-literary" texts, such as travel guides and logbooks. The term travel writing became popular in the 1980s to link texts about travelling to academic disciplines such as literature, history, geography, and anthropology. Both terms, "travel literature" and "travel writing", are categorised as genres.⁷⁹ Researchers needed a new expression for works about journeys that could not be considered literature. Here the definition of literature becomes important. Thus, it can be said that every work of travel literature also falls under travel writing, but not necessarily the other way around. The distinction or non-

jektives' Genre, das in erster Linie Auskunft über die 'erfahrene Welt' bieten soll". The words 'erfahrene Welt' have been put in quotation marks, as the word could either mean the discovered world, or refer to someone driving, for example, around the world but also experiencing it, thus an experienced world.

78 See Hanne, 1993:54.

79 See Hulme and Youngs, 2002; Campbell, 1991.

distinction between the terms might be a problem of ‘über-setzen’, of translation not only in a geographical and semantic sense,⁸⁰ but also from one genre into another. Only the English-speaking world distinguishes between travel literature and travel writing; there are no equivalents to travel writing in other European languages: “letteratura di viaggio”, “littérature du voyage”, “Reiseliteratur” and “literatura podróżnicza”. All are literary translations of travel literature. There is no common separate translation for travel writing, as there is, for example, for creative writing: “Kreatives Schreiben”, “scrittura creative”, “écriture créative”. This excludes the movement initiated in 1992 by Bouvier, among others: *Pour une littérature voyageuse*. This alone can lead to confusion, as Vilas-Boas says in his article: “Literarische Texte funktionieren innerhalb bestimmter Systeme. Annemarie Schwarzenbach’s Reisetexte gehören nur teilweise zum literarischen System, sie gehören ebenfalls zum System ‘Reiseliteratur Zeitungstexte’ und besonders zum System ‘Zeitungstexte’” (Decock and Schaffers, 2008:155). This assumes that travel literature is no literary text, which is already an oxymoron. Vilas-Boas may have travel writing texts in mind, which are not considered literary texts. He uses the expression: “literarische Reisetexte” (Decock and Schaffers, 2008:157), to describe such literary texts. The combination of *literarisch* and *Reisetexte* assumes, however, that there are also non-literary travel texts, which leads to the conclusion that *Reisetexte* could be used as a translation for *travel writing*, and thus, *Reiseliteratur* would be a synonym of *literary travel texts*. Scholars use the terms in different ways and need to explain first what the term means to them, e.g. Charles Forsdick: “travel writing is to be understood in a much wider sense as travel literature” (Forsdick, 2005:82) or leave a term in its original language, e.g. the translation from M. Butor’s text “Travel and Writing”:

We have consistently left the term ‘récit’ untranslated, feeling that its polysemic character (narrative, tale, story, account, etc. depending on the context) would be in no way clarified by translation into its numerous English counterparts which are equally polyvocal and even more definitionally controversial in the English-speaking world. [...] The phrase ‘récit de voyage’ has no precise English equivalent. There is a certain inelegance, and inaccuracy, to ‘travel

80 See Ette, 2020:135.

narrative,' or 'travel account', and the term 'travelogue' carries with its invidious connotations of cinema short subjects (Butor, 1974:2–3).

The lack of translation can be traced back to the multiple meanings of the word "récit" in other languages. It can be translated into English as "report", "history", "story", "tale" and "narration" and numerous dictionaries deliver different answers. Stefan Zweifel writes in his commentary of his translation of *Le Poisson-scorpion*: "doppeldeutig wie so vieles: Es kann 'Bericht' heißen, also ganz im Sinne der Reiseaufzeichnungen, für die Bouvier seit der Erfahrung der Welt bekannt war, aber auch 'Erzählung'" (Bouvier, 2011:174). The word *Bericht*, "report", and the following *Reiseaufzeichnungen*, "travel notes", do not do justice to the book *L'Usage du monde*, whereas the translation *Erzählung*, "narration", which he suggests as a more suitable translation for *Le Poisson-scorpion*, is probably also more suitable: not to describe or categorise Bouvier's *L'Usage du monde*, *The Cruel Way* and *Alle Wege sind offen*, but to announce the genre as a perspective from which the book can be read.

The need to define the terms also becomes obvious if one looks at Edwards Said's text fragment from his well-known work, *Orientalism*:

Travel books or guidebooks are about as "natural" a kind of text, as logical in their composition and in their use, as any book one can think of, precisely because of this human tendency to fall back on a text when the uncertainties of travel in strange parts seem to threaten one's equanimity. Many travelers find themselves saying of an experience in a new country that it wasn't what they expected, meaning that it wasn't what a book said it would be. And of course many writers of travel books or guidebooks compose them in order to say that a country is like this, or better, that it is colorful, expensive, interesting, and so forth. The idea in either case is that people, places, and experiences can always be described by a book, so much so that the book (or text) acquires a greater authority, and use, even than the actuality it describes (Said, 2003:93).

Said equates the travel book with the guidebook here, which would imply, according to our definition, that he speaks about travel writing in general. This, of course, does not do justice to what Said is referencing here, as he is speaking about travel

guides or travel advisors. A few pages later, he speaks about travel literature and travel literature as “imaginative” (Said, 2003:99) which presumes the existence of non-imaginative travel literature.

Therefore, it is important to clarify the proper significance of the terms. It must be determined whether the words can be either treated as synonyms or separate terms with individual meanings, despite, or even due to their hybrid character. Jan Borm defines them as such: “that the literary is at work in travel writing, and that it therefore seems appropriate to consider the terms the literature of travel, or simply travel literature, as synonyms of travel writing” (Hooper and Youngs, 2004: 13). Elizabeth Bohls and Ian Duncan named their edited book *Travel Writing, 1700–1830 An Anthology*, while both terms already appear in the preface:

During the eighteenth century British travellers fanned out to every corner of the world, driven by diverse motives: scientific curiosity, exploration, colonization, trade, diplomacy, and tourism, which began to flourish during this period. Those at home read voraciously in travel literature, which informed curious Britons about their nation’s activities overseas. The Empire, already established in the Caribbean and North America, was expanding in India and Africa and founding new outposts in the Pacific. Readers also enjoyed reports of travel closer to home: tours of the Continent and the British Isles themselves, whose beauty spots fuelled the rising fashion for picturesque and sublime scenery. Travel writing fed readers’ desire for adventure and exoticism and reinforced their pride in their nation’s achievements (Bohls and Duncan, 2005).

Many research papers make such an alternate use of them; in the book titled *New Approaches to Twentieth-Century Travel Literature in French*, for example, it says that the “aim of this book is thus to contribute to contemporary reassessments of travel writing” (Forsdick, 2006:6).⁸¹ Shortly afterwards, the term “travel narra-

81 See also Pratt, 1992:39: “This chapter undertakes to illustrate more concretely the impact of natural history and global science on travel writing. Through a set of examples, I aim to suggest how natural history provided means for narrating inland travel and exploration aimed not at the discovery of trade routes, but at territorial surveillance, appropriation of resources, and administrative control. This discussion is intended to be read in conjunction with two subsequent chapters, which take up sentimental travel writing, the

tive” is used similarly: “the nostalgia and intertextuality often present in the travel narrative” (Forsdick, 2006:6). Jan Borm tried to clarify the different terms in his article “Defining Travel: On the Travel Book, Travel Writing and Terminology”. From the terms that he summarises in the beginning (travel book, travel narrative, journeywork, travel memoir, travel story, travelogue, metatravelogue, traveller’s tale, travel journal, travels, travel writing, travel literature, the literature of travel and the travel genre), only a few are further defined in his article. The reason for this could be that some of the terms are interchangeable and thus work as synonyms: “In French, as in English, a string of terms are employed, often interchangeably, to describe a corpus of material that is perhaps ultimately best understood in functional, pragmatic rather than prescriptively generic terms” (Forsdick, 2006:15). So are the terms *travel book* and *travelogue*: “the terms *travel book* or *travelogue* usefully describe a genre known in French as *récit de voyage*, and in German as *Das Reisebuch* or *Der Reisebericht*, a category of texts that are an integral part of travel writing” (Hooper and Youngs, 2004:13). Borm states that: “to consider travel writing as a genre seems to me highly problematic” (Hooper and Youngs, 2004:14) and just after giving a quotation by Zweder von Martels who sees travel writing unlimited in its forms of expressions, he writes: “If some critics consider the travel book to be a genre in its own right, others look at it as being part of a larger genre” (Hooper and Youngs, 2004:14). This quick change from travel writing to the term travel book gives the impression that Borm also does not distinguish between travel writing and travel book, thus, according to him, there are four terms for one meaning: travel book, travelogue, travel writing and *récit de voyage*. Later, though, he writes: “Raban’s definition again suggests that the terms *travel book* and *travel writing* are synonymous. Yet it seems to me that this is where a problem arises, for readings (and readers’ expectations) of *Moby Dick* and *In Patagonia* are not identical. Captain Ahab is not a person that the reader supposes to have existed in life, whereas the narrator of *In Patagonia* obviously did” (Hooper and Youngs, 2004: 16). Here, Borm defines the travel book as a “non-fictional” work and travel writing as the “fictional” pendant. Luigi Marfè however sees *Don Quixote* or *Gulliver’s*

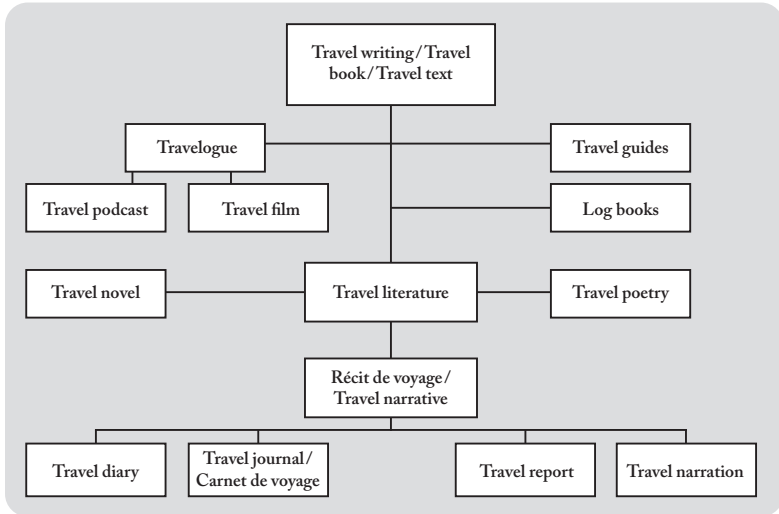
other main form of anti-conquest in this period. In travel literature, I argue, science and sentiment code the imperial frontier in the two eternally clashing and complementary languages of bourgeois subjectivity.”

Tales as travel literature and Marco Polo's *Milione* and Lévi-Strauss' *Tristes Tropiques* as travel writing.⁸² The confusion about the terms – and only three of them have been discussed so far – is already apparent. Tim Youngs does not even see a possibility to distinguish between the terms: “Travel writing feeds from and back into other forms of literature. To try to identify boundaries between various forms would be impossible and I would be deeply suspicious of any attempt on that task” (Youngs, 1994:8). This is understandable, and travel writing is not the only literary category that faces this problem, as Propp has shown by resuming trials of categorising the folk tale.⁸³ He states though, that “classification is one of the first and most important steps of a study” (Propp, 2015:10).

Whereas the boundaries between the various forms indeed seem to be impossible to draw, as the many discussions have already proven, the confusion and different understandings by scholars can be traced back to a lack of clear definitions in the field of travel writing. Even if “Die Grenzen zwischen den festen Gattungen und traditionellen Formen in der Kunst Produktion scheinen sich immer mehr zu verwischen, wenn sie nicht sogar ganz verschwinden” (Decock and Schaffers, 2008:255), there still seems to be a difference in travel literature; and the texts of Bouvier, Maillart and Schwarzenbach perfectly represent such differences. It appears questionable to speak about one and the same genre when speaking about Schwarzenbach's travel novel *Das Wunder des Baums* in comparison to her travel narration *Alle Wege sind offen*. Also, Bouvier's *L'Usage du monde* differs very much from the text *Le Poisson-scorpion*, which is more likely to be deemed a travel novel, or his travel poetry *Le dehors et le dedans*. So, too, does Maillart's *The Cruel Way* differ from her travel autobiography *Cruises and Caravans*. I therefore suggest an organizational chart that is not hierarchical in terms of value or importance of the individual works' contents, but that gives an overview of their scope and generic affiliation to the terms.

82 See Marfè, 2009:4.

83 See Propp, 2015:3–15.



The aim here is not simply to put travel texts into a specific genre. These genres cannot be completely separated, and I agree with Young's suspicion about attempts to clearly divide the text into a specific generic category. This would be very suspicious in such hybrid genres, which are somehow all linked and sometimes even put together intentionally, as can be observed in Schwarzenbach's book, *Orientreisen*, edited by Walter Fähnders (who has chosen and ordered different types of her texts in one book):

Die hier vorgelegten Texte und Fotos vermitteln einen Einblick in die besondere Wahrnehmung, die Annemarie Schwarzenbach dem Orient hat zuteil werden lassen. Dementsprechend sind bei der Auswahl die unterschiedlichsten Themen und Sujets, 'Textsorten' und Schreibweisen berücksichtigt, die Spanne reicht von den sach- und faktenorientierten Berichten und Reportagen bis hin zu selbstreflexiven oder dezidiert erzählerisch angelegten oder auch poetischen Texten und den entsprechenden Mischformen. Es geht also um ein Textensemble von Reportage, Reisebericht, Feuilleton, Erzählung, um kleine Formen, um Mischung und Verbindung historischer und aktueller, also objektiver Fakten mit der Wiedergabe subjektiver Befindlichkeiten einschließlich der extremen Selbstbefragungen und Grenzüberschreitungen (Schwarzenbach, 2010b:174–175).

The difficulty of dividing the text forms is thus not surprising. It is, however, possible to define single features of the genres and use them to read a text. This does not mean that the text is limited to one of these features. Nor does it mean that the text belongs to or can be placed in a fixed genre. Jaton's description of *L'Usage du monde* summarises this very well:

[...] le journal, les mémoires, la lettre, le poème peuvent s'y mêler, sans pour autant provoquer un effet de disparate, parce que le fil rouge de l'itinéraire y crée une profonde unité. C'est très exactement le cas de l'Usage du monde où le récit à la première personne est entrecoupé de lettres, de poèmes, où les fragments de notes prises en route, et parfois scrupuleusement datées, alternent avec les éclats plus tardifs de la mémoire, produisant en effet final puissamment unitaire (Jaton, 2011:33).

Here we are confronted, though, with the multiple aforementioned possibilities of translation for the *récit de voyage*. As it embraces several literary forms, it can be understood as the English term *travel literature*, which tells us no more than this is literature about travelling, like a film about travelling. But the reader still does not know what kinds of texts he or she is dealing with. Still, the *récit de voyage* cannot be equated with travel literature, as the *récit* excludes the travel novel. The travel book is often used as a synonym for the travel report, which becomes especially clear if one compares the definition by Jean Roudaut:

[The] Travel book is discontinuous. It juxtaposes also segments of texts which differ in tone... The text is stratified: it consists of various layers of voices, vocabulary (the descriptions vary in kind: landscapes, habitats, clothing works) and style... The travel book combines the heterogeneous (using all in one the form of memoir, diary, and the letter) and disparity. It aims at the mosaic (Roudaut, 1996:7–8),

with Forsdick's, Basu's and Shilton's definition of the journal:

The journal (unlike, in theory, the official logbook) is often subject to alteration on return either for the purposes of self-performance or in order to suppress those aspects of the journey with which the traveller may, on this return

to a customary routine and context, feel uncomfortable. In the same way, as a text such as Bouvier's *L'Usage du monde* [...] demonstrates, the reconstructed travel narrative often contains fragments of diary within the mosaic of genres that constitutes it (Forsdick, 2006:32).

Instead of distinguishing between travel writing and the travel book, *travel writing* is used here as the overarching term that includes all writings about travelling, including travel guides for tourism purposes as well as logbooks and any texts that deal with travel as a main topic. *Travel literature* is, again, a categorising term that includes works about journeys, works that have a literary value. Under this umbrella term, the reader still cannot be sure which type of text is meant, whether it be a book, an article, a short story or an essay, nor is it clear which genre he or she is about to read. The word "travel" can be added to each genre, and it becomes its own genre with typical characteristics of the style in which they are written, with the journey as the main topic. Their affiliations are – as is the case for other texts – not always clear:

Very few genres exist autonomously within single-language or single-cultural traditions; and travel literature, even more perhaps than the novel to whose emergence it is closely allied, must [...] be read as a transnational and transcultural form. Journey narratives themselves travel, in the same way as do the individuals whose itineraries they describe: both literally, as travellers themselves read en route and map their own journeys onto those of their predecessors, and metaphorically, as texts are adopted into different traditions (Forsdick, 2005:xix).

Considering Forsdick's words and Roger Perret's epilogue to Schwarzenbach's *Alle Wege sind offen*: "Ein Reisebericht ist erst dann überzeugend, wenn die Sprache selbst zur Reise wird" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:15), one may suggest – assuming they understood the *Reisebericht* as a *récit de voyage* in general – that the expression *travelling narrative* could be a more appropriate expression, as literature is constantly on the move. Besides the traveller within the narration, the text itself is moving: "Not only the travelogue but already one's own journey turns into a dialogue with other travelogues. Their results, experiences and at times also their forms and figures are set into motion and filled with new life. Intertextuality is

presented as a pattern of movement” (Ette, 2003:40), and so the reader of the travel book is also on the move: “The beginning of the journey on the level of the text corresponds to the movement of the reader, who agrees to leave his own space and to entrust himself to the journey through the foreign text” (Ette, 2003:33–34). Then the genres would also need to be modified into travelling diary, travelling narration, travelling report etc., which will be done in the following paragraphs to support the thesis of literature on the move.

Instead of distinguishing the text from its grade of reality within the travelling report by categorising it into “dokumentarische Reiseberichte”, “realistische Reiseberichte”, “revisionistische Reiseberichte” and “selbstreflexive Meta-Reisefiktionen” (Gymnich et al. 2008), as Ansgar Nünning does, this work will distinguish the travelling report, which focuses more on facts and reporting the observed, from the travelling narration, which focuses on narrating a journey.

The *travelling narration* is the most interesting genre for this dissertation, as the discussed works by Bouvier, Maillart and Schwarzenbach will be read as narrations told by autodiegetic narrators. It needs to be underlined that the discussed texts are *read* as travelling narrations, which is not to enclose them into one category. This would simply not be possible and would do nothing to avoid the issue, while probably even causing more confusion by adding descriptive adjectives to the genre categories, e.g. the “realistic” or “lyrical travelling report”, or the “self-reflective meta travel-fiction”. Again, the text cannot belong to a specific categorising term; it depends on how the text is read and interpreted, and there are, of course, various possibilities for doing so. The travelling narration is – just like the other travelling genres – a hybrid genre characterised by a combination of many genres into one. Olivier Hambursin names this phenomenon “l’art de récit” (Hambursin, 2005:229). Although this is an over-categorised term, it embraces the art of the travelling diary, the travelling report, the travelling journal, or the travelling narration. That is also why in the suggested chart, all genres listed at the bottom (travel diary, the travel journal/carnet de voyage, the travel report, and the travel narration) are figuratively connected to each other. Why do they need to be mentioned separately, then? Is it even possible to differentiate between those genres if they are all connected in the end? In that case it would really seem deeply suspicious to do so. It is, however, still possible to differentiate the genres in their form by imagining deleting the term “travel” from the beginning, which is actually the reason to combine all of them. There would probably be no objection

if one were to speak about Kafka's diaries as belonging to a different genre than his poetry and his prose, although it does not mean that the diary doesn't contain fragments of his prose. The deciding factor is which form and narratology predominate in the text.

Whereas the *travelling diary* focuses on the emotions of the narrator, the *travelling report* focuses much more on the descriptions of an experienced journey:

Die Pilgerinnenberichte schildern durchgehend Bekanntschaften mit anderen Pilgern [...]. Die unterschiedlichen Lebensgeschichten, Begegnungen und Episoden bewirken außerdem, dass die Texte bei allen Gemeinsamkeiten zugleich einzigartig sind (Holdenried et al., 2017:130).

This description applies very well to the report as such, and the word *Pilgerinnenberichte* could easily be exchanged with other words from the semantic field of the journey, because the description applies to the travelling report in general. It can therefore be seen as a synonym for travel descriptions other than the *travelling journal*; Hentschel writes about Goethe's texts *Auszüge aus einem Reise-Journal*, published in Wieland's *Teutschem Merkur* in 1788/1789:

Es sind allesamt keine Reisebeschreibungen, obwohl sie Reiseerfahrungen reflektieren. Die Bewegung des reisenden Erzählers und damit im Zusammenhang die je eigene authentische Erfahrung des Fremden wird nicht in den Bericht mit einbezogen (Hentschel, 1999:85).

The negation in this sentence reveals a characteristic that is also important for the travelling narration. The experiences noted in the text are no descriptions of an experienced journey – they can be summarised as factuality, subjective authenticity, discursivity, poetic prose, entertainment value and work of art. Those characteristics can all be found within the travelling narration. The travelling journal can be equated with the *carnet de voyage*, which has been defined by Forsdick as follows: “The carnet is the extension of a staple element of travel literature, i.e. the juxtaposition of text and image in the representation of the journey” (Forsdick, 2006:37). Borm's definition of the travel book actually serves as a suitable definition for the travelling narration, travelling journal, travelling diary or travelling report:

[...] any narratives characterized by a non-fiction dominant that relates (almost always) in the first person a journey or journeys that the reader supposes to have taken place in reality while assuming or presupposing that author, narrator and principle character are but one or identical (Hooper and Youngs, 2004:17).

According to this definition, the travelling book is the English counterpart of the French *récit de voyage*. However, the travelling novel and the travelling guide, which are both excluded from the *récit de voyage*, can both be named travelling books, as the latter is, simply put, a book about travelling, just as the travel text is a text about travelling. This does not give us any information on how to read the text.

Instead of the travelling diary, which is generally supposed to be personal, the travelling report comes closer to being made up of pure descriptions of experiences authors have on a journey they take, while the travelling journal combines both of them; meanwhile the focus of the travelling narration is not so much on the happenings and monuments described but on the perception of what is experienced. Just as the autobiography “might be read, as Couser suggests, for what it does, not from what it is” (Smith and Watson, 2010:19), the travelling narration embodies the spirit of the *littérature voyageuse* “qu’il faut bien dire ‘une certaine idée’ de la littérature, un commun désir de liberté, un ‘désir du monde’” (Borer et al. 1992:13), and is at the same time connected to the novel:

Hinter den Worten einer Reiseschriftstellerin oder eines Reiseschriftstellers können sich andere Autorenstimmen verbergen, die in diesen Worten anklingen oder sich ganz in deren Urheber verwandeln. Friedrich Nietzsches schwerwiegende Frage ‘Wer spricht?’ gilt auch hier. Die ‘Mehrstimmigkeit’ des Wortes bleibt nicht auf den Roman beschränkt, sie darf ebenso und in vollem Umfange für den Reisebericht Geltung beanspruchen (Ette, 2020:133).

In the following chapter, the author/narrator/traveller figure will be looked at closely, as will the narratological aspects within the narration.

3.2 Narratology and the Travelling Narration

Travelling narrations are characterised by three different levels: “der Traum von der Reise erstens, die wirkliche Reise zweitens und ihre Erzählung drittens” (Hoppe, 2009:81–82). This goes back to the three-phase-model by Karl-Heinz Stierle in 1975 ‘Geschehen – Geschichte – Text der Geschichte’.⁸⁴ One may describe those three levels with Benjamin’s words: a coordination of soul, eyes, and hand.⁸⁵ All three aspects may apply to the authors, each of whom went on a journey and wrote a book afterwards, respectively:

Dazu bedarf es wiederum narrativer und rhetorischer Strategien, die dem Geschehen der Reise natürlich keineswegs inhärent sind. Hinzu kommt, dass das Geschehen einer Fahrt überhaupt erst durch Geschichten und Erzählungen strukturiert wird. Für die Auseinandersetzung Reiseberichte ist es von größter Wichtigkeit, in Erinnerung zu behalten, dass diese Ebene die einzige ist, die wir beobachten können, denn nur sie beinhaltet der vor uns liegende Text (Agai and Conermann, 2013:16).

It is interesting that this is observed twice within the travelling narration. Not only in the text written by the author, but also in the story by the autodiegetic narrator who travels and tells the narratee about the writing and the created story.

Besides Gymnich’s, Nivre’s, Ansgar and Vera Nünning’s edited book from 2008, *Points of Arrival: Travels in Time, Space, and Self/Zielpunkte: Unterwegs in Zeit, Raum und Selbst* and the research group at the University of Bonn, “Europa von außen gesehen – Formationen nahöstlicher Ansichten aus Europa auf Europa” (founded in 2010), studies on travelling literature have not garnered much attention from narratological perspectives.⁸⁶ A possible reason for this has been summarised well by Bekim Agai: “Überspitzt gesagt, ist der historische Reisebericht zu real, um reine Literatur zu sein und zu fiktiv, um als reine wirklichkeitsabbildende historische Quelle zu dienen” (Agai and Conermann, 2013:29). Although

⁸⁴ See Stierle, 1975.

⁸⁵ See Benjamin, 2007:127.

⁸⁶ In some articles on the study of Schwarzenbach, a narratological perspective has already been thematized. See Carbone, 2010.

Agai is examining the interaction of narrative elements and facts well, in this research, the factual historical sources will not be ignored but rather remain in the background. As the accuracy of the facts is not decisive for an *ars vivendi*, what the author decides to include in the text and what the narrator tells the narratee in the end is what is important. Instead of speaking about the travelling report like Ansgar Nünning does in his article “Zur mehrfachen Präfiguration/Prämediation der Wirklichkeitsdarstellung im Reisebericht: Grundzüge einer narratologischen Theorie, Typologie und Poetik der Reiseliteratur” (Gymnich et al., 2008), Bekim Agai considers the examined text of travel author Şerefeddin Mağmumi, a report about a real person on a real journey. This “Ego-Dokument” is written in the first person with narrative charisma.⁸⁷ Agai examined the text in order to learn more about the author,⁸⁸ while the texts of Maillart, Schwarzenbach and Bouvier, (which have been examined extensively from biographical perspectives), will be considered as travelling narrations narrated by an autodiegetic narrator about a journey experienced by a real person. This qualification is, however, always subject to the consideration that, “Dabei ist unstrittig, dass ein faktuales Gerüst der Reise trotz diverser Formen von Intertextualität und narrativen Strategien immer auch vorhanden ist” (Agai and Conermann, 2013:30). Whether the text reflects what really happened on the journey will not be examined; not only because this would be “im Falle der Reiseberichte eine historische Detektivarbeit” (Agai and Conermann, 2013:40), but because it would not affect the results of this research.

3.2.1 The Narrator

The narrator of the travelling narration is usually an autodiegetic narrator⁸⁹ who consists of a narrated “I” and a narrating “I”. He or she is therefore a narrator who describes experiences both through the narrator’s own eyes and from a distance, focusing on historical or social events in the place visited.⁹⁰ The narrator is autodiegetic, as he or she is the main protagonist as well. In Maillart’s *The Cruel Way*, the narrator could be also seen as simply homodiegetic, as the narrator is the

87 See Agai and Conermann, 2013:30.

88 See Agai and Conermann, 2013:57.

89 See Agai and Conermann, 2013:176.

90 See Ette, 2003:30.

protagonist of the story. But Christina, the travel companion, plays a more significant role than the companions in the other two narrations, and could be seen as a protagonist of the story as well, even if the focalisation remains the same. In this way, the narrator speaks about himself seeing the world through his own eyes. The way of travelling – as Luigi Marfè wrote about Bouvier, “Il viaggio consente a Bouvier di osservare il mondo in prima persona, senza intermediazioni” (Marfè, 2009:84) – is reflected within the autodiegetic narrator. It is the author’s choice which perspective he or she chooses.⁹¹ The autodiegetic narrator helps the reader travel with him or her and underlines the personal level and authenticity of the narration. It is less important to examine the accuracy of the facts mentioned or of biographical aspects of the text because they do not influence the results of this research, but also because they simply cannot be distinguished anymore:

At what point may the discovered be distinguished from the invented? Are not both bound to an experience and to a ‘being-lived’, which in their nomadic, transareal dimensions shape the environment of millions of people today? (Ette, 2016:48).

Not the texts’ biographical accordance with the authors’ journeys, but the created veracity that they transmit is significant for showing literature as *ars vivendi*. That is why the distinction of author and narrator is of great importance for this work,⁹² even if “Autor, Erzähler, Protagonist bilden eine Einheit und die interne Fokalisierung sorgt dafür, dass der Leser in chronologischer Reihenfolge die Reise nacherlebt” (Agai and Conermann, 2013:45–46).⁹³ This is, however, only a narrative strategy: “Der Leser ist auf diese Art und Weise so nah am vermeintlich tatsächlich Geschehenen dran wie nur möglich. Doch die Art und Weise der Verschriftlichung, nämlich nachträglich und damit narrativ (re-)konstruierend, zeigt, dass dies nur eine narrative Strategie ist” (Agai and Conermann, 2013:46).

91 See Jost, 2005:24: “Denn der Autor hat ja die Wahl, aus welchem Gesichtspunkt er seine Beschreibung umsetzen wird.”

92 See Gymnich et al., 2008:25.

93 See the definition of identity from Lejeune in Niggel, 1989:243: “Bei der Definition von Identität geht man von drei Begriffen aus: Autor, Erzähler und Figur”.

While the narrations in general reflect the chronological path of the journey, Müller's distinction between the time narrated and the time of narration⁹⁴ can be clearly observed within the narration. In Bouvier's and Maillart's case, this takes place a little later, in Schwarzenbach's book, in contrast, it happens at the beginning, when the narrator exposes to the narratee that the journey is already long in the past: "Es ist lange her. Jener Anfang einer großen Reise ist zu einer sanften, einer unbeschwerten Erinnerung geworden, wie ein Traum, den man nicht zu fürchten braucht und den man nicht verliert" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:17). Thus, the time narrated differs from the time of narration, even if generally in the travel narration, the reader has the impression that the narrator, along with the reader themselves, is very close to the narrated story. The time gap between the time narrated and the time of narration appears continuously:

Therapia liegt so weit zurück wie die Kindheitsinseln. Alles schon einmal gesagt, alles überstanden, ich möchte jetzt mein Gesicht vergraben und schweigen. Wenn ich trotzdem diesen Namen beschwöre und liebe, so ist es vielleicht, weil nichts ihn beschwert – er stand ja am Anfang – und nichts ihm anhaftet als der von ganz leisen Abendwinden getragene, schon wieder verwehte Duft von Himbeeren, die in vielen Körben, frisch gepflückt, am kleinen Hafen standen zum Verkauf (Schwarzenbach, 2000:18).

All three authors use internal ana- and prolepses. Even if the reader is very close to the events and can reconstruct the journey through its chronological path, feeling its authenticity through the dialogues used and the detailed descriptions of what was experienced, the use of ana- and prolepses underlines the fact that the journey is reconstructed. It is not just that the traveller reconstructs the day when it is over, like in most diary entries; even if the reader generally has the impression that the story is told instantaneously after "the experienced", it is a reconstruction created after the journey. This not only becomes clear when checking the dates on which Maillart, Bouvier and Schwarzenbach went on their trips and when they actually wrote and published about them; the reader can also recognise from the prolepses used in the narration that the narrator already knows what happened

94 See Müller, 1948.

after the journey, as the journey already lies in the past. Kini, Maillart's narrator, already knows that her travel companion, Christina, will die only a few years after the journey.

The prolapse often includes problems of memory, in which the narrator already appeals to the questionable accuracy regarding how and if the experienced even happened:

Könnte ich doch den Hergang und Fortgang dieser nun beendeten Reise erzählen! Mit allen überstandenen Prüfungen, Gefahren, Magien, Unvergessenlichkeiten – und noch einmal in der sanft geschwungenen Bucht von Bandra liegen, die Augen ausruhen lassen im Pastell von Himmel und Meer, dem versinkenden Horizont. Noch einmal! Den Trost des frühen Morgens! Aber Ich habe alles, auch die letzte Stunde, vergessen. Lass mich nur die Augen öffnen der stürmischen Begegnung ... (Schwarzenbach, 2000:18).

Only at a very advanced stage of the text does Bouvier's narrator expose that he lost all his notes. In that very moment, the reader understands that all he or she has read so far must have been created simply from the memory of the narrator. What seems to be a prolapse shortly before the end of *L'Usage du monde*, a short chapter written in italics called: "Pour retrouver le fil – Écrit six ans plus tard" suddenly becomes the present of the text and makes the journey itself into an analepsis:

Et puis pourquoi s'obstiner à parler de ce voyage? quel rapport avec ma vie présente? aucun, et je n'ai plus de présent. Les pages s'amoncellent, j'écorne un peu d'argent qu'on m'a donné, je suis presque un mort pour ma femme qui est bien bonne de n'avoir pas encore mis la clé sous la porte. Je passe de la rêverie stérile à la panique, ne renonçant pas, n'en pouvant plus, et refusant de rien entreprendre d'autre par peur de compromettre ce récit fantôme qui me dévore sans engraisser, et dont certains me demandent parfois des nouvelles avec une impatience où commence à percer la dérision. Si je pouvais lui donner d'un coup toute ma viande et qu'il soit fini! mais ce genre de transfusion est impossible, la faculté de subir et d'endurer ne remplaçant jamais, je le sais, l'invention. (De l'endurance, j'en ai plus qu'il n'en faut: maigre cadeau des fées.) Non, il faut en passer par la progression, la paille au tas, la durée, les causes et les effets. Donc revenir au Château des Paiens, à ce trou de mémoire, à ces

versants de glaise jaune qui ne sont plus que grisaille, faible écho et lambeaux d'idées qui s'effilochent dès que j'essaie de m'en saisir, à cet automne âpre et heureux où ma vie m'apparaissait tellement mieux tracée, aux Français si vifs et remuants qui couronnaient cette colline et m'ont fait excellent accueil, m'ont découvert un monde, m'ont nourri du produit de leur pêche et de leur chasse. Revenir, mais surtout: creuser la terrifiante épaisseur de terre qui me sépare de tout cela. (Voilà aussi de l'archéologie! chacun ses tessons et ses ruines, mais c'est toujours le même désastre quand du passé se perd.) Forer à travers cette indifférence qui abolit, qui défigure, qui tue, et retrouver l'entrain d'alors, les mouvements de l'esprit, la souplesse, les nuances, les moirures de la vie, le hasard riche, les musiques qui vous tombent dans l'oreille, la précieuse connivence avec les choses, et ce si grand plaisir qu'on y prend. Au lieu de quoi: ce lieu désert qu'est devenue ma tête, la silencieuse corrosion de la mémoire, cette distraction perpétuelle qui n'est attention à rien d'autre (pas même la plus ténue des voix intérieures), cette solitude imposée qui est un mensonge, ces compagnies qui en sont d'autres, ce travail qui n'est plus du travail et ces souvenirs qui ont séché sur pied comme si une malveillance toute puissante avait tranché leurs racines, me coupant, moi, de tant de choses aimables. Encore une fois: revenir à la fouille. Je revois cent détails mais rien ne bouge plus. Il faut donc en décrire les acteurs, immobiles à table, le soir, dans la grande tente où l'on dînait (Bouvier, 2014:364–365).

Here, the reader is placed directly into the formation of the text, which was recreated six years after the events. The narrator suddenly has an external view of the protagonist and must recreate the scene. It is astonishing how detailed the narrator recreates the scene afterwards. He inserts the characters into the scene like a director of a theatrical production and becomes an omniscient narrator who knows what each of them were thinking, and he remembers a short dialogue. The described text suddenly becomes a scene that is much less authentic than the entire rest of the work. This becomes especially clear after five pages of this text fragment, when the text suddenly changes back into the main narration again, still describing the same day. The difficulty of remembering the journey is different from the difficulty of expressing oneself, a problem that the narrator openly addresses, mostly by expressing so-called "instants souverains". The use of this insecurity about how to put "the experienced" on paper is different from the use of a

hole in a character's memory, as the former does not question the authority of the narrator. Bouvier also uses an allegory here: the archaeological topic discussed at the table includes "digging" for memories in his brain. The fragment, which seems to be a prolapse at first glance due to the description "written six years later", is a complete analepsis which retrospectively fills a gap in the narrator's memory at the same time.

Afterwards, the journey continues – until the protagonists leave Afghanistan for India, and in this way, close the narration with the open road, as classic travel narrations usually do. This is not the case in the other two examples chosen for this research. Kini's journey would have ended in Kabul with a dialogue of their separation. While Christina went further North to Kunduz, Kini planned to travel to India. In the last chapter of Maillart's *The Cruel Way*, the narrator's present has changed again. From the journey's point of view, this is a prolapse in which the reader learns that Kini will spend the next few years in India. But it is also an analepsis, as Kini remembers the last time she met Christina and reconstructs their conversation. The narrator already knows what the protagonist will only learn in the very last sentence of the narration. Whereas Kini says before the last sentence: "Though she cannot answer me, I think she would have allowed me to quote some of her sentences" (Maillart, 2013:205). In the very end, the protagonist learns that Christina died: "From Switzerland I received the following answer: 'Christina died peacefully 15th November, 1942, suite bicycle accident Engadine'" (Maillart, 2013:207). In Schwarzenbach's example, the return to Switzerland has been added. It remains speculation, as the book has been edited posthumously, whether she had included the journey back home in her narration; she did not include it in her earlier narrations. Even though it takes place on her way back, the end of the narration is not a classical arrival back home but still ends with the departure motif: "In der ersten Stunde des neuen Tages, im kalten und starken Wind, der schon unsere Heimatküsten erreicht, ja, in diesem einzigen Augenblick ewig wiederkehrender Reue begreife ich: Was uns so erschüttert, ist immer wieder der Morgenglanz des Aufbruchs!" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:136). Therefore, even if Perret has added a chapter about the return from Afghanistan back to Switzerland, the narration still ends with the typical open road.

When speaking about Bouvier, Schwarzenbach or Maillart, it is not automatically intended to speak about them as authors. If author, narrator, and protagonist form one unity, though, the temptation is quite high to name them in the same way, to

call the narrators Bouvier, Maillart and Schwarzenbach as well, even though the narrators in the narration are unnamed. This situation falls under Philip Lejeune's category "2b = undefined" in his schematic diagram about defining autobiographies,⁹⁵ as the names of the autodiegetic narrators do not appear within the three narrations. The fact that Bouvier's *L'Usage du monde* carries the subtitle "Récit" also does not help the division between an autobiographical text or a novel, as the "récit" does not clearly signal belonging to either category. This will be discussed in the continuation of this chapter.⁹⁶

<i>Name der Figur</i> → <i>Pakt</i> ↓	≠ Name des Autors	= 0	= Name des Autors
romanesk	1 a ROMAN	2 a ROMAN	
= 0	1 b ROMAN	2 b unbestimmt	3 a AUTOBIO.
autobiographisch		2 c AUTOBIO.	3 b AUTOBIO.

Niggel, 1989:234

In *The Cruel Way*, the autodiegetic narrator is named Kini and her travel companion Christina, (both are the middle names of the authors Maillart and Schwarzenbach, respectively). According to Lejeune, this already excludes the text from the possibility of being autobiographical.⁹⁷ Lejeune's theory in terms of the "auto-

95 See Niggel, 1989:234.

96 Lejeune does not consider the problematic of the paratext here, namely that the author may not have an influence on the titles written on the cover.

97 See Lejeune in Niggel, 1989:234: "Schon diese Tatsache allein schließt die Möglichkeit der Autobiographie aus."

biographical pact” has already been fractured, though, by the example of J. M. Coetzee’s *Summertime*.⁹⁸

The companions’ names in Bouvier’s and Schwarzenbach’s texts appear, though with their full names: Schwarzenbach’s narrator speaks about her companion, Ella Maillart, and Bouvier’s speaks about his companion, Thierry Vernet, but this still leads us to the category 2b.

The name does indeed elicit an autobiographical feeling, though, if one looks at the text *Des monts célestes aux sables rouges*, in which the autodiegetic narrator is called Ella. This can also be seen in Bouvier’s clearly autobiographical text, *La guerre à huit ans*, when he tells a story about his grandparents and parents from the perspective of a young boy named Nicolas.⁹⁹

In the same way that Ette is careful to distinguish between the text’s external and internal figure in Auerbach’s work:

Wir sollten weder das wissenschaftliche noch das erzählende Ich, die beide textinterne Instanzen darstellen, mit dem realen, textexternen Erich Auerbach gleichsetzen oder verwechseln [...]. Gewiß lügt der Autor als Gewährsmann des von ihm Erzählten und Analysierten immer wieder zwischen den Zeilen hervor, doch ist er eine Figur, die im Gegensatz zum realen Autor textintern bleibt (Ette, 2004:60),

a distinction needs to be made between Bouvier, Maillart and Schwarzenbach as internal and external travellers and writers. This is often ignored in academic research about travel literature, in which most scholars simply assume they are dealing with the author and his or her autobiographical writing and disregard Lejeune’s theory of the “fictive” name, as in Decock’s and Schaffer’s article, “Wenn sich ihre [Maillart’s] Reisegefährtin Schwarzenbach, die in Maillarts Buch *Christina heißt*” (Holdenried, 2017:74).

Olaf Georg Klein speaks about the difference between technical and existential knowledges of time in his book, *Zeit als Lebenskunst*. With the latter knowledge,

98 See Smith and Watson, 2010:14–15.

99 In Maillart’s *Ti-Puss*, however, the protagonist’s name, Ella, does not cause an autobiographic mood.

he underlines the importance of who transfers this knowledge to us. Travelling narrations, whether they are fictional or not, give the reader confidence. As a traveller and writer, the narrator seems to be qualified to share his or her existential knowledge of travelling, a knowledge and ability needed for *ars vivendi*, with the reader. This way of thinking is also reflected in the type of narration found in all three works when the narrator speaks directly to his or her interlocutor,¹⁰⁰ fulfilling the Benjaminian task of the narrator: “Der Erzähler nimmt, was er erzählt, aus der Erfahrung; aus der eigenen oder berichteten. Und er macht es wiederum zur Erfahrung derer, die seiner Geschichte zuhören” (Benjamin, 2007:107). The focus on the subjective experiences of the traveller has been transformed through the paradigm shift of the 18th century, when travel reports changed from informative tasks into subjective reflections: “Da sich dieser [the traveller] in der Reisebeschreibung als gestalteter Charakter zeigt, vermag sich der Leser mit seiner eigenen Erfahrungswelt einzufühlen und die Unternehmung an Stelle des Protagonisten bzw. mit ihm zu machen” (Hentschel, 1999:28). The paradigm change also shifted the rather fact-oriented report into a more poetical travel narration by maintaining an ambiguity between fact and fiction:

Indem sich die Reiseliteratur als grundsätzlich autobiographische Gattung allmählich aus dem Verbund der humanistisch-eruditen historia löst und – wenngleich seitenverkehrt – der fiktionalen Literaturproduktion annähert, bestimmt sie für das ganze Jahrhundert und darüber hinaus ihre Ambiguität zwischen Bildungsauftrag und Evasionsbedürfnis (Wolfzettel, 1986:10).

100 See Bouvier, 2014:235: “Moi, je crois plutôt ceci: des paysages qui vous en veulent et qu’il faut quitter immédiatement sous peine de conséquences incalculables, il n’en existe pas beaucoup, mais il en existe. Il y en a bien sur cette terre cinq ou six pour chacun de nous.” and Schwarzenbach, 2000:97: “Sie wissen, ich liebe den fröhlichen Hufschlag, den weichen Galopp, ich liebe die Jagd im Bachbett, auf steinigen Halden, und den letzten, scharfen Ritt über die weite Grasebene, den Wettlauf mit dem Schatten. Ihr wisst es doch, solcher Versuchung kann ich nicht widerstehen. Ein gesatteltes Pferd, sein Übermut, seine Treue, die gezügelte Lebensfreude.” and Maillart, 2013:64: “One great panel of faience-mosaic made me think of the time when one is in love, when one feels that never before has one really seen the splendour of the midnight heavens: the stars, no two of them alike, burn with such intensity they seem to come towards you. Imagine a corner of that sky but every star a coloured flower, then you have a hint of what I saw”.

This newly defined aim of travel literature influences how a travel report is narrated; facts and accuracy move into the background, and the focus lies on the narrator and the creation of their travelling narration.

Sie [die Reiseliteratur] legt es nicht darauf an, das pure “an sich” der Sache zu überliefern wie eine Information oder ein Rapport. Sie senkt die Sache in das Leben des Berichtenden ein, um sie wieder aus ihm hervorzuholen. So haftet an der Erzählung die Spur des Erzählenden wie die Spur der Töpferhand an der Tonschale (Benjamin, 2007:111).

Benjamin’s words can be interpreted here in three different ways. The creator of the clay bowl can either be understood as the author, who, according to Ricœur, will have an impact on the narrator through prefiguration. The creator of the clay could also be understood as the narrator himself, whose past journeys and memories of previously-told stories influence the “present” story. Third, the creator of the clay may refer to other travellers travelling on that road in earlier days:

Sie stiftet das Netz, welches alle Geschichten miteinander am Ende bilden. Eine schließt an die andere an, wie es die großen Erzähler immer und vor allem die orientalischen gern gezeigt haben. In jedem derselben lebt eine Scheherazade, der zu jeder Stelle ihrer Geschichten eine neue Geschichte einfällt. Dieses ist ein episches Gedächtnis und das Musische der Erzählung (Benjamin, 2007:117).

One may also speak about the tradition of the travelling narration, as Benjamin says: “Die Erinnerung stiftet die Kette der Tradition” (Benjamin, 2007:117). In the following, we will see which memories have had an influence on the travelling narrations of Maillart, Schwarzenbach and Bouvier by looking at intertextual relations.

3.2.2 Intertextuality

Intertextuality within the travelling narration creates this chain of tradition within the genre. Therefore, the travelling narration needs to be read with reference to Clifford Geertz and the theory of *New Historicism*,¹⁰¹ under consideration of travelling literature as a whole family, as travelling literature always builds on earlier travelling texts:

Writing and travel have always been intimately connected. [...] The biblical and classical traditions are both rich in examples of travel writing, literal and symbolic – Exodus, the punishment of Cain, the Argonauts, the Aeneid – which provide a corpus of reference and intertext for modern writers (Hulme and Youngs, 2002:2).

It also creates a trust in the author, narrator, and traveller from a narratological perspective, each of whom have been well informed about their road through knowledge gained from books, and are also experts when it comes to travelling as they are well-versed in travelling literature.

The individual levels of author, narrator and protagonist can be observed very well within intertextuality. Direct intertextual references which the narrator gives the narratee by quoting and naming other travellers and writers refer to the knowledge of the narrator. Intertextual references included by the authors without directly addressing them, (such as their way of describing the travel experiences), can be read as allusions to other texts such as: The Goethean panoramic description or as Chateaubriand's description of the magic of names or as Custine's mystery of nature and speechlessness of its description, Flora Tristan's and Georg Sand's divine depictions, as one can find in Schwarzenbach's works especially,¹⁰² this is the work of the author. Christophe Bourquin analysed the connection very well by saying:

101 The research group at the University of Bonn: "Europa von außen gesehen – Formationen nahöstlicher Ansichten aus Europa auf Europa" also take the theory of New Historicism into account in examining Muslim travel literature from a narratological perspective.

102 Compare to Wolfzettel, 1986:113; 121 and 144.

Entdecken und Beschreiben gehören zusammen. Sie sind die beiden Seiten ein und desselben Blattes, zwei Seiten ein und derselben Münze. Stets aufeinander bezogen, in ständiger Interdependenz, ist Ersteres ohne Letzteres nicht denkbar: Parallel zur Entdeckung der Welt geht ihre Beschreibung einher. [...] Wenn die Entdeckung qua Entdeckung ihre Beschreibung impliziert, dann impliziert die Entdeckung der entdeckten Welt die Entdeckung der beschriebenen Welt (Bourquin, 2006:255).

The interest of the travel authors lies not only in the discovery of the described world, but also in the discovery of the discovery of the described world. That is why they continuously refer to people who have already travelled on their paths.¹⁰³ Then the protagonists' intertextuality can be observed as well, as they are travelling with actual books in their luggage, which they decided to take with them on the journey.

Forsdick speaks about intertextuality as a “defining element of travel literature” (Forsdick, 2006:35). The transtextual presence – to use Genette’s term – in Maillart’s, Schwarzenbach’s and Bouvier’s books is omnipresent. Obviously Maillart and Schwarzenbach, who travelled together, had a strong personal connection, and each plays a part in the other’s books about their shared journey. In Schwarzenbach’s *Alle Wege sind offen*, the travel companion is hardly written about. However, when the narrator speaks about her, the companion is called Ella Maillart. Christina, who portrays Annemarie Schwarzenbach, could be described as the main character of Maillart’s *The Cruel Way* next to the homodiegetic narrator. The authors not only knew each other personally, they also alluded to each other’s texts. Maillart, for example, speaks about “Christina’s happy valley” (Maillart, 2013:87), referring to Schwarzenbach’s paratext, the book titled *Das glückliche Tal*

103 Zoroaster, whom Maillart, 2013:60, calls “one of the greatest among those who travelled along our road” or Marco Polo: “I was interested to read what Marco Polo said about the ‘large and very noble city’ of Tabriz”, Maillart, 2013:61–62, or “Links, am Ende der Ebene, erblickten wir die Heerstrasse Alexanders”, Schwarzenbach, 2016:102, and “On signa un registre noir, [...] quelque lignes en dessous d’Aurel Stein qui avait passé par là vingt ans plus tôt”, Bouvier, 2014:273. Not only following the discovery of the described, but also imagining how the discovered would have been described by other writers: “Cette ville m’attache, et comme j’ai Stendhal en tête j’en profite pour me dire qu’il l’aurait aimée aussi”, see Bouvier, 2014:229.

(translated as *The happy valley*). Schwarzenbach's sentence, "Ich wäre nicht anders als die Blinden, Stummen und Bettler", (Schwarzenbach, 2010:115) is written nearly identically by Maillart in *The Cruel Way*.¹⁰⁴

Bouvier was himself an admirer of Maillart, and he wrote the prefaces to Maillart's book *Oasis interdites* (Maillart, 2002). There is also a collection of photography that Bouvier and Maillart published in their book, *La vie immédiate* (Bouvier and Maillart, 1991).

Their works are characterised by their intertextuality with texts by other (travel-) authors in particular. Maud Perrioux has already pointed out that intertextuality plays an important role in Bouvier's works,¹⁰⁵ and Anne Marie Jaton has described Bouvier as a writer 'à la Montaigne' and 'à la Michaux':

Il prend en effet pour modèle aussi bien les Essais ('la seule variété me paye, et la possession de la diversité') que les livres acides comme des pommes trop vertes de l'écrivain belge, sans cesse à la recherche du 'gong fidèle d'un mot' Henri Michaux, convaincu qu'il existe des pays 'maudits', comme l'Écuador dont il trace un portrait inquiétant, est le plus hostile et les plus désenchanté des voyageurs. Il enseigne à Bouvier qu'il faut savoir faire place à la déconfiture et au désastre. Sans lui, peut-être que l'écrivain aurait idéalisé davantage ses expériences et, à côté de L'Usage du monde, livre de grâce et de sagesse, il n'aurait pas écrit le Poisson-Scorpion, livre de déréliction et d'hallucination (Jaton, 2011:32).

Thanks to quotes and allusions, travelling narrations not only gain another characteristic but also include (and thus create) a tradition of travelling literature. Homer's *Odyssey*, of course, needs to be mentioned at some point: "Like Leon of Thurié, what we longed for was 'to sail the rest of the way stretched out on our backs like Odysseus'" (Maillart, 2013:36). The names of Herod the Great,¹⁰⁶ Montaigne¹⁰⁷ or Nerval¹⁰⁸ also appear.

104 See Maillart, 2013:85–86.

105 See Maud Perrioux in Hambursin, 2005:248.

106 See Bouvier, 2014:202.

107 See Maillart, 2013:6, Bouvier, 2014:227.

108 See Bouvier, 2014:224.

Maillart quotes Emerson: “The Hero is he who is immovably centred’ wrote Emerson” (Maillart, 2013:38), and so does Bouvier in the very end of *L’Usage du monde*. Quoting Emerson in their works, it is very likely that Bouvier and Maillart were familiar with Emerson’s *The conduct of life*, which is also related to the philosophy of *ars vivendi*.

Their intertextual fragments mostly refer to European literature, probably due to their prefiguration (which they are trying to free themselves of), but they also show an interest in travel authors not limited to the French-, English- or German-speaking world. Maillart, in particular, quotes many travellers, writers and philosophers without European identities such as Asanga¹⁰⁹ or Xuanzang, who inspires her narrator: “whose writings had so greatly helped me to appreciate what I saw” (Maillart, 2013:151) and whom she admired: “Hsuan Tsang, my guide in so many places, was here in 632” (Maillart, 2013:174). Bouvier speaks, for example, about Sadegh Hedayat¹¹⁰ and refers to Hafiz.¹¹¹ Thanks to these numerous inter- as well as intratextual references, (which are not only characteristic of the works of these three authors, but which have previously been observed in travelling literature in general), the travelling narration continues its journey and keeps literature moving.

3.2.3 Intermediality – Iconic, Phonic, and Tangible Landscapes

“Welche Sprache aus dem Geben kommt.

Welche Musik”¹¹²

Wolfgang Büscher

In this chapter, intermedial narratology will not be addressed by discussing the narration in different mediums such as text, painting, graphic novel, film etc. It will focus instead on the intermediality of the narration, namely, how other mediums are included *within* the travelling narration.

109 See Maillart, 2013:175.

110 See Bouvier, 2014:220.

111 See Bouvier, 2014:224; 316.

112 Büscher, 2006:39.

By examining travelling narrations, one can observe that not just music, but art, too, arises from walking: “Der Dichter, als Musiker und Maler, entdeckt in seinen Empfindungen die *analogia entis*. In dieser ‘Pracht des Orients’, wo ‘Ordnung und Schönheit’ herrschen, spricht ‘alles [...] verstohlen dort die Seele mit lieben Heimatworten an” (Le Rider, 1997:153). Jacques Le Rider quotes Baudelaire’s *Auforderungen zur Reise* here, and it is probably no coincidence that Goethe started his *Farbenlehre* after his journey through Italy. In the travelling narration of the 20th century, it is not the classical aesthetic beauty which unites the arts. It is not sufficient that the observations “speak” to the traveller. It is also not sufficient to simply see or observe, as Agai already figured out in Şerefeddin Mağmumi’s travel text: “Es reicht eben nicht aus, sich nur auf das Sehen zu konzentrieren” (Agai and Conermann, 2013:45). Even if he refers to the travellers’ knowledge about the places visited, which of course also plays an important role in the travel texts discussed here, the experience must be had with all the senses. The traveller must feel, see, touch, smell and taste the world. The experiences touch the soul with all senses. The travelling author as poet, musician, painter, and photographer experiences the world in all its facets, expressing every sense in words. Simone Wichor continues the work of Katharina Sykora, Regina Dieterle, Renée Riedler, Barbare Stempel and Silvia Kenke on the connection and interaction between writing and photography in Schwarzenbach’s works, but I would argue that it consists of more than an “Abfotografieren” (Decock and Schaffers, 2008:249), and that it is not only the eye of the camera or the “Kameraauge einer Fotografin” (Decock and Schaffers, 2008:249) that reflects the picture of the unknown. The authors create an iconic, phonic, and tangible landscape of the senses on paper. Not only seeing the world, but experiencing it with all five senses¹¹³ is required for telling the travelling narration. In addition, the authors also go through all five elements metaphorically. The traveller and writer within the narration literally experiences earth, water, and air while fire stands for their passion for the journey, writing and literature, the lust for gaining knowledge. Aether, the fifth element, can be seen in the spiritual fragments, the narrators’ metaphysical thoughts of the space between earth, sky and beyond. Those five elements, as well as the five senses, come to ex-

113 See also Jatou, 2011:31: “Le cœur thématique des ouvrages est constitué par un regard et des sens.”

pression within the ten motifs. They are the basics of experiencing the motifs so full of life *a priori*, and thus create an *ars vivendi*.

The discussion of a fusion of the mediums of literature, music, art, and film in the 18th and 19th centuries changed in the 20th century to specify the characteristics of each medium and find out how the different mediums could be combined.¹¹⁴ Intermediality is, of course, not a phenomenon that appears only in travelling literature. It is a characteristic of literature in general: “Implizite wie explizite Intermedialität ist nicht allein ein Kennzeichen der Reiseliteratur, sondern der Literatur überhaupt” (Holdenried et al., 2017:185). Nevertheless, the use of intertextual counterparts in the travelling narration is omnipresent, as *ars vivendi* is an art as well, and thus, just another medium which does not replace art, music, literature, or photography,¹¹⁵ but which stands beside them and is expressed with and within the mediums.

In the works of Maillart, Schwarzenbach and Bouvier, such examples of *ars combinatoria* exist. Topping states the connection between art, music, and the text. Of Bouvier’s masterpiece he says: “L’Usage du monde displaces any hierarchical struggle between verbal and visual in favour of an iconotextual mosaic that privileges polyphony and exchange” (Topping, 2010:302). This thought about polyphony is shared by Rybakov, who focused on Bouvier’s works in terms of music and images: “musique alors la photographie. Paysages de variations, de symphonies, de ballades, de fugues. En quelques clichés, voyage au cœur d’un monde polyphonique” (Guyader, 2010:26). In an interview with Irène Lichtenstein-Fall, Bouvier describes the world as “constamment polyphonique” (Bouvier, 2004:106). Topping discovered that the image of a text as a mosaic reflects the life of a traveller, and the encounter with the diversity of our planet. This mosaic consists not only of music and words, but also of illustrations. Bouvier adds to his *L’Usage du monde* sketches of Thierry Vernet’s paintings. Schwarzenbach and Maillart included photographs of their journey to their books, although those have been deleted in some editions, which has led to justified criticism.¹¹⁶ However, the intermedial methodol-

114 See Zima, 1995.

115 See Schmid, 1998:74–75: “Die Kunst löst sich nicht in Lebenskunst auf. [...] Die Künste wurden lediglich ergänzt um die Kunst, das Leben zu führen.”

116 See Walter Fähnders in: Carbone 2010:24: “Vielfach ist über die editorischen Mängel hinaus Kritik an einzelnen Bänden laut geworden. Dass bei der Neuauflage von

ogy consists of more than the arts within the books, photographs, or film material that the authors produced. They – especially Bouvier – refer to the act of painting many times within their literature. They refer to the problem of not being able to express everything in words and to the miserable lack of knowledge reflected in not being able to communicate the things seen and experienced through painting. A writer should be able to paint in order to “paint” his text. This is no unknown metaphor, looking at Lessing’s quotation from *Laokoon*: “Aber der Dichter soll immer malen” (Jost, 2005:73), and Jost already figured out that this applies to travel literature in particular:

Im 19. Buch von Dichtung und Wahrheit berichtet Goethe über seine jugendliche ‘Gewohnheit, [...] die Landschaft als Bild zu sehen’ [...] Lessing selbst hatte sich im Lakoon nur mit der poetologischen Problematik des Phänomens befaßt. [...] ‘Aber der Dichter soll immer malen’ stellt er kategorisch fest. Insbesondere die Autoren von Reiseliteratur betonen immer wieder die Verwandtschaft von Dichtern und Malern (Jost, 2005:73).¹¹⁷

Besides the intermedial methodology, writing about the different mediums and writing *with* the mediums can be observed in the selected texts. Bouvier submits to a colour training during the journey to Kabul – not least of all due to his friend, Thierry Vernet, who accompanies him. Bouvier confirms this in the interview with Irène Lichtenstein-Fall:

Dans le sud iranien, les couleurs sont admirables aussi à cause de la douceur de la lumière. Vous avez des reliefs très érodés, toutes les teintes que le sable peut avoir et c’est bleu omniprésent, d’une finesse extraordinaire, qui se marie au rose saumon et au violet léger du crépuscule. Tout cela m’aurait de toute façon frappé mais j’aurais moins bien su le dire si je n’avais voyagé, de Belgrade à Kaboul et en bien d’autres lieux auparavant, avec Thierry Vernet. C’est comme si j’avais traversé la France à pied avec Van Gogh. Il me rendait sans cesse at-

Winter in Vorderasien (2002) die Fotografien, die Schwarzenbach dem Buch beigegeben hat, fehlen, wurde ebenso gerügt (Vilas-Boas 2003:49).”

117 For the 18th and early 19th century, the travel literature of Friederike Brun could be used as an example.

tentif à des choses pour lesquelles je n'aurais peut-être pas trouvé les mots. Il y a eu une mise en forme du plaisir visuel, une sorte de training, comme si j'avais été avec un entraîneur sportif pour la couleur. Et ensuite, ça m'est resté (Bouvier, 2004:96).

This experience has a visibly significant influence on his books. He “paints” his travel reports with a range of colours. Colours are no arbitrary adjectives and not only do they reflect his attention to detail, but they indicate his point of view towards a global world. The choice of colours in his descriptions is a method of writing; it is one of his *usage(s) du monde* for a colourful life and a colourful text, as Maud Perrioux noticed: “Un texte est jugé vivant quand il recrée un monde plein de couleurs, d'odeurs et de bruits, où fourmillent des adjectifs et des images sélectionnés avec soin” (Hambursin, 2005:240).

However, his *theory of colours* learned via his companion cannot be the only reason for this colourful writing style. All three authors wrote with colours and sounds. The phrase “welche Kunst” could be added to Büscher’s statement, “Welche Sprache aus dem Gehen kommt. Welche Musik” (Büscher, 2006:39). Writing, making music and painting seem to be inseparably linked in the travel narration. One reason for this may lie in the fact that travelling is movement through time and space. Auditory phenomena like words and sounds are categorised into temporal perception according to Lessing,¹¹⁸ whereas visual phenomena take place in space. Hans Holländer has questioned this by arguing that architecture that can be visited and thus would be categorised as a visual phenomenon also carries its time of creation and other events with it, and could thus be categorized into temporal perception as well.¹¹⁹ The traveller is steadily experiencing auditory and visual phenomena on the journey simultaneously, and is therefore also travelling both in and through time and space at the same time. The perception of time and space is of such importance to the traveller and so essential for *ars vivendi* that it is discussed as one of the motifs in the main chapter.

The use of describing (with) colours is conspicuous in all three works. The colour written about above all others is Persian blue:

118 See Göpfert, H. G. (ed), (1974), G. E. Lessing, Werke – *Kunsttheoretische Schriften. Laokoon*. Bd. 6, Munich.

119 See Hans Holländer in: Zima, 1995:129.

Where traces of gold-painting sparkled over deep blue, it evoked a night sky. One great panel of faience-mosaic made me think of the time when one is in love, when one feels that never before has one really seen the splendour of the midnight heavens: the stars, no two of them alike, burn with such intensity they seem to come towards you. Imagine a corner of that sky but every star a coloured flower, then you have a hint of what I saw. This dark enamel has nothing in common with Prussian blue and its cold green afterglow: it is of a dark, dense ultramarine with a faint touch of deep red in it. I saw sculptured alabaster blocks with such rare jade-like shades that I should have liked to stay much longer to enjoy them (Maillart, 2013:64).

While Maillart is speaking about actual mosaics, Bouvier's style of writing is often described as mosaic or compared to collage.¹²⁰ Maud Perrioux interprets the three books, *L'Usage du monde*, *Chronique Japonaise* and *Journal d'Aran et d'autres lieux* in her article, "Une Esthétique du Fragment. Écrire pour retenir et pour laisser" in a stylistic way. She summarises:

Il s'agit en somme d'une écriture pointilliste: les détails s'inscrivent dans une économie textuelle et une structure phrastique marquées par la forme brève, l'ellipse et la rupture. Les blancs ainsi pratiqués mettent en valeur les points retenus tout en faisant du texte un véritable collage (Hambursin, 2005:242).

This mosaic way of writing can be also found in Maillart's text:

The early morning filled me with delight. The colours were bright but mellow, as if edged with mother-of-pearl – the emerald of the short-napped grass, the violet and orange of the cliffs, the yellows of the fields, the sparkling of poplar leaves; and above it all the incredible blueness of the sky, a deep rich blue as we have it over the snowfields in Switzerland. The Koh-i-Baba floated grey and vaporous, as if very far. To the north, beyond the pink cliffs and their sculptured figures, rose high hills with velvety blue furrows dotted here and there with little blots of snow (Maillart, 2013:173).

120 See Forsdick, 2005 and 2006.

Just as Bouvier does, Maillart is *painting* the text in that fragment; the amount of these scenes and the variety of colours frequently used leave a strong impression on the reader:

[...] rose-coloured earth, a tiny jewel of an incredible blue density dazzled in the silent solitude. It was our first glimpse of the King's Dam, the Band-i-Amir. Mountain wheat grew sparsely at our feet, short, stiff, solid, its ear like a broad blade. Further on we found an amazing scene spread at our feet – a string of lakes caught between pink cliffs, their colours passing from apple-green, turquoise, gentian and Prussian blue to dark indigo. Shallow, the two first were set in a ring of bright white limestone (Maillart, 2013:183).

Colours are mainly used to describe the landscape. The use of colours for landscapes that the traveller admires sounds like an ode to the piece of earth described:

They showed such vivid crimson, orange and grey that the eye went back to them again and again, to make sure of what it had seen. With the rays of the setting sun these walls became a vision of flamboyant velvet belonging to a world of legend (Maillart, 2013:171).

A pictorial way of narrating a story can also have a commemorative purpose, just as *ars memorativa* is a training to improve the memorization of geometrical forms, the pictorial descriptions may also create a commemorative character with the intention of not forgetting the experienced “pictures” of landscapes.

Sound has a similar weight to colours in the travel narration of Bouvier and Schwarzenbach, less in Maillart's text. Schwarzenbach wrote in a letter to Ernst Merz about her texts:

Es ist merkwürdig, dass außer Ihnen niemand das in meinen Schriften versteht, was mir Freude macht: die Art, der Klang, die Schönheit des Wortes. Ich schreibe fast nie eine Idee zur Liebe, sondern ein irgendwann aufgetauchter Gedanke ist nur die Grundlage und gibt mir die Mittel, schreiben zu dürfen. Der Inhalt ergibt sich von selbst, aber zu schreiben, zu Formen – langsam,

gleichsam musizierend zu schreiben: das gibt mir ein ungeheures Problem (Vilas-Boas, 2003:53).

Here she describes the difficulty of *playing* a text: of writing in a way akin to playing music. It is not about mentioning the importance of music within the narration; rather the travel narration becomes a musical score with a rhythm that continuously reminds the reader directly of the importance of music and art:

Eine Hymne auf seinen Namen, denn Namen sind mehr als geografische Bezeichnungen, sind Klang und Farbe, Traum und Erinnerung, sind Geheimnis, Magie – und es ist nicht etwa ernüchternd, sondern ein wunderbarer Vorgang, wenn man sie eines Tages wiederfindet, beschwert mit Glanz und Schatten, Feuer und kalter Asche der Wirklichkeit (Schwarzenbach, 2000:54).

Therefore, one could speak about music in the travel narration as “word-music”, in which music is transmitted through rhythm or onomatopoeia.¹²¹ This is most often seen in poetry,¹²² which probably creates the impression that the travel narration is often lyrical. In Bouvier’s texts, music also appears as so-called “verbal-music” (Steven Paul Scher) in which music itself becomes the topic and is discussed in the text. Bouvier writes about the different kinds of music sung by people he meets on the journey. The book, *L’Oreille du voyageur*, (again, an inter-medial example, as it comes with a CD), focuses on the music Bouvier cites and describes in his work. It also includes manuscripts of Bouvier’s notes that prove the importance of music to the writer:

A dix-neuf ans, j’ai lâché le piano pour l’Université et n’ai d’ailleurs pas regretté ce choix. Mais j’ai toujours considéré la musique qui est langage et réconfort universels comme l’art par l’excellence, comme la plus haute et la plus tutélaire de nos fabrications. J’écoute sans cesse de la musique en travaillant. Si l’on me

121 See Steven Paul Scher (ed) (1992), *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

122 See Albert Gier in Zima, 1995:71: “Wortmusik ist in den drei Großgattungen Lyrik, Epik, Dramatik gleichermaßen möglich, kommt aber am weitaus häufigsten in der Lyrik vor.”

faisait cadeau d'une autre vie, je voudrais être pianiste (Tocquer and Guyader, 2008:100).

Neither paintings, nor photography, nor music nor words can reproduce the *ars vivendi* of a journey: “La photo ne peut pas plus reproduire les tons veloutés de ces émaux qu'elle ne peut capter le lustre d'un riche tapis” (Perret, 2003:130). Neither photography nor the text itself is sufficient to express “the experienced” from the journey. This will not only be transmitted in the travelling narration but is explained by Bouvier straight away in his book *L'Echappée belle* when he writes:

Dans ce travail de cordonnier, je me suis très vite heurté aux insuffisances du langage qui découlent souvent de nos carences personnelles, mais existent aussi objectivement. Si le langage est bien un des serviteurs, un des miroirs du monde, c'est un serviteur souvent absent, un miroir presque toujours embué. En cherchant à rédiger ce qui devait être le simple compte rendu d'une longue route, je me suis aperçu qu'un certain nombre de choses refusaient d'être dites, et que plus elles étaient centrales et essentielles, plus elles renâclaient à être réduites à des mots. La raison de cette réticence étant, je crois, que le monde est sans cesse et partout polyphoniques et qu'à ce monde, nous ne prêtons par 'insuffisance centrale de l'âme' (Antonin Artaud) qu'une attention monodique... ou pas d'attention du tout. Quand nous lisons la partition, nous n'en lisons le plus souvent qu'une ligne (Bouvier, 1996b:54).

Life as a score needs to be read between the lines and the mediums need to be compiled; they need to work together using their specific characteristics to try to narrate the journey in the best possible way, and it is probably the reason why Bouvier “a cherché toute sa vie l'unité du monde et ce qu'il appelait avec insistance sa *polyphonie*” (Jaton, 2011:12).

3.2.4 The Narratee

A book needs a reader, and the narrator needs a narratee; the verb, “to tell” is usually followed by an object pronoun, as the question always arises: Whom am I telling a story? Whom are the three authors' narrators telling the story about the journey to Kabul? While Maillart's narrator, Kini, partly addresses her travel

companion, Christina, who is already dead by the time she is being addressed, all three authors address – albeit rarely – their narratees directly, using the second-person singular form. Even though the implied reader belongs to the “real” world of the implied author, the narrator’s narratee is the reader of the narration, even if the imagined readership does, of course, differ from the actual readers of the travel narrations, which Ette also emphasises when writing about the end of Auerbach’s *Mimesis*:

Die wiederholte, insistierende Wendung an den Leser, an die Leser schließt den Kreis zum ersten Kapitel und führt vor Augen, daß die geteilte Lektüre selbst hochgradig bedeutungsvoll ist, schafft sie doch eine Gemeinschaft der Lesenden, die durch das vorgelegte Buch erst wiederhergestellt und neu geschaffen werden muß. Das Buch will die ‘überlebenden Freunde von einst’ erreichen, aber auch andere Leser ‘finden’ – und dies heißt zugleich erfinden –, um sie auf diese Weise ‘zusammenzuführen’ (Ette, 2004:58–59).

The community of the readership of the “surviving friends” and “the implied readership” could be a reason why Ella Maillart wrote – after publishing her first books in French – most of her works in English. It is likely that more people she met on her journeys spoke English than French. She might have been able to reach a bigger audience of “surviving friends”, (or a bigger audience in general), by telling the stories in English. In contrast to Bouvier and Schwarzenbach, who were writing in their native language, Maillart’s narrator claims to be home “nowhere – unless it is everywhere” (Maillart, 2013:203). She also may have tried to create a distance from her nationality by distancing herself from her mother tongue.

The sense of community between the narrator and the narratee is also created by using the first-person plural. Here, it has to be distinguished from the inclusion of the travel companion in the narrative perspective, as in the following: “Als wir von Kabul aus die versprochenen Schnittmuster nach Kaiser schickten, leisteten wir auch einen winzigen Beitrag zu den Folgen dieser Gesetze. Wir bekämpften den Tschador!” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:66). Another example is the direct addressing of the narratee in the first-person plural:

On s’étire, on fait quelques pas, pensant moins d’un kilo, et le mot ‘bonheur’ paraît bien maigre et particulier pour décrire ce qui vous arrive. Finalement,

ce qui constitue l'ossature de l'existence, ce n'est ni famille, ni la carrière, ni ce que d'autres diront ou penseront de vous, mais quelques instants de cette nature, soulevés par une lévitation plus sereine encore que celle de l'amour, et que la vie nous distribue avec une parcimonie à la mesure de notre faible cœur (Bouvier, 2014:112).

The use of the second-person plural, which can also be found in this example, unites the narratees and shows that the readership of the narration is seen as the narratee, and not a specific or single person.

Furthermore, Ette speaks about the common memory as a 'new bond' that unifies reader and writer: "So ist die gemeinsame Erinnerung [...] konstitutiv für einen Pakt, vielleicht sogar einen 'neuen Bund', der Autor und Leser in der gemeinsamen Lektüre jenes Buches vereint" (Ette, 2004:59). By telling a story to narratees, known or unknown, the narrator passes his or her knowledge and memories on to the readership. The transience of the experienced, but also of life in general, is an important motif in the travelling narration and will be discussed in the chapter '4.7.4. memory and forgetting'. It becomes clear within the narrations that one of the reasons for writing is to prevent the forgetting of the journey, which stands in contrast to post-war literature, in which writing helps to forget.¹²³ The same may also happen to the travel narrator, however, who repeatedly claims to forget the experiences after they have been written down. The memories only live on in the narratee's mind and in the mind of the reader of their travel narrations, who can re-read the stories and add them to their own memories.

123 Look for example in Semprún, 1994.

4 On the Road – Motifs for the Travelling Narration

Now that the idea of the trip has been born, the journey carefully prepared and the engine started, it is time for the examination and comparison of *ars vivendi*, *L'Usage du monde*, *The Cruel Way* and *Alle Wege sind offen*. Having introduced and clarified the terms *ars vivendi* and travelling narration, it is up to the road, the main chapter, to compare and interpret the texts. Furthermore, this chapter will figure out the results derived from the philosophical point of view of *ars vivendi* and the narratological perspective of the autodiegetic narrators, who are on the road and driving on their path in the way that Ette describes as “Die Welterfahrung öffnet sich hier auf eine Welt-Erfahrung im buchstäblichen Sinne einer Bewegung über die unterschiedlichen territorialen, religiösen und kulturellen Grenzen hinweg” (Ette, 2010:134).

The following chapters all contain topics that Wilhelm Schmid influentially discusses in his approach to a philosophy of *ars vivendi*. Looking at the three texts, it can quickly be observed that such topics of *ars vivendi* are also present within each travelling narration. This main chapter will focus on the texts of the travelling narrations and their content. The ten motifs will help the reader go through the comparison of the texts and understand the connection between the travelling narration and *ars vivendi*. The subjects themselves will only be defined briefly. They will not be examined using the wide range of existing academic research because each subject is so broad that one could write a dissertation on each of the topics, respectively. Furthermore, this work aims to strengthen the relationship between *ars vivendi* and the texts and to create a new approach to the travelling narration.

The motifs are not listed in a hierarchical order. They also do not build on each other; they all cling together and could be arbitrarily changed to any other order. The aspects discussed in the intermediality of the five senses and elements are not separately structured in this main chapter, as these are the perceptions: the way they read, write, and travel the world, the way they experience culture, freedom, the other, religion, home, time and space and the way they cross borders. In all motifs, the use of the senses and elements, as well as the different landscapes discussed in the earlier chapter, will appear. They are not considered as separate motifs but as instruments for experiencing the single motifs and therefore, experiencing the world.

Combining *ars vivendi* and the travelling narration not only reveals how the traveller changes on the journey,

Le texte de Bouvier, dit-il [Charles Forsdick], loin de plaquer sur l'autre une identité qui se conforme aux conceptions préalables de l'auteur et aux attentes des lecteurs, démontre au contraire comment l'altérité transforme le voyageur (Baudelle and Marzewski, 2018:265),

but also in which way this perspective on the texts can change and influence the lives of the narratee and the implied reader:

La lecture des œuvres de Nicolas Bouvier peut changer une vie. Ses textes enchantent le monde. Mais surtout, ils donnent à voir et à penser ce que nous sommes exactement, dans ce monde quelquefois traversé avec inconséquence (Laporte, 2016:7).

The following ten motifs form the topics of the travelling narration that may have such an impact in and on the *ars vivendi* of the traveller, writer, and reader.

4.1 Culture

Culture – this is a broad term to begin with: “Culture is, assuredly, a perplexing phenomenon – ubiquitous in presence, complex in detail, and as such overwhelming and incomprehensible in its totality and in its intricacy. Any attempts to grasp

it all in analysis will, therefore, be frustrated from beginning to end” (Wuthnow et al., 2012:71). Luckily, to analyse culture is not the aim of this part of the dissertation.

What is going to be examined in this chapter are ways of life, traditions of the countries, habits and rituals of people, as well as the cultural heritage of monuments the travellers encounter on the journey. These topics hide under the title “culture”, under which they have been categorised within this chapter. How do they reflect the places they travelled to? What does culture mean to the autodiegetic narrator? Bouvier’s narrator is an example of Amin Maalouf’s hypothetical thesis:

Were it so that from early childhood on, and throughout an entire life, each person were encouraged to be enthusiastic for a culture and a language other than one’s one, that could be freely chosen and fully in keeping with one’s own preferences – and which would be studied even more intensively than the inevitable English – the result would be a dense cultural interweaving that would cover the entire planet, insofar as it would support the timid identities, weaken animosities, strengthen bit by bit the belief in the unity of the human adventure, and provide through all of this a beneficial jolt (Maalouf, 2009:106).

Right at the beginning of *L’Usage du monde*, Bouvier writes: “C’est la contemplation silencieuse des atlas, à plat ventre sur le tapis, entre dix et treize ans, qui donne ainsi l’envie de tout planter là” (Bouvier, 2014:10). Maalouf’s theory becomes practice in Bouvier’s narrator, who is interested in different countries and gets the idea of a journey around the globe. This is what Ette sees not only as a chance but as a necessity to widen one’s perspective and to leave behind the Eurocentric way of thinking in literature and in life, which was also one of the motivations for the authors to depart:

The literatures of the world, as certainly the most complex retentive and generative medium for knowledge, comprising also the greatest variety of times and cultures, offer us here, in relation to that which is mobile, a multitude of life-forms and life-norms that should enable us, polyperspectively and polylogically, to reread, to rethink, and to re-experience our world. For ultimately,

they avoid every attempt to systematize the world all-inclusively from one point, from one single place of writing. Differing from the concept of world literature formulated by Goethe, the literatures of the world are not centred in Europe, nor are they static; instead, they form a highly dynamic force field that is characterized by the constant interchanging of cultural logics, languages, and coordinates, and which can no longer be considered and ‘evaluated’ from Europe alone (Ette, 2016:34).

As the first motif addressed, the discussion of culture experienced on the journey shall start with this way of thinking, with a range of different perspectives. The choice of the three authors, all of Swiss origin, implies a European point of view written by a European scholar. One could therefore assume that a strong pre-figuration is brought into this research. However, the travelling narrations of the three authors will show how the European-centric perspective can be changed by observing from such a multitude of life-forms and life-norms in the travelling narration how the narrator – who is both traveller and writer – rereads, rethinks, and re-experiences the world.

4.1.1 **Origin and Movement**

Recently, in cultural and postcolonial studies, culture has become a more and more movable term. Like travelling literature, culture is never static but rather constantly in motion:

Any sort of attempt to identify the ‘origins’ of a movement thus opens itself again and again to other, earlier or later, movements, such that the sought-after origin loses itself, again and again, in countless plural origins. Movements always give evidence of how they were facilitated, and they, for their part, again and again facilitate, anew and from the beginning, that which, time and again, points to what came earlier and anticipates what it is to come. For transareal studies, too, it is not about a single origin, but as many origins as possible, not about a single background, but as many backgrounds as possible, which try out, in the experimental space for the literatures of the world – and not a world literature centered upon Europe – futures that are new and perhaps not yet thought of (Ette, 2016:49).

Within their narrations, the narrators of Bouvier, Maillart and Schwarzenbach share this understanding of culture. As everything is movable, they are looking for a beginning of this movement, chasing sources by being literally on the move, as Stephen Greenblatt explains in his mobility studies manifesto:

First, mobility must be taken in a highly literal sense. Boarding a plane, venturing on a ship, climbing onto the back of a wagon, crowding into a coach, mounting on horseback, or simply setting one foot in front of the other and walking: these are indispensable keys to understanding the fate of cultures (Greenblatt, 2009:250).

Sources play a decisive role for the traveller, not just because they are among the reasons to go on a journey, a reason to move, but also because movement and culture are not free of ambiguity. Therefore, it is necessary to understand both movement and rootedness:

[...] mobility studies should analyze the sensation of rootedness. The paradox here is only apparent: it is impossible to understand mobility without also understanding the glacial weight of what appears bounded and static (Greenblatt, 2009:252).

That is why the traveller is interested in travelling through time: to learn about the history of the places visited. One of the best examples of movement in a concrete place is given by Bouvier's narrator, when speaking about the memoirs of Zahir-al-din-Babur and his affiliation with Kabul:

Mais, quant au 'centre du monde', il faut bien lui donner raison. [...] D'ailleurs, depuis les Macédoniens d'Alexandre qui crient: 'Dionysos' à chaque arpent de vigne et se croient déjà rentrés chez eux, quel mouvement, quel passage! Les cinq cents éléphants que Seleucos Nicator a acheté en Inde pour rosser ses rivaux de l'ouest; des caravanes chargées d'ivoires sculptés, de verrerie tyrienne, de parfums et de cosmétiques iraniens, de méchantes statuettes de Silène ou de Bacchus sorties en série des ateliers d'Asie Mineure; des changeurs, des usuriers, des Tziganes; le Mage Gaspard peut-être – on roi

indo-parthe du Pendjab dont les rédacteurs des Actes de saint Thomas ont estropié le nom; des nomades scythes ou kouchans, chassés d'Asie centrale, qui arrivent à bride abattue, et chacun d'enterrer éperdument son magot pour le bonheur des numismates et des archéologues. D'autres marchands. Un simple curieux comme il y en aura toujours, suivi d'un domestique qui prend des notes (on les retrouvera peut-être). Pas d'historiens, hélas. Des bouddhistes chinois qui s'en retournent en grommelant de leur dangereux pèlerinage en Inde, leurs bagages bourrés de textes sacrés. D'autres nomades, des Huns cette fois, et ils font l'effet de brutes aux premiers qui entre-temps se sont poliés... Puis l'Islam dur et sans mémoire. Au VII^e siècle. Par la suite, ce carrefour en verra bien d'autres, mais je m'arrête là. Que le voyageur d'aujourd'hui, qui vient après tant de monde, se présente donc avec la modestie qui convient, et n'espère étonner personne. Il sera alors parfaitement reçu par les Afghans qui ont d'ailleurs pour la plupart complètement oublié leur histoire (Bouvier, 2014:333–334).

Bouvier is searching for his origins: not in Switzerland, but earlier origins. He is searching in Asia, the grandmother of Europe, in the place where Noah's journey came to an end, where the ark found land. However, the traveller's movements are not traceless and take a part in forming culture. They do not just form his own culture but also that of the people he meets on the road. That is why there are moments on their journey in which the three travellers are concerned about the effect the "Western" way of life has on the countries they visit. Even if they are not actively bringing their way of life to the visited countries, as they rather want to adapt to the ways of life of the others, they automatically bring it with themselves. The car they are travelling in is also of note because it is needed in order to physically reach their sources and aims, even though it is also a symbol for the Western technological progress the travellers themselves criticise, as the rest of this chapter will prove. It seems contradictory that they are also taking advantage of this so-called "progress", which they are criticising, but which at the same time enables them to travel. This is a previously observed phenomenon in travel literature:

Pinner und Edschmid lassen in ihrer [ihren] Reisetexten keinen Zweifel daran, dass 'Rassenmischung' und kulturelle Hybridität dem Fortschritt der

Menschheit massiv schaden. Genau dies aber erscheint geradezu paradox, hatten die beiden doch einst als Paar und intellektuelles Tandem das Ideal einer perfekten kulturellen Symbiose verkörpert (Holdenried et al. 2017:96).

A love-hate relationship widely known at least since the famous beginning of Levi-Strauss' *Tristes Tropiques*, "La fin de voyages", which he starts with "Je hais les voyages et les explorateurs. Et voici que je m'apprête à raconter mes expéditions" (Strauss, 1955:9).

Thus one may criticise *L'Usage du monde*, *Alle Wege sind offen* and *The Cruel Way*, as well as travelling literature in general, because: "Die Texte, die sich darum bemühen eine andere Perspektive auf Europa zu entwerfen, laufen damit wie Segalens Ästhetik Gefahr, die Fremdheit zu löschen, der sie zur Geltung verhelfen möchten", (Mayer, 2010:66). However, the travellers in the narrations are aware of this. Nowhere is Schwarzenbach's awareness of this issue expressed as directly as when she speaks about fighting the chador: "Als wir von Kabul aus die versprochenen Schnittmuster nach Kaisar schickten, leisteten wir auch einen winzigen Beitrag zu den Folgen dieser Gesetze. Wir bekämpften den Tschador!" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:66).

To learn from travelling literature, one must accept the fact that the journey is contradictory. Every journey probably has a variably distinctive anti-journey. It is what travelling literature stands for and what makes it so special. One can focus on such parts, in which the journey always remains questionable, because it can probably never be freed from the context of colonisation. If one focuses on the other part, following Charles Forsdick, who illuminates 20th century travel literature by applying Édouard Glissant's and James Clifford's aim to: "wrest back travel from a reductively colonialist understanding and to redeploy the concept as a means of understanding the new patterns of intercultural relating" (Forsdick, 2005:204), one can see the richness of travelling literature, in which the existence of difference is so important, not least of all because only out of difference can one find common ground, a *community*. Forsdick pointed out that "it is the traveller's attitude to the concept of 'diversity' that is important" (Forsdick, 2005:ix-x). This is what will be discussed in the following, without ignoring history but with a focus on how travelling narrations can give their readers a different understanding of cultural otherness and diversity. This movement not only forms but also eliminates cultures, as has been proven by the many instances of European colonisation

of the continents of the world. The danger of the movement hidden behind so-called progress is not only theoretically discussed by Adorno:

Die Naturverfallenheit der Menschen heute ist vom gesellschaftlichen Fortschritt nicht abzulösen. Die Steigerung der wirtschaftlichen Produktivität, die einerseits die Bedingungen für eine gerechtere Welt herstellt, verleiht andererseits dem technischen Apparat und den sozialen Gruppen, die über ihn verfügen, eine unmäßige Überlegenheit über den Rest der Bevölkerung. Der Einzelne wird gegenüber den ökonomischen Mächten vollends annulliert. [...] Unter den gegebenen Verhältnissen werden die Glücksgüter selbst zu Elementen des Unglücks. [...] der Fortschritt schlägt in den Rückschritt um (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2006:4–5),

but has been observed in practice by Schwarzenbach's narrator:

Aber der Fortschritt – jene vielfach fragliche und jedenfalls oft missbrauchte Macht – folgt fatalen Gesetzen: Der aufrichtige Kenner Afghanistans wird es begrüßen, dass Spitäler und Schulen eingerichtet werden. Er empfindet es als dringende Notwendigkeit, dass man Strassen baut und das Land dem Verkehr öffnet. Er weiss, dass man die Armut beheben und die Ausnützung natürliche Reichtümer fördern will. Er versteht, dass dies beispielsweise durch Rationalisierung der Baumwollproduktion oder durch die Kontrolle der Karakul- (= Persianer) Felle geschehen muss. Er stemmt sich nicht gegen die Entstehung von Fabriken und von Arbeitersiedlungen anstelle der Nomadenlager. Er begrüsst sogar die kaum begonnene und noch wenig sichtbare Emanzipation der Frauen. Aber dabei nimmt er nur mit schmerzlichem Bedauern hin, dass die alten, lieb gewordenen Traditionen und Zustände erschüttert werden. Dass man sichere und wirklich fahrbare Strassen mit den staatlichen Hotels 'erkauft' statt bei Nomaden und Dorfbürgermeistern zu Gast zu sein. Es ist eine gewisse Tragik in diesem Problem des Fortschritts, wie man ihn gegenwärtig in Afghanistan am Werk sieht. Leise nur regt sich die Hoffnung und zugleich der Zweifel, ob es in diesem unabhängigen Land zwischen Indien und den asiatischen Republiken der Sowjetunion nicht am Ende gegen alle Entwicklungsgesetze doch möglich sei, die alten Tugenden der Afghanen mit jenen unvermeidlichen Neuerungen zu verbinden, die dem Westen trotz ihrer

Übel stets noch den Schein einer Vormachtstellung geben (Schwarzenbach, 2000:106–107).

Successfully combining tradition with progress remains both a silent hope and highly doubtful. Culture is movable, but this movability is not always positive progress. However, modern times have always existed, as modernity is a culture of time,¹²⁵ and modernity in one century changes into the past in the following. Modernity is either accepted or rejected by people. Schwarzenbach's narrator even describes progress as a threat, and not only once: "Wohin man sich wendet, der Fortschritt ist unterwegs, Organisation ist notwendig, der Staat wird allgewaltig" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:41) or, in "Afghanistan entwickelt sich heute nach jenen fatalen Gesetzen, die man Fortschritt nennt" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:66). Progress is represented by Western technologies and is negatively loaded here.¹²⁶ It is described as a destruction of local traditions and ways of life, like a curse on the natives. These descriptions are not only found in Schwarzenbach's text but also in Maillart's:

I asked the Germans if they were not upset to think how much misery their grand construction had already brought to the valley? Were not the technical achievements of our civilisation a curse when they swept the Afghans off their feet, plunging them too suddenly into a life that was never meant for them? But these engineers were not willing to consider that their power-plant would spoil the indigenous way of life. Of course they mentioned Progress, our emaciated god that thrives on wars. Their job was to build: they were satisfied so long as they built. Happy the short-sighted who see no further than what they can touch (Maillart, 2013:161).

Maillart opens up an important discussion here, as the knowledge of life and thus, the art of life is not always pleasant. Being elsewhere does not automatically help expand knowledge or change perspectives:

125 See Schmid, 1998:98.

126 See also Hertling, 2013:221, who speaks about Schwarzenbach criticising the Western progress in the East.

It ought to cause us deep concern that it is the material and acquisitive side of Western civilisation that has so powerful and revolutionary an effect on the rest of the world,' wrote Dr. J. H. Oldham in one of his Christian News Letters. It is the answer to give to engineers who mention Progress (Maillart, 2013:163).

The engineers working in the Afghan village will probably not return to Germany richer in any way other than the salaries in their pockets. One needs to travel with open senses: open to experiencing the elements of the world from within it. The confrontation with technology that can be observed in the examples shown is discussed in Schmid's last chapter "Ökologische Lebenskunst", on his philosophy of *ars vivendi*. He refers here to Hans Jonas' five problems, which discuss the ambivalence of helping and destroying brought on by technology:

Die Reflexion ist gleichsam ein Herausspringen aus den mechanisch ablaufenden und perfekt sich selbst steuernden Prozessen, um die Bedingungen und Konsequenzen ihres Funktionierens zu klären und das Subjekt in Bezug dazu zu setzen [...]. Gegenüber der Zwangsläufigkeit der Anwendung von Technik betont das Subjekt der Lebenskunst die Frage der Wahl und des Gebrauchs sowohl auf allgemein gesellschaftlicher Ebene als auch in dem Bereich, der vom Individuum unmittelbar selbst zu verantworten ist (Schmid, 1998:419).

The travellers do not respond directly to sustainability or the environmental discussion in the three narrations, as Schmid does on the following pages, but rather to a cultural influence and to a convivence between a Western and Eastern world.¹²⁷ It is important to note, though, that the narrators travel by car, (thus using one of the biggest examples of technological progress in the late 19th century), see the ambivalence of technology and question its general use and their use of it.

During their journey, the travellers visit numerous monuments. They not only narrate the history, architecture, and events of those places, but focus much more

127 Maillart's travelling narration *Des monts célestes aux sables rouges* does thematise sustainability and corresponds to current ecological discussions.

on their personal experiences with said monuments. Just like the names of most cities in Schwarzenbach's works, the monuments also gain personal relevance for the traveller.

Maillart clearly surpasses Schwarzenbach and Bouvier in her depictions of monuments. Whereas Schwarzenbach and Bouvier's respective narrators concentrate much more on the history of the places, the road, their accommodations, the landscape, their meetings with the people, the events, and the feeling of the journey, Maillart describes numerous monuments on the road. In the following passage in Maillart's text, one can observe how unknown monuments gain meaning when the traveller experiences the unknown with his or her own senses:

When I entered that ruined and desecrated building, the simple structure at once conveyed its meaning: I stood still, with respect for something great. Slowly my mind rose towards the peace, the fullness of the inner dome [...]. I was captivated: here was a very simple monument that had suddenly become important to me. I was eager to learn details about it (Maillart, 2013:78).

Maillart consistently experiences an intense bond between herself and the visited monuments described: "An intimacy had grown between myself and the stubborn dome above its high drum girthed with huge Kufic characters" (Maillart, 2013: 109). The personification of monuments and their relation to the traveller reminds one of a relationship between human beings. Maillart especially admires the mosaic of the mosque built by Gohar Shad:

The process adopted by Shah Abbas is called *haft-rengi*: it means that as many as seven colours may if necessary be applied side by side on a tile before it goes to the kiln. The result is that each coloured detail not being sharply separated from the next as it is when incrustation-mosaic is used, the general impression is more diluted, weaker. In the seven-colour process it is impossible to obtain a gamut of the densest tones since each colour has a different maximum firing-point (Maillart, 2013:108).

Again, she personifies the monument by comparing it to the touch of a good friend:

The old monuments of Samarkand have pathos, most of them being in ruins [...]. Do we cherish better what is on the eve of vanishing? [...] Time, wars and earthquakes have badly mauled the Herat monuments, but the little that remains – a tomb with minarets in a wheat-field – touches me like the last smile of a friend (Maillart, 2013:109).

However, the single meeting with the monument is still not enough to feel it as an art of life. Just as the first quotation has shown: “I was eager to learn details about it” (Maillart, 2013:78), in the very next passage, Maillart repeats the importance of knowledge:

I had to read Pope’s Introduction to Persian Art to understand what was moving me. And I clearly see how knowledge ‘does both train and supplement the eye’: [...] Design bears, indeed, the same relation to beauty that logic does to science and philosophy. It is the proper introduction to art, its indispensable framework, and perhaps also its finest achievement’ (Maillart, 2013: 109).

What Maillart describes as the *finest achievement of art* here, is her finest achievement too, namely living her *ars vivendi* by understanding and actively experiencing what she sees and feels. Instead of describing a monument by its shape, Maillart uses colours, painting the path of her encounter with the monument: “mausoleum of Gohar Shad, a building that gave peace to one’s whole being. Flashes of turquoise glaze gave a note of gaiety. The higher you climb on mountains, the deeper is the cobalt of the gentian, the green of the turf, the scarlet of the alpine rose” (Maillart, 2013:123). The reception is not limited to her sense of seeing a monument, it is also needed to experience it: “The wooden columns of a veranda arrested me: I passed my hand over the elongated bulbous shafts, feeling that I knew them already. Yes, they reminded me of the great wooden pillars I had admired in the Khan’s Palace at Khiva” (Maillart, 2013:132). Maillart’s comparison is not restricted to her European background. The narrator, Kini, reminds herself of places and things she had already seen on earlier journeys instead of comparing everything to her home continent of Europe. The same counts for Schwarzenbach’s description of the Gumbad-i-Gabus:

Man konnte ihn mit keinem anderen Bauwerk vergleichen, nicht mit den von Sklavenvölkern errichteten Pyramiden, nicht mit den Säulen von Persepolis oder den türkisblauen Minarets von Herat, Prachtzeugen grosser Herrscher, noch weniger mit den Kreuzfahrer-Kathedralen, streitbaren Burgen, oder den von gläubigen Wallfahrern bezahlten goldenen Domen von Nedschef und Meschhed (Schwarzenbach, 2000:37–38).

Schwarzenbach's narrator also describes the astonishing encounter with the monument, however the narrator addresses the change of progress:

Da tauchte, vor mir, in gerader Linie, unzweifelhaft also am Ende meines Wegs, der Gumbad-i-Gabus auf. Der Mongolenturm, Grabmal eines Kahns, gigantisch und schlicht, und ich dachte nicht darüber nach, ob im Gehäuse seines spitzen Dachs noch der gläserne Sarg hänge, wie die Legende der Steppe es will. Mir genügte das überwältigende Wahrzeichen des Menschen, der die Armut und allen menschlichen Massen abholde Grösse der Steppe nicht gefürchtet hatte. Ich atmete tief, und versuchte, trotz allem, das Leben grüsen [...] Denn dieser Turm ist einsam, einsam – zu keinem Ruhm bestimmt, keiner Andacht und keinem Zweck geweiht. Die Steppenvölker kennen ihn, wie sie den Wind kennen von der Kaspisee, und die Karawanenspuren, und loben ihn, den Wegweiser, Tröster, Himmelssohn. Zugvögel streifen sein Haupt, Kamele grasen am Hügelfuss, und weithin, so weit der Blick reicht, ist es Nomaden-Reich, die Heimat schwarzen Zelte. Jetzt haben ihn pflicht-treue Beamte in Besitz genommen, sie tragen Uniformen und sind gebildet, und befehlen, requirieren, treiben Steuern ein in verbrieftem Namen, Gesetz und Recht! Und Fortschritt! Die Alten im Turm sind Gefangene und verstehen nicht viel vom Wortlaut der Paragraphen. Aber sie erinnern sich an andere Tage; da besaßen sie Waffen und schnelle Pferde, die Steppe dröhnte unter unbeschlagenen Hufen, im schimmernden, staubdurchzitterten Abendlicht breitete sich ringsum die grosse Freiheit aus, ein Meer goldener Wogen! Wie fröhlich wuchsen ihre Söhne auf! (Schwarzenbach, 2000:37–38).

The traveller tries to think in the way of the old people whom she met, who signed documents they did not understand as they waited for their children to come back and pay their fines for having dodged their military duties by escaping over

the Russian border. Consequently, the narrator forecasts the disappearance of the black tents of the nomads, and their replacement by factories and hospitals.

4.1.2 The Perception of Culture

Whereas Maillart lets her narrator compare “the seen” to other experiences from earlier journeys, the comparison to Europe is not left out, but is rather used to show how the journey makes the traveller think of Europe from the perspective of being on another continent. The traveller reflects on his or her own culture differently by experiencing the *other* culture:

The magic power of the drum commands the bounds, the leaps, the accelerating foot-work. Pirouetting at an incredible speed [...] After the dance they re-wind their turbans and wipe their shiny faces with the long end that flows loosely down their backs. They seem to dance just when they feel like it: there are no spectators, no girls to please, no alcohol to prime them up. In this beautiful and virile way they express their feelings, their overflowing vitality. Football matches, which may be said to be the Western way of doing the same thing, have only one of these two qualities (Maillart, 2013:141–142).

On the other hand, Maillart’s traveller sees the influence of the Western World on the East, and she is deeply concerned about the consequences that this will have for Afghan culture:

We thought that it is not the machine in itself that is bad, but the way we use it. When man is master of a machine he feels more powerful, whether he is free-wheeling on a bicycle or climbing above towers of clouds in the skies. A skilled busdriver shows a kind of dignity: master after God on board his ship, he is a hero to his twenty-five passengers. But when man becomes the slave of a machine that dictates the gestures he is to make, he soon finds that life becomes tasteless, even though his increased wages allow him more and tastier food. Yet taste is in you, not in the morsel. Such work does not call for initiative, decision, understanding or the joy of making. Men born in our monstrous capitals have little choice, they can hardly avoid becoming factory-hands; but to turn healthy peasants or independent shepherds into nerveless or up-rooted robots is nearly a murder. A day must come when machines will

no longer be used to stifle half of what makes a man. It is the only solution, for in Europe we cannot go back to the patriarchal system by which the clan looked after the needs of all its members. [...] ‘So, little by little, we come to the sort of development that characterises Europe, whose main effect on the rest of the world amounts to this: more machines and more specialised workers producing more and more every day.’ Pol-i-Khumri grew into a symbol of our machine-age oppressing the heart of man, our machine-civilisation copied servilely by Asiatic countries in spite of the fact that all Easterners have nothing but contempt for the Western barbarians. The nature, the climate and the character of Afghanistan were completely alien to what was already appearing here and there – not only factories and hurried industrial schemes, but houses of Western type with broad windows and thin roofs, and tailored suits, laced shoes, bicycles (Maillart, 2013:162).

Kini, who comes from that world of progress and consumption, forecasts that the Afghans would become depressed by adjusting to the methods and lifestyles of the Western world: “They will be unable to fight the moral depression that crawls in the wake of our materialistic culture” (Maillart, 2013:163). She asks herself:

The question is: are the advantages [...] worth the loss of the lingering smile that used to accompany his hard but well-balanced life? [...] I say No, convinced that if you spend the best part of your energy walking to steps one way, then [...], you have no inspiration or vitality left for living your own life during the rest of the day. But before I say No with complete certitude on behalf of the Afghan, I should spend one or two years with him, sharing his life rich in great winds, sun, snow and hardships. I must be prepared to consider it possible that the confused tribesman might eagerly exchange his free skies for factory-life and a lousy wattle-and-daub room in Kabul so as to laugh once a week at a degrading ‘movie’ made among cardboard settings; so as to have a daily shave while he listens to the town gossip; so as to ‘stuff wads of chewed newspapers’ into the ears of his neighbours at the tea-house (Maillart, 2013:164).

Even if she were to directly answer the questions from her perspective, she is aware of the fact that she cannot speak on behalf of the Afghan without knowing all cir-

cumstances of their daily lives or understanding the worries, fear and pain of the tribesman. This is an anthropological way of thinking according to Geertz's third point of studying culture.¹²⁸

There must be a reason: "Why does our civilisation disintegrate everything it touches? Why do most of Arabs, Japanese, Hindus, Chinese adopt the worst of our ways?" (Maillart, 2013:163). Bouvier's narrator is indirectly asking the same question, just explaining it the other way around:

Portée par une vague majestueuse, l'écume de la camelote occidentale avait atteint et souillé le commerce local; [...] Minables échantillons qui faisaient honte d'être Européen. [...] Je me consolais en pensant qu'à cet égard au moins, l'Inde s'était bien vengée en nous refilant tout son rebut, [...] Mais c'était un rendu pour un prêt (Bouvier, 2014:294).

Culture is actively brought to another culture. This is also what the West did and does to the East and what the East in the West does as an act of revenge, in the eyes of the narrator. Even though Maillart was not only travelling through countries, but also living temporarily, working, and socialising in different places, she pointed out that it is not possible to speak on behalf of the people she met on the road. Bouvier's narrator gives his estimation while travelling. Even though he does not clearly define who shares this opinion, he speaks on the general opinion of the locals:

C'est cet esprit mécaniste et utilitaire qui aveugle et appauvrit l'Occident depuis Archimède et Léonard. On est d'avis ici qu'en inventant la brouette ou le

128 See Geertz, 2000:16: "To discover who people think they are, what they think they are doing, and to what end they think they are doing it, it is necessary to gain a working familiarity with the frames of meaning within which they enact their lives. This does not involve feeling anyone else's feelings, or thinking anyone else's thoughts, simple impossibilities. Nor does it involve going native, an impractical idea, inevitably bogus. It involves learning how, as a being from elsewhere with a world of one's own, to live with them". The anthropological intention of Maillart's narrator also becomes clear at the very beginning of the narration: "There live the men I want to study in a country where I feel happy: mountaineers not enslaved by artificial needs, free men not forced to increase their daily production", see Maillart, 2013:2.

cabestan, nous avons perdu de la force psychique et qu'après la machine à vapeur il ne nous est plus rien resté (Bouvier, 1996:105).

The first-person plural form ensures that they speak for all people, though. There is no restriction based on the place people come from; everybody is addressed simultaneously. Neither the West nor the East comes out positively in the following description:

[...] Meanwhile in the West where there is nothing but change, no-one knows what to think, nobody feels secure – least of all the rich – and that even in so-called peace time. Here, no more high-heeled sluts in short frocks: you've come to the country where women are not seen, where men are capped with snowy muslin and walk with heavy shoes like gondolas. You've come to a country that has never been subjugated – neither by Alexander the Great nor by Timur the Lame, neither by Nadir nor by John Bull. It is the Switzerland of Asia, a buffer-state without colonies or access to the sea, a country whose great hills shelter five races speaking three totally different languages, a country of simple hillmen and well-bred citizens...' (Maillart, 2013:117).

On the one hand, it reflects two extreme lifestyles of women in societies of different parts of the world. On the other hand, common ground between Switzerland and Afghanistan as a buffer-state can be found due to the different languages and the shared mountainous landscapes. If culture is understood according to Bhabha as a concept of hybridity, otherness is nevertheless required to keep differences alive in transculturality. The space in between, however, is never static but rather in constant movement. Inevitably, cultures are merged on the planet. If cultures were static, the traveller would not even be able to travel and would thus not be able to encounter other cultures. Only with the acceptance of movement and the acceptance of changes can a world exist in a globalised period. Culture is a dialogue between people on the road. The term travelogue, which is defined in the *Oxford Dictionary* as the following: "from travel, on the pattern of monologue",¹²⁹ should

129 See <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/travelogue>, last accessed on 11th August 2022.

be changed to “an understanding on the pattern of dialogue”: “Si l’on souhaite employer ce terme dans le contexte de la littérature de voyage contemporaine, je propose alors de le saisir comme un néologisme formé à partir des mots *travel* et *dialogue*, ‘voyage’ et ‘dialogue’” (Lüsebrink and Moussa, 2019:145). This change in the understanding of the term, not only of the travelogue, but of travelling literature in general as a *travelling* dialogue, can help to see literature as: “Un dialogue entre les cultures; un dialogue entre des gens sur la route; un ‘travelogue’ qui lui-même est en mouvement et donc un dialogue voyageant, un ‘travelling dialogue’” (Lüsebrink and Moussa, 2019:163).

However, that does not imply that movement is linked to the technical progress of the Western world. It rather evokes the contrary, as the previous examples have shown. Maillart tries to strengthen this argument with a quotation from a Western Christian: “It ought to cause us deep concern that it is the material and acquisitive side of Western civilisation that has so powerful and revolutionary an effect on the rest of the world,’ wrote Dr. J. H. Oldham in one of his Christian News Letters. It is the answer to give to engineers who mention Progress” (Maillart, 2013:163). The time in which the three authors travelled was, of course, much less technological than the world is nowadays. Kini asks herself: “When did Europe begin to go wrong? When did we cease to be worthy of ourselves, cease to carry our head with dignity? Why are traditional cultures everywhere so weakened that they crumble before our materialism which has nothing to put in their place?” (Maillart, 2013:172). Kini tries to find the answer on the journey by using one of the biggest examples of technological progress available at the time: the car. Again, the technological movement, which brings so many negative things with it, enables the traveller to move in this way. It enables him or her to encounter the world, just as modern communication methods enable the modern person to communicate with any person connected to the proper technical devices in any part of the world. Back to the 1930s, when the traveller understood that Europe was not the heart of the world:

Soudain je comprends quelque chose: je sens maintenant par toute la force de mes sens et toute celle de mon intellect, que Paris n’est rien, ni la France, ni l’Europe, ni les Blancs... une seule chose compte, envers et contre tous les particularismes, c’est l’engrenage magnifique qui s’appelle le monde (Maillart, 2002:313),

that the centre can have an elsewhere: “Lorsque le voyageur venu du sud aperçoit Kaboul, [...] il se flatte d'être arrivé au bout du monde. Il vient au contraire d'en atteindre le centre” (Bouvier, 2014:331) and later on: “Mais, quant au ‘centre du monde’, il faut bien lui donner raison” (Bouvier, 2014:333).

It is the journey, the dialogue, the perception, the knowledge, and the experience of the world that teaches the traveller. Through books, the traveller can gain knowledge about a culture, a place, or a religion, but only the traveller's personal experience makes him feel the different values of different cultures:

En Suisse [...] les montagnes étaient comme des aiguilles, si hautes, et les vallées si profondes qu'on n'y distinguait pas la nuit du jour. Aussi les montres suisses étaient-elles lumineuses. On m'a demandé ce qu'il fallait penser de nos roses et de nos melons. Les roses: superbes; quant aux melons, rien qui vaille ceux de Kaboul. Chacun s'en est réjoui. Il faut savoir que du Turkestan au Caucase, on mesure le Bonheur d'un coin de terre à la qualité de ses melons. C'est un sujet de controverse, d'orgueil et de prestige (Bouvier, 2014:348).

Schwarzenbach has the experience with cigarettes: “– und schenkt mir dann eine Schachtel echter englischer Zigaretten. Ja, nun müsste ich erklären, was ein solches Geschenk bedeutet, hier, am Ende der Welt” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:53). It is only with this knowledge that one is able to speak about a fair deal of the goods exchanged between the mullah and Bouvier's traveller later on: “Il ouvrit son couteau, m'offrit une tranche de son melon et accepta une cigarette qu'il fuma assis sur ses talons sans cesser de me dévisager” (Bouvier, 2014:357).

The face-to-face meeting is important in terms of culture, which goes back to Peter L. Berger's phenomenology:

The reality of everyday life is shared with others. The most important experience of others is in the face to face situation. All other types of social encounter are derivatives of this face to face experience. In the face to face encounter, individuals cannot readily know the other's subjectivity; they must view and understand each other by means of typifications (Wuthnow et al., 2012:32).

The encounter with the Other is certainly the most important way of understanding culture. The encounter with people from different cultures will be examined

in more depth in chapter ‘4.6. The Self and/as the Other’. Berger’s understanding of culture suits the transmitted experience that has been (and will continue to be) seen in the text fragments of the three authors. The meeting with the Other is not only restricted to other people on the journey; a face-to-face meeting and interaction with all ten motifs is also needed on the journey in order to understand it in the best way possible, and should be considered throughout this thesis.

By being curious, by trying to understand other ways of life, attitudes and habits, the travel authors point out the differences between the cultures; they not only build bridges but follow the river that touches both of them. They use the distinction of Orient and Occident, of East and West, but they try to break a one-sided way of thinking into a transcultural way that represents culture as an ever-changing phenomenon. While the world is full of variety, culture does not change simultaneously or in the same direction in every part of the world. That is why the prefixes, “trans-” and “inter-” both find their places here. Travelling for a fascination with the foreign – the culture that differs from one’s own – and for the wish of finding oneself are both typical motivations of travellers in the 20th century that were already present in the 17th century. This must be treated with caution, taking account of the imperial background. However, the achievements on the journey make a decisive contribution to the way in which people coexist today, in the fourth period of globalisation, in which East and West are drifting more and more apart. This contribution is not made in a way that creates a separate third space, but instead in a way that changes both sides and connects them.

Culture is not understood as a static term, but rather, as Ette wrote: “Culture presupposes movement” (Ette, 2016:32). That is why cultures need to be interpreted not apart from each other but together with each other: “Anstatt Kulturen als abgegrenzte Einheiten zu interpretieren, die in sich und aus sich heraus bestehen, wird Kultur als ein fortwährender Prozess des Austausches zwischen ‘Innen’ und ‘Außen’ interpretiert”¹³⁰ (Boomers, 2004:51). There is a necessity of boundaries which has been also discussed in terms of the concepts of culture:

Culture will exist only in a limited variety of forms relative to the immense, perhaps infinite, variety of forms in which it conceivably might exist. It is the

130 Compare to Bouvier’s book entitled: *Le dehors et le dedans*.

delimitation of forms that makes signs of culture possible and which gives purpose to such an endeavor, namely, to specify the conditions or rules and I wish different patterns emerge and are sustained. The study of patterns, however, require some initial understanding of what these patterns may entail. The answer is given by Douglas – that order (patterns) exists only insofar as there are symbolic boundaries (Wuthnow et al., 2012:260).

Such symbolic boundaries, as well as geographical and national borders, will be looked at in the following.

4.2 Crossing Borders

Iran borders Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan in the North, Afghanistan and Pakistan in the East and Turkey and Iraq in the West. Its geographical position is an invitation for a crossroads of cultures.¹³¹ Annemarie Schwarzenbach crossed all of these borders on her four trips to Iran. On her journey with Ella Maillart, they entered Iran through Turkey. While Bouvier and his friend Thierry drove by car, passing the capital of Turkey, the two women went by boat, crossing the Black Sea. On this trip to Kabul, the three travel authors crossed several geographical borders in Europe, and afterwards in Asia at the Turkish, Iranian, Afghan and Indian borders. Borders are, in principal, a division between two parts, which does not imply a strict division of the discussed subjects. As the title already implies, borders need to be crossed in the travelling narration; the two parts need to be combined instead of homogenised. The travelling narration offers different topics, from national borders, natural borders, and personal borders to borders between reality and fiction. In the next few pages, it will probably become obvious in which way *ars vivendi* is linked to the border depictions in the travelling narration, and if not, it will become clear at the end of the border-crossing chapter at the latest.

131 See Bailhache and Ramade, 2001:7.

4.2.1 Border – Term

Before examining depictions of the border, the term ‘border’ should be briefly reflected upon. As Benito and Manzananas write in their introductory essay: “the term ‘border’ is in itself a ‘borderish’ concept or hybrid term which implies both a line of division and a line of encounter and dialogue” (Benito and Manzananas, 2002:1), while “Hybridity [...] is the offspring of the border” (Benito and Manzananas, 2002: 10), and the borderland is also called a “third space” by Homi Bhabha (Benito and Manzananas, 2002:10) or “contact zones” by Mary Louise Pratt (Benito and Manzananas, 2002:4). In travelling literature, ‘border’ is often combined to allegorical expressions that can have the significance of a line of division and/or a line of encounter. Just like the term “border”, the travelling narration has already proven its hybridity in the third chapter; thus, there is not only a direct connection between the border and the journey but also with the narration.

There have been several studies about border crossing, especially in American and Canadian literature.¹³² Viktoria Tchernichova wrote in her article, *In-Betweenness Howard O'Hagan's Tay John*, that “the story deals with crossing of geographical boundaries, a crossing that involves changes in the landscape and in the people” (Palusci and Rizzardi, 2014:14). The same goes for the works of Schwarzenbach, Bouvier and Maillart, although their writings are not based on a diasporic or cultural background between countries. Each of the four times Schwarzenbach travelled to Iran, she crossed different borders and tried to discover the Iranian country from a different direction.

Even though, to say it with Schwarzenbach's book title, *all the roads are open*, the travellers had to cross many borders in their lives. Walter Fähnders speaks about “Überschreitungen freilich nicht nur geographischer Grenzen” (Decock and Schaffers, 2008:50), but also psychological borders like loneliness, hopelessness, loss of identity, being overtaken by nature and the motif of death.¹³³ As Kerstin Schlieker stated, the experience with the border is also always a personal one: “Die Erfahrung der Reise ist aufgeladen mit Topoi der Sehnsucht, aus Mythos und Literatur, intertextuell verwoben. Die Erfahrung der Grenze ist auch immer eine

132 See Benito and Manzananas, 2002; Palusci and Rizzardi, 2014.

133 See Fähnders and Rohlf's, 2008:176: “Einsamkeit, Hoffnungslosigkeit, Identitätsverlust, Vereinnahmung durch die Natur oder auch das Todesmotiv”: Also notice that the psychological disease borderline comes etymologically from borderland.

persönliche Grenzerfahrung” (Schlesier and Zellmann, 2003:153). There has also been a discussion about ‘borders’ in Schwarzenbach’s way of writing. Sofie Decock and Uta Schaffers say:

In ihren Reisebewegungen [...] sowie in ihren Erprobungen der Schreib-Räume zwischen Faktizität und Fiktionalität etwa machte sie stets zweierlei sichtbar: sowohl die scheinbaren bzw. postulierten Lokalisierungen, Spielräume, Oppositionen und Grenzen als auch die Möglichkeit ihrer Infragestellung, Überwindung und Aufhebung (Decock and Schaffers, 2008:8).

Regarding the discussion about reality and fiction, a topic which has already been explored in relation to autobiographies and travelling literature in particular, Schwarzenbach’s narrator comments in the book *Alle Wege sind offen*: “Es ist nicht an mir, Gruss und Abschied zu bestimmen und die Grenze zu ziehen zwischen Wirklichkeit und Vision” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:61).¹³⁴ Simone Wichor previously commented in her detailed research about aspects of journalism and literature in Schwarzenbach’s publications that the author leaves it up to the reader to differentiate between reality and fiction.¹³⁵ If a ‘border’ between fiction and facts exists, travelling narrations overcome it. Although the texts are interpreted as narrations and their truthfulness is not being questioned in this research, the authors do include facts that one could examine to determine their historical accuracy. The authors also play with this, as Schwarzenbach calls her companion, Ella Maillart, by her full name in the story; Bouvier does this as well with his companion, Thierry Vernet.¹³⁶

Personal borders are crossed as well. Schwarzenbach’s narrator admits having gone too far: “Die Kleider zerreißen, gestehen, man sei zu weit gegangen” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:16). She means this not necessarily just in terms of space but also in

134 This quotation will be examined once more in chapter 4.10.

135 See Wichor, 2013:248.

136 The inclusion of photography also takes part in this border crossing of fiction and non-fiction. Such interactions of the mediums do not have to be the choice of the author. Whereas Bouvier for example added Thierry Vernet’s sketches to his *L’Usage du monde*, the German translation has exchanged them with photographs taken on the journey by Bouvier, whereas the English translation has kept the sketches.

terms of time. Too far and too long on the road, Schwarzenbach's narrator confesses to herself and to her readership on that journey to Kabul:

Ich war auch schon zu weit, wieder einmal zu weit gegangen, der rauschende Baumschatten von Therapia, die Kuppeln von Stambul konnten nur eine Station sein, – und seither war ich mehrere Tage untätig der Küste des Schwarzen Meeres entlang gefahren, und hatte immer nur zum asiatischen Ufer hinüber gesehen. Dort begann eine andere Welt (Schwarzenbach, 2008:119).

Bouvier has this experience, not on the road to Kabul, but in Sri Lanka: “Je n'étais pas jaloux. J'étais parti trop loin et trop longtemps” (Bouvier, 1996:93). It is nevertheless interesting that their awareness of having travelled too far and too long is not actually changing anything. Schwarzenbach's narrator is still just about to start her journey, and Bouvier's narrator in *Le Poisson-scorpion* is about to leave for Japan. Whichever border the traveller crosses, he or she needs to adjust to the new circumstances:

On avait pris l'habitude d'expliquer lentement – et plutôt deux fois qu'une – en s'attardant sur les mots le temps que la compréhension chemine. Dès la frontière c'est superflu: l'interlocuteur vous interrompt au milieu des phrases – d'un geste impatient – il est au fait – et vous parler encore, qu'il s'est déjà lancé dans l'espèce de pantomime emportée qui contient sa réponse (Bouvier, 2014:79),

and if that works out successfully, happiness begins: “Les deux premiers jours, cette rapidité prend de court. On est en retard d'une réplique au moins, ou d'un geste, puis on ramène son intelligence à fleur de peau, on s'adapte, et le plaisir commence” (Bouvier, 2014:79).

4.2.2 Border Depictions

The journey in 1939 is Schwarzenbach's fourth time travelling to Persia. On her first journey to Iran, she crosses the Iraqi-Iranian border. In her travelling report, *Winter in Vorderasien*, she describes the first meeting with the wide mountain range and countryside that welcomes the visitor upon arrival: “Dahinter lag Persien – ein uraltes Königs- und Hirtenland; doch bis heute empfängt es den Reisenden mit der Überraschung seiner unvergänglichen Gebirge” (Schwarzenbach,

2016:94). Her surprising reaction implies the change of the Iranian landscape from Iraq. Schwarzenbach uses strong adjectives to create an impressive picture: *The very old Kingdom, the immortal mountain range* or, (like in the following quotation), *wider sky* and *stronger wind*. Sometimes the natural border runs parallel with the national one: “Noch fast hundert Kilometer bis zur Grenze – und der Horizont wird größer und leerer, der Wind stärker und heisser” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:45). Schwarzenbach feels the border in advance. Visible changes of landscape and circumstances appear.

No matter which border she crosses, this vastness of the landscape is always present: “Hinter Pol-e-Khomri wurden die Hügel steiler, die Felsen rückten zusammen, Schluchten taten sich auf, Schatten breiteten sich aus” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:58). This also goes for borders that are not necessarily found between two countries, but within a single country: “Immer aber fahre ich den Steppenrand entlang und weiss, dass dies die ewige, die grosse Grenze ist zwischen Iran und Turan [...] – die Grenze zwischen den Hochländern” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:41). This quotation refers to Iranian mythology, a border from history that is invisible but has never disappeared. The chapter about intermediality already discussed the temporal and spatial connection. These can also be found in the border discussion. Benito and Manzanar have indicated the border as a historical line: “the border is not only concerned with space; it is also a timeline which graphically represents and actualizes the flow and the progression of history” (Benito and Manzanar, 2002:5). Schwarzenbach’s expression of the “eternal border”, though, could be interpreted not only in terms of time but also space. In this way, she evokes a borderless landscape, as does Maillart in the following “landscape border” description: “As soon as we left the main road, the country changed completely: we entered the vastness of the steppe” (Maillart, 2013:91) and as does Bouvier: “en regardant la pleine lune monter sur un paysage sans limite” (Bouvier, 2014:262). The countryside itself serves as a border, like the mountain range whose mountain passes lead into another world, a natural border dividing two cultural atmospheres:

Soixante kilomètres au nord de Kaboul s’étend le massif de l’Hindou Kouch. À quatre mille mètres d’altitude moyenne il traverse l’Afghanistan d’est en ouest, soulève à six mille les glaciers du Nouristan et sépare deux mondes. Versant sud: un plateau brûlé, coupé de vallées-jardins, qui s’étale jusqu’aux montagnes de la frontière baloutch. Le soleil est fort, les barbes noires, les nez en

bec. On parle et on pense pashtoun (la langue des Pathans) ou persan. Versant nord: une lumière filtrée par les brouillards de la steppe, les faces rondes, les regards bleus, les manteaux ouatinés des cavaliers ouzbeks au trot vers leurs villages de yourtes (Bouvier, 2014:343).

Here the border experience of Bouvier's narrator includes a change in people's language and appearance. Whereas language seems to adjust itself to the atmosphere, it simultaneously seems to have an impact on the people:

Mianeh est aussi la frontière de deux langues: en deçà, l'azéri où l'on compte ainsi jusqu'à cinq: bir, iki, ütch, dört, bêch; au-delà le persan: yek, do, sé, tchâr, penj. Il n'y a qu'à comparer ces séries pour comprendre avec quel plaisir l'oreille passe de la première à la seconde. L'azéri – surtout chanté par les formidables commères de Tabriz – a pourtant sa beauté, mais c'est une langue âpre, faite pour la bourrasque et la neige; aucun soleil là-dedans. Tandis que le persan: chaud, délié, civil avec une pointe de lassitude: une langue pour l'été (Bouvier, 2014:207).

While Maillart uses them when speaking about the border: "The silvery waters of the Arax meandered eastward along the high valley: they would soon glide out of sight, passing north of the Ararat, marking the border between Persia and Soviet Georgia, then ending in the Caspian" (Maillart, 2013:50), Schwarzenbach gives a description of a changing feeling: "Die Luft wurde dünner, leichter, kälter" (Schwarzenbach, 2016:104). Those climate circumstances become even more significant in the following passage:

Wir hatten die Klimascheide überschritten [...]! Damit begann eine andere Kultur; statt der nackten gelben Lehmmauern umzogen nun Zäune aus Latten, Pfählen und Strauchwerk die Gärten, und an einem steilen Hügel lag, wunderbar unregelmäßig, ein Kraal aus Ästen und aufgehäuften Dorngebüsch. Ich sah die ersten Reisfelder (Schwarzenbach, 2016:105).

With a different climate and fertile soil, the culture necessarily changes as well. The sublimity is also present in these border descriptions within a country: "Wir sind hoch über der Baumgrenze. Wir sind an der Grenze der Welt" (Schwarzen-

bach, 2010:25). Having reached the tree line, she goes so far as to speak of the border of the world. This border later dissolves in itself: “die Vermählung von Himmel und Erde” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:144) – the “marriage” of sky and earth. This dissolution seems to provide a reassuring feeling for the lyrical I: “weil sein Haupt den Himmel berührt und sein Fuss unsichtbar ist, da vermischen sich meine Herzschläge wieder mit dem unaufhörlichen Rieseln. Ich werde ruhiger” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:12). Not only earth and sky are able to overcome and merge borders, water does as well: “Meer [...] für die Aufhebung von Grenzen” (Holdenried et al., 2017:107). Schwarzenbach combines the elements in the following: “Aus dem schönen, klaren Blau des sanft verfließenden Meeres wuchs der gelbe Sand und strömte in breiten Wellen landwärts, da war zwischen Wasser, Himmel und ebener Erde keine Grenze mehr zu spüren” (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 134). The merging of these borders makes the narrator feel calm. It creates the impression of a peaceful and complete world.

One might also recognise a vision of sublimity in her description, which has been a well-known topos in German travel literature in the 18th century.¹³⁷

As Sofie Decock mentioned, the crossing of the Siana-Pass is a cultural as well as a geographical crossing.¹³⁸ The lyrical I leaves the European landscape, and the Asian continent shows itself again in its full size. Maillart experiences this change, too: “We felt so much at the end of the world: a new world was bound to begin soon” (Maillart, 2013:55). This quotation reminds the reader of what Bouvier wrote in the beginning of *L’Usage du monde*: “Je pensais aux neuf vies proverbiales du chat; j’avais bien l’impression d’entrer dans la deuxième” (Bouvier, 2014:11). This beginning of a new world by way of crossing a border is experienced by Schwarzenbach at the Iranian border: “Man fühlte die alte Ergriffenheit auf den Wegen, die über ein Gebirge und eine Passhöhe hinüberführen in eine andere Welt” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:104) and by Bouvier, too:

[...] on apercevait la ville étagée en fer à cheval sur les deux côtés du défile qui sépare la Perse du plateau anatolien: des maisons de terre aux douces arêtes rongées, des portes peintes en bleu, [...]. Une galette mince come du journal avait remplacé le pain turc; et le petit lait, le café. Plus moyen de déchiffrer une

137 See Jost, 2005.

138 See Decock, 2010:68.

enseigne ou une borne militaire; c'était l'écriture persane qui marche à reculons. Le temps aussi; en une nuit nous avons passé du vingtième siècle du Christ au X^{IV}e de l'Hégire, et changé de monde (Bouvier, 2014:114).

The border works as a threshold, not only between two worlds, but between two lives. This connection of the two different worlds and the personal threshold can be interpreted in the following lines:

Dort begann eine andere Welt, die kahlen, wie erstarrte Wogen aneinandergelehnten Hügel Anatoliens, dort wehten grössere Winde, verhallte die Menschenstimme, weideten glänzende Herden auf unermesslichen Weiden, dort gab es Rauchopfer, die sich fortsetzten von Steppe zu Steppe ostwärts bis zu den schlitzäugigen Nomaden Turkestans und immer weiter bis an das Gelbe Meer – dort war die Schwelle, die ich überschreiten musste... (Schwarzenbach, 2000:17).

Moser speaks about a central aesthetic experience when such differences clash:

Wenn Gegensätze zusammenfallen, richtet sich die Aufmerksamkeit auf den Übergang von einem Zustand in einen anderen. [...] Dieser Zwischen- bzw. Schwellenraum ist von Liminalität gekennzeichnet, in der übliche 'Gesetze' ihre Gültigkeit verlieren und Grenzen sich auflösen. Die Schwellenerfahrung wird in diesem Raum zur zentralen ästhetischen Erfahrung (Moser, 2011:63).

In this space in between, laws lose their validity and borders dissolve. If we understand the national border as a line, it does not leave any of this space in between. Schwarzenbach gives an example at the frontier house between Turkey and Persia:

[...] der Grenze zwischen der Türkei und Persien [...] und das Auge sich von einem Augenblick zum anderen gewöhnen muss an die luftige Glockenhöhe, das verschwebende Blau des persischen Himmels, die blendende lichtdurchzitterte, vom Blau verschwimmender Gebirge kaum wirklich begrenzter Ebene eines fremden Landes (Schwarzenbach, 2000:25–26).

Sometimes, one's eyes have to immediately adjust to a new landscape. "Pol-e-Khomri wo hinter der vorspringenden Nase eines buddhistischen Ruinenhügels plötzlich die Welt sich verändert" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:57). Along with the landscape, Maillart also describes the changing of the alphabet and cultural habits:

Makou is a natural border. Beyond it, no cloud, no rain, no mountain any more, but an undulating country, open, fertile, sunny. No longer the Latin characters now familiar to modern Turkey, but the sweeping curves of the Arabic alphabet. Tiny cups of syrupy coffee are replaced by big glasses of tea; and no more oxen and carts (Maillart, 2013:58).

However, as has been already mentioned, Schwarzenbach describes the change to another country long before she arrives at the border line. Her depictions imply that the differences between countries do not appear simply by crossing a national border. Bouvier shares this observation by writing with colours. In this example, the dominant colour is blue with slight variations:

Lorsqu'on quitte la Yougoslavie pour la Grèce, le bleu – la couleur des Balkans – vous suit, mais il change de nature; on passe d'un bleu nuit un peu sourd à un bleu marin d'une intense gaieté, qui agit sur les nerfs comme de la caféine. Et c'est heureux, parce que le rythme des conversations et des échanges s'est beaucoup précipité (Bouvier, 2014:79).

This emphasizes the road itself because only by travelling through a country can they be seen merging into one another and not abruptly changing. According to Seume, the person who walks sees much more than the one who drives.¹³⁹ This bit of wisdom, which was written in the beginning of the 19th century, could be re-written one hundred years later as: The person who drives sees much more than the one travelling by plane.

Schwarzenbach seems to feel the change from Europe to Asia several times: "Diese kahlen Hügelreihen, dieses Steppengras, diese zu weissen Wolken, von

139 See Seume, 1974:638.

Windstößen gejagt – das war schon Asien” (Schwarzenbach 2016:4). Istanbul is called: “die Stadt an der Grenze Asiens”, the city on the border of Asia. “Hier, die Stadt an der Grenze Asiens, die Meerespforte, das glänzende Schwert zwischen Osten und Westen: sie ist wie eine Drohung überpersönlicher, ja übermenschlicher und zeitloser Abläufe” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:5). Schwarzenbach implies that the natural border, the sea, which has not been created by human being, is the border to Asia. It is not the only time that she pictures the border as a gateway: “Man nannte diese Stelle, das Tor von Asien” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:97). This does not only apply to the border between Europe and Asia but to the border in general:

Welche Fülle, die Äcker, Weiden und Wälder im Hügelland hinter der italienischen Grenze, die riesigen, wogenden Felder an der Donau und bis zu den Toren von Belgrad, und die Bauern besitzen herrliche Gespanne, feurige, schmale ungarische Apfelschimmel vor ihren Heu- und Getreidewagen (Schwarzenbach, 2000:12).

The gateway as a metaphor for the border experience may stand for the possibility of entering and leaving. Regardless of which way one passes through the gateway, the act of walking through the gateway always remains an act of both entering and exiting. Nevertheless, there is a threshold at the moment between entering and exiting. At this very threshold, there are two types of longing: longing to exit and longing to enter. The latter arises at the threshold, as will be discussed in the following.

4.2.3 The Border as Longing

The desire and need for distance and vastness are also common phenomena of travelling literature and paintings in the 18th century.¹⁴⁰ It is not necessarily a longing for distance, but a longing for a better world and for answers to the motivation that the traveller had for the departure in the first place: “On the other side of the border ahead of us, we were to see a way of life that was simple, patriarchal and harmonious probably because it is still left room for an unknown agent

140 See Jost, 2005:257.

called divine” (Maillart, 2013:112). The border is described like a destination of promises that needs to be reached and crossed.

The following two quotations from *Alle Wege sind offen* contain the magnificent panoramic view and the size of landscape that arouse the exciting feeling of departure, and the change of landscapes introduces another motif. This change is so significant that it means saying goodbye to Europe: leaving a place which is known and familiar to enter a new and unknown country and situation:

Man spürt gleich: Hier handelt es sich um einen Abschied. Dieses Tal ist noch grün, und gekühlt von der Meerluft. [...] den letzten Blick auf das Meer [...] und schon sind wir über 2000 Meter hoch, auf der Passhöhe von Siana [...] wir sehen ein grossartiges Panorama, Kette an Kette, ein Meer von braunen und kahlen Bergen, asiatische Landschaft, asiatische Grösse (Schwarzenbach, 2000:21–22).

It is a change the traveller feels directly. The massive and vast natural border is fascinating. In contrast to her first encounter, the reunion with Iran could be interpreted rather negatively in the following passage:

Das Schwarze Meer mit dem mittelländischen verwechseln? Ungeduldig vorwärts eilen, – und uralter Trauer verfallen? – Herz und Verstand verlieren, weil es jetzt zu spät ist, und keine graue Kapelle, kein Kreuzeszeichen mehr aus der Verlorenheit dieser nächtlichen Grenze emporsteigen, keine Glocke mehr läuten wird? Denn hier war zweifellos die Grenze. Kennt ihr, die Sesshaften und Beheimateten, den Schrecken und jähren Zauber dieses Worts? [...] Ich wusste schon lange, dass mir dieses Ende, und das Wiedersehen mit Asien nicht erspart bleiben würde (Schwarzenbach, 2008:117–118).

On the other hand, it reveals the author’s fascination with the country she keeps returning to. However, the nostalgia of “the known” in a world which is not comparable to “the used” is part of her “border experience”. Also, the characters who appear in her books, who are constantly on the move,¹⁴¹ are provided with this

141 See Decock and Schaffers, 2008:13–14.

longing for home: “Dort war die Grenze ganz nahe, die Grenze von Sowjetrussland, ihrer Heimat” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:40). And the word, *Heimat*, arouses a longing for the homeland that Schwarzenbach experiences herself as well. Nevertheless, staying home was not an option for her. The question Schwarzenbach asks her readership at home: “Kennt ihr, die Sesshaften und Beheimateten, den Schrecken und jähren Zauber dieses Worts?” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:118) seems rhetorical. It implies the ambiguity of the border experience, which is frightening, as it always brings an end to “the known and loved” and is the start of the fascinating, the new and different. Thus, the nostalgic feeling of crossing from Europe to Asia goes in two directions. It is a longing for the home as much as it is for the distance, not only when crossing the border from Europe to Asia, but also later from Afghanistan to India:

Aber vor mir ist nur die Passhöhe, ein neues Land, ein immerwährender Abschied. Ich weiss schon, wie mir zumute sein wird, dort, hinter jener verführerischen fernen Grenze Indiens, dort, wo der Himmel hell und weit wird, über dem Meer. Ich lasse ein Leben zurück, die Gewohnheit dieses abendlichen Blicks in schimmernde Länder, die Stunde der Verheissung (Schwarzenbach, 2008:159).

A nostalgic feeling for the experiences and beauty seen in the visited countries arises here as well. The experience of crossing the border is remarkably like the experience of the departure in general, as a border crossing very often follows a departure. The nostalgia, therefore, arises not only from leaving home in the first place, but from crossing any border, as it always comes as a result of a past farewell. This can be also observed when Bouvier’s narrator is about to leave Persia for Afghanistan:

À deux jours de la frontière nous y repensions tendrement; on la voyait, la Perse, comme un large espace nocturne avec des bleus très doux, compatissants. Déjà, nous lui rendions justice (Bouvier, 2014:275).

It is thus unsurprising that Bouvier’s narrator experiences the same nostalgic feeling again when leaving Afghanistan for India, one and a half years after starting the journey in Geneva. He admits that he fell in love with the country: “J’ai-

mais ce pays” (Bouvier, 2014:342). When he finds the officer at the border control sleeping, he leaves his passport on the table: “Je n’étais pas pressé. On ne l’est pas quand il s’agit de quitter un pays pareil” (Bouvier, 2014:371). Only the longing for the next journey can distract him from that nostalgic feeling towards the past and send him into nostalgic feelings for the future. He therefore rereads a letter from his friend, Thierry, who has already arrived in Sri Lanka, and the narrator speaks to himself: “Un autre monde. Il ne serait pas parti pour rien” (Bouvier, 2014:374).

The border clearly focusses on the act of crossing as a goal; but does it give the traveller the satisfaction of achieving a goal somehow, despite the nostalgic feeling associated with it? First, it must be said that goals on a journey are necessary in order not to get lost on the road: “Die mutige Wahl eines Ziels kann beträchtliche Energien freisetzen” (Schmid, 1998:218). This energy works like an engine on the road. Even if it does not become directly visible in Schwarzenbach’s work, it is what brought her to reach her goal in the end:

Nach so vielen Grenzen, die wir berührt, überschritten haben – diesmal ist es unsere Grenze, die lang erwartete und ersehnte. Und drüben, jenseits des jetzt in Halbdunkel gehüllten Wüstenstreifens, liegt Afghanistan. Was ist daran so wichtig so besonders? Scheiden sich hier zwei Erdteile? [...] werden die Ebenen weniger endlos, die Horizonte tröstlicher sein? (Schwarzenbach, 2000:46).

The collage of Schwarzenbach’s texts leaves these questions open. Maillart, however, dedicated an entire chapter – albeit a short one – to that crossing, simply titled, “The Border”. The fragment takes place from Kini’s perspective and covers the border crossing, which, although the scene is full of gaiety, was still frightening, especially with three armed men entering their car and accompanying them:

In mad exultation we rushed and bounced through the desert: we were no longer held back from a beautiful and little-known country called the land of the Afghans. Ours were its great mountains, its splendid people, its icy rivers, its ruins as old as the world, the peace of its isolation. We gave out yells of victory, we congratulated each other, we giggled like fools, we said all the silly

things that passed through our heads! The hour was magnificent (Maillart, 2013:116).

For Christina, it is the first time crossing that border, and Kini can feel her excitement: “I knew that Christina was as happy as she could be” (Maillart, 2013:118), when crossing this (for the moment) last border of her journey. The border was, as such, a pit stop. One aim of the journey is also reflected in Maillart’s *Des monts célestes aux sables rouges* when crossing the border to China: “Un peu plus loin à vingt kilomètres, et à gauche, c’était le premier poste chinois! Magie des mots!” (Maillart, 2017:135), which gives the traveller the power to continue on the road, as every act of crossing into a new place seems to be a new departure.

4.2.4 (Im)Possible Border Crossings

The tempting distant borders evoke sacrifices the travellers need to make in order to say goodbye to the lives they led before the journey. In the following quotation, Schwarzenbach seems to be surrounded by all kinds of borders:

Keine Nachricht erreichte mich, ich war weit weg, die hohe Barriere des Hindukusch trennte mich vom Kabul-Fluss, vom Khyber-Pass und der Grenzen Indiens, der breite Wüstenstreifen im Norden von den Städten Russlands, von Samarkand, Taschkent, Bucharra und vom Ufer des Amu-Darja. Und diese Grenzen, diese Barrieren, Flüsse, Wüsten waren für mich und meinesgleichen unüberschreitbar! (Schwarzenbach, 2000:85).

Nature is stronger than human beings, the latter of which cannot overcome natural borders. On the other hand, history, political situations, and natural disasters do not stop at any border line: “...und das Echo des fernen Krieges macht nicht Halt vor der gebirgigen Grenze Afghanistans” (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 90).

She refers to the simultaneity of historical and political happenings that take place in the world in parallel: “Inzwischen wurde die Gegend von Bayazid vom grossen Erdbeben im Herbst 1939 heimgesucht. Der Nachfolger Atatürks war in den Zeitungen abgebildet, wie er Witwen, Waisen und Obdachlosen die Hand schüttelte. Da war schon Krieg in Europa” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:26). Later on, Schwarzenbach writes:

Wir vergessen, dass es sich um einen Ablauf handelt, dass die Erde in ständiger Bewegung ist und dass wir von Flut und Ebbe, Erdbeben und Ereignissen weitab von unserem sicht- und greifbaren Umkreis mitbetroffen werden [...] wir nennen Wirklichkeit nur, was uns direkt betrifft. [...] Zwölf Stunden, zwölf Wochen nur von unseren Grenzen entfernt (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 32).

Schwarzenbach's narrator not only reminds the reader of the steady movement of the rotating world here, of the movement of cultures and of the passing time; she may also want to express that events do not stop at border lines, and that there is always a connection between countries and cultures. She appeals to her narratee, not to think only of what touches them directly, but to think about how just behind a border, life can be completely different. This life beyond the border could take the form of the continent across the sea, the country beyond the border control checkpoint, the city on the other side of the mountain range or the neighbour's house beyond the fence. It is an appeal to the reader to think further than his or her own four walls. Even though communication technology has developed a lot since Schwarzenbach's literature, the premise behind her thinking is still significant today. She might see the same problem in this "anti-neighborhood-thinking", "Moi, je n'ai besoin de personne" (Perret, 2003:103), that Bouvier criticised in his country of origin after returning from his journeys. He also speaks directly to his readers on that matter, quoting Emerson when he says that crossing a border changes one's life: "...et, une fois ces frontières franchise, nous ne redeviendrons jamais plus tout à fait les misérables pédants que nous étions' (Emerson)" (Bouvier, 2014:377). This reflects the concept that every border crossing is like a rebirth: like entering a new world and life. Inevitably, this must also change a personality.

Nevertheless, the border, (aside from all the excitement about the new), is an obstacle to the traveller. The traveller needs to prove at the national artificial borders that he or she is legally allowed to cross the border. The border is thus able to stop the continuation of a journey, a fear described by Maillart: "At the Persian post, a sort of great school-hall, we feared we should not be allowed to travel further [...] we were car number two entering Iran by this road" (Maillart, 2013:56). For the people living in border regions, attempting to cross prohibited borders can lead to death, depending on the political situation:

Des contreforts de l'Ararat aux plages désertes de la Caspienne, la frontière offre une ligne continue de barbelés doublés d'une bande de sable fin où les pas des fugitifs sont immédiatement décelés (Bouvier, 2014:125).

Bouvier describes the Afghan border, not always that strict but still a hindrance, to Russians: “Quinze cents kilomètres de frontière commune et une dépendance économique toujours plus étroite obligent les Afghans à ménager leur grand voisin” (Bouvier, 2014:351). It is, of course, the length of the border that is so impressive and the fact that despite its length, it is still difficult to cross. The interest, however, also does not seem to be a given according to the traveller's understanding:

Malgré ce va-et-vient clandestin et les escarmouches qui en résultent parfois entre 'passeurs' ouzbeks et gardes-frontières communistes, les rapports entre les gens des deux rives sont singulièrement détendus. Les Afghans n'éprouvent ni crainte, ni haine, ni attirance vis-à-vis de l'URSS, et voisinent en conservant un quant-à-soi qui n'a son égal qu'en Finlande (Bouvier, 2014:351).

Aside from the potential legal difficulties associated with crossing a border, other circumstances can also unexpectedly close borders, making them impossible or very difficult to cross. In the current century, we became witnesses of this with the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Schwarzenbach and Maillart had similar difficulties crossing the border to Afghanistan, as the borders were closed due to the spread of cholera, and the crossing of the Afghan border was questionable. Maillart's and Schwarzenbach's narrators also reflect upon this obstruction in their narration: “In Afghanistan herrschte die Cholera, man sagte uns, dass wir in diesem Sommer nie die Erlaubnis erhalten würden, die Grenze zu überschreiten” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:135) and: “It was true that the border was closed because of the cholera: nothing but a Turkish car had passed during the four last weeks” (Maillart, 2013:118).

The literature of Schwarzenbach, Bouvier and Maillart may question the need for national borders dividing the world, as a national border would be considered unnecessary to recognise the crossing into another country in their literature, because no matter which borders the travellers were crossing, every border involved noticeable changes.

And still, borders are needed – not in a national sense, but in a natural and cultural sense. What Schmid says about the ‘temporal border’: “Was wir dem Tod verdanken, ist demnach die Begrenzung des Lebens. Würde es diese Grenze nicht geben, wäre die Gestaltung des Lebens gleichgültig” (Schmid, 1998:88), also applies to a spatial border. Homogenising the world culturally makes travelling superfluous. If everything can be found everywhere, if people, landscapes, and cultures were all the same, the diversity on the planet that makes travellers want to travel disappears. Schwarzenbach gives a direct example on her journey to the United States:

Es ist nicht, wie man zuerst glauben möchte, nur ein Abfallhaufen der Industrie. Es ist nicht nur eine riesige Arbeitsstätte. Die Namen Hoboken, Newark und Camden bezeichnen nicht nur Quartiere dieser traurig-unmenschlichen Landschaft, es sind die Namen von Städten. Sie sind schwer zu erkennen, es gibt kein Tor und kein Kirchturm und kein Rathaus, und ihre Grenzen gehen ineinander über. [...] Weit im Westen schimmert rötlich Abendlicht. Hier aber, über der Zukunftslandschaft, scheint es keinen hellen Tag und keinen sinkenden Abend zu geben: Ein unveränderter grauer Himmel lagert niedrig über dem wüsten Chaos, Rauch und rieselnder Nebel verhüllen gespenstisch und fast grossartig düster, was sonst nackte Hässlichkeit wäre. Und wie der Leib einer Riesenschlange schwingen sich neue Hochbrücken darüber und verhelfen mir endlich zur Flucht... (Schwarzenbach, 1997:35–36).

The world without borders and change, a world with inhuman landscapes, is a world the narrator just wants to escape, or according to Marc Augé, a “non-lieu” (Augé, 1992:110).¹⁴²

The spatial and temporal border are also connected because the border is, at times, linked to a temporal episode from life: an aim as well as a beginning or an end for the traveller. The way that the narrators describe the landscapes in the moment of crossing country borders shows the differences between the countries. There is a visible diversity, and not only the border guard makes the difference. The atmosphere changes, the colours, the air, everything that her senses can perceive. Like

142 Interestingly, Augé and Maillart both speak about New York/the surroundings of New York in these examples.

site-specificity in modern art becoming a distinctive medium for similar looking cities in the globalised world,¹⁴³ the travel authors' specific descriptions make a place, culture, and history special.

For the travel authors, the border is a place of constant departure and arrival. Bouvier and Maillart are just like Schwarzenbach: people “in between”, as Sofie Decock and Uta Schaffers call her, from various perspectives. This in-betweenness is the traveller's gift, and borders in their various understandings are not only needed for the excitement of not knowing what will happen or what will change behind the border, but are described by Maillart as “one of the climaxes of our journey” (Maillart, 2013:115). Schwarzenbach sees herself as one of the privileged people who have the possibility of travelling between countries. That is why she says after her last journey to Iran: “Nur einigen Zufällen des Schicksals verdanken wir es, unterwegs zu sein zwischen den Ländern, und wir nennen sie glückliche Zufälle” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:46). Thanks to these “lucky coincidences”, we can enjoy their literature today.

4.3 Freedom

The understanding of freedom changes with time, including cultural, political, and historical situations, respectively. It may be inconceivable for some of us today to travel to Afghanistan and even more surprising to travel to Afghanistan looking for freedom. Surely, the context of time and history need to be considered here. In the first half of the 20th century, Europe was, of course, anything but a *free* continent, Switzerland included. Susan Zerwinsky, who looked at the European image of Afghanistan back in those days, says that the distant country at the Hindukush lured travellers with its difference and “wildness”, which was recognised as positive overall from a German perspective and was associated with “freedom” and “originality”.¹⁴⁴ Religious freedom, political freedom, economic freedom, and social freedom have developed since the 16th century.¹⁴⁵ Freedom in the modernity of the present focuses on the choices of the individual, on having the choice

143 See Moser, 2011:124.

144 See Carbone, 2010:212.

145 See Schmid, 1998:99–100.

to choose and the freedom to decide. Being free means not depending on anything or anyone:

On my own. Diese Erfahrung, ins bodenlose zu fallen und immerfort nur zu stürzen, nirgendwo mehr Heil zu finden, hat entgegen dem äußeren Anschein nichts von Privathalt an sich, sondern resultiert aus dem strukturellen Problem moderner Freiheit, der Abwesenheit jeglicher Bindung, die noch irgendwelche selbstverständliche Geltung oder gar Notwendigkeit beanspruchen könnte, sei es in persönlicher, gesellschaftlicher, geschichtlicher, religiöser, politischer oder naturgesetzlicher Hinsicht. Freiheit, das ist die Idee des Freiseins von Gebundenheit, der Zustand eines Seins, das immer auch anders sein kann – ein Zustand voller Wahlmöglichkeiten, die bis zur Beliebigkeit gehen können (Schmid, 1998:114).

This freedom the individual wants to achieve, the absolute freedom, brings several difficulties with it, as Schmid has already noted in his philosophy:

Das zentrale Problem aber ist das moderne Verständnis von Freiheit, das zum einen über einem äusserst umfangreichen Befreiungsanliegen die Arbeit an Formen der Freiheit vernachlässigt hat, zum anderen die konstitutive Widerspruchstruktur der Freiheit zu negieren suchte. Da sich in der 'Postmoderne' das Problem nur noch verschärft, beginnt die Suche nach einer anderen Moderne, deren Anliegen die Ausarbeitung einer Praxis der Freiheit ist, und in deren Umfeld sich das Subjekt der Lebenskunst darum bemüht, das Leben selbst zu führen, einen Lebensstil ins Werk zu setzen und seine Lebensform zu gewinnen, nicht zuletzt in der Auseinandersetzung mit der Herausforderung, die moderne und postmoderne Medien und Informationstechnologien für die Frage der Lebensführung darstellen (Schmid, 1998: 89–90).

The travelling narrations do reflect such problems. How the travelling narration, in combination with *ars vivendi*, can find an answer to this problem that individual freedom inevitably faces in modernity remains a topic that must be discussed.

Fromm distinguishes between the negatively-loaded 'freedom from' and the positive form, 'freedom to'. Another example of childhood is given: "The child be-

comes more free to develop and express its own individual self unhampered by those ties which were limiting it. But the child also becomes more free from a world which gave it security and reassurance” (Fromm, 1994:30). This distinction also appears in Horatschek’s introduction to *Der Britische Roman als Genre der Lebenskunst*: “Freiheit von muss transformiert werden in eine Freiheit zu” (Horatschek et al., 2008:9). Those two methods, however, would only cover the first two understandings of ability in Schmid’s *ars vivendi*.

Die Freiheit von etwas kennzeichnet nur die Vorbereitungsphase und beruht auf dem Akt der Befreiung, nämlich sich lösen zu können von Bindungen, um sich Möglichkeiten zu verschaffen und nicht mehr nur Notwendigkeit zu unterliegen. [...] Die Freiheit zu etwas verlangt in der Konkretisierungsphase die genauere Festlegung, welche der gewonnenen Möglichkeiten nun zu realisieren seien, und welche Regeln die Realisierung anleiten sollen, um das Werk der Freiheit in frei gewählten Formen zu vollenden (Schmid, 1998: 114).

The third method shows that freedom can only be achieved if it is fully realised or practiced: “In diesem Stadium wird die Freiheit zur detaillierten, mühevollen Arbeit, um aus den gewählten Möglichkeiten auf gekonnte Weise Wirklichkeit werden zu lassen, Bindungen neu einzugehen und Beziehungen neu zu knüpfen” (Schmid, 1998:115). The hard work of the freedom of choice, but also of finding and defining freedom for the traveller, becomes visible in the following.

4.3.1 Freedom in the Travelling Narration

For the Chinese-speaking public, a connection is created linguistically through the significations of the character. Kim Joon points out that the character for playing, travelling, and wandering is also used for sightseeing and going abroad to study. In addition to that, the character itself also connotes the concepts of ‘doing nothing’ or ‘being free’.¹⁴⁶ The connotation of playing can even be observed in

146 See Joon, 2006:11–12.

Maillart's text: "I had ceased to be proud of having, by my own efforts, turned the world into a playground" (Maillart, 2013:190).¹⁴⁷

If one thinks of a journey in a car, an association with freedom is likely to be made quickly. This is not surprising, considering that road trips, and thus, vehicles, are often staged and advertised in a context of what one may call freedom. The invention of the car and the American dream may come to mind. Not only road trips – but the journey itself and freedom are very much linked concepts in the Western way of thinking. So much so that the German translator of *L'Usage du monde* translates Bouvier's phrase as follows: "Nous avions deux ans devant nous" (Bouvier, 2014:10) into: "We had two *free* years in front of us".¹⁴⁸ The open road, the possibility of moving and driving further and further, the wide-open landscape of a huge country and encountering nature and beautiful views all are concepts that shout "freedom!" to the reader. Numerous scholars, books and films have delivered this message.¹⁴⁹ In her book *American Road Narratives*, Ann Brigham examines "how the Euro-American national imaginary has been profoundly shaped by the promise of mobility: the freedom to go anywhere and become anyone" (Brigham, 2015:3). She states that, "in our vaster imaginations, the road offers new horizons [...] liberated from the confines of home and society" (Brigham, 2015:4). And so the title of the travel narration implies: *All the roads are open*. Maillart's *The Cruel Way* starts with the idea of the Afghanistan journey. The two protagonists, Christina and Kini, have a conversation, and when Christina says, "The car is worn out and Father has promised me a Ford", Kini thinks, "I only heard the last name and it seems to have been responsible for all. That one word was enough" (Maillart, 2013:1). The car is the condition: the ticket for the two travellers to start their journey and to make it possible that *All the roads are open*.

Thus, from the beginning, the car is the existential object of the journey. As Anke Hertling wrote in her work *Eroberung der Männerdomäne Automobil, – conquering the male domain of the automobile*, the car, a Ford Roadster deluxe, "offered the

147 Ette has already observed the relation between knowledge of life and the children's game in his book *ÜberLebensWissen*.

148 See the German translation of *L'Usage du monde*, Bouvier, 2010:8: "Wir hatten zwei freie Jahre vor uns und Geld für vier Monate."

149 See Brigham, 2015:6.

chance to finally move freely” (Hertling, 2013:243). However, as Hertling has already discovered, the car not only turns from a symbol of freedom into a symbol of Western progress, (which the authors criticise in their works more and more), but also into a burden of dependence on the machine – a problem that the walking traveller does not face: “Wer zu Fuß reist, genießt eine unbeschreibliche Freiheit, weil er von nichts anderem abhängig ist als von seinem Willen und seinem Vergnügen” (Schmidt, 1990:141). The characters in the books of all three authors soon recognize that the journey does not fulfil its promises.

A feeling of freedom also arises from nature and is expressed within the five elements, such as in the water: “I had been sufficiently shaped, too, by life on small ships to be wedded to the wind in a sailor’s way: caressing breezes or threatening squalls arouse in me feelings that no landlubber could imagine” (Maillart, 2013: 45) or the Earth: “We drank in the impression of boundlessness that arose from the monotonous hills” (Maillart, 2013:165). Schwarzenbach’s narrator describes it in the air: “ich will das Freie gewinnen, will einen tiefen Atemzug tun” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:77), and Bouvier’s narrator in the fire: “La lune brillait assez pour qu’on coupe les phrases et ménage ainsi la batterie. Grand Plaisir à ronger à quinze à l’heure, tous feux éteints, ces énormes vallonnements solitaires et couleur de corail” (Bouvier, 2014:262). The narrators also find freedom in the fifth element, *aether*, as Maillart shows in this example: “she would begin to feel in herself a freedom beyond nature: she would enter the realm of the spirit, experience its actuality in herself” (Maillart, 2013:114).

Freedom also becomes visible in the freedom of choice: “Ainsi, nous y étions déjà Où serions-nous au Noël suivant?” (Bouvier, 2014:151). Schwarzenbach speaks about her freedom to make decisions, too: “Wieder einmal hatte ich nach sehr freiem Ermessen meinen Weg gewählt. Den Umweg über Kurdistan? Wohin wollte ich denn eigentlich gelangen?” (Schwarzenbach, 2003:71–72). The question of choice is always a central aspect of *ars vivendi* and must be asked in terms of freedom. The problem in modern times is very often not the optional question: Do I have a choice? It is much more often the problem that the choices one has are not limited. Again, the individual is confronted with the problem of limitlessness, which Schmid addresses:

Das fortgeschrittene Befreitsein von Bindungen und Abhängigkeiten führt einen Zustand der Beliebigkeit herbei, der wortreich beklagt wird, aber nicht

behoben werden kann, daher die zwangsläufige Konsequenz der Freiheit des modernen und postmodernen Menschen ist (Schmid, 1998:103).

Therefore, the individual must make a choice. Without choosing these choices and aiming for them, the traveller is lost. Schmid calls this the first dilemma of choice: “Das erste Dilemma der modernen Wahlfreiheit besteht darin, dass die Wahlfreiheit zu einer Wahlnotwendigkeit wird” (Schmid, 1998:189). On the other side of the extreme is the person without a choice. The locals, who seem to be trapped in their space, stand next to the traveller:

Tausendjährigen Gesetzen folgend, auch sie, und den Gesetzen der Jahreszeiten, der guten Weiden, als müsste es so sein, als habe der Mensch keine Freiheit zu wählen und sei nur ein treuer oder ungetreuer Knecht. Und die Gesetze sind hart, das Dasein dürftig, die Jahreszeiten unerbittlich – kann man ihnen nicht entfliehen? Ist nirgends ein Weg offen, ein Pass, der hinüberführt in andere Länder, ist es immer der gleiche Himmel, Morgen und Abend, der gleiche Kreislauf, der gleiche Gebetsruf, und nie eine Antwort? (Schwarzenbach, 2000:90–91).

Schwarzenbach’s quotation here suits what Schmid describes as the culture of space in premodern times perfectly, in which there was no focus on the individual and freedom as it would be defined in modern times. The traveller is chased by a longing to be bound but cannot rest, as he recognises that the longing for a complete freedom is stronger:

Es handelt sich um eine Kultur des Raumes, denn es gibt kaum Veränderung in dieser Welt, und selbst die Zeit steht in Relation zum jeweiligen Raum: Eine zirkuläre Zeit kennt nur den Spielraum der natürlichen Zyklen, und die traditionellen Rituale bestätigen die Zeit der Wiederkehr, in der die Lebensführung sich einrichten kann. Die Kultur des Raumes, das ist die Bodenständigkeit der Menschen, die Selbstverständlichkeit der Heimat und die Pflege des Brauchtums (Schmid, 1998:96).

While Schwarzenbach’s narrator pities the people living in that very same place doing the same things day by day and thinks about how they could get out of their

cycle, she also admires them: “Es ist gut, Gewohnheiten zu haben, eine Tageseinteilung, ein warmes Haus” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:38), because she as an individual is totally lost. She does not know where to go to, which is the second dilemma of choice – the lack of the ability to choose. Nor does she know “gegen was man aufbegehrt, an welchen Gott man sich wendet, demütig, bitter, ratlos, in ohnmächtiger Bedrängnis” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:91). Being freed from everything, the traveller faces the third dilemma of choice:

Es handelt sich um eine Variante des Freiheitsdilemmas, denn mit jeder Wahl wird eine Festlegung vorgenommen, die den Raum möglicher Freiheit begrenzt. So sehr das moderne Subjekt jedoch fürchtet, in der Vielzahl der Möglichkeiten zu ertrinken, so sehr liegt es ihm fern, auf Möglichkeiten zu verzichten oder durch eine selbstgewählte Reduktion die Zahl der Möglichkeiten einzugrenzen. Zieht es daraus die Konsequenz, nicht zu wählen, jede Festlegung zu scheuen, sind die Folgen erst recht fatal, denn in der Epoche der Wahl ist auch die Nichtwahl eine Wahl (Schmid, 1998:190).¹⁵⁰

It also be must discussed what freedom means to the traveller of the 20th century, besides metaphorical items and the vision of the open road. It has already been said in chapter ‘2.2. The motivation to go on a life’s journey’, that Maillart, Schwarzenbach and Bouvier started their respective journeys in hopes of finding unlimited freedom. But what is this unlimited freedom? And does it exist? According to Brigham it cannot be reached through mobility, as this is not a method of freeing oneself from space, society, or identity, but instead the opposite.¹⁵¹ It is not as simple as saying that mobility provides absolute freedom, even though an inexperienced traveller might think so. It would also be too simple to say that it teaches the opposite; it is exactly the ambiguity that arises from those contradictions that is important for the *ars vivendi* in connection with the travelling narration. Is it possibly the departure or the beginning of a road that makes the journey appear endless, unlimited, and open from the starting point of view? A feeling of freedom just in the very moment? Schwarzenbach’s narrator sees the departure as

150 Katrin Lehnert has observed this problematic of choice also in Schwarzenbach’s *Lyrische Novelle* and *Bei diesem Regen*. See Willems, 1998.

151 See Brigham, 2015.

the only remaining freedom: “Der Aufbruch ist die Befreiung – o einzige Freiheit, die uns geblieben ist! – und verlangt nur den ungebrochenen, den täglich erneuerten Mut...” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:17). In an earlier journey to Persia, the narrator also recognises this, as shown nearly identically in *Das glückliche Tal*: “Und ich breche auf. – Befreiung! Befreiung! – Einzige Freiheit, die uns geblieben ist!” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:106).

Erich Fromm explains in his book *Escape from freedom* that the beginning of freedom has the price of leaving the mother’s womb. What does this have to do with travel literature? The departure from one’s home into a new, unknown world can be compared to birth or the start of a new life. Bouvier emphasises this thought in the very beginning of *L’Usage du monde* by writing, “Le départ est comme une nouvelle naissance et mon monde était encore trop neuf pour se plier à une réflexion méthodique” (Bouvier, 2014:146).¹⁵² Habermas says that, “Sich frei zu fühlen heißt zunächst einmal, etwas Neues anfangen zu können” (Habermas, 2005: 18) and every departure may be interpreted as starting anew. He does not speak about freedom itself but about one’s feeling of being free. Further on, he refers to Adorno and Kant:

Was dieses Initiieren betrifft, bleibt Adorno konventionell nahe an Kants dritter Antinomie: Frei handelnde Subjekte greifen in naturgesetzlich geregelte Abläufe ein und ‘stiften’, wie er sich ausdrückt, neue Kausalreihen. Der Handelnde, der eine Initiative ergreift, unterstellt, dass er damit etwas in Gang setzt, was nicht ohnehin geschieht (Habermas, 2005:18).

In contrast to natural birth, travelling is an action, an active decision made by the traveller to do something that would not have happened otherwise. That implies, though, that it is not the journey itself which brings freedom, but the deliberate act of making changes; the free action of a nomad would be, for example, to settle down. According to Schmid, this action needs to be exercised. Sarah Heinz already noted this observation in her article ‘Freiheit ohne Grenzen’: “Die grundlegende These von Schmid’s Lebenskunstphilosophie ist hier, dass frei zu leben

152 See Bouvier, 2007:14: “I thought of a cat’s proverbial nine lives: it seemed to me that I must be starting on my second.”

ein Können ist, das geübt werden muss” (Horatschek et al., 2008:271). *Ars vivendi* and freedom are thus linked together, as both are abilities which can be trained and gained. The challenge for the individual to find himself in modern freedom is noted by Schmid in the ability to handle contradictions.¹⁵³

4.3.2 Hospitality and Freedom

An interesting statement has been discussed by Catherine Mee: “hospitality is by nature in contradiction with freedom” (Mee, 2014:73). She argues that: “it implies reciprocity and obligation: hosts have duties, but guests also have responsibilities. The guest is not free to come and go at will, but is subject to the host’s rule, whether that host is an individual traveller, or a nation state” (Mee, 2014:73). In the following example from Schwarzenbach’s narrator, it can be seen that a rule is limiting the traveller’s freedom: “Wir hätten Lust, hier noch einmal nach persischer Art im Schatten zu liegen, die Augen im Blau, und Melonen zu essen. Aber ein Polizist weicht uns nicht mehr von der Seite, es ist verboten zu fotografieren” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:45). The fact that taking pictures is prohibited not only complicates their work and habits, but also limits them in their freedom of artistic expression. It also reminds the traveller instantly of the freedom one may take for granted in Europe:

Wir mögen heute in Europa skeptisch geworden sein gegenüber den Schlagworten von Freiheit, Verantwortung, gleichem Recht für alle und dergleichen mehr. Aber es genügt die dunkle Knechtschaft von nahem gesehen zu haben, die aus Gottes Geschöpfen, freudlose angsterfüllte Wesen macht [...] und wieder der Vernunft das Wort reden (Schwarzenbach, 2000:71).

The thought that guests are not free in the hands of the host can be observed very well when Bouvier and Thierry are staying in prison for a couple of days on their trip. In Mahabad, they run out of money, and the only accommodation offered to them is by a police officer who allows them to stay in a prison cell. A nice gesture, but soon, they are wondering about their status: “Une proposition affable mais péremptoire; nous n’avions pas le choix” (Bouvier, 2014:174). The addendum stat-

153 See Schmid, 1998:106.

ing that they had no choice lets the reader question whether they have really been taken as prisoners. This is probably one of the most extreme examples that supports the thesis that “hospitality is by nature in contradiction with freedom”, but Kini has a similar experience:

Except in town, you will not find a door or window that locks: your privacy belongs to the past. Nobody would understand what you meant by it or why you could possibly want it [...]. You belong to your host: his family and neighbours want to see and touch what you possess (Maillart, 2013:59).

Besides the hosts, a traveller’s companion also seems to have an impact on the image of limiting freedom:

In this regard, Jo Gwi-myeong, the author of *Record of Tour to the Jiri Mountain* (Yu Jirisan-gi), had an interesting point when he said: ‘Traveling with buddies is not as good as traveling alone.’ When traveling alone, he said, he could move from one spot, as soon as his excitement had waned. He could get up and return any moment [...]. Or, he said, he could enjoy looking at a nameless stone in a stream all day (Joon, 2006:11–12).

Not only the habits of the companion but also his or her doubts can play a role. Bouvier’s traveller has such an experience when his companion, Thierry, has a nervous breakdown in the prison cell: “Je ne peux plus de cette prison, de cette trappe’ – et je ne compris d’abord pas, tant l’égoïsme peut aveugler, qu’il parlait du voyage – ‘regarde où nous en sommes, après huit mois! Piégés ici” (Bouvier, 2014: 157). In his statement the prison does not have to mean the literal prison they are sleeping in; it can also be a metaphor for the journey in general.

On the other hand, not being able to stay in the houses of the locals also works against their freedom: “Sie [hotels] tun zweifellos der persönlichen Freiheit einigen Abbruch” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:106). Freedom is not to be equated with independence. One may also argue that thanks to the hosts, one has the freedom to enter a local’s house. The fact that doors are unlocked also shows both sides: the freedom to enter and to exit, just as the guests had the freedom to enter the countries through their “doors”. but also the host’s responsibility to welcome people into his or her property. Another question arises regarding the limitation of free-

dom through the companion: Can one really appreciate his or her freedom, if it is not shared with somebody else? In addition to that, Maillart hopes to find freedom in meeting the nomads: “There live the men I want to study in a country where I feel happy: mountaineers not enslaved by artificial needs, free men not forced to increase their daily production” (Maillart, 2013:2). The rebellious attitude of not participating in the world of consumption is clearly visible here. The wish to meet nomads could also have to do with wanting to experience hospitality in a different way. The following example from Schwarzenbach:

Ihre Brüder sind Nomaden, ihre Heimat sind die Täler des Hindukusch, oder die ferneren Weidegründe im Süden, ich weiß es nicht genau [...] Aber welche Gastfreundschaft, welches Loblied des Daseins! (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 81),

reveals that it is not hospitality itself that is limiting the guest’s freedom, but perhaps the houses’ four walls: a closed space. The admiration of the nomads also reflects the authors’ understanding of freedom. However, they can only partly share it, as they will always have their houses in Switzerland welcoming them back, as well as their cars, portable but closed home-like spaces and a small area of retreat.

4.3.3 Freedom, the Terrible Gift

In this chapter about the motif of ‘freedom’, the ambiguity of travelling literature becomes especially clear in the journey to Afghanistan, which Brigham has also discussed in American travelling narratives and which Schmid sees as a necessity for *ars vivendi*. Here, there is an outstanding connection between freedom, *ars vivendi* and travelling literature, a literature of inter- as well as intratextual contradictions. This ambiguity therefore creates not only the connection between freedom and *ars vivendi*, but also the link to the travelling narration, which becomes clear in the following quotation:

Das ständige Offenhalten noch weiterer Möglichkeiten, das Warten auf neue Alternativen und der Wunsch nach einer Freiheit im Sinne einer totalen Flexibilität machen denjenigen, der doch eigentlich frei sein wollte, handlungsunfähig und damit unfrei [...]. Lebenskunst und Freiheitsdilemma sind daher untrennbar miteinander verbunden (Horatschek et al., 2008:271).

The complicated entanglement of the ambiguity in the travelling narration, freedom and *ars vivendi* is a given. Schwarzenbach's title *All the roads are open* and Maillart's *The Cruel Way*, which both describe the same journey, are a perfect example of this ambiguity within freedom and *ars vivendi*: On the one hand the positive connotation of the open road and on the other the negative connotation of a suffering, cruel way. Doesn't the content of *All the roads are open* question the journey much more than does *The Cruel Way*? Fromm says that "Freedom [...] is an ambiguous gift" (Fromm, 1994:32). The ambiguous feeling of freedom is characteristic of their travelling narrations. Schwarzenbach's narrator speaks about the gift of a terribly appalling freedom: "Ich erhielt das Geschenk einer fürchterlichen Freiheit" (Schwarzenbach, 2010:137). The ambiguity already becomes visible within the signified of the language in this sentence. While the words 'gift' and 'freedom' evoke a harmonious picture in our minds, the adjective 'terribly' disturbs it.¹⁵⁴ Why does Schwarzenbach connect freedom with such an extreme and negatively-loaded adjective?

[Der] Friede unserer armen Seelen aber ist ein köstlich Gut der Freiheit, dem man nicht nachjagen, um das man weder feilschen noch verhandeln mit den Diktatoren, die unsere Häuser in Brand stecken, unsere Felder zerstampfen und die Cholera aussäen können von heute auf morgen. Fürchterliche Ungewissheit? Fürchterlich nur so lange, als wir ihr nicht ins Auge zu blicken vermögen (Schwarzenbach, 2000:33).

Freedom is a terrible gift; it is cruel to the individual in that it offers unlimited choices and possibilities. As freedom is still appalling to the protagonist, she is thus not able to "look freedom in the eye". And still, why is that the case? Schwarzenbach's protagonist says: "Freiheit gilt nur, solange man die Kraft hat, von ihr Gebrauch zu machen. Ich aber habe sie missbraucht" (Schwarzenbach, 2003:118). The statement assumes that there was 'freedom' at the beginning that has been used wrongly, the freedom of choice:

154 Not to mention the false friend in the German language, in which "Gift" means poison.

Ja, ich bin aus Gewissenhaftigkeit weggegangen, und viele haben mich um meine Freiheit und um meine Wahl beneidet. Aber hier verliert auch die Freiheit ihren Sinn. Ich will keinen Anspruch mehr auf meine Freiheit erheben, ich möchte nur zurückkehren, und ich kann nicht, ich kann nicht, und ich weiss es (Schwarzenbach, 2003:120–121).

It could be argued here that Schwarzenbach wrote these lines in the times before World War II. It could also be argued that Schwarzenbach is writing the book in Switzerland after she has already returned. However, as the bibliographical character stands in the shadow of the travelling narration, these lines can be also read as pertaining to the issue of returning home. Even if the traveller has the choice to return, he or she can never actually return, as so many events have changed him or her. After her last longer journey to Africa, Schwarzenbach writes a letter to McCullers in October of 1941. In it, she states that for the first time in her life, she anticipated feeling the full degree of inner freedom in the mountains of Bas-Congo:

Dort oben, in einer zugleich romantisch-lieblichen, und friedlich großartigen Landschaft, ahnte ich zum ersten Mal das volle Mass innerer Freiheit und tiefer, reiner Freude [...]. Hier hatte ich gelernt, unser wahres, unzerstörbares Selbst vor jener verletzten Persönlichkeit zu unterscheiden, die von der Gunst und Ungunst der irdischen Umgebung und Partnerschaft abhängt [...]. Ja, dieser Ort in den Bergen des Bas-Congo war mir so etwas wie ein irdisches Paradies geworden (Carbone, 2010:51).¹⁵⁵

Is it the great, wide landscape that arouses freedom? If so, then Schwarzenbach must have had plenty of such moments on her journey to Afghanistan, because there are many examples of descriptions of the massive land. In addition to that, her numerous pictures reflect the open, endless road through the Syrian, Iranian and Afghan countryside.¹⁵⁶ Kini also gives that impression in *The Cruel Way*: “We drank in the impression of boundlessness that arose from the monotonous hills”

155 Carbone quotes from Schwarzenbach’s text here: *Beim Verlassen Afrikas*, pp. 43f., an unpublished typescript located in the Swiss literature archive Bern (SLA).

156 See Hertling, 2013:255, 258–259.

(Maillart, 2013:165). Maillart lets the two terms act together here: boundlessness and freedom. When she speaks about her companion, Christina, she mentions a freedom beyond nature: “she would begin to feel in herself a freedom beyond nature: she would enter the realm of the spirit, experience its actuality in herself” (Maillart, 2013:114). However, Schwarzenbach emphasises that she feels this kind of fulfilled freedom for the first time in her life. This may have the result that freedom is not a constant status but rather a moment which can be noticeably short, a feeling that may pass by and be forgotten very quickly. The picture created by Bouvier in *Le Poisson-scorpion*: “ferrer comme une truite un instant de liberté” (Bouvier, 1996:134), reflects this thoughts as well.

In the narration about that journey to Africa, the narrator already thinks further. The narration *Wunder des Baums*¹⁵⁷ tells us: “Meine Freiheit... Ich habe jetzt dieses Wort begriffen und spreche es auch aus, obwohl es mir große Traurigkeit verursacht” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:138). Why does it make the protagonist sad? Probably because she understands that absolute freedom is just a figment of our imaginations that can never be reached in the way that she wished, or that the only insights into freedom lie in the cognition of not finding it.

Towards the end of *All the roads are open*, Schwarzenbach questions her behaviour: “Und nenne mein unbedachtes Treiben Freiheit, Menschenrecht...?” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:98). The journey has turned into something strong, difficult, and unpredictable:

Die Reise aber, die vielen als ein leichter Traum, als ein verlockendes Spiel, als die Befreiung vom Alltag, als Freiheit schlechthin erscheinen mag, ist in Wirklichkeit gnadenlos, eine Schule, dazu geeignet, uns an den unvermeidlichen Ablauf zu gewöhnen, an Begegnen und Verlieren, hart auf hart (Schwarzenbach, 2000:34).

The roads have been freely chosen, but this does not imply that walking on the freely chosen road means living in freedom: “Ich dachte über die Grenzen des Zufälligen nach, das in jenen Ländern, wo wir uns in einer scheinbar so unbegrenzten Freiheit bewegen, eine so grosse, wenn auch trügerische Rolle spielt”

157 *Das Wunder des Baums* has not been translated so far.

(Schwarzenbach, 2003:71–72). The freedom to let coincidence decide where one goes becomes questionable through the realisation that coincidence might not be endless. That coincidence accompanies one only up until a specific point. It is probably destiny that is leading the traveller, but then the narrator questions whether she has ever met it: “Vielleicht bin ich meinem Schicksal nicht begegnet, es könnte der Preis sein, den man für die Freiheit zahlt” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:156). It is not the only price the narrator had to pay for her freedom: “Ich hatte, um meine Freiheit zu erlangen, alle Gewohnheiten abgelegt, alle Erinnerungen vergessen, allen Höflichkeiten und Uebereinkünften abgesagt” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:146). In order to pay for freedom, one needs to be aware that one is sacrificing destiny, habits, memories, politeness, and agreement. That shows that Schwarzenbach has understood the third important level of ability in terms of freedom:

Die Festschreibung der neuen Realität bedingt jedoch, bis zu einem bestimmten, genau festzulegen Maß, zwangsläufig ein Aufgeben von gewonnener Freiheit, da, wenn auch aufgrund einer freien Wahl, auf die Realisierung anderer Möglichkeiten verzichtet wird. Das ist der Preis der Realisierung von Freiheit: Dass sie wieder in Formen gegossen, in Bindungen und Beziehungen festgelegt wird, auf deren mögliches Anderssein für eine unbestimmte Dauer verzichtet werden muss, um die Freiheit wirklich leben zu können: [...] Wird dieser Schritt nicht vollzogen, bleibt die Freiheit leer, denn sie verbleibt völlig im Raum der Möglichkeiten; wird er vollzogen, ist die Freiheit keine absolute, ideale mehr, denn sie reduziert sich auf die realisierten Möglichkeiten. Das ist das Freiheitsdilemma, aus dem es kein Entrinnen gibt: Die Freiheit von einer Gebundenheit, von einer Notwendigkeit, von einer Form, die vielleicht zu starr geworden ist, kann letztlich nur durch eine andere Formgebung, Notwendigkeit und Gebundenheit befestigt werden, die jedoch ihrerseits die Freiheit wieder bindet und begrenzt (Schmid 1998, 115).

The price that Schwarzenbach thus pays are the freedoms she was used to. The new freedom that she receives from the journey is the freedom of departure. Like Schwarzenbach’s narrator, Bouvier’s narrator also experiences a two-faced journey. A remarkably similar comment to Schwarzenbach’s is noted in *L’Usage du monde*:

Le voyage fournit des occasions de s'ébrouer mais pas – comme on le croyait – la liberté. Il faut plutôt éprouver une sorte de réduction; privé de son cadre habituel, dépouillé de ses habitudes comme d'un volumineux emballage, le voyageur se trouve ramené à de plus humbles proportions. Plus ouvert aussi à la curiosité, à l'intuition, au coup de foudre (Bouvier, 2014:72).

In diary entries from 1958, (after his long trip from Geneva to Kabul, which led him further to Sri Lanka and Japan), Bouvier writes: "Reste ce voyage, cet énorme et exigeant voyage, dont il faut faire façon sous peine d'être mangé par lui" (Bouvier, 2013:73).

The journey is personified, and instead of bringing freedom, becomes its opponent, which takes away the traveller's freedom: "Wir sind keinen Augenblick frei, wir sind nicht 'wir selbst', die Fremde gewinnt Macht über uns und entfremdet uns unserem eigenen Herzen" (Schwarzenbach, 2003:74). A similar observation is made by the narrator of *Winter in Vorderasien*: "Dafür trat eine vage Hoffnung ein, dass man sich weltragenden und -bewegenden Mächten getrost überlassen dürfe. Sie zu erkennen, gab zuerst das Gefühl einer grossen Freiheit, doch bald war man ermattet und sonderbar enteignet" (Schwarzenbach, 2016:116–117).

In both cases, the previous examples have shown that the travellers have been left disappointed: "Freiheit, das ist die unaufhörliche Produktion von Enttäuschung, denn ihre Ansprüche gehen immer weiter, als ihre Realisierung einzulösen vermag" (Schmid, 1998:116). They are both witnesses of freedom in modernity, which cannot keep its promises:

Jede Moderne, wo und wann auch immer, hat damit zu kämpfen, das maßlose Erwartungen an die Freiheit zu ebenso maßlosen Enttäuschungen beim Versuch zu ihrer Realisierung führen; Enttäuschungen, die mehr sind als nur eine Ernüchterung, da sie auf die Idee der Freiheit selbst zurückschlagen und sie infrage stellen. Das moderne Individuum trägt die Zerrissenheit zwischen Freiheitsanspruch und Enttäuschung in sich, und auch die andere Moderne steht vor diesem Problem, dass eine grenzenlos werdende Freiheit zugleich als enttäuschend begrenzt erfahren wird (Schmid, 1998:113).

The search for absolute freedom on the road that the traveller was about to find thus always remains a disappointment, as it can never be realised in the way that

the individual pictured it. When Ette quotes Barthes' words to describe a fresh start: "intime qui veut parler en moi, faire entendre son cri, face à la généralité, à la science" (Barthes, 1984:319), he emphasizes the literarily-expressed *cry* in writing, which only works in French: 'cri' in 'écriture', not in English. Schwarzenbach's cry is the cry for freedom: "O Freiheit, Freiheit!" (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 97) that she repeats within her works.¹⁵⁸ Maillart also speaks about this cry of and for liberty: "I emphasized the 'shout' of a red flower against the blue of the sky, the joy of every step of ours that we had freely chosen" (Maillart, 2013:74). Freely chosen? It is, again, not the journey that brings freedom but the fact that one has the chance to decide for it. Kini, the protagonist of *The Cruel Way*, is grateful for it: "We felt grateful for our freedom – so difficult to bear, but more necessary than life" (Maillart, 2013:187). Is it possible that Maillart uses freedom here not only as an allegory for the chance to travel and for the departure, but also as an allegory for *Heimat*? In the relationship between travelling, writing and freedom, Stefan Zweig – a world traveller and the most translated author of his time, who travelled both voluntarily and in exile, made an important point before his suicide in the 1940s: "Kunst und Kultur kann nicht gedeihen ohne Freiheit" (Zweig, 2004: 412). Zweig offers another phrase: "unsere wahre Heimat war unsere Kultur, unsere Kunst" (Zweig, 2004:410). Freedom is needed to create art and culture and thus, home.

The longing for freedom gives the traveller motivation for his or her departure. Freedom is an important motif in the content of their travelling narrations, as the problems related to it are consistently repeated. The journey represented has revealed that the journey simply does not fulfil the expected freedom. This is also because the understanding of freedom changes during the journey. Once empty names of cities, countries, people, and monuments receive a meaning after the travellers see and get to know them. The simple understanding of the term is not sufficient: "Kennst du den Wortlaut von Gesetz und Freiheit? 'Ich verstehe jedes Wort, das sie zu mir sagen, – und weiss keinen Gebrauch davon zu machen'" (Schwarzenbach, 2008:162). Only after many miles do the protagonists recognize that they are not capable of defining freedom and with this, they do in fact define the word. They realize that they cannot chase their freedom, as it is not a con-

158 See Schwarzenbach, 2000:17 and 23.

stant state but rather just appears, like a short inspiration that bounces off the car in the next moment. If the border control does not stop them, they are free to go further and further, but they are not actually free to stay, nor to return. Travelling turns from an art of living into an art of life. The journey is more powerful than the traveller. The protagonists of the three books become servants: servants of the road by being off the road. Is this unlimited freedom? Clearly not. But by understanding the meaning of freedom to oneself and how to live with it, one can gain important information:

To be accepted by the earth. To understand its meaning. Then to feel how much it is one whole, to live the strength of that unity. Then only will be the time to love each part of that whole, freed at last from the blindness of partial love (Maillart, 2013:180).

A love Maillart's narrator reaches. Later on she gains, despite all of the struggles and contradictions, a positive result from the journey: "One evening I should have fallen on my knees to thank my eyes for seeing so well" (Maillart, 2013:190). And could one expect anything more?

Nur die Freiheit, die grenzenlos ist, kennt keine Selbstmächtigkeit und nimmt sich selbst nicht mehr wahr; spürbar ist sie allenfalls noch im Moment der 'Überschreitung' (Schmid, 2005:43).

Freedom can never be absolute; or it can be as absolute as possible on the way to realising that its absoluteness does not exist: "Ist die Freiheit vollkommen, ist sie nicht lebbar; wird sie realisiert, wird sie erfahrbar als eine, die nicht völlig frei ist: Darin besteht die Tragik der modernen Freiheit" (Schmid, 1998:115). The tragedy is precisely the disappointment that the travellers in the narration experience when they realise they can never reach complete and total freedom. The disappointment will always be bigger than the realisation; the journey will win against the traveller.

4.4 Time and Space

*“Es ist das Wissen um die Vergänglichkeit
 des gegenwärtigen Lebens,
 das immer wieder den Anstoß gibt
 zu einem bewussten Gebrauch der Zeit”¹⁵⁹*
Wilhelm Schmid

The two motifs time and space, are placed together in this chapter, because the fragments that are about to be discussed refer mostly to either of them and are thus difficult to separate. What Lessing tried to clearly divide is non-separable, according to Zima: “Raumkünste haben eine zeitliche und Zeitkünste eine räumliche Komponente” (Zima, 1995:131) or Böhme: “Zeitordnungen kommen nicht ohne Verräumlichung aus, Raumordnungen sind immer auch historisch-temporalisierend” (Böhme, 2005:XXI). If that is the case, then travelling literature is not an exception to that theory: “Das zeitliche Gerüst der Reise und die topographische Raumerfahrung verlaufen geradezu homolog zu einem psychischen Aufbruchsbewusstsein” (Boomers, 2004:111). The connection between time, space and *ars vivendi* can be observed in Elmar Schenkel’s article, *Exzentrische Lebenskunst in den Erzählwerken G. K. Chestertons*: “Man kann daraus schließen, dass Lebenskunst auch darin besteht, sich jener Räume und Zeiten zu versichern, die dem eigenen Selbst entsprechen, in dem es sich, aus welchen Gründen auch immer, zuhause fühlt” (Horatschek et al., 2008:247–248). The relation to a feeling of home is to be discussed at a later point. In this chapter, it is important to note the relationship between *ars vivendi* and the awareness of time and space in the travelling narration. *Ars vivendi* strongly depends on time: “Eine grundlegende Technik der Lebenskunst ist daher der bewusste Gebrauch der Zeit, um die existenzielle Zeit zu nutzen und sie nicht im bloßen Verbrauch zu verlieren” (Schmid, 1998:355). Literature is not only capable of describing but also of reforming orders of time and space:

159 Schmid, 2005:69–70.

So wird auch die Literatur als eine spezifische kulturelle Praxis aufgefasst, die über die poetische Kraft verfügt, mittels rhetorischer und narratologischer Darstellungsverfahren und Formästhetiken erzählte raumzeitliche Welten hervorzubringen und dabei potenziell neue Raum- und Zeitordnungen zu schaffen (Decock, 2010:21).

It is about seeing if the travelling narration is realising the technique of *ars vivendi* in terms of time and space, by representing the narrators' experiences with time and space and how their understanding may change during the journey. Sophie Decock, who wrote an entire dissertation about the organisation of time and space in Schwarzenbach's oeuvre, already touched on the creation of identity through the topic of *ars vivendi* without actively considering the term and its philosophy:

Dabei wird von einem semiotischen und performativen Verständnis von Kultur ausgegangen. Das bedeutet, dass die Menschheit als eine kreative Gattung betrachtet wird, die durch symbolisch-diskursive Praxis in der Lage ist, Raum und Zeit zu gliedern und handlungsrelevant zu markieren. Mittels einer solchen Praxis 'schreiben' sich symbolisch-diskursive Ordnungen in Raum und Zeit ein. [...] Unter einer topo- und tempografischen Praxis wird also eine symbolische-diskursive Praxis verstanden, die dazu dient, Raum und Zeit zu ordnen und so die Wirklichkeit zu deuten, zu erfassen und zu beherrschen. Eine Deutung der Wirklichkeit versetzt den Menschen in die Lage, sich zu orientieren und eine (individuelle wie kollektive) Identität zu konstruieren. Obwohl das Räumliche und das Zeitliche begrifflich voneinander getrennt sind, muss ihr wechselseitiges Abhängigkeitsverhältnis jederzeit mitgedacht werden (Decock, 2010:17).

How the three narrators experience time and space and how their understanding can contribute to an *ars vivendi* will be discussed in the following section.

4.4.1 Experience of Time and Space

On the journey, the traveller can test places and time to get a feeling for transience, (different levels of time), and to understand that time and space are limited to the world. Just as in many other aspects, the traveller learns from the people of the vis-

ited countries: “C’est que le nomadisme rend sensible aux saisons: on en dépend, on devient la saison même et chaque fois qu’elle tourne, c’est comme s’il fallait s’arracher d’un lieu où l’on a appris à vivre” (Bouvier, 2014:87). The recognition of time and space is shaped on the journey because it is shaped by the Other:

Die eigene Zeitsouveränität und der eigene Zeitsinn können ebenfalls durch die Begegnung mit einer anderen Zeitkultur gestärkt und verfeinert werden. Wer auf eine andere Zeitkultur trifft, kann sich ihr rein analysierend und disanziert oder eben existentiell, bezogen auf die eigene Existenz nähern. Entweder häufen wir Wissen in einem technischen Sinne an, oder wir wagen eine lebendige Auseinandersetzung und stellen unsere eigene Zeitvorstellung und unsere eigene Zeitkultur in Frage (Klein, 2007:164).¹⁶⁰

The texts reveal a different cultural understanding of time. In the following example, Bouvier’s narrator mentions the different culture of time by combining a time specification with the people’s way of thinking: “Pharda (tomorrow) toujours invoqué. Pharda gonflé de promesses. Pharda, la vie sera meilleure” (Bouvier, 2014: 164). Bouvier’s narrator often hears that phrase, and it becomes an answer to some of his questions.

The phrase seems to stand in direct opposition to the German figure of speech, *Was du heute kannst besorgen, das verschiebe nicht auf morgen*. It takes the speed and the pressure out of the day, and it gives the traveller more time, which seems to pass differently than time on the clock that a Westerner is used to. Bouvier generalises this understanding of time by applying it not to just one country but to the entirety of Asia: “le temps d’Asie coule plus large que le nôtre, et cette association parfait me semblait avoir duré dix ans” (Bouvier, 2014:342). Schwarzenbach thinks about a hunter’s understanding of time and space while observing him:

Aber was zählte für ihn der Raum, der Tag, und der nächste! Was galten ihm Gegenwart und Zukunft, ihm, der den Staubsturm nicht fürchtete! Wusste er denn, was Glück und Unglück heisst, und was unsere gequälten Herzen Hoff-

160 It is probably also the reason why a culture shock can often be traced back to a shock of a different understanding of time. See Klein, 2007:164: “Kulturschock ist in den meisten Fällen ein Zeitschock.”

nung nennen? Der Staub war jetzt ringsum dicht wie Nebel, der Himmel bleiern, die hellblaue Linie des Oxus-Ufers versunken. Auf was wartete ich? Auf Zeichen und Wunder, Sterne am Firmament...? (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 88–89).

With the influence on different understandings of time and space, the traveller develops his or her own consciousness for time and space. The time and space measurement in travelling literature is, again, as ambivalent as all of the other motifs and has already been recognised on Nerval's journey.¹⁶¹ The desire to slow down time is chased by the clock. Since so many occurrences take place on the journey, the traveller has to say goodbye to earlier lives, and the past seems much further away than it is. This makes the life of the traveller appear longer.

Bouvier's narrator describes slowness as the most precious luxury that the traveller owns: "Assez d'argent pour vivre neuf semaines. Ce n'est qu'une petite somme mais c'est beaucoup de temps. Nous nous refusons tous les luxes sauf le plus précieux: la lenteur" (Bouvier, 2014:51). Saying that: "Nous nous refusons tous les luxes sauf le plus précieux: la lenteur" (Bouvier, 2014:51), proves that Bouvier sees his slowness as a luxury. The fact, however, that he sees it as the most precious good, reveals his different understanding of values, in which financial resources are used to yield more time. Bouvier turns Benjamin Franklin's idiom 'time is money' into 'money is time', because money is needed to prolong his journey, to have more time. Schwarzenbach's statement that "Briefe haben Zeit, Zeit kostet nichts hierzulande – kehren wir zu den Melonen und Pfirsichen Afghanistans zurück" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:53) also says that time is not equal to money in all parts of the world. The journey, and even more so the people whom the travellers meet, teach them to appreciate time as a luxury. Bouvier's narrator's observation that "Ici, prendre son temps est le meilleur moyen de n'en pas perdre" (Bouvier, 2014:328), reflects this thesis as well. Jean-Xavier Ridon correctly turns his attention to different understandings of slowness. While he attempts to differentiate between the perception of slowness in different cultures, he describes societies and the danger of the neo-colonialism:

161 See Pasquali, 1994:27: "cette fascination ambivalente de la vitesse et de la lenteur était déjà perceptible chez Nerval."

On le constate, la lenteur n'est pas perçue de la même manière selon les cultures rencontrées. Lorsque l'on vient de l'Occident et de ses richesses, la lenteur se donne comme la possibilité d'un choix qui s'oppose à des pratiques communes, elle est un privilège qui ramène à une forme d'oisiveté; pour des sociétés plus pauvres la lenteur est une contrainte à laquelle on essaye d'échapper à tout prix. [...] On pourrait alors soupçonner cette lenteur de reproduire un certain néocolonialisme en devenant le signe ostentatoire d'une forme de loisir dans un espace qui en est dépourvu (Antoine, 2010:28).

Ridon's doubts seem to be very reasonable. It is true: for the traveller, time is a privilege. It is an important good, and Bouvier's narrator has just shown that he is aware of it. However, the concept of time on the journey cannot be limited to the traveller's free time, and slowness is not necessarily a status that the locals want to escape from. With their different understandings and methods of measuring of time, they are highly unlikely to call their movements slow. They simply value it differently than the travellers are used to. For the Swiss travellers, though, time is such an important good, and the visited country offers it to them. Schwarzenbach implies with this that the traveller's cultural experience with time changes his or her feeling for it. In countries where time is free, the traveller has the time to consider what time means. This paradox is also expressed in the following: "Es ist noch früh am Tag, ich kenne den Wert und Verlauf der Stunden nicht, ich muss diesen Tag benutzen" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:98). Schwarzenbach's narrator is not aware of the hour's value, nevertheless it is clear that it needs to be used. In this constant need to use a day in the most useful way, Schwarzenbach sees the traveller's biggest danger:

Das ist überhaupt die grösste Gefahr einer langen Reise: Da man beständig aufbricht oder die Zeit möglichst nützlich und ohne allzu grosse Entmutigung ausfüllt bis zum nächsten Aufbruch und dann jedesmal wieder abrechnet, als sei es endgültig, so ist man sich beständig bewusst, dass Tage derart vergehen und dann Monate, und dass das ganze Leben nur aus einer kleinen Zahl solcher Unternehmungen besteht. Ja, diese ganze, auf einer Reise verbrachte Zeit zeigt nur ein wenig unverkleideter und zusammengedrängt, wie wir unser ganzes Dasein verbringen [...]. Im gewöhnlichen Leben scheint natürlich alles

fester und nicht vorübergehend; das Bewusstsein des 'Episodenhaften' verliert sich (Schwarzenbach, 2016:53).

The traveller is not entirely freed from the problem of asking him- or herself how the time has been used or if it has been used successfully: "Es mag sieben Uhr sein – Herr, lass es Tag werden! [...] Zu spät, zu spät, und ich beginne den Tag, diesen vielleicht besonderen Tag, wie jeden anderen" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:98). Schwarzenbach's narrator is aware of this problem on the journey. The traveller knows about the limited time and thus feels pressured, even in a "timeless" space. This is, again, the ambiguity which the consciousness of life and death brings, and this is still to be discussed in the upcoming motifs. Even though Ridon's objection is understandable, it is the traveller who is taught by the local and the impressions gained on the journey, not the other way around. The following quotation gives an example of how the traveller's reception changes:

L'agrément dans ces lents voyages en pleine terre c'est – l'exotisme une fois dissipé – qu'on devient sensible aux détails, et par les détails, aux provinces. Six mois d'hivernage ont fait de nous des Tabrizi qu'un rien suffit à étonner. À chaque étape, on relève de ces menus changements qui changent tout-qualité des regards, forme des nuages, inclinaison des casquettes (Bouvier, 2014: 208).

The journey makes the traveller receptive to details, or, speaking in the words of François Laut, it is the eye that writes, "l'œil qui écrit". Without the rush that the Western world is used to, one simply has more time: "Puis le jour se lève et le temps ralentit" (Bouvier, 2014:51). The experience of the slow occurrences in the visited places teaches the traveller a perception of time: "Parfois un camion d'épicerie venu de Yezd s'arrête devant la porte; parfois aussi une semaine entière s'écoule sans qu'on voie rien passer sous les murailles" (Bouvier, 2014:254). Thanks to the ambiguity of the endless feeling and the limitation of life, the traveller can use this knowledge for his *modus vivendi*:

Die individuelle Einteilung der Stunden ist ein Kunstgriff der Lebenskunst, um die Zeit zu gebrauchen und nicht eines Tages, viel zu spät, zu bemerken, dass sie ungenutzt verstrichen ist. Der Schmerz über die vergehende Zeit: Das

ist die Geburt der Stunde, die kleine Schritte im unabsehbaren, unermesslichen Land der Zeit zu machen erlaubt und Wegmarkierungen setzt, die anzeigen, welche Strecke das Selbst zurückgelegt hat und welche noch vor ihm liegt, um so der maßlosen Zeit das Maß zu geben. Die Einteilung der Zeit durchzieht das Leben, das alltäglich gelebt und das Leben insgesamt, mit Strukturen, die ihm eine Form geben und zugleich ermöglichen, es intensiv zu leben. Die Stunde ist die asketische Praxis, die das ekstatische Leben nicht in einem langen Bedauern über die flüchtige Zeit enden lässt (Schmid, 1998: 358).

As the traveller is aware of the passing and end of time and space, he or she will likely not face the problem of figuring out that time has passed in a useless way. He notices it during the journey: “Nous nous regardions par-dessus nos verres: que faisons-nous ici? depuis combien d’années étions-nous dans cette ville? pourquoi? les mots de Bagramian me tintaient aux oreilles: ici aussi, c’était le Léthé” (Bouvier, 2014:161). Even if time passes differently, the running water of the river is an allegory for the passage of time, which also passes in Tabriz.

How far and how fast, or rather, how slowly a traveller travels is necessarily dependant on the mode of transportation. The car is the third companion in all three narrations. There are travelling authors who claim that real travelling means walking, like Saint-Pol-Roux, Gustave Roud and Seume;¹⁶² that is because they refer to the motion of travelling. The car is symbolic for fast movement, and therefore, important elements of the journey are said to get lost. However, as Jean-Xavier Ridon has written, “il y a les voyageurs qui empruntent des modes de transport rapides mais qui vont essayer de les détourner de toute forme de vitesse” (Antoine, 2010:17). The car gives the travellers the possibility to traverse distances in a specific time and the option to stop and walk at any time.¹⁶³ It also allows the traveller to easily change plans and directions. Maillart included this independence on the path in her report: “We were on the newest road of Afghanistan, the shortcut to Kabul across the Hazarejat. [...] Now we stood at the other end of that road

162 See Forsdick, 2005:176 and Seume, 1974:638: “Wer geht sieht im Durchschnitt anthropologisch und kosmisch mehr als wer fährt”.

163 The car as an object in travel literature has been discussed by Anke Hertling in her book *Eroberung der Männerdomäne Automobil*.

and, though unreasonably tempted to follow it, we went back in search of the main highway to Turkestan” (Maillart, 2013:131–132). This idea of travelling by walking is influenced by the importance of slowness:

[...] dans la lenteur, l'apparition vient coïncider avec la reconnaissance, dans une forme de présence pleine, pour passagère qu'elle soit. Jusque dans sa multiplicité, le monde sensible semble affirmer une intégrité, le plus souvent fragile et menacée; il assigne à l'individu une place de choix à laquelle celui-ci ne peut que consentir. Pour que ce monde sensible apparaisse avec ses surprises et ses étrangetés, la lente disponible apprise par le voyageur peut conduire jusqu'à la lente dé-faite du sujet individuel (Pasquali, 1994:26).

Only if the traveller has the time can he or she truly observe his or her surroundings. Travelling with a fast medium of transportation does not imply, though, that one cannot travel slowly. Hambursin argues that a voyage à la lenteur is also possible by car: “Commençons par un goût prononcé pour la lenteur et la disponibilité, qui passent notamment par la marche, mais aussi par des déplacements en voiture à toute petite vitesse” (Hambursin, 2005:227).

Jean-Xavier Ridon claims that speed depends on the author's method of writing and is independent of the method of travelling: “Pour chacun de ces voyages le symbole même des déplacements rapides, le train de banlieue et l'autoroute, va être associé à la lenteur”, (Antoine, 2010:17). The travellers are thus working against speed, even though they are travelling by car. Interestingly, Jean-Francois Guennoc compares Nicolas Bouvier and filmmaker Chris Marker in his article “Les arrêts du temps ou le voyage en spirale”. In fact, it took Bouvier several years to write (and especially to finish) his books after a journey so that they were ready to be published. *L'Usage du monde* was published a decade after going on his journey and *Le Poisson-scorpion* took him nearly three decades. This is the case for nearly all his books, besides the *Japanese Chronicles*, which he had to finish in a modest amount of time, but which he also revised twice and published again. Besides the careful, slow way in which the author wrote, the narrator also emphasises slowness in relation to the content. Compared to Bouvier, Schwarzenbach and Maillart published their books rather quickly after their journey.

Speed is typical in a society of modern travellers: “Die Frage ‘Wo sind wir, wenn wir reisen?’ kann laut Virilio zunehmend mit ‘in Geschwindigkeit’ beantwor-

tet werden” (Boomers, 2004:65). Hertling points out an important fact by paraphrasing Bierbaum, not only in terms of time, but also regarding the reception of space:

In *Eine empfindsame Reise im Automobil* (1903), dem ersten deutschsprachigen Buch über eine Automobilreise, würdigt er [Otto Julius Bierbaum] die Rückeroberung des Raumes. [...] Im Gegensatz zur Eisenbahn legt Bierbaum dar, bewege man sich im Auto nicht an der Landschaft vorbei, sondern mitten in ihr (Hertling, 2013:135).

The desire for distances that the travellers share refers not only to geography but also to travelling back in time, which was one of their motivations for starting their journey. Maillart’s narrator says: “I felt as if plunged into the Middle Ages. Smoothly flowing, life seemed changeless. The bazaar was peaceful, even somnolent” (Maillart, 2013:137). Maillart has a similar experience on her journey from Peking to Cachemir: “Je pars vers le Moyen Âge, et même vers l’Âge du bronze” (Maillart, 2002:29). That may be the cause of Maillart’s feeling: “in time and space we felt remote from everything that we knew” (Maillart, 2013:121). Schwarzenbach experiences this journey in a time machine while in Uruk:

Ich glaubte, dass wir vielleicht doch, [...] die Jahrtausende übersprungen hätten und nun mit tausenden Ohren und leicht erblindeten Augen den Wegweisern ‘nach Kisc’ und ‘nach Babylon’ begegneten, und dass demnächst ihre Stadtmauern aus der Ebene auftauchen würden (Schwarzenbach, 2016:64).

The traveller can cross the borders of centuries, but not only in this specific place in the countries visited on the journey:

In diesen Ländern durchwandere ich alle Zeitläufe. Die Trennungen der Jahrhunderte sind aufgehoben, die alten Denkmäler werden zu Bildern des unaufhörlich Wiederkehrenden, und die flüchtigen Spuren der Stunde sind Zeichen einer ewigen Uebereinkunft (Schwarzenbach, 2010:122–123).

The journey in time only has a short duration, though:

La pierre n'est pas de notre règne, elle a d'autres interlocuteurs et un autre cycle que nous. On peut, en la travaillant, lui faire parler notre langage, pour un temps seulement. Puis elle retourne au sien qui signifie: rupture, abandon, indifférence, oubli (Bouvier, 2014:250).

The experience of a past reminds the traveller that time and space are always on the move. The traveller can travel in time, but after a short moment, he or she will recognise that the world has changed and that the past belongs to the past. The world that they see in front of them is so old that it must have already been old in the 16th century B.C.: “We were in the heart of an old, a very old world. Was it not already old sixteenth centuries B.C. [...]?” (Maillart, 2013:179). Schwarzenbach uses this image of the heart as well: “Unaufhörlichkeit: das Herz Asiens” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:88). The use of that metaphor makes time and space the engine of everything alive: an engine that is always running and one that brings changes:

Die Wüste gibt hier das Gefühl der Entfernung. Professor Jordan erzählte mir gestern, dass er früher 21 Tage gebraucht habe, um mit einer Karawane von Aleppo bis Bagdad zu reisen. Das mag freilich eine andere Erfahrung gewesen sein, und wir versäumen heute viel. Aber jeder Zeit sei das Ihrige gegönnt; über nichts bestimmen wir weniger als über unsere Erlebnisse (Schwarzenbach, 2016:59).

Looking at the travelling narrations discussed here, one can argue that a fast pace prevents the text from existing. Neither Bouvier nor Maillart describe their return home, and Schwarzenbach dedicates two chapters of five pages each to the touristic return by ship. Schwarzenbach's narrator quotes one of the tourists on the ship talking about Aden:

Ein trostloses Nest. Nichts zu sehen, kein Fleckchen Grün, kein Tempel, kein Denkmal, kein anständiges Restaurant zu finden, die Bar im Crescent Hotel ist ein Witz, die Preise sind unerhört, das Klima entsetzlich. Es lohnt sich nicht, an Land zu gehen (Schwarzenbach, 2000:127).

The traveller on the cruise, who is going to see only those parts of a country made for the tourists visiting for a few hours before re-entering the ship, will never reach

the *ars vivendi* transmitted on a journey. The rapid journey skips the essential parts of being on the road, which the traveller is taught and trained to catch with all his or her senses. Visiting places in such a limited amount of time does not give one the chance to truly experience them. A place that has not really been experienced cannot be narrated, either. That is why Schwarzenbach's narrator remains silent about the return: "Von der Reise ist nicht viel zu berichten" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:132), and it is probably also the reason why the return does not find its place in the travelling narration of the 20th century.

4.4.2 The Suspension of Time and Space

In travelling literature there are different levels of time from a narratological perspective and within the plot of the narration. Therefore what Olaf Georg Klein, among others, divides between 'Ereigniszeit' and 'Uhrzeit' can be also applied to the content of the narration and thus, to the findings of the journey's narrator. In other words, the traveller gives the journey and its events the time that is needed ('Ereigniszeit') and does not assign deadlines until the journey needs to be completed ('Uhrzeit'). It is not stated in the beginning how much time it will take until they reach Kabul, how long they will remain in individual places or at what time they have to be at any specific point: "Zeit oder Raum, es bleibt sich gleich, was immer uns davon trennen mag" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:32). The road and the goal the traveller wants to reach are what is important. The temporal or spatial distance does not need to be measured, as the traveller simply arrives when he or she arrives. The authors leave space for surprises and coincidences, a space which not only the traveller, but also *ars vivendi* and the arts in general need to develop.

To understand the significance of the hour and the mile, which has just been determined to be important for *ars vivendi*, the traveller needs to have the experience of a suspension of time and space. These concepts need to dissolve to teach the traveller their meaning. When Bouvier's narrator describes this attitude, he compares himself to a nomad: "La vie nomade est une chose surprenante. On fait quinze cents kilomètres en deux semaines; toute l'Anatolie en coup de vent. Un soir, on atteint une ville déjà obscure [...] et on reste six mois à Tabriz, Azerbâjân" (Bouvier, 2014:115). The time that the nomad embodies is astonishing to the traveller, who turns this finding into practice for his own journey straight away. Their journey takes as much time as it needs or – in Bouvier's case – as long as his

financial resources last. However, it has an end, a “natural border” or “natürliche Grenzen”, as Klein calls them, (Klein, 2007:143) because otherwise, he argues, the meaning of the event would change. For example, a break would not be a break anymore if someone finished working afterwards; a journey would not be a journey if there was no end to it, no coming home.

From reading travelling narrations, one gets the impression that the journey prolongs a traveller’s live. The interaction between time and space could probably not be expressed better than in the beginning of *L’Usage du monde*: “Je pensais aux neuf vies proverbiales du chat; j’avais bien l’impression d’entrer dans la deuxième” (Bouvier, 2014:11), and in Maillart’s text passage before entering Iran: “Ararat was still in full view, its dark flank brightened here and there by spangles of running water. We felt so much at the end of the world: a new world was bound to begin soon” (Maillart, 2013:55). Entering another country or another space in general gives the traveller several lives.¹⁶⁴ In addition to the several lives, it has just been shown that time is often forgotten or even stands still. Klein combines the feeling of timelessness with happiness. Timelessness can be experienced, for example, “bei der intensiven Begegnung mit der Natur, beim Wandern im Hochgebirge, in tiefen Wäldern oder bei der Betrachtung des Meeres” (Klein, 2007:137).

Timelessness seems to be a way to find freedom: “Den Glocken die Zungen ausreissen, sie begraben, sie vergessen. Die Säulen Griechenlands stürzen. Die Ruinen von Byblos hinter sich lassen. Sich befreien von Jahr und Tag!” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:72).

Schwarzenbach shows in her book *Winter in Vorderasien* that intense encounters with nature cause not only timelessness but also “spacelessness”, due to the landscape seeming endless: “l’Asie m’ait paru sans fin” (Maillart, 2002:312). There is a constant movement in space; not only the traveller or the Earth are moving. Mountains function as a traveller’s milestone but also as natural borders that need to be crossed. However, mountains are moving, too: “Berge schienen sich in die Ewigkeit fortzusetzen” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:94) and thus, they create illusionary distances:

164 This topic will be interpreted again under the aspect of Religion and Spirituality in chapter 4.9.

Wir fahren drei Stunden bis zu seinem Fuss [Firus-Kuh-Pass], aber stets schien er sich wieder wie verzaubert von uns zu entfernen, so endlos ist die Ebene und so sehr verliert man den Begriff von Raum und Mass (Schwarzenbach, 2016:104).

The text creates a race between the traveller and the rotation of the Earth, a race between a human being and time that the human being can never win. There will always be the other side of the world, the inaccessibility that the traveller is hopelessly chasing after:

Von den Dächern eines alten Moghulenpalasts reicht der Blick weit und genügt doch noch nicht, – man kann es nur ahnen, das grosse Gemälde der Welt, und dann die Hände ballen in furchtbarem Ungenügen [...] Aber es ist vergeblich, dein Blick reicht nicht weit genug (Schwarzenbach, 2008:144–145).

The world is never to be put into one image; it thus cannot be entirely described in the text, which leaves the traveller in anger. The traveller loses track of time, which Schwarzenbach points out in her works in particular, e.g.:

Höchstens auf dem Ziffernblatt kann man nachrechnen, dass die Zeit sich schon um eine oder mehrere Stunden fortbewegt hat und man also schon ziemlich weit nach Osten gelangt ist. Jeden Tag wird es unmöglicher, umzukehren, man will es auch nicht mehr (Schwarzenbach, 2000:16),¹⁶⁵

or as in *Winter in Vorderasien*: “Die Begriffe der Zeit waren mir abhanden gekommen” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:115). Schwarzenbach’s narrator stops counting the hours in the same way she stops counting the kilometres: “Meine Ungeduld übt sich nicht mehr, misst keine Strecken, berechnet keine Zeiten, kennt keinen Ablauf” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:111).

Time cannot be calculated anymore, but the narrator still knows that time is passing extremely fast: “Wer misst die zerrinnende Zeit! – Seit vielen Tagen, – ja,

165 See also Schwarzenbach, 2000:56: “Das ist volle vier Monate her oder ein bisschen länger” and two pages later Schwarzenbach, 2000:58: “Das war vor vier Monaten, sagte ich, oder ein wenig früher”.

wieviel Tage sind seit dem Ende jener Reise schon vergangen?“ (Schwarzenbach, 2008:180). Schwarzenbach’s narrator repeatedly points out that while writing time is wearing “Siebenmeilenstiefel”¹⁶⁶ (seven-league boots). Maillart abuses a watch that reminds her of that fast passing time: “I had been continually aware that, impassive, ugly and Japanese, a wall-clock had trivially ticked away second after second” (Maillart, 2013:107).

At the same time, though, life is not described as being short, but rather as the opposite:

[...] die Reise hatte ja kaum begonnen, ich hatte kaum die Rebenhügel und Bauerndörfer Jugoslawiens, die Erdbeer- und Rosenfelder und ockergelben Berge Bulgariens und die nadelfeinen Minarette von Edirne hinter mir gelassen, und mich noch nicht an die wechselnden Himmel der Balkanländer gewöhnt, da spiegelte sich schon Stambul im Bosphorus! (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 14).

The high amount of occurrences and changes in a noticeably short time frame on a journey make all happenings in the past, even those that just happened, seem as if they are already long past:

Und die Wirklichkeit von gestern brennt noch im Abschiedsschmerz, die von vorgestern ist eine abgeschlossene, nie wiederkehrende Episode, was vor einem Monat war, ist Traum und Vorleben (Schwarzenbach, 2000:33).

The past seems unreal or seems to belong to another life. That is why Schwarzenbach describes events from two months ago as having occurred a long time ago: “Es ist lange her, zwei Monate oder zweieinhalb, und gehört schon wieder der Vergangenheit an” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:31). In *Tod in Persien* the narrator expresses the same feeling: “Es ist nicht so lange her’, sagte ich zögernd. Denn es war nur ein Jahr her, aber mir schienen es Ewigkeiten” (Schwarzenbach, 2003: 55). Transience thus plays an important role for the traveller. The same experience is described by Bouvier’s narrator. After six months in Tabriz, he asks him-

166 See Schwarzenbach, 2000:34; 2003:35 and 118–119; 2016:46.

self the question: “depuis combien d’années étions-nous dans cette ville?” (Bouvier, 2014:161). And at a later point on the journey, he has a similar feeling: “Téhéran nous paraissait déjà à des années. Que serait-ce à Kaboul! Nous n’avions encore fait qu’un quart de trajet, mais nous tâchions de nous persuader que s’était le plus dur” (Bouvier, 2014:243). In the following quotation, Schwarzenbach dissolves the time levels, past, present, and future, in the same way that distances are annulled on the journey:

Die Gleichzeitigkeit von Nähe und Ferne verwirrte mich, mir schien, Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und zukünftige Stunde dürften sich wohl an einem Ort vereinigt finden, um ihm den vollen Gehalt des Lebens zu geben, dass aber das Leben im selben Augenblick hier und dort, diesseits und jenseits der Meere und Gebirge herrsche, das schien mir ernsthafter Bedenken wert. Und solche Zweifel, die behoben sein wollten, haben vielleicht meine ersten Reisen bestimmt (Schwarzenbach, 2000:55).¹⁶⁷

It is difficult for her to imagine that life is going on in every part of the world. This difficulty may arise because the traveller has the feeling of pausing life at home. When starting a journey, a new life begins, and the past life stops. That is also an explanation as to why the past already seems so far away, as it refers to another life, whereas in the present, time and space are not measurable:

Ich liess mich nicht mehr täuschen, denn dort draussen, ganz nahe, durch eines Atemzugs Dauer nur von mir getrennt, war die Wüste. Ihr zu begegnen, war unwiderruflich. Da galt kein Stundenschlag mehr, da ertönte kein Gelächter, Entfernungen liessen sich nicht messen (Schwarzenbach, 2000:85).¹⁶⁸

The journey changes the understanding of time. Like the inhabitants of the visited places, the traveller reaches a state in which he does not measure time anymore.

167 See the concept of proximity and distance in Jean Paul in Stauf, Simonis, Paulus, 2008:37.

168 See also Schwarzenbach, 2010:72: “Den Glocken die Zungen ausreissen, sie begraben, sie vergessen. Die Säulen Griechenlands stürzen. Die Ruinen von Byblos hinter sich lassen. Sich befreien von Jahr und Tag!”

Sometimes, time simply passes without many comments: “die Wochen vergingen ungezählt, es wurde Herbst” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:59). Schwarzenbach’s narrator expresses here that time does not always need to be calculated. The same goes for distances, as time and space act homogeneously; it is not only time which dissolves but also space: “Die Stunden töten! Die Ungeduld zügeln, die Ferne eindämmen!” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:94). Time often cannot be measured, and distances also lose their ability to be measured. Just as time sometimes passes fast and sometimes slowly, distances shrink: “Entfernungen rückten rätselhaft zusammen und waren ohne Mass” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:98), and function as optical illusions for the traveller: “ich glaubte, er sei zwei Stunden von mir entfernt und von bedeutender Größe – aber nach wenigen Minuten streifte mein Fuss ein paar verstreute Tonscherben, und der Hügel war, zusammengeschrumpft, eine dürftige Anhäufung des Windes” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:86). Otherwise they continuously grow, which makes it impossible for the traveller to measure distances: “Es war unmöglich, eine Entfernung abzuschätzen” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:81).

The vast expansion of distances also creates a huge gap between their location and their country or even continent of origin: “Uns kam es manchmal so vor, als seien wir unendlich weit und seit unendlich langer Zeit von unserem heimatlichen Erdteil getrennt”, (Schwarzenbach, 1996:32). Using descriptions of space and time within one sentence reveals their dependence on each other, which has already been discussed in theory. Schwarzenbach, too, measures a distance using an indication of time: “Therapia liegt so weit zurück wie die Kindheitsinseln” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:18). In *Oasis interdites*, Maillart even speaks about Europe as if it did not exist for her anymore: “Pour moi l’Europe est si loin qu’elle me semble morte” (Maillart, 2002:110). She finds herself on another planet: “Depuis six mois, j’ai souvent eu l’impression de me trouver sur une planète différente” (Maillart, 2002:281).

This suspension of time takes away the traveller’s baggage: the heavy weight that burdens a Europe of modernity, when everything is calculated in time and time is only meant to be filled to avoid emptiness. The traveller is taught on the journey to free him- or herself from that pressure and stress and from accepting that living in the moment and taking one’s time is sometimes more useful than a comprehensive plan: “Mais je n’étais pas pressé d’écrire; pour quelques jours ‘être arrivé à Quetta’ me tiendrait lieu d’occupation” (Bouvier, 2014:279).

4.4.3 The Meaning of Names

The journey not only teaches the traveller about the understanding of time; it also teaches him or her about the understanding of space: “Die Reise aber lüftet ein wenig den Schleier über dem Geheimnis des Raums – und eine Stadt [...] wird wirklich im Augenblick, da wir sie betreten und mit unserem lebendigen Atem berühren” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:32).

To understand space, it must be experienced.¹⁶⁹ This thesis is shared by all three authors. Therefore, the traveller physically needs to be in the place to move in space, as Bouvier describes in the following:

À mon retour, il s’est trouvé beaucoup de gens qui n’étaient pas partis, pour me dire qu’avec un peu de fantaisie et de concentration ils voyageaient tout aussi bien sans lever le cul de leur chaise. Je les crois volontiers. Ce sont des forts. Pas moi. J’ai trop besoin de cet appoint concret qu’est le déplacement dans l’espace (Bouvier, 2014:53).

Maillart’s narrator shares that thought by recognising the need to be physically present in Makou in order to experience the place: “In fact it is only when one has seen Makou – counterpart to Bayazit in the crack leading to Persia – that the full meaning of these two forts becomes clear” (Maillart, 2013:55). For Schwarzenbach, this means understanding names and giving names a meaning, which she wants to experience directly: “Ich zog aus, nicht um das Fürchten zu lernen, sondern um den Gehalt der Namen zu prüfen und ihre Magie am eigenen Leibe zu spüren” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:55). The traveller’s motivation was to gain knowledge and awareness about names. Places that are nameless are still unknown to the traveller until they have been personally experienced:

169 The same goes for understanding the Other. See Schwarzenbach, 2000:33: “Haben wir, früher einmal, Sitten und Gebräuche fremder Völker studiert? Gut und recht, aber wir lernten nicht, wie der Afghane seinen Turban windet, und wussten nicht, wie der tägliche Pilaf schmeckt in einem Land, wo man täglich Reis und Schaffleisch zu essen bekommt und Tee zu trinken, und nie einen Tropfen Alkohol. Auf der Reise wechselt das Antlitz der Wirklichkeit mit den Bergen, Flüssen, mit der Bauweise der Häuser, der Anlage der Gärten, mit der Sprache, der Hautfarbe.”

[...] die Weite sommerlicher Hügel und Felder war vorbei, eine schmale Straße führte am Abhang eines romantischen, in gelbe, rostbraune und violette Schatten gekleideten Tals mitten in Berge ohne Namen hinein (Schwarzenbach, 2000:15).

To see a place and to experience it by breathing, tasting, and touching it makes the names come alive:

Pamir Hindukusch, Karakorum [...] wo ich mir eigensinnig zu glauben weigerte, dass die Namen, die ich lernte und auf der Landkarte las, Gestalt annehmen könnten, bevor ich sie mit Augen gesehen, mit meinem Atem berührt, gewissermassen mit Händen gegriffen hatte (Schwarzenbach, 2000:54).

Jean-Xavier Ridon found this importance of naming places in Le Breton. He says that, “Reconnaître les noms est une manière de se familiariser avec une région, de se rapprocher de son identité culturelle et de mieux la comprendre” (Antoine, 2010:24). The visualisation of a name “taking shape” appears once more in *Winter in Vorderasien*: “Was der königliche Name enthielt, nahm hier Gestalt an” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:114), and reflects the idea that the encounter with a place is full of power. This need to personally and physically experience a place is so strongly embedded in Schwarzenbach’s work that she repeatedly speaks about it throughout her oeuvre:

Ich für meinen Teil habe schon damals, als ich die Namen der Städte lernen musste, an ihrer Existenz gezweifelt. Ich dachte darüber nach und kam zu dem Schluss: es ist wie im Kino. [...] Was weiss jener Herr davon, der so geläufig spricht? [...] Jetzt weiss ich besser Bescheid als er; denn ich war in Baku (Schwarzenbach, 2010:16–17).¹⁷⁰

The journey not only makes names come alive; it also helps to find places that have not been “worth” being named:

170 See also Schwarzenbach, 2016:114: “Persepolis [...] und der Name wurde Wirklichkeit” and “Was der königliche Name enthielt, nahm hier Gestalt an.”

À ce train-là, il se peut bien, le soir venu, qu'on n'ait fait qu'un seul petit col. Mais on n'a que lui en tête. C'est devenu une sorte de propriété. [...] Pourtant il ne mérite pas même une mention sur la carte et les montagnes dignes de ce nom sont encore loin au nord (Bouvier, 2014:328),

or that one is afraid of speaking out loud: “Wir scheuen uns, die Dinge beim Namen zu nennen” (Schwarzenbach, 2003:74), because knowing the name means knowing the place, which does not necessarily make it a better place. The reader, who is not physically with the narrator and who has probably not been able to visit the places on the route before, is not left disappointed: “und die Täler sind namenlos, deswegen nicht minder lieblich, und bieten dir Gastlichkeit, den Anblick weidender Herden, und eine friedliche Stunde” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:145). By addressing the reader at this point, Schwarzenbach's narrator gives the reader the chance to stay with her. She lets the reader – for whom the places are still nameless – share the beauty that she was able to see with her own eyes.

4.4.4 The End of Time and Space

In the beginning of *L'Usage du monde*, death is still distant to the traveller from a spatial and temporal point of view: “On souhaiterait qu'elle s'étende ainsi, en dispensant ses bons offices, non seulement jusqu'à l'extrémité de l'Inde, mais plus loin encore, jusqu'à la mort” (Bouvier, 2014:53). Later, Bouvier's narrator says: “Je ne m'étais pas plutôt dit cela que j'ai commencé à la sentir partout, la mort [...]. Elle gagnait sur moi à toute allure” (Bouvier, 2014:235).

A space without an exit becomes a metaphor for Schwarzenbach's grave. It is interesting that she sees the valley in Persia, to which she dedicated the title of her book *Das glückliche Tal*, as a valley with a dead end: “Alle Wege, welche ich auch ging, welchen ich auch entging, endeten hier, in diesem Tal, das keinen Ausgang mehr hat, und deshalb schon dem Ort des Todes ähnlich” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:23). The awareness of time inevitably brings with it the consciousness of the end of time. While everything is episodic, it becomes normal again. The fact that everything is final, like the view in the following passage:

Die in Nichts zerrinnende Bläue ferner Gebirge, die doch schneegekrönt, ehern waren, ihre Kanten wie Stahl geschliffen im Abendgewölbe Afghanis-

tans, ihre Zinnen in Schwefelflammen getaucht, und die ich nie mehr sehen werde (Schwarzenbach, 2008:175),

makes the presence of transience heavily oppressive in a traveller's life. While the mountain transmits a picture of eternity to the traveller: "da stand, eine gestreifte Pyramide, der erloschene Vulkan, (Ararat) ein schmerzreiches, tiefbewegendes Bild: die Unvergänglichkeit" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:27), the traveller is afraid of transience: "Ich fürchte mich vor dem Vergänglichen" (Schwarzenbach, 2003: 48). Directly afterwards, the eternal sense of the names seems to calm the traveller: "Doch schon der Name von Persepolis war unvergänglich [...] und schon der Anblick seiner Ruinen war unvergesslich" (Schwarzenbach, 2003:48). On the other hand, only the awareness of death as a limit of life makes *ars vivendi* possible:

Unter dem Aspekt der Lebenskunst ist jedoch nicht allein der Tod als Lebensform von Interesse, sondern der Tod als Grenze, der dem gesamten Leben erst Form und Bedeutung gibt. Daraus, dass diese Grenze in jedem Fall gezogen wird, in welcher Form und wann auch immer, bezieht das Subjekt der Lebenskunst [...] die entscheidende Motivation zur Gestaltung des Lebens. Leben mit dem Tod heisst dann, sich klar zu sein darüber, dass dieses Leben begrenzt ist, was immer über diese Grenze hinaus sein wird, und dass der Tod gerade hierin, Grenze zu sein, seinen Sinn hat, und zwar so sehr, dass das Selbst die Grenze, würde sie zum Verschwinden gebracht, wohl selbst zu ziehen hätte. Die Grenze gibt dem Leben, unabhängig von den Formen, in denen es gelebt wird, die existenzielle Form, die es überhaupt Leben sein lässt, und nur der Tod als Grenze macht dieses Leben zum eigenen eines Selbst (Schmid, 1998:350).

The traveller who is accompanied by death learns through the encounter with a culture of space that death is not frightening anymore: "Aber was zählte für ihn der Raum, der Tag, und der nächste! Was galten ihm Gegenwart und Zukunft, ihm, der den Staubsturm nicht fürchtete" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:88). Death no longer needs to be denied: "even death could be beautiful" (Maillart, 2013:190) and where the traveller finds himself in-between life and death: "et le plaisir aussi de m'achonner paisiblement dans le noir entre l'ombre seigneuriale de la mort et

la vie de seigneurs que l'été nous avait faite" (Bouvier, 2014:243). If one considers the border of life to be death, the individual is convinced to live his or her life to the fullest:

Den Tod als Grenze zu akzeptieren, sich vertraut zu machen mit ihm, bedeutet vor allem, frei zu werden für das Leben und es auf diejenige Weise zu leben, die den Tod leicht machen kann. Der Gedanke an den Tod ist in einer reflektierten Lebenskunst gedacht als Ermutigung zum Leben, als Ansporn zum Auskosten der Fülle des Lebens, auch als Erleichterung in schwierigen Momenten des Lebens, in denen das Selbst sich sagen kann, dass alles, was zu schwer erscheint, dereinst zurückgelassen werden kann (Schmid, 1998:351).

This way of thinking helps the traveller (especially in times of diseases) to free him- or herself from unnecessary consumption: "Niemand sucht nach Schmerz und Leid und allgemein nach Krankheit, aber auszulöschen sind sie nicht, daher sind sie einzubeziehen in eine reflektierte Lebenskunst" (Schmid, 1998:347). The travellers get sick several times on the journey, suffer from high fevers, tropical diseases, and the consequences of accidents. It makes it possible for the traveller to leave things behind and to reduce his or her luggage to the most important necessities, as he understands that the meaning of life does not lie in the temptations of modern life:

Geld, Macht und Sex, sondern die grundlegendere Trias Geburt, Tod und die Erotik, die dazwischen ist: Der Augenblick, in dem ein menschliches Wesen zu atmen beginnt und somit eine ganze Welt neu entsteht, der Augenblick, in dem ein Mensch zu atmen aufhört und somit eine ganze Welt irreversibel verlöscht, sowie die Fülle des Lebens zwischen diesen beiden Momenten, die Möglichkeit des Schönen und Bejahenswerten, der Zauber der Innigkeit mit Anderen (Schmid, 1998:353).

The magic of the moment and the magic of experiencing the world is exactly what the travelling narration communicates: "Le silence, l'espace, peu d'objets et qui nous tenaient tous à cœur" (Bouvier, 2014:27). But still, the human being needs something to live: "Que faire quand tout manque? La frugalité élève la vie, c'est entendu, mais cette pénurie continuelle l'endort" (Bouvier, 2014:55).

The aim of the journey is not necessarily the place the traveller planned to arrive; instead, it is to collect memories, to have specific experiences, to enjoy life and to record such moments on paper. Bouvier calls those moments that define one's life "instant souverain":

[...] et on s'empresse de couler cet instant souverain comme un corps mort au fond de sa mémoire, où on ira le rechercher un jour. On s'étire, on fait quelques pas, pensant moins d'un kilo, et le mot 'bonheur' paraît bien maigre et particulier pour décrire ce qui vous arrive. Finalement, ce qui constitue l'ossature de l'existence, ce n'est ni famille, ni la carrière, ni ce que d'autres diront ou penseront de vous, mais quelques instants de cette nature, soulevés par une lévitation plus sereine encore que celle de l'amour, et que la vie nous distribue avec une parcimonie à la mesure de notre faible cœur (Bouvier, 2014:112).

Maillart describes them as "unforgettable moments of plenitude":

The softness of the meadow, the radiant purity of the mountain air, the deep peacefulness of the rich valley, all contributed to our intense delight. If only for that unforgettable moment of plenitude, it was worth having travelled so far (Maillart, 2013:171),

which is reason enough to travel. Bouvier's narrator makes a similar comment on the intensity of the colour blue that he experiences: "Et surtout il y a le bleu. Il faut venir jusqu'ici pour découvrir le bleu" (Bouvier, 2014:214). Still, this moment of plenitude, or instant souverain, seems to be ineffable. Maillart hopes to find it with the aid of people she will meet on the journey: "Something more is needed. The joke is that I am looking for it, though I don't know what it is! But I must see first if what Indian sages know can be of use to us" (Maillart, 2013:204). Schwarzenbach's narrator calls such moments "episodes". The fact that she put the word into quotation marks also underlines the ineffability of what she intends to say:

Und endlich begreift man, dass der Ablauf eines Lebens nicht mehr enthält als eine beschränkte Anzahl solcher "Episoden", dass es von tausendundeinem Zufall abhängt, wo schließlich wir unser Haus bauen dürfen (Schwarzenbach, 2000:33).

Travelling narrations are full of such “instants souverains”, of “unforgettable moments of plenitude” and “episodes”, which make these texts, among other things, examples of *ars vivendi* and mediators of an art of life. Sometimes, they can even let death appear to be beautiful:

Even without knowing that one stood above a ruined capital, we could feel that the site had a meaning – particularly at sunset or at sunrise when the light accentuates the relief of the earth instead of annihilating it. Nowhere else have I seen such dense ultramarine shadows [...]. There even death could be beautiful [...]. Nowhere else have I listened with more intensity to the rush of a great wind coming down from great mountains (Maillart, 2013:190).

In the earlier quotation Schwarzenbach is speaking about magic: magic that appears on the journey, thanks to these instants souverains, moments or episodes. Such magic is created by making names come alive. One might argue now that the traveller has become accustomed to the idea that time is worthless. It is the other way around, though. More than slowness, the ability to lose control of time without forgetting its existence becomes a decisive value and motif in travelling literature:

Mit diesem Genuß des Augenblicks ist eine Möglichkeit gegeben, die Lebenszeit mit Bedeutung aufzuladen. Die Glücksmomente, die in der Reiseliteratur der folgenden zwei Jahrhunderte thematisiert werden, beruhen denn auch auf der momentanen Aufhebung der Zeit im einmaligen Augenblick oder auf der Erfahrung des Lebens als Einheit, wenn Reminiszenzen der Kindheit, Augenblick und künftige Erinnerung in einem mythischen Moment der Zeitlosigkeit zusammenfallen (Opitz, 1997:179).

The authors experience these magical moments, in which time seems to stand still. Schwarzenbach learns what Schmid would call a successful understanding of *ars vivendi* in terms of time:

Sie [Magie] liess die Flucht der Zeit zu, als würde sich die Zeit nie erfüllen –, so fand ich einen Ersatz für den wunderbaren Kreislauf, der mich einmal ent-

zückt hatte, und lauschte nicht mehr auf den Stundenschlag (Schwarzenbach, 2010:158).

The traveller's understanding of time has changed. He or she can find peace in such moments of plenitude, in such very brief and small occurrences where life made them feel whole and made time stop for them. On the other hand, the traveller is still aware of time as fleeting and leading, in the end, to death: "Ebensogut die Flucht der Zeit anklagen und ihr den Rücken kehren wollen, ebensogut sich schützen wollen vor dem eigenen verrinnenden Atem" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:79). Maillart's narrator explains that "There we felt slightly linked with the rest of the world" (Maillart, 2013:142). What has been experienced on the journey is reflecting what Schmid aims for in his philosophy. The individual should not repeatedly ask himself how time has been used:

Charakteristisch für die veränderte Zeitauffassung des Subjekts der Lebenskunst in einer anderen Moderne ist es, sich nicht mehr ständig zu martern mit den Fragen des modernen, rationalen Zeitkalküls der Art: Habe ich meine Zeit optimal genutzt? Womit habe ich sinnlos Minuten und Sekunden verloren? Das Zeitkalkül der reflektierten Lebenskunst kennt diese Fragen auch im umgekehrten Sinne: Wo habe ich meine Zeit mit Genuss vergeudet? Wo habe ich sie ohne Bedauern verschleudert? Die veränderte Zeitauffassung macht es möglich, den widersprüchlichen Gebrauch der Zeit vorsätzlich und bewusst zu leben: Die zur Verfügung stehende Zeit einerseits gut zu nutzen, sie nicht ungenutzt verstreichen zu lassen, schon um äußeren Notwendigkeiten nachzukommen und eigene Vorstellungen zu realisieren und nicht eines Tages auf die Suche nach der verlorenen Zeit gehen zu müssen; andererseits aber Zeit mit Absicht dahingehen zu lassen und mit sinnlosen Beschäftigungen zu vertreiben, die Kunst des Müßiggangs zu pflegen und, wie in alten Kulturen des Raums, in den Tag hineinzuleben (*in horam vivere*) – nur um sich der Gewalt der rücksichtslos fortschreitenden Zeit zu entziehen (Schmid, 1998:359–360).

In such *instants souverains*, the traveller is fulfilled with feelings of great happiness and no longer asks if time has been used successfully or not, as there is probably no better use of time than experiencing such moments of happiness: "Si je n'étais

pas parvenu à écrire grand-chose, c'est qu'être heureux me prenait tout mon temps. D'ailleurs, nous ne sommes pas juges du temps perdu" (Bouvier, 2014:46). The journey is working well for the traveller.

In such moments, he or she is not only freed from time but also from space: "c'est la lune à main gauche, les flots argentés de la Morava à main droite, et la perspective d'aller chercher derrière l'horizon un village où vivre les trois prochaines semaines, je suis bien aise de ne pouvoir m'en passer" (Bouvier, 2014:53). The numerous textual examples have shown that time and space are well discussed in the theory and practice of *ars vivendi* and in literature. These concepts are both important for the narrator, as well as for the traveller. The journey teaches the awareness of time and space, which is extremely important for *ars vivendi*, and because of this understanding, the traveller can even – if only for short moments – experience a feeling of time- and "spacelessness".

4.5 Aesthetics of Landscapes

The landscapes described on the journey will be focused on from spatial and temporal distances in the following. How the relationship between landscapes and the view of the landscape is reflected in the travelling narration will be shown in the following section. Marc Augé speaks about a double displacement: one of the traveller and one regarding the view of the landscape that the traveller seems to picture as snapshots from his or her memory:

L'espace qu'on pratique des lieux et non du lieu procède en effet d'un double déplacement: du voyageur, bien sûr, mais aussi, parallèlement, des paysages dont il ne prend jamais que des vues partielles, des 'instantanés' additionnés pêle-mêle dans sa mémoire et, littéralement, recomposés dans le récit qu'il en fait ou dans l'enchaînement des diapositives dont il impose, au retour, le commentaire à son entourage. Le voyage (celui dont l'ethnologue se méfie au point de le 'haïr') construit un rapport fictif entre regard et paysage (Augé, 1992: 109–110).

To begin with, this relationship between the traveller and the landscapes in travelling literature is committed to memory upon the first sight of the romantic pan-

oramic view of Goethe's Italian journeys. The beautiful pictures and paintings are what come to one's mind when thinking about the description of a perfectly shaped landscape. In the travelling narration, the encounter with the aesthetics of landscape evokes a desire in the traveller. Rather than by love for a human being, those feelings are evoked by having new experiences in new environments. Schwarzenbach treats them equally, writing: "ein Mensch oder ein Ort, den unsere Liebe seit langem phantasievoll umkleidete und beim Namen nannte" (Schwarzenbach, 2016:54). Maillart compares the love for a country with love between people: "The same kind of light burns in the eyes of a girl when she discovers that love inhabits her, a love she feels so inexhaustible that it can inundate the whole wide world" (Maillart, 2013:168). Bouvier also describes the landscape in a deeply passionate way: "Ces grandes terres, ces odeurs remuantes, le sentiment d'avoir encore devant soi ses meilleures années multiplie le plaisir de vivre comme le faire l'amour" (Bouvier, 2014:92). Instead of the simple description of "the seen", the examples have already shown that more than just the view is happening in a beautiful panoramic image; the memories made in these landscapes contain more than just the sense of sight and even evoke a feeling of love inside the individual. Love embodies life, and experiencing love means living once more: "noch einmal lieben [...]. Ach, noch einmal leben!" (Schwarzenbach, 2003:12),¹⁷¹ or: "O Zärtlichkeit, Stummheit, unsterbliches Begehren" (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 99). The traveller is subordinated to this desire: "Wir sind hingegeben der grossen Landschaft, ihren herrlichen Farben und reinen Formen, ihrer königlichen Eigenart" (Schwarzenbach, 2003:74). Maillart declares her love in a passionate way, too:

Though we longed for the desolate expanse of the Persian desert and the sharp winds of the Hindu Kush, our eyes were sensitive to the Pays Romand. How moved I was by a country endowed with such variety, a country where nothing is in excess; so proud the hills of rocks, so radiant the snowfields caressed by passing clouds, so odorant the long hay mixed with daisies, so pure the waters, so deep the murmuring foliage of the parks, so classical the pediments of the old grey houses. How unbelievable all this would seem evoked in the monot-

171 This is again a reference to the several lives of the traveller, a reference to *ars vivendi*.

onous plains of Iran! [...] I want to touch your earth once more (Maillart, 2013:11).

Kini personifies Persia in the last sentence of the quotation, which makes her desire seem even stronger. By expressing her feelings towards the country, she is not only talking to the country but also directly to the reader:

Where traces of gold-painting sparkled over deep blue, it evoked a night sky. One great panel of faience-mosaic made me think of the time when one is in love, when one feels that never before has one really seen the splendour of the midnight heavens: the stars, no two of them alike, burn with such intensity they seem to come towards you. Imagine a corner of that sky but every star a coloured flower, then you have a hint of what I saw (Maillart, 2013:64).

She wants the reader to feel what she feels, even though it is not possible for her to express herself accurately. Schwarzenbach also addresses the reader directly, when speaking about her love for Afghanistan: “Lasst mich einmal so reden, wie es mir um’s Herz ist (denn ich liebe dieses Land, Afghanistan)” (Schwarzenbach, 2008: 165). Bouvier declares his love for Afghanistan as well: “J’aimais ce pays” (Bouvier, 2014:342). In both cases, the narration has almost completely come to an end. The feeling of love towards a landscape or a place can be explained by Schmid’s quotation:

[...] die Formel vom ‘Gebrauch der Lüste’ findet sich bei ihm. Im Hinblick auf die Dinge der Liebe plädiert er für das Kalkül der Liebenden, mit der Nähe und der Distanz zueinander zu spielen: Eine Kunst des Liebens, zwischen Präsenz und Absenz (Schmid, 2005:44–45).

Schmid is speaking here about an art of love that can be experienced in the interaction of presence, absence, proximity, and distance. Just as “le langage nait de l’absence”, love, lust and passion are also growing in absence. What Schmid calls “die Formel vom Gebrauch der Lüste”, may also be the formula of a “usage du monde” as an interaction between presence and absence, reality, and dream, and between time that stops and runs.

It is directly and indirectly noticeable that all three authors prefer travelling in the rural areas and smaller towns to travelling in large cities, a characteristic which can also be observed in the works of other 20th century travelling authors, e.g. Tiziano Terzani or Lacarrière. Forsdick interprets the preference of rural places in 20th century French travelling literature as a “means of hallucinating a ‘lost’ France whose links to the contemporary country are increasingly tenuous and even suspect” (Forsdick, 2005:180). Still, after a long time in a rural area, the arrival in a town seems like a reward: “Nous avions bien gagné la ville” (Bouvier, 2014:278). Again, the ambiguity and the interactions of the *lieux* and *non-lieux* seem to be needed.

4.5.1 **Ambiance and Aura**

Jean-Francois Guennoc speaks in his article about ambiance as “l’invention d’un nouveau trope” (Antoine, 2010:171), the invention of a new trope. Ambiance in the travelling narration is immensely powerful. It is not just the lust that is evoked by the encounter with the landscape, but also the instant *souverain* which creates a specific moment of the visited places:

We were in the heart of an old, a very old world. Was it not already old sixteenth centuries B.C. [...]. Reduced to essentials, a skeleton of hills covered with the leanest flesh, for all the little it gave, the world pleased me as it was. Nothing too much. [...] Attraction of a horizon we want to reach but push back with every step. To be accepted by the earth. To understand its meaning. Then to feel how much it is one whole, to live the strength of that unity (Maillart, 2013:179–180).

Maillart’s text passage reveals how this atmosphere is initiated. It is not only the dialogue between human beings that teaches the traveller, but also the dialogue between human and nature. What Guennoc interprets as *ambiance* could also be understood as Benjamin’s term *aura*, which is dependent on the uniqueness and presence of the traveller experiencing the moment: “Denn die Aura ist an sein Hier und Jetzt gebunden” (Benjamin, 2015:40). When Benjamin tries to explain the term in a more comprehensible way, he uses the example of a real situation that took place:

An einem Sommernachmittag ruhend einem Gebirgszweig am Horizont oder einem Zweig folgen, der seinen Schatten auf den Ruhenden wirft – das heißt die Aura dieser Berge, dieses Zweiges atmen. An der Hand dieser Beschreibung ist es ein Leichtes, die gesellschaftliche Bedingtheit des gegenwärtigen Verfalls der Aura einzusehen (Benjamin, 2015:19).

Michael Hauskeller interprets Benjamin's words in a phenomena-related sense, in which it is not about the object itself but a fusion of subject and object – in the case of the travelling narration, the traveller and the view that opens through his or her eyes.

Sie gibt sich uns immer als ungeteilte Erlebnisganzheit, die alles mit einbezieht, was in der jeweiligen Wahrnehmungssituation überhaupt gegeben ist, also nicht nur das, was wir als Berg oder Zweig zu bezeichnen gewohnt sind, sondern auch, um nur einiges zu nennen (denn alles aufzuzählen wäre unmöglich), die Wärme und Trockenheit der Luft, die Farben und Geräusche, die Gerüche, die uns umgeben, der Schatten, das Rauschen der Blätter, das Zirpen der Grillen, kurz: alles, was da ist, und zwar einschließlich dessen, was wir selbst in diesem Augenblick an diesem Ort sind, also der Stimmung, in der wir uns gerade befinden, den Erfahrungen, die wir gemacht haben, usw. Subjekt und Objekt lassen sich hier gar nicht mehr sinnvoll trennen: sie bedingen sich gegenseitig oder vielmehr fallen sie zusammen, verschmelzen in einem einmaligen Erlebnis (Hauskeller, 2005:4).

The views of the landscapes are thus loaded with the traveller's thoughts and conceptions, shown through the lens of the senses that make it important to experience the place. Bouvier's example supports that theory:

Ces étendues me donnaient des picotements. C'est tellement agréable aussi, ces grandes images dépliantes de la nature, avec des taches, des niveaux, des moirures, où l'on imagine des cheminements, des aubes, un autre hivernage encore plus retire, des femmes aux nez épatés, en fichus de couleur, séchant du poisson dans un village de planches au milieu des jones (un peu pucaux, ces désirs de terre vierge; pas romantiques pourtant, mais relevant plutôt d'un ins-

inct ancien qui pousse à mettre son sort en balance pour accéder à une intensité qui l'élève) (Bouvier, 2014:158).

A suitable example which perfectly reflects the unique moment of the aura can be found in Schwarzenbach's text as well. Even if a place is seen twice, it is not perceived in the same way:

[...] jetzt aber zählten alle Namen und blieben haften, ich entdeckte mehr Täler, mehr Gipfel, und es stimmte mich hoch und freudig, als ich gegen Mittag einen Baumgarten wiederfand, wo ich schon einmal gelagert hatte [...]. Aber obwohl meine Erinnerung geweckt wurde und zärtlich belebt und durch schöne Ausblicke, die schon einmal geträumt, und Melodien, die schon einmal erklungen waren, so schien mir doch, dieses grosse Panorama des Hindukusch sei ein anderes (Schwarzenbach, 2000:59).

This example reveals the dependence on the respective perceptions of the subject and object. When the traveller comes back to the place, circumstances may have changed. The traveller has changed, and the view that opens in front of him or her appears different as well. Kini supports the theory as well, but from a different perspective. She is not describing the landscape but expresses directly that she has the power to shape her world: "Beauty, pain, joy, are not intrinsic to a thing, an event, they are nowhere but within me, I can learn to bring forth from my being pure and unconditioned joy, ... I can shape my world" (Maillart, 2013:72). Kini is saying what Benjamin evoked with the suspension of object and subject. It is up to the individual how the eye perceives what it can see. And sometimes, nature is just so beautiful that even her companion, Christina, must recognise it, no matter how she shapes her world:

But for a while, morning and evening, a glorious display of changing lights turns this mournful stage into a world of unexampled beauty. Gold and blue, blue and gold, such was the scene that morning – a few gilded bushes rising against a far-away background of hills, dusky blue like a ripe plum, while golden dust and golden light throbbled in the depths of the azure sky. [...] Yes, Christina, life is beautiful! (Maillart, 2013:98).

This may also be the reason why the traveller is not describing any action in such specific moments but instead describing only the pleasure of the very moment, which he or she is not actually participating in, instead just inhaling the aura. This looks different if the description does not cover the panoramic view but does cover the experience with buildings and cities or villages. Schwarzenbach's narrator speaks about movement in the picture. More specifically, the narrator describes the sound of walking through the streets and of touching and feeling the buildings:

Ach, die Namen erreichen, die Mauern berühren und durch die Gassen gehen, meinen Schritt auf dem Pflaster hallen und mein Herz schlagen hören! [...] Ach, den Boden betreten, ihn durch meinen Atem lebendig machen! Ach, Wirklichkeit, Wirklichkeit! (Schwarzenbach, 2010:18–19).

Nevertheless, the impression of this scene leaves the reader with a similar result: that the narrator in the story feels the need to experience the experienced again. That may also raise the issue of capturing the moment in the travelling narration in writing: the problematic of mimesis. As will be discussed in the chapter, 'Writing and Reading', the difficulties that the narrator as a traveller and writer faces to write down what he or she wants to express may lie in the problem of the impossible reproduction of the aura, or in Bouvier's words, the *instant souverain*. This is not only expressed in writing but also in the other media. Even though the traveller admires the painter and the musician for their means to express that which goes beyond the words, the problem becomes clear in the medium of photography:

But the minarets near the tomb were unbelievably beautiful. The density of the colours, the sharpness of the flowery designs, the radiance that emanated from these proud columns forced me to rush around, hopelessly trying to find the angle from which a colour-slide might do justice to such joyful contrasts (Maillart, 2013:123).

Kini, as the photographer in this scene, has problems finding the right angle, in which the colours will be best represented in the picture. The statement by Schwarzenbach's narrator confirms her fear that no medium is able to catch the

aura: “Im grossartigen und wechselvollen Gemälde des Hindukusch fehlt mir das junge Grün, der sanfte Wind, der rührende Gesang des Frühlings. Aber man bestimmt seine Träume nicht, und ich wagte es nicht, mich umzublicken” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:61). The differences between countries do not only lie in culture, history, religion, or people; the landscape has or proven its ability to show the traveller that he or she is in a different place:

Seules une légère différence de matière et la trace des camions distinguent la route de terre de la terre brune qui l’entoure et s’étend à perte de vue. Les pieds au chaud dans les bottes, une main sur le volant, de la terre plein le regard, on entame cet immense paysage en se disant: cette fois, le monde a changé d’échelle, c’est bien l’Asie qui commence! (Bouvier, 2014:89).

This time, it is Bouvier’s narrator who is on the move and in the action of driving while feeling the incredible moment of the Asian aura for the first time. This fragment is a suitable example against the classical aesthetic beauty of the landscape as well. The traveller only faces the brown air, and still, the moment and the vastness of the landscape seem as magnificent as a beautiful view of a rich landscape from a mountain. Not every landscape causes such a feeling of magnitude and aura. There are also landscapes that the traveller wishes to leave as soon as possible. Bouvier’s narrator claims that there are only five or six such landscapes for every human being on the planet:

Moi, je crois plutôt ceci: des paysages qui vous en veulent et qu’il faut quitter immédiatement sous peine de conséquences incalculables, il n’en existe pas beaucoup, mais il en existe. Il y en a bien sur cette terre cinq ou six pour chacun de nous (Bouvier, 2014:235).

Still, the traveller first needs to experience a place in order to know that this is one of the places he or she fears. The *Poisson-scorpion* shows that for Bouvier, one of these places is the island of Sri Lanka.

4.5.2 The Mountain

On the journey, mountains often arouse the traveller's attention. They could be interpreted as a synonym for the element Earth. By combining landscape and travelling literature, the reader may be pulled back to romanticism and Goethe's descriptions of the view from atop the Alps. Aside from the more obvious experience of standing on top of a mountain, the simple appearance of a mountain alone is also enough to arouse attention. Schwarzenbach gains this experience with Mount Ararat: "zum Berge Ararat hinübersah. Es war ein herrlicher Anblick!" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:24). So does Maillart: "the magnificence of snow-covered Ararat" (Maillart, 2013:54) and a similar experience with the Hindukusch: "sah ich in der Dämmerung das ferne Gebirge auftauchen, blau, kalt, schneegekrönt, und herrlich anzusehen" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:59). Bouvier's narrator also experiences a moment of peace by looking at the mountain by night: "des étoiles, des étoiles, des étoiles assez claires pour dessiner les montagnes qui barraient l'horizon vers l'est... et peu à peu, la paix" (Bouvier, 2014:261). Maillart expresses this peacefulness by personifying the landscape that one can see from atop the mountain:

From the top of the head the world looked splendid in the clear mountain air – the chequer-board of fields, the smiling vale of Kakrak and beyond, the gentle Koh-i-Baba. [...] With its spirits of smiling restfulness, the landscape was the best part of Bamian (Maillart, 2013:174).

Even though such Goethean descriptions can also be found in 20th century travelling literature, Schmid's aesthetics of existence are more reliable for the travelling narration:

Die eigentliche Macht der Schönheit liegt dabei nicht in der Perfektionierung, oberflächlichen Glättung und Harmonisierung der Existenz, sondern in der Möglichkeit ihrer Bejahung. Bejahenswert kann keineswegs nur das Angenehme, Lustvolle oder, wie es im ausgehenden 20. Jahrhundert gerne genannt wurde, das 'Positive' sein, sondern ebenso das Unangenehme, Schmerzliche, Hässliche, 'Negative'. Die Ästhetik der Existenz umfasst auch das Misslingen, entscheidend ist, ob das Leben insgesamt als bejahenswert erscheint (Schmid, 1998:168).

Schwarzenbach's depiction of the Ararat reveals the power of beauty described in the previous quote: "da stand, eine gestreifte Pyramide, der erloschene Vulkan, [Ararat] ein schmerzenseiches, tiefbewegendes Bild: die Unvergänglichkeit" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:27). In *L'Usage du monde*, the mountain itself spreads a specific aura. It emits a vastness and a giant power: "Trois cents kilomètres à l'ouest, la calotte de glace de l'Ararat domine une mer de montagnes bleues qui descendent en vague vers la Russie, la Turquie et l'Iran" (Bouvier, 2014:126). The mountain seems to spread a mystique which gives the traveller an experience that one may otherwise only expect from death:

Auch das gehört zur Magie und zur geheimen Botschaft der Berge. Von den Bergen geht vielleicht eine solche Zuversicht aus, daß es denkbar erscheint, es gebe doch noch einen finalen Zustand der Ruhe und des Friedens mit dem Leben (Schmidt, 1990:18).

Kini may experience exactly what Aurel Schmidt describes regarding mountain climbing in the Alps:

To be accepted by the earth. To understand its meaning. Then to feel how much it is one whole, to live the strength of that unity. Then only will be the time to love each part of that whole, freed at last from the blindness of partial love (Maillart, 2013:180).

Kini is feeling the mountain and experiencing it, not from climbing it, but from beyond the role of the observer:

What an impressive pattern of relief the earth has thrice repeated! [...] Joyfully plunging into their waters during snowstorms or in the scorching heat of noon, I came to love them (Maillart, 2013:47).

Bouvier dedicates his last pages to the mountain and to the view that he sees from it:

La montagne, elle, ne se dépensait pas en gestes inutiles: montait, se reposait, montait encore [...]. L'air était d'une transparence extraordinaire. La voix por-

tait. [...] J'ai passé une bonne heure immobile, saoulé par ce paysage apollinien. Devant cette prodigieuse enclume de terre et de roc, le monde de l'anecdote était comme aboli. [...] devenaient les éléments d'une pièce où j'étais venu, à travers bien des obstacles, tenir mon rôle à temps. [...] moi non plus, je ne sais comment dire... car, pour parler comme Plotin: 'Une tangente est un contact qu'on ne peut ni concevoir ni formuler'. Mais dix ans de voyage n'auraient pas pu payer cela (Bouvier, 2014:374).

Bouvier indicates here that it is not about the number of days that the journey lasts, but the actual experience. It also expresses the invaluable feeling of the instant sovereign, which cannot be bought or exchanged for time, which cannot be repeated or taken from the traveller. The mountain seems to have a magical force, magnetic demand to be climbed:

C'est l'Hindou Kouch qui fait signe. On ne le voit pas, mais on le sent derrière les premières chaînes, tendu dans la nuit comme un manteau. Tout le ciel en est occupé. L'esprit aussi: au bout d'une semaine on n'a plus que la montagne en tête, le pays qui s'étend derrière, et à force d'y penser, on y va (Bouvier, 2014:343).

It may not just be the mountain itself but the view that it offers its visitors, which the traveller would like to save as a panoramic image accompanied by the view as a new perspective of the world, despite its not being the perfect panorama. This is not necessarily the gift of the mountain itself, but rather of its height, which offers this possibility. It could therefore also be experienced from a rooftop:

Von den Dächern eines alten Moghulenpalasts reicht der Blick weit und genügt doch noch nicht, – man kann es nur ahnen, das grosse Gemälde der Welt, und dann die Hände ballen in furchtbarem Ungenügen [...]. Aber es ist vergeblich, dein Blick reicht nicht weit genug (Schwarzenbach, 2008:144–145).

Not surprisingly, landscapes are transmitters of ambiguity in the travelling narration:

Das mutet schon asiatisch an, wenn die Sonnenseite der Hügel Schwarz und ohne Vegetation ist, die Schattenseite aber wie eine Oase mit Wasser und tiefem Grün! [...] die violette Flut von Lavendel, eine milde, vom süßen Geruch erfüllte Luft, sondern auch die Dörfer ganz verändert (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 12–13).

In this example, it is not only the contrast to the European vegetation on the mountain that differs but the different sides that each mountain can have. The mountain gives different perspectives, depending on the cardinal directions. The encounter with the Asian continent is an encounter with the elements and senses. Many of them can be observed in this quotation, in which Schwarzenbach makes the reader feel the water, the sky, the earth and the warmth of the sun on one's skin. She also evokes other senses through her descriptions of the smell of lavender and the taste of the fresh water. In all its otherness, it may still remind the traveller of the mountains in Europe:

[...] et les montagnes mauves du Zagros, d'une découpage très provençale. Et dans la nature, exactement cette même intimité molle et dangereuse qu'on trouve parfois, les nuits d'été, aux abords d'Arles ou d'Avignon (Bouvier, 2014: 235).

Besides the different vegetation and different perspectives, the view from the mountain also offers a view of different times. The narrator observes not only the different perspectives, again depending on the view of the cardinal direction; he or she is also able to investigate the past. The recent past, when he walked on the path, and the past including the history of the place are shown in the following quotation:

Bien que le soleil soit caché, la vue de la colline est admirable: on domine une immense étendue de joncs, de marais, de labours couverts d'épines, entre lesquels serpent un ruisseau bordé de saules. Au sud-est, on aperçoit sur plusieurs kilomètres le chemin que j'ai suivi. Je mesure la déception de ceux de la fouille, qui ont largement eu le temps de me voir approcher, en espérant des lettres. À l'est: deux villages de yourtes couleur blé, noyées dans la glaise et les flaques, quelques bosquets, tous les tons de l'automne. Dilué dans cet espace roux où

parfois un cavalier laisse une trace de poussière, le présent ne pèse pas lourd. Quant au passé: le sommet de la colline, nivelé par les fouilles, révèle les fondations soigneusement dégagées d'une sorte d'oppidum formant un long rectangle qu'un gigantesque escalier encore partiellement enfoui, et qui couvre l'autre versant, relie au niveau de la plaine. C'est le Temple du Feu, dynastie des Grands Kouchans. Je me sens ignorant comme une borne; il faudra me faire expliquer tout cela dès demain (Bouvier, 2014:362–363).

The narrator feels ashamed of his lack of knowledge and wants to ask about it the next day, although *pharda*, tomorrow, can have many meanings. It is left to the author, and it is not revealed by the narrator whether the traveller really asked about it the next day. He tells the continuation of the story six years later, though, trying to remember the discussion by reconstructing it.

4.5.3 The Desert

Aside from the mountains, the desert is also a landscape that fascinates the traveller. It is not the desert itself though, with its promising freedom and vastness: “Alle Wege offen, die Wüste baumlos, die Horizonte ohne Hindernis” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:157) that makes it a special place on Earth:

When a tree or a rock stands alone in the nothingness of a desert, it partakes of the surrounding greatness by centring upon itself the radiations of immensity; this is the charm of Tibet, this void around the simplest object. How much greater is this charm when in the middle of an empty plain the old tomb of Oljaitu stands aloof in simple grandeur—a gigantic egg in a massive hexagonal egg-cup towering above the land of Media (Maillart, 2013:77).

The rare objects standing or rising in the desert suddenly take on a new meaning, another importance, and another perception. The enormous landscape and the dry desert arouse the travellers: “Greatest joy of Asia: clear running water – promise of fields, trees, grazing-lands” (Maillart, 2013:170). Objects and nature become rare, unique, and thus, important. First, it is the water, which is a necessity for life everywhere on Earth; the recognition of its value grows in the desert and becomes the traveller’s friend:

Hills had also risen to the south; and then, amazed, we saw between us and them a deep broad river splitting the earth, canon-like. By its size and its blueness we knew it could only be our friend the Hari Rud (Maillart, 2013:131).

It is probably the reason why the colour blue is of such importance in Persia and Afghanistan, as it represents water.¹⁷² The rise in the importance of the tree in treeless deserts is also of great interest. The tree belongs to the greatest joy of Asia: “But the pines gave such relaxation and joy: Asia teaches you beautifully how to appreciate trees” (Maillart, 2013:132). Maillart also expresses this with colours here. Through the darkness of the trees, a colourful spot again gains a new interest:

[...] pinnacles of intense orange and purple [...]. Near at hand on our slope the blackness of a few old trees, twisted and full of character, enhanced these colour-values. [...] Between them, the earth disappeared under the dark round pin-cushions of dwarf bushes; sunrays played over their pink flowers (Maillart, 2013:134).

This is caused by the trees' shadows. Bouvier's narrator also observes this colourful game evoked by the shadows: “Tout de même c'est beau – [...] ces couleurs qui conspirant et s'agencent dans l'ombre” (Bouvier 1996:61). In Schwarzenbach's text, a similar process can be observed, not through shadow, but through the monotone colour of the desert, which allows the green to suddenly appear in a different light: “Zwei Monate hatten wir vor uns die baumlose Hochebene gehabt – jetzt konnten wir uns am dunklen Grün nicht satt sehen” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:28). The tree can be also understood as a symbol of survival. It provides shade and, thus, helps one to escape “from the glare of the world” (Maillart, 2013:112). By this, Maillart means the sun and the reason Schwarzenbach probably speaks about the miracle of the tree in Africa: *Das Wunder des Baums* is the title of her narration.

The desert is also an example of ambiguity, as it always has two sides: The empty space of the land on the one hand and on the other hand, the space of the sky:

172 Water will be discussed further as a symbol of convivence in the upcoming chapter.

It is because of their sky that deserts are so moving – that vast, total sky, the greatest amount of space we can behold at once, a sky into whose subtle landscape of thin vapours all the charm, the very essence, of a once fertile land has risen and taken refuge (Maillart, 2013:98).

What seems to be a natural spectacle is seen as heavy to bear in the eyes of Schwarzenbach's narrator. The desert reflects the ambiguity, not only within the land and the sky, which sometimes even melt into each other:

Da ist das Dorf zu Ende, die Welt öffnet sich, Himmel und Erde sind eins! Nicht dass hier draussen der Himmel heiter wäre, und die Erde fruchtbar und lieblich. Nicht dass es fette Weiden gäbe, und sanftes Grün, einen murmeln-den Bach, einen Birkenhain, und gesegnete Sonne, gesegneten Wind – nicht dass das Herz leichter würde. Unser Dorf ist von der Wüste umgeben [...]. Ja, unser Dorf ist schon erfasst von der unaufhaltsamen Zerstörung wie von einer ansteckenden Krankheit (Schwarzenbach, 2000:77),

but also in the contradiction of freedom: the open roads that the vast land promises.

Das Land übrigens, dieser öde und windgepeitschte Wüstenstreifen im äus-sersten Norden [...] und sie müssen, wie wir, den blendenden Anblick eines flachen, uferlosen [...] Horizonts ertragen (Schwarzenbach, 2000:76).

Here, the traveller can hardly bear this endlessness that he or she was looking for. The desert turns into a vision, an ambiguity of beauty and danger:

Jetzt gab es keine Bäume mehr, kein Gras, kein Feld, kein Dorf, keine Hütte, keinen Zaun, kein Wasser. [...] Der blasse Himmel [...] färbte er sich violett und schwefelgelb, rostbraun, feuerrot – das Schauspiel war schön, aber beklemmend wie eine Vision in der 'Göttlichen Komödie' (Schwarzenbach, 2000:36).

This is not only felt by Schwarzenbach's narrator but by Bouvier's narrator, too:

[...] six cents kilomètres de fournaise et de montagnes désertes jusqu'à la frontière, et une fois autant à travers le désert baloutche pour gagner Quetta. Sur les deux cents premiers kilomètres, jusqu'à l'ancienne forteresse de Bam, la piste est encore fréquentée. Au-delà, elle s'ensable, le trafic tarit, la vie s'épuise et le pays s'étire comme s'il n'avait plus l'énergie d'en finir. Mieux vaut ne rien dire du soleil! (Bouvier, 2014:260).

The sun in the desert seems to be the feared enemy, whereas it is the source of life at the same time, just like water. In Bouvier's text in particular, the sun becomes more and more threatening, whereas the moon, which will be discussed in chapter '4.9. Religion and Spirituality', turns into a symbol of life, based on Eliade's sacred and profane.

The landscape, especially in terms of *ars vivendi*, comes to be expressed in the beauty – not necessarily in an aesthetical way – of the experienced. These experiences with nature, (less with cities, but sometimes with monuments) are most important in understanding that the real power of beauty lies not in the superficial smoothing, harmonisation, and perfection of existence but in the possibility of its affirmation.

4.6 The Self and/as the Other

*"It is not that we must love
one another or die (if that is the case – Blacks and Afrikaners,
Arabs and Jews, Tamils and Singhalese – we are I think doomed).
It is that we must know one another, and live with that knowledge,
or end marooned in a Beckett-world of colliding soliloquy"¹⁷³
Clifford Geertz*

The meeting with the Other will be discussed from a transareal perspective, which is, using Ottmar Ette's words: "less about territories than about relations and communications" (Ette, 2016:53). This chapter will discuss the traveller's perception of

the meeting with the Other and of the meeting with the Self as the Other. This reciprocal forming of the Self through the Other and with the Other is also a particularly important point in Schmid's philosophy:

Gegenstand der Gestaltung [des Lebens als Kunstwerk] kann die eigene Handlung des Selbst sein, die, ausgeführt, eine eigene Existenz zu führen beginnt, nicht mehr identisch ist mit dem Selbst, von dem sie ins Werk gesetzt worden ist, sich jedoch über ihre Konsequenzen zurück wendet auf das Selbst, ihm Erfahrungen vermittelt, es prägt, bestätigt oder ihm eine veränderte Gestalt verleiht. Gegenstand kann auch die sprachliche und vor allem schriftliche Äusserung sein, in die das Selbst sich hineinlegt, um sich auf andere Weise daraus wieder zu entziffern. Und schließlich kann zum Relais der Selbstgestaltung die Gestalt des Anderen werden, dem das Selbst sich zuwendet, um in ihm sich selbst zu erfahren; der Andere ist dabei keineswegs nur ein reflektierender Spiegel, sondern selbst ein Selbst, sodass die Gestaltung eine wechselseitige ist. Von der Begegnung mit dem Anderen seiner selbst und dem Anderen als äusserer Gestalt kehrt das Selbst nicht einfach in sich selbst zurück, sondern erfährt sich selbst als fremd. Die Selbstentfremdung ist nicht etwa ein Zustand, der aufzuheben wäre, sondern einer, der in der Lebenskunst geradezu zu suchen ist, um das Selbst zu vervielfältigen und sein Selbstbewusstsein auf die vielfältige Erfahrung des Andersseins zu gründen, ein Selbstbewusstsein, das nicht mehr nötig hat, allzu ängstlich die eigene Identität zu hüten (Schmid, 1998:242).

Schmid's thought about the Self and Other being reciprocal terms goes back to Ricœur's theory of *Oneself as Another*, in which otherness is seen as: "a kind that can be constitutive of selfhood as such" (Ricœur, 1994:3). Ricœur is not speaking about a comparison "(oneself similar to another) but of an implication (oneself inasmuch as being other)" (Ricœur, 1994:3), just like Schmid does. With this, he emphasizes the importance of the Other for the Self. The transformation of the traveller and writer into the narrator of the narration already mirrors the shaping of life as a work of art, and with this, the Self is already represented as an "Other" from the outside. Then, within the narration, the narrator sees himself as the Self like an "Other": a *mise-en-abyme* par excellence.

Mathilde Jegou draws attention to a comment by Irène Lichtenstein Fall in her dissertation, *Le Corps à l'ouvrage*. Fall commented during her interview with Bouvier that for someone who left to meet people, Bouvier met comparatively few.¹⁷⁴ This lies, of course, in the eye of the beholder, but one can argue that Bouvier does meet numerous people on his road. More than once, he and his companion, Thierry, are invited to their hosts' homes for dinner. The fact that Bouvier needs to earn a living while travelling, e.g. as a teacher in Tabriz, already shows that he is in social contact with a group of locals. We can, however, observe – and the same goes for Maillart and Schwarzenbach – that those meetings are often observations from the narrator's perspective or only short meetings represented in indirect speech, so they do not reconstruct the dialogues that the travellers may have engaged in word for word. Direct speech conversations are indeed comparatively rare in their works. The observations are of decisive importance for *ars vivendi* because they are no simple observations but participant observations. In anthropological studies, this method is heavily criticised. This is mainly because results are influenced by the person observing a particular group and because the group's behaviour might vary based on the appearance of the observer. The texts of the travelling authors are not read as anthropological studies, though. They are instead read as an important step towards *ars vivendi*: "Das Selbst versteht besser, wie Anderen zumute ist, wenn es selbst erleidet, was sie bedrückt" (Schmid, 2005: 58). That is why meeting people in the circumstances in which they are living has such an impact on the individual.

The difficulty of bringing one's own personality to the journey is also discussed by Schwarzenbach's narrator:

Behaltet eure Ratschläge, ich werde sie nicht befolgen können. Und ich lerne eine neue Sprache. [...] es gibt neue Erden, neue Sprachen, andere Völker, die nicht in festen Häusern wohnen. [...] Aber ich muss noch vergessen, dass ich mich befreien wollte. Dass ich eure Kirchen verliess, eure Gerichtssäle, eure Spitäler. Dass ich mich auflehnte gegen eine irdische Gewalt, Busse tat vor einer himmlischen, und Rede und Antwort stand. [...] Ich muss die schattigen

174 See Jegou, 2008:416: "pour quelqu'un parti faire des rencontres il ne rencontre que peu de gens".

Alleen vergessen, die Pappeln Napoleons, die gepflegten Pfade der Nationalparks, die Kindheitswege (Schwarzenbach, 2010:106–107).

To leave behind and forget all the memories preceding a journey sounds like an impossible task, and it probably is. They try to leave the Eurocentric way of thinking behind and replace it with ‘cultural relativism’. Georg M. Foster said in 1962: “Ethnocentrism is so deeply engrained in all of us that even when we are sensitive to the philosophy of cultural relativism, we may easily fall victim to evaluating others in terms of our own views” (Foster, 1962:69). This can be also found in the literature of the three authors. Recently in 2017, Sofie Decock and Uta Schaffers examined the Eurocentric thoughts in Schwarzenbach’s and Maillart’s works according to the authors’ lack of language skills. As they have shown, Eurocentric thoughts can be found or interpreted in their literature.¹⁷⁵ It is however, in the 21st century, necessary to look for examples that may help to overcome this way of thinking. At this point, there is another connection to Bouvier’s “neuf vies proverbiales du chat”. The traveller needs an open mind and a free spirit to start a journey or new life. At the same time, this requires “killing” the earlier life. This is an issue described in travelling literature, which probably has an impact on all people moving on this planet:

Ces voix des tableaux noirs, tellement de chez nous. J’ose à peine ouvrir la bouche de peur de m’entendre, moi aussi. Je me demande combien de temps il faudrait passer sur les routes et dans quelles canailleries il faudrait se lancer pour perdre ce ton pastoral (Bouvier, 2014:77).

The traveller wants to free himself from the prefiguration he carries with him on the journey in order to observe and experience “the seen” in the most objective way possible. The quotes by Bouvier and Schwarzenbach already imply the difficulty of losing that pastoral tone and leaving behind the prefigurative way of thinking. One thing, however, is clear: The encounter will definitely have an influence on the Self and the Other: “Je suis curieux de voir qui du pays ou de moi aura le plus change” (Bouvier, 1991:11).

175 See Holdenried et al., 2017:72.

4.6.1 (Non-)Verbal Communication

One of the crucial reasons for the lack of direct speech is most likely the language barrier that is directly expressed within the chosen literature and also reflects the traveller's frustration, as the following examples demonstrate: "we could not exchange a word with our man, and he was useless at the gesture-language" (Maillart, 2013:132) or as Bouvier wrote: "Il ne savait pas un mot d'allemand, d'anglais ou de français. Nous, vingt mots de turc à peine et nous étions trop fatigués pour nous lancer dans les gestes ou dans les dessins. Nous avons donc de part et d'autre mangé les pommes en nous regardant sourire" (Bouvier, 2014:102). Even though a relationship cannot be built through verbal conversation in those scenes, the atmosphere seems to be pleasant, as can be seen from the exchanging of smiles. Bouvier states in his interview with Lichtenstein-Fall: "Il n'y a pas de meilleure communication que le rire, pas de meilleur passeport" (Bouvier, 1992:179). He is not only referring to laughing and smiling as a perfect way to communicate, he is also saying that this ability is stronger than any national heritage – that this ability to laugh and to smile overcomes national borders and unites individuals regardless of their home countries. His statement can be heard straight away from this interview and is very well expressed in *L'Usage du monde*.¹⁷⁶ Karl-Josef Kuschel has shown the different faces of laughing in his book *Lachen – Gottes und der Menschen Kunst*. Before Kuschel starts with a theological reflection, he quotes Aristotle and Nietzsche:

Das 'proprium hominis', das Eigentümliche des Menschen, das ihn von allen Tieren unterscheidet, besteht in seiner Möglichkeit zu lachen. Was lachen kann, das ist ein Mensch. Und was ein Mensch ist, das kann lachen. Friedrich Nietzsche sollte diese Erkenntnis später mit der Pointe versehen: 'Das leidens- te Tier auf Erden erfand sich – das Lachen' (Kuschel, 1994:47).

Hence, every human being can laugh, a quality which is international and independent of one's language. The traveller is probably not the human being

176 Sylviane Dupuis says that the reader is confronted with laughter throughout the entire book. See Baudelle and Morzewski, 2018:194: "Dès les premières pages, le lecteur de *L'Usage du monde* se voit confronté au rire" and 197: "On trouvera de nombreux exemples de ce rire thérapeutique dans *L'Usage du monde*".

who suffers the most, but he or she still suffers, and because of it, laughing is inevitable:

Folgen wir also diesem Roman [Steppenwolf], so ist für den Spätmenschen des 20. Jahrhunderts, der alles erlebt oder durchprobiert hat, das Lachen nichts Spontanes und Natürliches mehr, sondern wird zur Aufgabe des Lebens, buchstäblich zur geistigen Überlebenskunst (Kuschel, 1994:47).

Kuschel's quotation reflects this idea: Laughing in the 20th century is an exercise of survival, and it will be shown in the following that in terms of intercultural communication, smiling or laughing is key to conversation, whether verbal or nonverbal, independent of a (or, more likely, the) common language. This is also expressed by Maillart as she writes: "The conversation was soon reduced to an exchange of smiles" (Maillart, 2013:133). The day after crossing the Afghan border, when the car gets stuck on a sandy road, Kini says:

Then, O joy, I saw three men coming towards us. I greeted them smilingly, made explanatory gestures and offered the spade to the youngest. Two of them worked in turn for a few minutes. The third sat down, bored. Just as I was thanking our lucky stars, they walked away... I ran after them, convinced that the word *bakshish* would alter their minds. But no. They did not want my tip. Just like that. How far we were from begging Persia! The hearty way they laughed as I retrieved my silk scarf from the neck of the bored one – I don't know when he had picked it up – was also a new experience (Maillart, 2013: 119).

Because of the language issue, they sometimes depend on someone's translations,¹⁷⁷ which, as is often the case with translations, may confuse and misinterpret the cultural dialogue, too. Little by little, Maillart describes a development in the travellers' language skills: "We were beginning to adapt ourselves to the country and we had reached the stage when we involuntarily mixed Persian words with our French" (Maillart, 2013:97). This is expressed not only directly in this part;

177 See Maillart, 2013:145: "A bright boy who had attended the German school in Kabul interpreted for us."

it also can be seen in the use of Persian phrases such as “We took leave (Khoda hafiz!)” (Maillart, 2013:181). Maillart describes a meeting with a solitary tribesman in the Bamian area, which confirms the impact that language has on intercultural relations: “He laughed at us as we slowed down and he shouted the usual greeting: Mandana bashi!¹⁷⁸ to which we answered: Zenda bashi! [...] Our whole day was bright and unforgettable for having met him” (Maillart, 2013:168). The relief of understanding and the ability to reply are visible in this scene, even though the conversation itself consists only of four words. The following extract reveals this importance, as through this common language, misunderstandings could be successfully resolved:

The atmosphere was frightening. Something had to be thought out quickly! Yes, it worked: one of the gendarmes spoke Russian. Our inarticulate gibbering ceased, viewpoints were exchanged, the tension fell. In the end we all apologised, the man saying with great feeling: ‘You are our highly honoured guests. It was very wrong of me to become so wild’ (Maillart, 2013:65–66).

Bouvier experiences a similar situation thanks to an understanding of the other culture. Understanding how Afghans think and the knowledge of only a few Persian words is his ticket to crossing the Hindukush:

Pour traverser l’Hindou Kouch et gagner le Turkménistan afghan – l’ancienne Bactriane – il faut un passeport de la police de Kaboul et une place dans l’autobus de l’Afghan Mail ou sur un des camions qui montent vers le nord. Ce permis est souvent refusé; mais lorsqu’un lui fournit une raison simple, évidente et qui lui parle – voir du pays, vagabonder – la police est bonne fille. Tout musulman, même flic, est un nomade potentiel. Dites: djahan (le monde) ou shahrah (la grand-route), il se voit déjà libre de tout, cherchant la Vérité et foulant la poussière sous un mince croissant de lune. En ajoutant que je n’étais pas pressé, j’ai obtenu mon permis tout de suite (Bouvier, 2014:343–344).

178 Maillart provides the translation shortly afterwards: “Don’t be tired / Be alive!” See Maillart, 2013:168.

At the same time, however, the failure to communicate in conversations exemplifies feelings of disappointment and frustration on the journey. Kini describes those circumstances with the aid of her companion, Christina:

The usually equanimous Christina lost her temper and complained about everything as if she had never been in Asia before: why were people so silly, so dirty, houses so badly built, why was it impossible to wash oneself? I failed to make her smile by saying that such are the joys of travelling when you do not speak the language of the country you are passing through (Maillart, 2013:92).

It is interesting that Bouvier describes a similar situation that Thierry also suffers in such a moment of breakdown:

Un peu plus tard, retour du bain Iran, je le trouvai sur le point d'éclater. J'allai faire du thé pour lui laisser le temps de se reprendre et quand je revins, c'était: 'Je n'en peux plus de cette prison, de cette trappe [...] regarde où nous en sommes, après huit mois! piégés ici' (Bouvier, 2014:157).

Those impulsive moments do not repeat themselves, and they are not taken for granted, as was the case in earlier travelling literature.¹⁷⁹ Instead of imperial thinking towards a so-called “third world” that one could interpret from those scenes, they rather reflect the phase of rejection, which is also the third phase of Oberg's culture shock theory:

[...] excessive washing of the hands; excessive concern over drinking water, food, dishes, and bedding; fear of physical contact with attendants or servants; the absent-minded, far-away stare (sometimes called ‘the tropical stare’); a feeling of helplessness and a desire for dependence on long-term residents of one's own nationality; fits of anger over delays and other minor frustrations; delay and outright refusal to learn the language of the host country; excessive fear of being cheated, robbed, or injured; great concern over minor pains and eruptions of the skin; and finally, that terrible longing to be back home, to be

179 See Mercer, 1999.

able to have a good cup of coffee and a piece of apple pie, to walk into that corner drugstore, to visit one's relatives, and, in general, to talk to people who really make sense (Oberg, 1960:142–143).

The travellers in the narration have already been on the road for some time; that is why the rejection phase is nothing surprising at this point, and likely a reason for the miserable feelings which can be found in the misleading conversations.

Hölderlin has described the problems of not knowing the language in foreign places in his famous poem, mnemosyne: “We [...] have almost forgotten speech in exile”.¹⁸⁰ Kristeva refers to this poem and describes the stranger as mute: “Coincé dans ce mutisme polyforme, l'étranger peut essayer, au lieu de dire, de faire: de faire le ménage, du tennis, du football, [...] ? Ça reste une dépense, ça dépense et ça propage encore davantage le silence” (Kristeva, 1988:28). Travelling author Tiziano Terzani wrote: “Ma se vai in un paese e non sei indipendente dalla lingua, ti limiti, sei un po' zoppicante” (Terzani, 2006:254). In Terzani's and Kristeva's description, there is, thus, a comparison between a foreigner who is not able to speak the language of the host country and a disabled person, who either has a limp or is mute. This strong image underlines the enormous importance of speaking the language of the host country. In his book *Transarea*, Ottmar Ette directs his attention to José Martí, who once defined this very well: “the boundaries of our minds may well be the boundaries of our languages” (Ette, 2016:204).¹⁸¹ Thus, not only does language itself act as a barrier to getting in touch with one's interlocutor, but it may have an impact on much bigger boundaries within ourselves, from stereotypes to racism. The examples have just confirmed what Ette mainly shows in *Transarea* based on Alexander von Humboldt: “Multilingualism best does justice to the many perspectives, the many logics of the world” (Ette, 2016:151).

Learning languages and communicating with people in different languages requires a lot of patience. The narrator of *L'Usage du monde* admits that he lacks that

180 This translation was found on <http://mesocosm.net/2012/06/06/mnemosyne-by-friedrich-holderlin/>, last accessed on 6th February 2021. Original text “wir [...] haben fast die Sprache in der Fremde verloren”. See Hölderlin, 1953:203.

181 Wittgenstein, 1922, included this thought in his *Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung* section 5.6: “Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt”.

kind of patience from time to time. The Other sometimes has completely different intentions from the Self. It is about to become sensitised for what the other wants to communicate:

L'admirable mosquée de bois où vous trouveriez justement ce que vous êtes venu chercher, ils ne penseront pas à la montrer, parce qu'on est moins sensible à ce qu'on a qu'à ce dont on manque. Ils manquent de technique; nous voudrions bien sortir de l'impasse dans laquelle trop de technique nous a conduits: cette sensibilité saturée par l'Information, cette Culture distraite, 'au seconde degré'. Nous comptons sur leurs recettes pour revivre, eux sur les nôtres, pour vivre. On se croise en chemin sans toujours se comprendre, et parfois le voyageur s'impatiente; mais il y a beaucoup d'égoïsme dans cette impatience-là (Bouvier, 2014:105).

Clearly the travellers expected to be shown around the beautiful mosque by their interlocutor, which is, up to that point, unknown to the latter. For the locals, this mosque is visited often and they probably expect the Westerners to be non-believers who are therefore not interested in the mosque. Due to the lack of verbal communication, the traveller is highly unlikely to be able to explain why he came to that place and that he intends to free himself from the culture of consumption and technology.

Intermediality plays an important role, especially in terms of this motif, as another form of communication can be found through music. Writing again faces the difficulty of a language, in that it requires the ability to read and understand letters and signs. Bouvier's narrator can connect to the Other through music:

Ici, comme en Serbie, la musique est une passion. C'est aussi un 'Sésame' pour l'étranger: s'il l'aime, il aura des amis. S'il enregistre, tout le monde, même la police, s'emploiera à lui racoler des musiciens (Bouvier, 2014:74).

The desire to exchange and listen to music with company is mutual: "Ceux qui nous avaient aidés – certains pendant une nuit entière – ne voulaient pas d'argent; ils auraient voulu un peu de musique, mais l'accordéon était plein de sable" (Bouvier, 2014:262). It is one possibility that may serve as a 'transcultural common', as described in Bouvier's *Le Hibou et la Baleine*: "La musique comme la lumière ou

la souffrance n'a pas de patrie. Depuis des millénaires on entend dire qu'elle est la mère de tous les arts. [...] Cette mère consolatrice a des milliards d'enfants: nous tous" (Bouvier, 2003:10–11).

It works similarly in the realm of art; a conversation can also take place with the aid of paintings:

Le chanteur traduisait du kurde en persan, nous comprenions un mot sur six, mais c'était un mime inventif et la conversation allait bon train. Quand les gestes nous faisaient défaut, Thierry dessinait de la pointe du couteau au dos des écuelles de fer-blanc: notre route depuis Erzerum, la voiture, les barreaux de la prison. L'arbab s'égayait beaucoup de ces graffitis et applaudissait même pour montrer qu'il avait compris. La prison surtout l'amusait... excellent! la prison. Il nous envoyait dans le dos des claques à décoller la plèvre, et prenait du bon temps (Bouvier, 2014:186).

Again, the quotation depicts the joy of understanding. The patience dedicated to communication is rewarded with such successful scenes. The reason why music and art could be a method for intercultural communication has already been examined, for example, by Max Peter Baumann.¹⁸² It is important to note that there is a common denominator which two or more people can share. That could be through books in different translations, music, art or, as Bouvier's narrator shows the readership, a common experience or passion that people may share: "Par la suite, nous ne nous sommes jamais croisés sans qu'elle m'adresse un signe ou un clin d'œil de connivence; avoir tous deux vu l'Allemagne – bien différemment pourtant – nous avions au moins ça à partager" (Bouvier, 2014:69), and: "Nous nous entendions bien, parce qu'elle était d'ascendance serbe et que j'aime la Serbie" (Bouvier, 2014:228). Bouvier's narrator already indicates here that curiosity can lead to a strong interest in and relationship with a country and that this interest can even develop into love, which is one of the common denominators around the world.

Nevertheless, there are situations in which the autodiegetic narrators let the interlocutors of the traveller speak for themselves. In the following extract, we can

182 See Baumann, 2000.

observe a nice example of the difference between signifier and signified. When Bouvier's narrator is asked by an officer in the Persian facility where he is being held prisoner, "What is a white castle without doors?", he thinks about the answer to that riddle, which he did not solve. In Tabriz, when he teaches in front of his class, he asks his students the same question and they reply immediately: An egg!:

Depuis la prison de Mahabad, j'avais moi aussi une question: – Dites-donc... un château-blanc – sans-porte... qu'est-ce que ça peut bien être? – Un œuf, fit-elle aussitôt... vous n'aviez pas deviné? elle est pourtant facile, un enfant la connaît, celle-là. Et elle se recueillit comme pour en mesurer la pertinence et la saveur. Un œuf? je ne voyais pas. [...] Comme ni leurs œufs ni leurs châteaux ne devaient s'éloigner tellement des nôtres, c'était donc leur imagination qui différait. Et moi qui les accusais d'en manquer! Mais non, elle s'exerçait dans un autre monde que le mien (Bouvier, 2014:197).

In this short conversation about word play, Bouvier's narrator gets the answer to a question that has been on his mind for a while, and the stereotypes that immediately come to his mind are also challenged,¹⁸³ which partially changes his prefigurative way of thinking. The answer to the short anecdote, which is obvious and natural to every child in Persia, is inexplicable and new to Bouvier. He becomes the alien to the children in this situation, as he was not aware of something obvious to them. The egg metaphor was not shared in the narrator's cultural background.¹⁸⁴ It is an example of the different understanding of signifier and signified and also shows the prefigurative aspect of the travelling narration that the traveller brings with him on the journey, not only from his individual background but also

183 The term is used from Quasthoff's four types of stereotypes.

184 It is interesting though that Maillart compares the tomb of Oljaitu with an egg as well: "When a tree or a rock stands alone in the nothingness of a desert, it partakes of the surrounding greatness by centring upon itself the radiations of immensity; this is the charm of Tibet, this void around the simplest object. How much greater is this charm when in the middle of an empty plain the old tomb of Oljaitu stands aloof in simple grandeur – a gigantic egg in a massive hexagonal egg-cup towering above the land of Media", see Maillart, 2013:77.

from his collectively formed cultural background.¹⁸⁵ Another example of this kind can be observed in *Chronique japonaise*:

Moi je suis au bout de mon vocabulaire: pas un seul de mes mots qui n'ait servi trois fois. Je pourrais m'en tirer par le rire ou là mimique, mais encore faudrait-il s'entendre sur les gestes! Ici, le pouce levé signifie quatre, l'éventail ouvert à plat, que l'on boit, et un balancement embarrassé de menton peut très bien annoncer un coup de poing dans la gueule (Bouvier, 1991:199).

Consequently, the traveller expands the development of his or her identity:

Das interaktionistische Verständnis von Identitätsentwicklung bestätigt auch die Bedeutung, die dem Reisen (im wörtlichen Sinne) für die Identitätsentwicklung zugeschrieben wird – nicht zuletzt in literarischen Werken, in denen die Begegnung mit einem fremden Ort oft als entscheidender Wendepunkt in der Identitätsentwicklung einer Figur dargestellt wird. Folgt man der Annahme, dass Begegnungen und Interaktionen schon grundsätzlich einen wichtigen Motor der Identitätsentwicklung bilden, dann ist auch anzunehmen, dass Begegnungen mit dem Fremden und die damit einhergehende Konfrontation mit ungewohnten Interaktionsmustern eine besondere Herausforderung für die Identitätsentwicklung des Individuums darstellen (Gymnich et al., 2008:3).

Even through those sometimes small events that are included in the narration, (and therefore, in the eyes of the narrator, worth telling the narratee), the journey influences the individual: not only the traveller but also the reader of the narration. The author, narrator, and protagonist, as well as the narratee and the implied reader, take such experiences with them, not only on the continuation of the journey but as a shape of life.

Another example of signifier and signified is given in Schwarzenbach's text: "Aber wie lange war ich schon unterwegs, und immer pflegten die Leute auf meine Fragen zu erwidern: 'Nastik ast, bissjar nastik...' – es ist nahe, ganz nahe! Zu Ross

185 See Nünning in Gymnich et al., 2008:11–32.

oder zu Fuss oder im Eseltrott und wiegenden Kamelschritt der Karawanen? Ein paar Tagesfahrten, ein paar Stunden?“ (Schwarzenbach, 2000:55). Even though Schwarzenbach is able to translate here, she doesn't know how to interpret the word “near”, just as Kini has problems with the answer yes: “He said ‘yes’ – which in the Orient has many a meaning” (Maillart, 2013:122). Their travel experience made them aware of those cultural differences in translation, but they are still struggling to interpret the signified properly. Therefore, they depend on the other. Bouvier's narrator learns from his pupils. Schwarzenbach's narrator, for example, does not realise the meaning of the number forty until a local explains it to her:

Es hat aber mit der Zahl vierzig noch eine andere Bewandtnis. Als ich noch nichts davon wusste und auch Afghanistan nur dem Namen nach kannte, erzählte mir ein befreundeter Afghane, in seiner Heimat gebe es vierzig Traubensorten. ‘Warum gerade vierzig?’ ‘vierzig’, sagte er ‘bedeutet zahllos, unendlich viel, bedeutet Süsse, unendliche Verschwendung!’ (Schwarzenbach, 2000:114).

This short conversation represents the importance of intercultural dialogues as a contact, not between nations and cultures, but between individuals. In this case, we can understand intercultural communication according to the concept of Ladmiral and Lipiansky, who as Lüsebrink describes, “betonen, dass nicht der Kontakt zwischen Nationen oder Kulturen, sondern zwischen Personen den Gegenstandsbereich der Interkulturellen Kommunikation ausmache” (Lüsebrink, 2005:7).

There are always two parties involved in coming to a successful understanding. Both asking questions and answering them, even if the question seems to be rhetorical or disturbing for those questioned, is essential for intercultural dialogue. Travellers and locals both ask questions: “The women were reserved while we exchanged the usual questions. And how many camels did we have at home?” (Maillart, 2013:180). The reader recognises that Kini, the narrator, is an experienced traveller with knowledge of cultural backgrounds of the places she visited because those uncommon questions, (from a European point of view), are not confusing to her but are instead accepted without question.

4.6.2 Friendship

Another reason for the small amount of dialogue may be that the encounters the travellers have on their journeys are once in a lifetime experiences, whether they become friends or just passing acquaintances. Goodbyes, in most cases goodbyes for forever, belong to the travellers' everyday lives. When Schwarzenbach's narrator speaks about the places she travelled through: "Wozu hätte ich ihre Namen auch kennen sollen! Einmal so unterwegs, vergisst man allen Wissensdurst, kennt auch keinen Abschied und keine Reue, fragt nicht nach dem Woher und Wohin" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:16), she simultaneously speaks about human contacts. The same counts for the following sentence: "Ich wundere mich jetzt über die Aufzeichnungen, die ich während der Reise gemacht habe. Ich habe die meisten Namen vergessen" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:26). That would imply, however, that she has not properly experienced the individuals. We have seen in the chapter about time and space that names only receive a meaning after a place has been experienced in person. It is also possible to forget names, and once they are forgotten, they are lost:

Man beginnt die Namen der Menschen zu stammeln, die man zu lieben meint. Entsetzlich, wie auch sie weggetragen werden, ihr Antlitz in Fetzen zerrissen, ihre Augen blicklos, ihr Körper weit, weit entfernt, unangreifbar, verloren (Schwarzenbach, 2003:39).

Writing down memories as text, even if they will be forgotten afterwards by the individual, is thus of great importance, as the memories will stay alive in the text. That will be further discussed in the following chapter, 'Writing and Reading'. Indeed, a lot of characters in the books are not introduced by name or described properly, and even if they are, they usually do not reappear within the narration. This is not surprising, as the departure is usually a departure without a return. This is a possible explanation for Irène Lichtenstein-Fall's impression that Bouvier did not meet a lot of people, because the reader does not have certain memories of the characters mentioned in the book. Nevertheless, the constant movement also means meeting many people and making friends, and even though the individuals will probably not meet again, the friends made will live on in their memories: "Nous quittions la Serbie comme deux journalistes, la saison finie, de l'argent frais en poche, la mémoire remplie d'amitiés toutes neuves"

(Bouvier, 2014:50), and will be there when they part ways: “nos amis nous attendent pour nous souhaiter bonne route. J’avais oublié que nous en avions tant” (Bouvier, 2014:230). The missing friends evoke thoughts of the friends and family left behind at home:

Et je suis, à vrai dire, comme rayée déjà du reste du monde ma famille, mes amis ont appris à se passer de moi; mon éloignement, mon isolement m’ont enseigné enfin que je suis inutile à ‘l’ordre des choses!’ (Maillart, 2002:281).

The void of friendship is filled with several experiences of hospitality: “Seit mehreren Wochen [...] und begannen dieses männliche, fröhliche und unverdorbene Volk liebzugewinnen. [...] Wir wurden in den Dörfern vom Bürgermeister begrüßt [...] und unterhielt sich oft lange und eingehend mit uns” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:62). The examples of hospitality which they experience are numerous. It is often astonishing how far this hospitality can go:

Jamais, quand j’étais à leur table, ils ne commençaient sans m’offrir d’abord: [...] Si j’acceptais, c’en était fait du repas de la journée. Je me demandais quel ordre poussait ces ventres-creux à offrir ainsi machinalement le peu qu’ils possèdent? Un ordre noble, en tout cas, bien ample, impérieux, et avec lequel ces faméliques sont plus familiers que nous (Bouvier, 2014:156).

Both the locals and the foreigners they meet on the road are generally represented in a positive and open way: “und ein Auslandschweizer, Herr Vonmoos, nimmt uns in Empfang und freundschaftliche Obhut” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:21), except for one meeting with a woman from the Normandie who has moved to Afghanistan:

Sie trug den Tschador, den dichten grauen Schleier, der den Kopf wie ein Häubchen umschliesst und dann in weiten Falten über die Schultern bis zum Boden fällt – das verhüllende Kleidungsstück der Afghanin. Sie war aber keine Afghanin, sondern war in der Normandie am Meeresufer aufgewachsen [...]. Vielleicht zeigte ich nicht genug Unbefangenheit, ich hatte mit einem lähmenden Gefühl des Schreckens, fast des Abscheus, die traurige, gespenstische Figur eintreten sehen – und kannte doch diesen Anblick schon lange.

Denn natürlich gleichen sie sich alle [...]. Ich wusste nur, dass die Jüdinnen einen schwarzen Tschador tragen, die Afghaninnen graue oder hellblaue, und es mag noch andere Unterschiede geben: unter dem Schleierrand die aufgebo- genen Spitzen der Bäuerinnen, die schief abgetreten Absätze der Armen, die bestickten Sammetsandalen reicher Damen (Schwarzenbach, 2000:67–68).

Like a helpless, unhappy alien, she is described in that world, in which the nar- rator sees her: unhappy and broken. The narrator cannot imagine how she could voluntarily put herself into that situation, and even despises the woman, her deci- sion, and her way of life. The narrator gives the impression that she has the right to judge the woman from a common cultural background differently than the Af- ghan women, who are not being judged. This implies that individuals are seen and measured by their cultural background.

Overall, the traveller is astonished by the hospitality, especially from the people who are considered extremely poor from her perspective:

Und sie haben sich ihr gutes Brot und ihre stolzen Pferde bewahrt, und den unverschleierten Anblick ihrer Frauen. Vielleicht sind sie ebenso arm wie un- sere Tadschiken, oder ärmer, denn genau betrachtet, gibt es in diesem Dorf weniger Wasser, weniger Bäume, weniger Felder; man kann es kaum noch eine Oase nennen, und die Gewalt der Wüste ist die gleiche. Aber welche Gast- freundschaft, welches Loblied des Daseins! (Schwarzenbach, 2000:81).

However, they recognise the individual, and it is not possible to speak about some- body as poor, in the same way that it is not possible to speak about somebody as the Other. In the end, everybody is poor from one perspective or another, and this is how it works with the Other as well. In the end, the Other is in ourselves: “Bauern, Tadschiken, Usbeken und Turkmenen – arme Brüder, Menschen wie du und ich” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:82). Hospitality is always tied to the known, and again, the traveller needs to compare, value, or measure the hospitality which they have experienced.

Bouvier’s narrator cannot imagine that a Persian in Switzerland would receive the type of hospitality that he has in Persia: “Ici, où tout va de travers, nous avons trouvé plus d’hospitalité, de bienveillance, de délicatesse et de concours que deux Persans en voyager n’en pourraient attendre de ma ville où pourtant tout marche

bien” (Bouvier, 2014:229). Maillart’s narrator also has such an experience in Afghanistan: “the people we had met that day were kind, they knew how to smile, they behaved as our equals and not like wrecks: They moved with ease in a life built to their size” (Maillart, 2013:121). People whom Bouvier’s narrator and Thierry meet on the road, however, are dreaming of Europe. Moussa, whom they meet in Tabriz, does too:

Il n’avait plus que Paris en tête et voulait nous persuader qu’il déteste la Perse mais nous n’en croyions rien – [...] Moussa comptait aussi aller peindre à Montmartre, pauvrement. Il entendait même, pour réaliser ce projet, extorquer à son père le revenu de plusieurs villages, car la ‘pauvreté à Paris’ lui apparaissait comme un statut si enviable qu’il imaginait plus coûteux encore que la richesse à Tabriz (Bouvier, 2014:150–151).

With Moussa, Bouvier’s narrator also experiences another cultural approach, as they are celebrating Christmas together. He surprises the two travellers on Christmas Eve by bringing the food. Bouvier’s narrator notes that he is the first one in town wishing them a happy Christmas. Nevertheless, the *transcultural ghost*, which will appear in the following part, ‘4.6.3. Die Fremde’, still seems distant. Despite meetings, conversations, visits and invitations, the theme of overcoming loneliness is constantly present in the narrations. Whereas the locals try to integrate the traveller, he or she remains alone:

Der Ruf entzückte mich. – ‘Kameraden!’ – auch ich war gemeint. Sie fragten mich nicht, woher ich gekommen sei. Ich brauchte keine Herkunft. [...] Verlorener, Heimatloser, Müsiggänger auf allen Strassen, den Winden, der Kälte, dem Hunger preisgegeben. Immer allein (Schwarzenbach, 2010:76).

What the local may be able to overcome or to forget, the foreigner cannot, even if he or she liked it:

Ich: Gast, Fremder, Abenteurer, was noch – neugierig, wissensdurstig, ungeduldig, unterwegs –, allein. Aber sie vergassen es. Sie nahmen mich auf. Und begierig, zu erfahren, wie sie leben, lebte ich mit ihnen. Welche Versuchung: mit ihnen leben. Mit euch. Zusammenleben (Schwarzenbach, 2010:75–76).

The traveller experiences the connection between the guest and the foreign here personally, which in the Greek language even has a linguistic connection because the words “foreign” and “guest”, “Fremder” and “Gast” are both called *xenos*. Schwarzenbach not only shows this connection within her literature but also in her photography.¹⁸⁶

The permanent traveller, who has decided to travel, is in the end not free to stay, nor to return: “ich möchte nur zurückkehren, und ich kann nicht, ich kann nicht, und ich weiss es” (Schwarzenbach, 2003:120–121). Sarga Moussa mentions that the traveller in the 19th century remained an object of curiosity: “Le voyageur reste un objet de curiosité” (Moussa, 1995:65). This is still the case in the following, thus in the 20th century. Bouvier’s narrator experiences it: “Il y avait peu d’étrangers dans la ville. C’est étonnant un étranger” (Bouvier, 2014:130) and so does Maillart’s:

[...] while more than fifty great boys surround us, each with a question on his lips. We spend a splendid hour surrounded by their eagerness: it reminds me of the devouring curiosity that sometimes forced me on my way to school, to stop foreigners in the street and ask them where they hailed from (Maillart, 2013:49).

Kini’s reaction here may be superficial, but aren’t visible interest and curiosity a necessary foundation of inter- or transcultural interaction and dialogue?

Comme Kyoto, comme Athènes, Téhéran est une ville lettrée. On sait bien qu’à Paris personne ne parle persan; à Téhéran, quantité de gens qui n’auront jamais l’occasion ni les moyens de voir Paris parlent parfaitement français. Et ce n’est pas le résultat d’une influence politique ni – comme l’anglais en Inde – d’une occupation coloniale. C’est celui de la culture iranienne, curieuse de tout ce qui est autre. Et quand les Persans se mettent à lire, ce n’est pas Gyp, ni Paul Bourget (Bouvier, 2014:218–219).

186 See Heuser in Carbone, 2010:239: “Im Griechischen lautet das Wort für Fremder gleich wie das für Gast: Xenos! Eine ähnliche Gleichung, meint man, läge den Fotos der Annemarie Schwarzenbach zugrunde. Sie zeigte im Fremden das Vertraute”.

Curiosity for other cultures might be one of the keys to intercultural communication and may also be key to travelling in the first place, as Bouvier let the permanent traveller, Dodo, whom he met at the end of his journey, speak about: “Il était complètement à l’aise dans son nomadisme frugal. [...] ‘pas tant par paresse, disait-il [...] mais plutôt par curiosité... voui, la curiosité’” (Bouvier, 2014:369). Difficulty integrating into another place is probably caused by the thought of home, which manifests as homelessness in a globalised world, a painful nostalgia for the once-known home, or the deep wish to forget something that cannot be forgotten, try as one might. When the traveller tries to forget, he or she is reminded of when he or she last tried to do so: “Depuis ce jour, l’opérateur de Radio-Prilep qui compose les programmes à sa guise nous envoie, pour nous obliger, un peu de musique française sur les haut-parleurs de la place” (Bouvier, 2014:75). It can, however, be the shared experience of being absent from home that brings people together:

La plupart de ces mécanos sont d’anciens camionneurs qui ont vu du pays; leurs lieux, leurs souvenirs, leurs amours sont distribués sur une vaste province. Cela vous fait des gens éclairés et portés sur le rire. Impossible de travailler avec eux sans s’en faire des amis (Bouvier, 2014:284).

The traveller feels a direct connection to the drivers, who share a very important part of the travellers’ lives: They are also on the road and forever distant from the people, places and things they love, no matter where they are actually located.

4.6.3 'Die/Der/Das Fremde'

*“Der Aufbruch in die Fremde erzählt von einem Sehnen danach,
nicht nur ein undefinierbar Fremdes zu finden,
sondern auch sich selbst fremd sein zu dürfen”¹⁸⁷*

Sabine Boomers

The German term *die Fremde* is not easy to translate into other languages. Just like *die Heimat*, it has several meanings and could be translated as “foreign”, “alien” or “strange”, while *der Fremde* actually means “the foreigner” or “the alien”.¹⁸⁸ Just like absolute freedom, one desperately searches for the *Fremde*: “Es gibt zwar relativ Fremdes, bezogen auf den endlichen Standort eines Einzelnen, einer Gruppe, eines Ethos, einer Polis, doch ein radikal Fremdes, das die Existenz des Einzelnen, der Gruppe und des Seins im Ganzen betrifft, suchen wir vergebens” (Breuninger, 1999:37). Again, the ambiguity that can help define it as *die Fremde* only exists in comparison to “the known”:

Das Fremde befindet sich nicht einfach anderswo, [...] es ist vielmehr ähnlich wie im Falle von Schlafen und Wachen, von Gesundheit und Krankheit, von Alter und Jugend, von Mensch und Tier durch eine Schwelle vom jeweils Eigenen getrennt. Dabei steht keiner von uns jemals auf beiden Seiten der Schwelle zugleich.¹⁸⁹ [...] Ebenso gibt es keinen kulturellen Schiedsrichter, der westliche und östliche Kultur äußerlich voneinander unterscheiden könnte, da Europäer ihre Eigenart finden, indem sie sich von orientalischen oder afrikanischen Kulturen unterscheiden, und für die andere Seite gilt dasselbe. Nur ein transkultureller Geist wäre vorweg schon über solche Differenzen erhaben (Breuninger, 1999:39–40).

This *transcultural ghost* seems like a role model to the traveller. As long as this ghost does not exist, the traveller is looking for other solutions that will enable

187 Boomers, 2004:32.

188 See also Bouvier, 1991:236: “Et puis c’est un concept ambigu, l’étranger, et dont on peut aisément inverser le signe.”

189 Compare to Bouvier’s metaphor of the river in *L’Usage du monde*.

him not to stand on both sides of the threshold, but to combine them. Bouvier creates an allegory for the journey and coexistence using the image of a river:

Il y avait là un ruisseau large d'une coudée à peine que, je ne sais par quelle superstition, ils craignaient de franchir. Ils s'assirent donc sur la rive occidentale, les pieds dans l'eau claire; nous, sur l'autre, et on resta là à festoyer, longtemps, en regardant la pleine lune monter sur un paysage sans limite. Puis les Arméniens nous serrèrent la main, les autres nous embrassèrent à la mode musulmane; ils remontèrent dans leur voiture (Bouvier, 2014:262).

The river not only separates the two banks from each other but also combines them, as the water touches both sides. It is not possible to stand on both sides of the river, but it is possible to cross it, perhaps only with the aid of a person on the other side, an instrument and courage. Maillart speaks about the solitude that she sees on both sides of the river: "The tall yellow grass bristling as far as the remote horizon reminded me of the solitudes on either side of the Oxus" (Maillart, 2013:91), which could be interpreted as two cultures living side by side in loneliness, as they are like tangents which do not meet. The water of the stream as an element of life mirrors, then, the third space in constant movement. This river can also be understood as a metaphor for *die Fremde*. Just like *die Fremde*, the river always demands two sides. There is no "one-sided-river" just as there is no "Fremde" as such:

Es gibt also nicht 'das Fremde', vielmehr gibt es verschiedene Fremdheitsstile. Fremdheit bestimmt sich einerseits als relational, es nimmt andererseits, wie Husserl sagen würde, eine okkasionelle Form an, bezogen auf ein jeweiliges Hier und Jetzt. Ein standortloses 'Fremdes überhaupt' wäre so sinnwidrig wie ein 'Links überhaupt', bei denen Ortsangaben mit begrifflichen Bestimmungen vermengt würden. Im Falle des Eigenen und Fremden haben wir es also nicht bloß mit zwei Themen zu tun, sondern mit zwei Topoi. Sobald wir vom Ort des Fremden absehen, verflüchtigt sich das Fremde in eine allgemeine Bestimmung (Breuninger, 1999:40).

In this way, one can also understand the other, which could simply be switched out for the word "Fremde" here. The Other inevitably asks for the Self, and they always need to appear in comparison with one another:

In allen interkulturellen Situationen werden unbewußt und bewußt Vergleiche angestellt; ohne Vergleichshandlung kann sich kein Sprecher in die Perspektive des anderen hineinversetzen, und auch einfache Berichte über fremde Kulturen kommen ohne Vergleich nicht aus. Der Vergleich wird demnach als Voraussetzung zur Diskussion gestellt, wie auch als Intention oder Thema dieser Kommunikation selbst (Müller-Jacquier, 1986:34).

The so-called Orient can, therefore, not exist either without the Occident. West cannot exist without the East, as it is only with the aid of the comparison that they can be understood. To find a way to combine the two sides of the river, the travellers cross it and look over to their original side from the other perspective:

But I have often noticed that Westerners have an inborn tendency to minimise or ridicule whatever the Persian do – not because it is badly done, but simply because they are exasperated by the pride of the Persian who boasts that what he has done is ‘the best in the world’. They do not see that among Asiatics this attitude is the inevitable reaction to the condescension with which Westerners brought their mechanical progress to the East as if it were a revealed religion capable of healing all ills (Maillart, 2013:68–69).

The authors largely refrain from including themselves in this discussion and behave in a rather reserved way towards their country of origin, trying to fight stereotypes by creating new ones for their country of origin and trying to fight against any kind of Eurocentrism.

Die eurozentrische Wahrnehmung und damit die häufig abwertende Beschreibung sowie die Konstruktion der fremden Kultur und ihre Instrumentalisierung für ideologische Zwecke erheben sich in den Texten selbst zu den zentralen Themen. Texte des literarischen Exotismus sind also von der Kolonialliteratur abzugrenzen, indem sie die eurozentristische Wahrnehmung selbst thematisieren, problematisieren und relativieren (Mayer, 2010:26).

This can be observed in the following example, when Bouvier finds himself in Tehran:

Ici, où tout va de travers, nous avons trouvé plus d'hospitalité, de bienveillance, de délicatesse et de concours que deux Persans en voyageur n'en pourraient attendre de ma ville où pourtant tout marche bien (Bouvier, 2014:229).

Marfè has already observed this in Bouvier's works: "l'idea del viaggio di Bouvier è molto più sfumata e si sforza di sovvertire ogni tipo di etnocentrismo" (Marfè, 2009:87). In the following quotation Maillart describes what she is hoping to find while standing on the other side:

'I know that the Afghan Hillman, the Tibetan, the Mongolian I have met has his troubles,' I added; 'but he is free of our tormenting urge to consider the misery of the whole world as if he were God. Why is it that no sooner have we enjoyed some beauty or goodness than we feel guilty, we remember with shame that our friends are murdering each other in Spain or China, that our charwoman's children are too pale under too scanty clothes?' After a silence I concluded: 'Isn't there a middle way between the bitter knowledge of the Westerner and a tribesman's happy-go-lucky ignorance of the world?' (Maillart, 2013:172).

One may find that Said has criticised geographical, political and cultural boundaries by making a distinction between "we and they", "ours and theirs" in the three authors' works. If we take a close look at those scenes, we can observe that they try to build up a common sphere in such a moment, otherwise known as a "third space", using Homi Bhabha's term¹⁹⁰, or "contact zone", according to Mary Louise Pratt¹⁹¹. This space is not limited to geographical boundaries and is not to be understood as a separate space but as a connection between the two: "They probably took us to be rich idlers and would have been surprised to learn that we felt we were not unlike them" (Maillart, 2013:45–46). Schwarzenbach uses the air as a common space: "wir schlucken alle den gleichen Staub, bieten dem gleichen Wind die Stirn" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:76) and also includes the reader in it: "und hinter den bröckelnden Mauern wohnen Bauern, Tadschiken, Usbeken und Turk-

190 See Benito and Manzanar, 2002:10.

191 See Benito and Manzanar, 2002:4.

menen – arme Brüder, Menschen wie du und ich” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:82). In *Das glückliche Tal*, Schwarzenbach writes:

Ich: Gast, Fremder, Abenteurer, was noch – neugierig, wissensdurstig, ungeduldig, unterwegs –, allein. Aber sie vergassen es. Sie nahmen mich auf. Und begierig, zu erfahren, wie sie leben, lebte ich mit ihnen. Welche Versuchung: mit ihnen leben. Mit euch. Zusammenleben (Schwarzenbach, 2010:75–76).

Here, the second person plural addresses the people in the Iranian village. Schwarzenbach’s narrator not only connects herself with the other here, she also connects people with each other by including the narratee, and in this case, the implied reader. The narrators cross the river, and by doing so, they do not only cross but also overcome national borders.

The heavily criticised sentence, “Not only had we reached our country the country we were to study with love” (Maillart, 2013:121) also reminds Mathilde Jegou, understandably, of Said’s thesis: “le monde se définit toujours en fonction de celui qui l’énonce” (Jegou, 2008:162) and so does her expression: “my’ Kafiristan” (Maillart, 2013:193). However, the world is not only defined by the person who speaks about it here; the transmitter-receiver model plays an important role too. The reader also has an influence on the interpretation of the sentence. The fact that Maillart has put the “our” and “my” in quotation marks may also reveal that she is aware of what the (probably false) interpretation of this expression is. It may as well be meant as a form of identification with the country, which becomes the country of the traveller and her home. This also counts for the general distinction between East and West. Even though the content of the following quotation includes many important aspects, this section will look at Bouvier’s choice of using “West”, “they” and “we” in particular:

À l’hypocrisie dont l’Occident a su faire un si vaillant usage, ils préfèrent de beaucoup le cynisme. Ici, comme partout dans le monde, on trompe son prochain lorsqu’il faut vraiment le tromper, mais sans trop s’abuser sur ses propres mobiles, ni sur les fins qu’on poursuit. Aussi peut-on, lorsqu’elles sont atteintes, s’en réjouir librement avec quelques amis. Le procédé est plus voyant, mais il est moins tortueux et moins confit. En outre, il y entre un mensonge de moins, puisque si on dupe les autres on ne cherche pas à se duper soi-même, et on

sait depuis Hérodote combien les Persans répugnent à mentir. Peu de pharisiens en Iran, mais passablement des chattemites; et l'indignation que certains étrangers feignent d'en éprouver est encore un effet de leur hypocrisie (Bouvier, 2014:199–202).

In this quotation, Bouvier uses the words “West”, “we”, and also “they” in reference to Persians. Therefore, this “we” does include readers of Herodotus around the world and does not announce a “we” limited to a “western readership”. When the reader chooses not to define this “we”, there is not necessarily a geographical distinction to be made. Maillart understands that one cannot speak on behalf of a culture and knows that they need to decide for themselves:

But before I say No with complete certitude on behalf of the Afghan, I should spend one or two years with him, sharing his life rich in great winds, sun, snow and hardships. I must be prepared to consider it possible that the confused tribesman might eagerly exchange his free skies for factory-life and a lousy wattle-and-daub room in Kabul so as to laugh once a week at a degrading ‘movie’ made among cardboard settings; so as to have a daily shave while he listens to the town gossip; so as to ‘stuff wads of chewed newspapers’ into the ears of his neighbours at the tea house (Maillart, 2013:164).

Communication, and with this, the sensibilisation for the Other, have been proven to be necessary. The Other and the Self, *die Fremde* and the familiar, must speak and reach out and grasp hands to get to the other side of the river. One cannot expect the Other to guess one’s expectations or to think in the same way. The senses become visible again in this motif. Besides seeing, hearing, and feeling *die Fremde*, it can also be tasted. It is probably no coincidence that most of the scenes in which the three travellers have contact to locals occur during dinners. The need to eat is shared by every single human being. The way people eat and what they eat are also signifiers that may have various meanings in different cultures, and one must learn how to read the signs. “[You] must share food with us! Rice was brought in an enamelled basin: it might have meant that our new friends were well off, for as a rule nomads can only afford wheat-cakes” (Maillart, 2013: 180). Schwarzenbach is overwhelmed by the hospitality towards her that takes place in the form of people sharing the few goods that they own:

[...] ich höre zum ersten Mal seit langem die Stimme einer Frau, herrisch und fröhlich, dann Gelächter, und 'biah, biah' – 'komm her, komm näher'. [...] Unter ihr, hinter der Mauer [...] andere Frauen [...] und eine Menge Kinder [...] sie jubeln alle und schreien 'biah', als wollten sie ein Fest feiern und sich über mich lustig machen. [...] Der Jüngling im geblühten Mantel ladet mich ein, ihm zu folgen [...] und ich bin Gast des Dorfes, ehe ich mich's versehe. [...] Der junge Mann geleitet mich über zwei Hofplätze bis zu einer kleinen Terrasse aus gestampftem Lehm, wo, auf einem dicken Filzteppich, der Hakim Saib sitzt [...]: 'Wo wohnst du, wer bist du?' Wir beginnen die Unterhaltung [...] und inzwischen werde ich bewirtet [...] 'Euer Brot ist gut', sage ich, und sie nicken: 'Wir haben Brot, wir haben Getreide und Felder, wir haben Schafe, Pferde, Esel. Wir haben auch Trauben und Melonen. Wir haben ein gutes Dorf, wir haben Wasser.' Und dann, auf meine Frage hin: 'Wir sind keine Tadschiken, wir sind Afghanen, und wir sind aus dem Gebirge gekommen.' [...] genau betrachtet, gibt es in diesem Dorf weniger Wasser, weniger Bäume, weniger Felder; man kann es kaum noch eine Oase nennen, und die Gewalt der Wüste ist die gleiche. Aber welche Gastfreundschaft, welches Loblied des Daseins! (Schwarzenbach, 2000:80–81).

Even if Schwarzenbach's narrator compares the Tadziks and the Afghans in that fragment, she is also unavoidably comparing it to the places she has been before, which are not restricted to Switzerland, as her example involving the Tadziks shows. Her pool is a mixture of the places she has already travelled to, and that she refers to when making a statement about the hospitality of the people. Bouvier's narrator finds another interest in the different types of clothing. He remains a little shocked when he discovers a modern Western outfit during an exhibition, as he can look at it from a new point of view:

Au rez-de-chaussée, dans une vitrine en retrait et consacrée aux costumes, on pouvait voir en 1954, entre une jupe de plumes maori et un manteau de berger du Sin-kiang, un pull-over assez commun portant l'indication 'Irlande', ou peut-être 'Balkans'. [...] tel qu'on en voit chez nous dans le tram, octobre venu. [...] Bref, je l'ai regardé longuement, avec un œil nouveau et je confesse que d'un point de vue objectif, la civilisation représentée par cette camisole lie-de-vin faisait pauvre figure à côté des plumes de paradisiac et de

la pelisse kazakh. Décemment, on ne pouvait que s'en désoler (Bouvier, 2014: 335).

Maillart has a different experience with clothing, as she looks at it from the point of view of the locals, who want to give her fashion advice: “She pinched them, showed me her wide bloomers and advised me to follow her fashion!” (Maillart, 2013:50). Still, the locals are also interested in the fashion of the two European ladies. Like in Müller’s *Tropics*, the perception here is switched: “Die Europäer erscheinen nun als Forschungsobjekte, die dem Blick einer anderen Kultur ausgeliefert sind” (Mayer, 2010:163). However, they are less objects of research than they are partners in an exchange:

Old fashion-papers appeared, our opinion was wanted and, after some shy nudgings, a length of blue silk was brought which we were asked to cut out for the young daughter of the house. [...] Bitterly regretting my ignorance of that kind of cutting, I found a solution: I gave our hostess a frayed linen dress of mine that could serve as a pattern (Maillart, 2013:143).

While speaking with the “Other”, Schwarzenbach, Maillart and Bouvier recognise that what seems to be the other for them is equally different through the eyes of the people that they meet. The journey teaches the traveller to see things from an objective point of view: “La mobilité sociale du voyageur lui rend l’objectivité plus facile” (Bouvier, 2014:27). The “Other” becomes superfluous, as the “Other” is in ourselves. While Maillart is looking for a way to connect with the women, Schwarzenbach is concerned about the consequences, and she questions their behaviour and representation:

Sie brachten uns einen hellblauen Seidenstoff und eine Schere und wollten, dass wir ihnen ein Kleid zuschnitten. Wir wagten uns aber nicht daran und versprachen, ihnen von Kabul aus französische Zeitschriften mit Schnittmustern und Modebeilagen zu schicken. [...] Und war es richtig, nötig, sie zu bilden und aufzuklären und ihnen den Stachel der Unzufriedenheit zu geben? Aber wir lernten bald, dass diese Frage sich gar nicht stellt. Afghanistan entwickelt sich heute nach jenen fatalen Gesetzen, die man Fortschritt nennt und deren Verlauf man nicht aufhalten kann. Als wir von Kabul aus die verspro-

chenen Schnittmuster nach Kaiser schickten, leisteten wir auch einen winzigen Beitrag zu den Folgen dieser Gesetze. Wir bekämpften den Tschador! (Schwarzenbach, 2000:65–66).

At a later point however, Maillart has similar doubts: “Men must certainly be fed and clothed, but in doing this must we strangle their most important faculties? In other words: Is it necessary that each Asiatic country should go to the bitter end of our materialistic experiment?” (Maillart, 2013:163). From this perspective, the journey is and will always remain questionable. Being aware of this problem, however, influences the traveller’s behaviour on the journey, which the modern traveller in a globalised world should always bear in mind.

4.7 Writing and Reading

Unlike chapter three, which deals with the narratology and stylistic methods of the texts, this part reveals the importance of writing and reading for the traveller and its representation in the travelling narration, such as the tasks of remembering and/or forgetting. Writing is one of the most important values conveyed by travelling narrations. This becomes clear when looking at how the texts emphasize the difficulty of writing. It is represented as a *mise-en-abyme* of writing about writing by the travellers who are physically carrying books within the book along with the desire for memory and simultaneously, the fear of forgetting. That is why the journey demands to be told. Roland Barthes says, “le langage naît de l’absence” (Barthes, 1977:22). For Bouvier this is certainly the case. The Swiss journalist Irène Lichtenstein-Fall asked Bouvier in an interview whether it was the journey that helped him to write his first book.¹⁹² Bouvier affirms this and adds: “je me suis assez vite rendu compte que la vie était tellement colorée et généreuse qu’il faudrait bien que j’en fasse quelque chose” (Bouvier, 2004:77). The following chapter will show how the act of writing and “the written” allow the narrator, the traveller, and the writer to live. Writing allows the individual to integrate the past, the present and the future, also an important task in Schmid’s *ars vivendi*: “Die

192 See Bouvier, 2004:77.

Aufmerksamkeit für die Aktualität, die Wachsamkeit gegenüber den Entwicklungen der Gegenwart, die Achtsamkeit, sich nicht in einer Realität einzuschließen, die keinen Ausweg mehr erlaubt, und das Offenhalten des Horizonts der Möglichkeit” (Schmid, 2000:317).

4.7.1 The Ineffable

Bouvier’s precise work, the search for the right word, is partially derived from the duration of the writing progress. This took up to several years, especially in the case of *L’Usage du monde*, which he published more than a decade after the journey and *Le Poisson-scorpion*, which he published more than two decades after his journey to Sri Lanka.

Bouvier’s narrator is constantly looking for suitable intermedial depictions of his experiences in other art forms, such as photography, music or painting: “Au lieu de me bourrer la tête avec Ulpian et Beccaria, j’aurais été mieux avisé d’appréhender à tenir un crayon. C’est un manque sérieux, une infirmité mortifiante, que de ne pouvoir représenter ce que l’aime” (Bouvier, 2014:297).¹⁹³ Bouvier’s narrator suffers from this lack of ability. If he were able to paint, he could express what seems ineffable to him. Just before crossing the Afghan border to India, when he rereads the letter of his friend Thierry, there is a small hope: “Dans un coin comme celui-ci où il t’arrive de voir côte un bonze safran vif, un vieux en sarong violet, une jeunesse en sari rose, le tout sur fond de mer jade et soleil couchant, on déviant peindre” (Bouvier, 2014:371). He introduces an important discourse here in literature and arts studies which has already been mentioned in chapter ‘3.2.3. Intermediality’ as a characteristic style of writing for travelling narrations. Here it is not about the style but about the narrator who makes the discussion a topic that belongs to the story. He implies that literature and art are two different media which can also create various effects. Where words cannot satisfy his expressions, he argues that a painting could. Kini also expresses the desire to paint: “I enjoyed a sight I should have liked to paint: intense blue sky, golden straw piled on the roofs,

193 Maillart makes a similar statement in her autobiography, *La vagabonde des mers*, 1992:338: “Un amour qui ne cesse de monter en moi, me submergeant presque, au point de me laisser désespérée. Ah combien je regrette de ne pas avoir le talent de chanter leurs louanges, de les sculpter ou de les peindre, ces marins ou ces montagnards aux mêmes visages burinés et tannés.”

brown mud walls and red dresses of women weaving on the ground” (Maillart, 2013:186), and Schwarzenbach’s narrator faces a similar problem. The memories of the landscapes already experienced on the journey have disappeared. They cannot be expressed in words, but they can be in paintings: “Könnte ich nur, was ich dort sah, in Worten ausdrücken. Aber ich bin kein Maler” (Schwarzenbach, 2008: 120). She tries to depict “the seen” with colours but is unable to express herself: “Lichtträger, deren Violett und Rosenrot, schmelzendes Gelb, Grottenblau, und schon in Nachtkälte getauchtes Schwarz ich nicht beschreiben kann” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:151). Just like Bouvier, Schwarzenbach considers the painter as the artist more suited to express the experienced because – just as Derrida argues – paintings can transcend the moment¹⁹⁴. It is important to note, however, that the figurative depiction and the linguistic reference are parts of a hierarchical relationship: “Figurative Darstellung und linguistische Referenz stehen beide in einem hierarchischen Bezugssystem, das in der Ähnlichkeit, der Analogie (Bild) bzw. dem Ausschluß von Ähnlichkeit (Sprache) gründet” (Zima, 1995:217). Hubertus von Amelnxun’s reference here to Foucault shows that the interplay of the medium literature and art counts: a possible reason why Maillart and Schwarzenbach included photographs in their narrations, and in the case of Bouvier, the paintings of Thierry Vernet. However, Schwarzenbach continues: “und was würde es auch nützen, mich der Farben und Klänge zu erinnern und mitzuteilen? – Die Stunde würde sich nicht wiederholen, und ich war erschöpft von einem jähen Augenblick des Schreckens” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:120–121). She includes music as a medium here and accuses all three media, literature, music, and art, of being incapable of allowing one to relive the moments. Here, Schwarzenbach’s narrator experiences the problem of mimesis per se. No matter which art is used to experience the moment again, it cannot be more than a reproduction of the moment itself. Photography is also incapable of it: “But a photo could no more reproduce the velvety tones of these enamels than it could catch the lustre of a rich carpet” (Maillart, 2013:123). It is interesting, however, that the experienced is expressed, despite the fact that Bouvier insists that it cannot be:

194 See Derrida, 1978.

Gestern noch auf der Höhe des Simplon, in der nach frischem Schwarzbrot und Fichtenholz duftenden, niedrigen Stube des Dorfbäckers? – Einen Augenblick noch verharren, den Blick auf die von der Abendsonne vergoldeten Matten gerichtet, und auf die in sanftem Rot vergehenden Schneegipfel? Zum letzten Mal? – Dann die heimkehrende Ziegenherde in der gepflasterten Dorf-gasse überholen, die nach Italien absteigenden Kurven überschauen, – Balkanstrassen, Donauufer am Rand wogender Aehren, schläfrige Tanzbären und Blasebälge der Zigeuner an einem jugoslawischen Strassenrand, Rosen- und Erdbeerbelder und romantische Hügel in Bulgarien, – versinkend am schnell überflügeltten Horizont eines lauen Abends die weisse Barockkirche und das Schloss der Kaiserin Maria Theresa, – oh singende, wahlende Prozessionen, – und die trabenden Gespanne der Bauernpferde, die weissen Rinder, – die nadelfeinen, in den milchigen, sternenlosen Glanz der Nacht und Fremde aufsteigenden Türme (Schwarzenbach, 2008:119–120).

In this fragment, the senses are lively and noticeable: The taste of the bread and the smell of wood, the warmth of the sunset that let the snowy, cold mountain peaks turn to red, the sound of the goats and horses on the streets, the music and the singing of a procession. Nevertheless, it belongs to the past and can be remembered and brought to the readership by the written text, but the moment itself cannot be experienced through the text. Even though Schwarzenbach herself may have struggled less because her books were usually completed just a few months after each respective journey, her narrator often thematises the problematic act of writing:

Seit vielen Tagen, – ja, wieviel Tage sind seit dem Ende jener Reise schon vergangen? –, versuche ich es, in Worte zu fassen, – dass der dem Dunkel liebend entgegengeneigte Blick, die Besinnung, diese Reise durch eine lange Nacht, zwar unfasslich und schwer zu ertragen ist, – aber nicht verschieden, nicht anders als das unverzagte Gelöbnis des nächsten Aufbruchs. Ich finde das Wort nicht, liebes Herz, – und muss jetzt die Feder weg legen. Erinnerst du dich an die Strasse, die im Norden gerade und schimmernd wie ein Pfeil immer vorauslief, durch unaufhörliche Dämmerungen? (Schwarzenbach, 2008:180).

And the difficulty of writing links the act of writing to the other senses once more, and it just seems to work automatically.

Meine rechte Hand weiss nicht was die Linke tut, und ich schreibe wie Einer, der blind und taub ist, – und doch einmal das Murmeln des Wassers vernahm, die Eisschmelze auf fernsten Gipfeln, und eines Vogels Herzschlag erkannte unter dem schimmernden Gefieder (Schwarzenbach, 2008:143).

Nevertheless, the narrator, as a traveller and writer, keeps writing, even if the ineffable can probably never be retold and the instant sovereign cannot be relived:

[...] dem Reproduzierten, dem Augenblick, wird die Singularität entzogen, und im Entzug erst statuiert. Die Reproduktion schenkt uns den Verlust und bewahrt in ihm die Singularität des Entzogenen. Die Wieder-Gabe verbindet scheinbar das Moment des Singulären der Gabe mit dem der Wiederholung, sie schließt aus, was sie wiederholt und trägt es als Verlust in eine andere Zeit (Zima, 1995:224).

And that is probably how the arts can reach their aim. In the end it is the lack, the ineffable, the inexpressible that is transcendent to the reader and which he or she gains from reading the travelling narration, because it has never been expressed.

4.7.2 **Mise-en-Abyme**

François Laut observes how often Bouvier writes about writing in his stories: “Que de pages écrites, dans les cahiers de Nicolas Bouvier, sur l’impuissance à écrire des pages!” (Laut, 2008:171). Bouvier’s narrator speaks numerous times about writing itself and even thematises it within encounters, for example with an elderly lady in a guesthouse in Turkey who does not consider writing to be a job: “Mais que faites-vous donc ici? [...] Mais le matin? Vous voyez bien, je prends des notes, j’écris. – Mai moi aussi j’écris... l’arménien, le persan, l’anglais [...] ce n’est pas un métier” (Bouvier, 2014:141). The narrator and the characters he presents in the story have a connection to writing. A doctor he meets on his way turns out to be a secret writer and someone who is knowledgeable about music and litera-

ture: “Aïmons-nous Wilde? il le traduit justement en italien à ses moments perdus. Et Corelli? il y a ce fameux *Concerto de Noël* dont la douceur lui vient souvent en aide. C’est qu’il est *artiste*, nous l’avait-il dit?” (Bouvier, 2014:321). The narration continues: “Depuis des années il y travaille, c’est son tourment. L’œuvre une fois achevée, il se tuera” (Bouvier, 2014:321). The doctor’s announcement that he will kill himself after completing his book and the connotation to Oscar Wilde builds a connection between writing and life because Wilde’s *Picture of Dorian Gray* thematises the “Verwandlung des Lebens in Kunst und von der Steigerung der Kunst in das Leben hinein, also von der unmöglichen Aufgabe, ein Bild zu schaffen, das nicht nur lebendig wirkt, sondern es tatsächlich ist und überdies die Natur an Schönheit übertrifft” (Zima, 1995:165). Hans Holländer comments that art is like a vampire for everything alive; it steals life and brings death.¹⁹⁵ It could also be inferred that art is always only a reproduction, but can never be exchanged for real life, just as the descriptions in the travelling narration can never replace the moments one has experienced. The doctor’s statement should not stand alone. It is also important to consider the lines beforehand, in which Bouvier’s narrator describes the transformation of the doctor. When he first enters the room, he is described as:

[...] un grand Roméo fiévreux en short et en sandales, avec un de ces beaux masques impérieux qui sont si gênants lorsque l’expression ne parvient pas à les remplir. On devine un filet de vie intérieure bien en deçà de ce visage pompeux, comme une humble courette derrière une porte à fronton (Bouvier, 2014:320).

However, after recognising that he had entered a room filled with two artists, his appearance changes:

[...] il renonce, et soudain le masque de Colleone fait place à un visage de dimensions plus modestes où percent le soulagement, la solitude, la jeunesse. Un autre personnage apparaît: compétent, vulnérable, affamé de compagnie, qui parle de nous prêter des livres, d’en venir bavarder ici, de me soigner pour rien (Bouvier, 2014:321).

195 See Hans Holländer in Zima, 1995:165.

In this example, art is the opposite of a vampire; art brings the doctor to life. He starts living with art. His announcement that he plans on killing himself after having finished the book could also be interpreted as the importance of art for life. Without writing, there is no life anymore, or in Jorge Semprùn's words, "l'écriture où la vie"¹⁹⁶ or as Foucault's says: "L'obligation d'écrire"¹⁹⁷. Even economically, writers depend on their writing. Schwarzenbach and Bouvier make the money for their journeys from writing, too, but as they come from wealthy families, they may not feel as much pressure as Maillart does: "In order to have the necessary means I began to write Gypsy Afloat, hoping a sufficient number of people would buy it" (Maillart, 2013:202). Unlike the doctor, who announces that his life will be over when he has nothing left to write, Schwarzenbach fears that her lifetime will not be enough to write down everything that has happened: "Eigentlich ist meine grösste Sorge –, ja, die einzige Furcht, die noch zählt, dass ich nicht mehr alles aufzeichnen könnte..." (Schwarzenbach, 2010:193). Bouvier's narrator describes a bout of writer's block that panics him: "J'essayais d'écrire, péniblement [...]. Je n'avais ni liberté ni souplesse; l'envie seulement, et la panique pure et simple. Je déchirais et recommençais vingt fois la même page sans parvenir à dépasser le point critique" (Bouvier, 2014:146).¹⁹⁸

Maillart's narrator directly refers to the act of writing during the narration when speaking about her companion Christina: "Christina lived solely for her writing" (Maillart, 2013:14), and "writing was life and food to her" (Maillart, 2013:25). Ella Maillart emphasizes the importance of her own writing less than she emphasizes the importance of writing for her travel companion. She writes right at the beginning of her travel narration: "Writing was the only ritual of her life: she subordinated everything to it" (Maillart, 2013:3). Bouvier mentions the relationship between Maillart and writing in his text: *Ella Maillart ou la vie immédiate*: "Premières affres de la page blanche – et qui ne cesseront jamais, Ella déteste écrire"

196 The title of Semprùn's book thematising the importance of writing after the experience of the Holocaust.

197 This refers to the article in 'Arts: Lettres, spectacles, musique' from November 1964 about Nerval.

198 See also Ette, 2005:63: "Denn auf einer Erde, die in ihrer Rotation zu Rotationspresse geworden ist, eröffnen sich für das Leben in weltumspannender und transregionaler Bewegung ständig neue Seiten."

(Bouvier, 1983:14). Like all other motifs, writing also contains ambiguity, not only in its purpose: to memorise or forget, but also in the act itself. Writing is associated with a huge effort:

Ich frage mich also nicht so sehr, weshalb ich mich preisgebe, sondern viel eher, warum ich überhaupt schreibe. Denn es ist gewiss nicht leicht es zu tun; es ist eine furchtbare und wahrscheinlich fruchtlose Anstrengung. Man muss sich erinnern, und wenn auch die Erinnerung mich und ebenso sicher meine Schicksalsgenossen keinen Augenblick freigibt (Schwarzenbach, 2003:73–74),

and also with a sacrifice of time which the individual could spend gaining new experiences:

[...] im milden Schosse der Zeit – es wird ein dürftiger Bericht werden heute, obwohl die Stunde günstig ist und der Tag noch lang, und Niemand meine Tür öffnen wird, Nichts mir zu Hilfe kommen um mich zu zerstreuen [...]. Zu was mag dieser Tag gut sein, den ich aussperre und töte in meiner ein paar dürftigen Linien gewidmeten Ohnmacht. Denn manchmal fällt mir die Sprache schwer, obwohl es doch nur mein Handwerk ist, das ich täglich wieder ausübe, so gewissenhaft wie jeder Andere [...] und wirst noch einmal, immer zum letzten Mal, die Sprache finden, die Menschensprache, den Gesang der Lerche, – und wirst die qualvolle Stunde überstehen und sie vergessen (Schwarzenbach, 2008:149–150).

Maillart focusses more on existing literature. The books that she carries with her on the journey are of great importance. She quotes them several times:

We travelled with a bookshelf fixed above the back of our seat. The poor books were shaken madly during all these days, but we rejoiced to be able to lay our hand on the right volume at the right moment. Rubbing against each other were Marco Polo, Pelliot, Evans-Wentz, Vivekananda, Maritain, Jung, a life of Alexander the Great, Grousset, the Zend-Avesta. I picked The Darvishes by John P. Brown and H. A. Rose (Maillart, 2013:153).

The importance of the books is not only visible in the numerous quotations and annotations within the narrations. The amount of space and the weight of the baggage need to be considered on the journey as well. Even though the travellers were going by car, the books seem to carry a high value, since they decided to take them on the journey. Telling a story does not only mean telling the story of oneself and the Other, even if that is the focus of the travelling narration. It also means telling stories that have already been written. It means reminding the reader of what has already been said a long time ago and showing them that the stories are still alive and will remain alive, as long as they are told and recorded by the narratee. Writing, and to that effect, the written book, is a medium for transforming one's life through the act of writing and through carrying on the transformed life to future generations. Not much is needed to write; just a pen and paper, a typewriter or a computer is sufficient. Such items are described as some of the most important goods that they took with them on the journey: "Dans ma cantine qui contient toutes nos richesses (boîte de médicaments, gramophone, machines à écrire)" (Maillart, 2002:165). The authors also worry about the purpose of their writing. In this way, Schwarzenbach encumbers herself with the value of her text *Tod in Persien*: "Auch was ich hier geschrieben habe, ist völlig nutzlos; das bekümmert mich zuweilen" (Schwarzenbach, 2003:118). Maillart struggles with the sense of her work, too:

She could not understand why I wanted to become an ethnologist. Why didn't I go on writing books that gave le goût du monde to fettered young people? 'If ever my books accomplished so much,' I replied, 'it doesn't satisfy me any more. What is the good of sending people round the world? I have done it: it doesn't help. It only kills time. You return just as unsatisfied as you left. Something more has to be done. [...] My words were wiped away by a very cold blast of wind (Maillart, 2013:171–172).

Later, she recognizes: "my articles can show why we are fighting" (Maillart, 2013: 203). These examples reveal what Schmid gains from Foucault's theory: "Es ist die Schrift, die den Menschen von sich selbst befreit und die in der Lage ist, die Welt zu verändern" (Schmid, 2000:311). To change the world with the written word, one first needs all the readers of the texts to listen to the narration and render it an *ars vivendi*.

4.7.3 Dreaming

The dream is also discussed by Schmid in the search for a new philosophy of *ars vivendi*. Just as writing, Schmid sees the dream as a possibility to connect the past, present and future:

Seit der Antike weiß der Mensch, daß er im Traum all dem begegnet, was war, was ist und was sein kann; es geht im Traum das, was geschehen und noch und doch nicht vergangen ist, es geht um das, was die Aktualität bestimmt, und es geht um das unruhige Feld der Möglichkeiten (Schmid, 2000:317).

In Schwarzenbach's texts in particular, dreams are often thematised. Schmid speaks about a language in images and refers to Foucault when he writes about the division of reality and dream as a fatal division of the Western world.¹⁹⁹ Schwarzenbach's narrator annuls this division:

[...] ich kann Erinnerungen nicht immer von Träumen unterscheiden und oft verwechsle ich Träume, die in Farben, Gerüchen, plötzlichen Assoziationen wieder lebendig werden, mit der unheimlich-heimlichen Gewissheit eines Vorlebens, von dem mich Zeit und Raum nicht anders und besser trennen als ein leichter Schlaf in der Frühstunde (Schwarzenbach, 2000:31).

The narrator's problem of not being able to separate dream and reality could imply that the narrator is literally living her dream. Dreaming with one's eyes open however, can prevent the traveller from recognising his or her surroundings. Schwarzenbach's narrator speaks about that experience when first encountering the Hindukush:

Ich glaubte damals, es sei meine einzige, meine endgültige Begegnung mit dem grossen Hindukusch und ich liesse mit jedem Schritt einen Flecken, ein Büschel Gras, einen Atemzug voll Wind, eine Erfahrung hinter mir, für immer. Was zähle ich Namen auf, von Dörfern, Pässen, Stämmen – ich vergass sie, löschte sie aus und glitt durch meinen Hindukusch-Traum [...]. Und dies

199 See Schmid, 2000:321.

alles blieb zurück, ich hatte schon Abschied genommen, als ich in die Ebene von Kabul einbog (Schwarzenbach, 2000:59).

When she encounters the mountain range again on the journey in 1939/1940, she experiences the meeting in a different way:

[...] jetzt aber zählten alle Namen und blieben haften, ich entdeckte mehr Täler, mehr Gipfel, und es stimmte mich hoch und freudig, als ich gegen Mittag einen Baumgarten wiederfand, wo ich schon einmal gelagert hatte [...]. Aber obwohl meine Erinnerung geweckt wurde und zärtlich belebt und durch schöne Ausblicke, die schon einmal geträumt, und Melodien, die schon einmal erklungen waren, so schien mir doch, dieses grosse Panorama des Hindukusch sei ein anderes (Schwarzenbach, 2000:59).

Even though the reunion reminds her of the dream, she is now able to see and feel it in a different way. While in the first meeting, the names were simply forgotten, the real experience (which should not be mistaken for the dream), keeps the names alive: “wandte ich mich manchmal nach Süden, trostsuchend, und begegnete der nun vertraut gewordenen blauen Gebirgskette. Ihre Wirklichkeit war erwiesen, ihr magischer Name blieb lebendig wie ein mächtiger Herzschlag” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:60).

Places trigger memories. That is why an agile mind is of great importance on a journey, and not only on the journey itself, but beyond that: “Vertraute Sonnenaufgänge? – Aber ich sah alles zum erstenmal! War ich, bisher, blind gewesen? Wie lange schon in diesem Land, und nichts gesehen!” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:94). Once the traveller has seen and experienced the world properly, he or she can recall such moments while dreaming: “Der Hindukusch! – Erwinnere ich mich? – Ich brauche nur die Augen zu schliessen, ebenso gut träumen” (Schwarzenbach, 2008: 166). The dream is the possibility of reliving what has already passed or of previewing what could possibly be coming. It is the ability to go beyond time, just as the traveller is able to do by visiting places that remind her of the past, the present or the future. That is probably what sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish the dreamed from the real. It is not rare that the traveller visits places which he or she falls in love with and wishes to see again one day: “Un jour, j’y retournerai, à cheval

sur un balai, s'il le faut" (Bouvier, 2014:44). The dream is a possibility of returning to such places: literature or the dream.

4.7.4 Memory and Forgetting

The three narrators claim to forget about their journey, not memorising it well, but they still write a few hundred pages each about it. Not to mention Bouvier's narrator, who tells the reader just towards the end of the story how he lost all his notes in the Lourde's Hotel in Quetta and desperately searched for them at a waste disposal site. The fear of a lost memory has already been defined as characteristic of "walking journeys of contemporary travel literature" (Forsdick, 2005:180); the three authors show that this phenomenon is not restricted to walking journeys only. Shortly before his departure on the way to Kabul, Bouvier's narrator loses his manuscript. A hotel boy thinks it is garbage and throws it away. When he goes to look for it, the garbage collection had already picked up the load in the morning. He decides to take the car to the waste disposal site the next morning to look for it there. While he is waiting, he writes:

[...] tuer ce temps irréversible que j'aurais tant voulu remonter pour reprendre mon bien. Je commençai par vomir [...] Je recomposais la première page, les paragraphes, les lignes frappées plus pâles quand les doigts s'étaient engourdis, Tabriz, l'ombre des peupliers sur la terre gelée, la silhouette transie des filous en casquettes qui venaient boire au bistrot arménien l'argent de leurs mauvais coups. Tout cet hiver étouffé, obscur, irrattrapable, écrit à la lumière du pétrole ou sur les tables du Bazar où les perdrix de combat dormaient dans leur cage, par quelqu'un que je n'étais plus (Bouvier, 2014:306).

Bouvier's narrator is concerned here with much more than the lost pages. He is concerned with the loss of memories: memories from the point of view of the person he was when he first wrote the lines he is searching for. A reconstruction of his journey would no longer be sufficient from his current perspective. Writing during the journey is, thus, the memory of what happened from the present point of view. The reader, who has already read 300 of these reconstructed pages at this point, recognises this for the first time. Shortly before the end of his narration, Bouvier's narrator goes into it again:

Donc revenir au Château des Païens, à ce trou de mémoire, à ces versants de glaise jaune qui ne sont plus que grisaille, faible écho et lambeaux d'idées qui s'effiloquent dès que j'essaie de m'en saisir, à cet automne âpre et heureux où ma vie m'apparaissait tellement mieux tracée, aux Français si vifs et remuants qui couronnaient cette colline et m'ont fait excellent accueil, m'ont découvert un monde, m'ont nourri du produit de leur pêche et de leur chasse. Revenir, mais surtout: creuser la terrifiante épaisseur de terre qui me sépare de tout cela. (Voilà aussi de l'archéologie! chacun ses tessons et ses ruines, mais c'est toujours le même désastre quand du passé se perd.) [...] Encore une fois: revenir à la fouille. Je revois cent détails mais rien ne bouge plus. Il faut donc en décrire les acteurs, immobiles à table, le soir, dans la grande tente où l'on dînait (Bouvier, 2014:365).

Like a film that he was so afraid to lose, the memories are played back:

Cette nuit-là, je m'aperçus avec une panique indicible que mon cinéma ne fonctionnait plus. Presque personne au rendez-vous, ou alors des ombres floues, écornées, plaintives. Les voix et les odeurs s'étaient fait la paire. Quelque chose au fil de la journée les avait mises à sac pendant que je m'échinais. [...] Pour le cas où j'aurais oublié (Bouvier, 1996:136).

Still, the narrator can tell the story, even several years later. Although he speaks of memory gaps, of the catastrophe of losing memories and of the immovable characters he sees at the table in front of him, he describes the situation in detail afterwards, even becoming an authorial narrator who can read the thoughts of those present in his mind. Schwarzenbach describes a similar problem: "Das ist Verzweiflung! – Das Ende! – ich schreib es auf, aber ein Wort gibt nicht das andere, und ich weiss, dass ich wissentlich lüge" (Schwarzenbach, 2008:167). The narrator, as a writer and traveller, refers to the problem of defining a genre which mixes the fictional and non-fictional. This seems to be a problem not only for theorists and readers but also for the narrators themselves. Why is writing so important on the journey? Bouvier's narrator, looking at a shredded excerpt from his remaining manuscript, reads: "neige de novembre qui clôt les bouches et qui nous endort' [...]. Et la mémoire un rien enténébrée: épaisseur du froid, Tabriz, cœur de

l'hiver?!? ... j'avais dû rêver tout cela" (Bouvier, 2014:309). What he experienced a few months ago now seems absurd and unimaginable to him. Here he addresses the issue of memory belonging to the past, which cannot be relived. Again, we encounter a well-known problem in the travelling literature of the 18th and 19th centuries, which Jost describes in his book:

[...] (im Gegensatz zum Roman) verlockt die Reiseliteratur als angenehmes 'Medium der Erfahrung' dazu, die Bilder sozusagen 'wörtlich' zu nehmen, denn, wie Emil Angehörn schreibt, die 'Grundillusion' jeder Abbildtheorie ist 'die des Immediatismus des Beschreibens. Es ist das Zerrbild reiner Objektivität, die Illusion, Wirklichkeit, wie sie an sich selber ist, zur Sprache bringen zu können' (Emil Angehörn: 1995: S. 59–74, [...]). Jede sprachliche Darstellung aber, so führt er weiter aus, ist notwendig 'selektiv' und 'konstruktiv': Aus der Vielzahl der möglichen Details eines Gegenstandes müssen wenige, und aus der Vielzahl der möglichen Perspektiven auf diesen Gegenstand eine ausgewählt werden, um innerhalb der zeitlichen Struktur eines Textes sein 'Bild' zu erschaffen. Dennoch ist nie 'nicht-Festgelegtheit der Perspektive' wie Angehörn betont, konstitutives Prinzip der Darstellung. Denn der Autor hat ja die Wahl, aus welchem Gesichtspunkt er seine Beschreibung umsetzen wird (Jost, 2005:24).

This perspective is precisely the problem that narrators face when they write their books months, or even years, after the journey, because the more they have already experienced, the more difficult it becomes to return to the mentality of an inexperienced traveller. The narrator wants to capture everything and does not want anything that happened to go unmentioned. Like Bouvier, Schwarzenbach also faces the task of writing down what she has experienced: "Könnte ich nun den Hergang und Fortgang dieser nun beendeten Reise erzählen! [...] Noch einmal! Den Trost des frühen Morgens! Aber ich habe alles, auch die letzte Stunde, vergessen" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:18). Schwarzenbach makes the narrator reveal this issue in her other works as well, for example, in *Das glückliche Tal*: "Alles noch einmal sehen! [...] Noch einmal zurückkehren ... Magien, tausend an der Zahl, und ich zittere: ein Leben wird nicht ausreichen, sich ihrer zu erinnern!" (Schwarzenbach, 2010:52). Thus, the concern of Schwarzenbach's narrator mentioned earlier is realized, namely the fear of not having enough time to write everything down,

as an entire life would not be sufficient to narrate “the experienced”. One of the narrator’s motives for embarking on the journey was to revive names. The idea that only the names of places seen or touched by travellers have meaning to them could also be applied to writing. The words only have value if they are written down: “Seither wurden Namen zu Bergen, der Ararat erhob sich schneebedeckt aus Wolkenwänden, der gewaltige Hindukusch war ehern” (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 17).²⁰⁰ This feeling of reality and of pure life appears consistently in Schwarzenbach’s works:

[...] wandte ich mich manchmal nach Süden, trostsuchend, und begegnete der nun vertraut gewordenen blauen Gebirgskette. Ihre Wirklichkeit war erwiesen, ihr magischer Name blieb lebendig wie ein mächtiger Herzschlag (Schwarzenbach, 2000:60).

Names are words, and simultaneously, they are magic described through words: “Worte sind kostbar, sind Hilfsmittel der Magie” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:139).²⁰¹ For Schwarzenbach’s narrator, forgetting is the greatest enemy of writing: “Trunkenheit, Schmerz, Schmelz der Erinnerung, und jenes Vergessen, der nie gelüftete Schleier, meine Todesangst” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:163). Once again, writing, and with it, life, means memory. Forgetting – not being able to write – means death. Writing stands for floating in eternal memories. Schwarzenbach therefore at one point describes writing as a:

[...] furchtbare und wahrscheinlich fruchtlose Anstrengung. Man muss sich erinnern, und wenn auch die Erinnerung mich und ebenso sicher meine Schicksalsgenossen keinen Augenblick freigibt (Schwarzenbach, 2003:73–74).

200 Compare to Schwarzenbach, 2016:114: “Persepolis [...] und der Name wurde Wirklichkeit” and “Was der königliche Name enthielt, nahm hier Gestalt an.”

201 See also Schwarzenbach, 2000:54: “Eine Hymne auf seinen Namen, denn Namen sind mehr als geographische Bezeichnungen, sind Klang und Farbe, Traum und Erinnerung, sind Geheimnis, Magie [...]. Pamir Hindukusch, Karakorum [...] wo ich mich eigensinnig zu glauben weigerte, dass die Namen, die ich lernte und auf der Landkarte las, Gestalt annehmen könnten, bevor ich sie mit Augen gesehen, mit meinem Atem berührt, gewissermassen mit Händen gegriffen hatte.”

Remembering, although one could assume that the memories on the journey are predominantly beautiful, is often a painful process for different reasons. Bouvier regrets, for example, that towards the end of his narration he is no longer able to live in the present but only in the past: “Et pourquoi s’obstiner à parler de ce voyage? quel rapport avec ma vie présente? aucun, et je n’ai plus de présent” (Bouvier, 2014:364). Remembering and forgetting are always tied to one another: “Noch erinnere ich mich, wie ich vor wenigen Monaten zum ersten Mal in dieses Land kam” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:87).²⁰² While Schwarzenbach narrates specific situations and events on the journey, she writes at the same time: “Vorbei, vergessen” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:79), but then, sentences like these follow: “nein, ich vergesse nichts” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:98).²⁰³ Through writing, Schwarzenbach reveals that one can record one’s experiences to awaken memories, but the moment cannot be relived through writing. This is how the authors describe the recurrent imposition of mimesis. The act of writing is presented, not for the purposes of pleasure and joy, but also as a necessity for remembering and even for staying alive: “Senza scrittura, le esperienze del passato si riducono un mucchio di cenere ed è come se non fossero mai esistite” (Marfè, 2009:86). To capture these precious moments in life, writing is of immense value, even if it does not always appear to succeed. As long as the author writes, he or she is still alive and what is written down outlasts life. In this way, Kini wants to remember her dead travel companion, Christina: “May these pages help me to remember that only by demanding all can we hope to obtain That without which, we said, our life is not worth living” (Mailart, 2013:209). It is the traveller’s mnemonic device, the *ars memoranda*, an important part of *ars vivendi* that also must exist in its ambiguity, as Bouvier says:

Le moteur de la vie, c’est l’instant. La réactivation de la mémoire tue l’instant. Et d’autre part la mémoire c’est aussi la vie, l’instant étant nourri de tout ce qui l’a précédé. Comment résoudre ce dilemme, comment trouver un confortable point de jointure, une solution bien aménagée? (Bouvier, 1996c:121).

202 Compare to Schwarzenbach, 2010:68: “Es wird immer schwerer, sich zu erinnern. Diese Erinnerungen, die ich früher von mir fernhielt – ja, bis gestern! – Ich verbannte sie, ich wollte mich verbannen, kein Exil war mir einsam genug.”

203 The same contradictory comments can be found in Schwarzenbach, 2010:77; 114.

Pasquali already pointed out that Bouvier's specific conception and description of the visited places are his mnemonic device: "le voyage et la constitution d'un itinéraire ont une fonction mnémotechnique qui procède d'une implicite conception rhétorique de l'espace. [...] N. Bouvier re-découvre de façon presque innocente le lien entre mnémotechnie et voyage" (Pasquali, 1994:130–131). Looking at Schwarzenbach's text, one can also see how the memory of Schwarzenbach's narrator is awakened by places visited: "ich erkannte die gebuckelten Basardächer wieder. [...] Alles schon einmal! Alles spiegelte sich wie in einer glänzenden Schwertscheide. [...] Mir war, als dürfe ich mich nicht an solche Anblicke verlieren, es war zu vertraut" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:14). The act of writing helps one to remember, but also to forget. In travelling narrations, as in post-war writings, forgetting can be of great importance. Forgetting what has happened before gives one the ability to start a new journey.

The traveller needs to be free of baggage, literally and metaphorically, as Schwarzenbach's narrator in the following: "Ich hatte die Andenken fortgeschickt. Ich wollte, dass mein Gepäck immer leichter werde. Keine Gegenstände, keine Bilder, keine Bücher. Keine Namen. Und kein Dach über dem Kopf" (Schwarzenbach, 2010:74). Maillart's text contains a similar expression: "a new life was being started on a spotless page!" (Maillart, 2013:52). Even though Maillart is not speaking about the beginning of her journey, she is speaking about a journey, Noah's journey, and with this, the connection between life, writing and the journey becomes clear. In Noah's case, it was God's power that opened a new, "spotless" page. However, losing memories voluntarily is not an easy task for the traveller: "und bemühte mich doch, mir jede Erinnerung zu verbieten, jeden Schmerz zu ersparen!" (Schwarzenbach, 2008:117) and if it works successfully, the language cannot get lost: "Aber man bleibt stumm, und hat alles bis auf die Muttersprache vergessen" (Schwarzenbach, 2008:121).

The narrators are fighting against time by telling their story. They cross the borders of time, and with it, of life. The written book will still exist, even after the author's death. The memory on the paper remains and turns into an important good. Like the concept of freedom, it is called on and addressed directly by the narrator:

Jener Anfang einer grossen Reise ist zu einer sanften, einer unbeschwerten Erinnerung geworden, wie ein Traum, den man nicht fürchten braucht und

den man nicht verliert. O Erinnerung! Dampfende Äcker, goldene Hügel – und die auf immer verhallten Hymnen, die nicht mehr weh tun, das Herz nicht mehr bewegen. Seither wurden Namen zu Bergen, der Ararat erhob sich schneebedeckt aus Wolkenwänden, der gewaltige Hindukusch war ehern, in der Wüste Turkestans wallet die Kälte mit tödlichem Atem und der Schnelligkeit der berühmten weissmäuligen Pferde; es verschlug einem das Wort. Was bleibt mir von jener fürchterlichen Einsamkeit? (Schwarzenbach, 2000:17).

An answer to the narrator's question can be found again in *ars vivendi*: "Das Leben des Menschen selbst hat die Form einer dramatischen Schrift. Der Mensch existiert in seiner Schrift, die im Licht des weißen Papiers der graziöse Schatten ist, der bleibt, wenn er selbst verschwindet" (Schmid, 2000:313).

4.7.5 Reading

The beginning of this dissertation has shown that reading, travelling, and writing belong to each other. It is thus not surprising that reading is also a necessary motif of the travelling narration and of *ars vivendi*. Reading transmits knowledge that the journey needs to fulfil the three abilities of *ars vivendi*. Intertextuality within the travelling narration has shown the number of other authors that the travel authors refer to.

The fact that the narrator often directly quotes from other books and that reading itself becomes a topic in the narration makes reading an important transmitter of the travelling narration. It is, however, only one of the three abilities. Schwarzenbach and Bouvier both mention that knowledge only gained from books through reading is not enough. According to them, reading cannot be a replacement for writing or travelling: "Und ich wusste jetzt, was mich vorher Bücher und Landkarte nur ungenügend gelehrt hatten [...]. Und ich sah diesen Bereich zum ersten Mal" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:36). Bouvier also gives examples that make it clear that reading itself is not sufficient: "Quant aux Américains, on les voyait moins encore. Ils vivaient en marge à leur ordinaire, apprenaient le pays dans les livres, circulaient peu et buvaient leur eau bouillie, crainte de virus et de maladies qui d'ailleurs ne les rataient pas" (Bouvier, 2014:341). However, there is a moment in which the traveller actually wishes to dive into a book, stay closed in its prison and simply read: "L'envie de rester coincé ici assez pour lire ce livre attentivement, de bout en bout, et voir éclore ce prodigieux printemps, m'effleura même une ou deux

fois” (Bouvier, 2014:183). Maillart’s narrator reveals the impact that the books read on the journey cause in her:

Though famous for his learning in China, Hsuan Tsang had come to the West in search of wisdom. He visited all the great men of his time. The Master Asanga taught him many aspects of Buddhism. One of the most important is compassion. [...] When I read the teaching of Asanga, I feel we need it to-day more than ever ‘for the wretched, for the wrathful, for the hot-tempered, for the heedless, for the servants of matter, for stubbornness in error!’ (Maillart, 2013:175).

In the examples that Maillart’s narrator presents, the variety of books, topics, and sources is especially astonishing. The fact that she selects titles, authors, and philosophers from many different nationalities of the world displays her need to free herself from a Eurocentric point of view. Maillart names the books or authors of the literature they take with them on their journey. Travelling by car allows them to move without carrying the books very often, but they take up valuable space. The fact that Maillart names them one by one in her narration shows the importance of these works, regardless of whether she and Schwarzenbach really took them on their trip or not:²⁰⁴

We travelled with a bookshelf fixed above the back of our seat. The poor books were shaken madly during all these days, but we rejoiced to be able to lay our hand on the right volume at the right moment. Rubbing against each other were Marco Polo, Pelliot, Evans-Wentz, Vivekananda, Maritain, Jung, a life of Alexander the Great, Grousset, the Zend-Avesta. I picked The Darvishes by John P. Brown and H. A. Rose (Maillart, 2013:153).

Types of literature can interact in discourse; it is comparable to other texts. Bouvier places them in a dialogue with each other, like this phrase by Lao Tse that he

204 This is a good example for showing that it is not important for this research to distinguish between reality and made-up stories. The single fact that those books are named here and that the autodiegetic narrator decided to take the books to an exceedingly long and spatially-limited journey by car transfers the importance of such books to the traveller.

asks Auguste to comment on: “Celui qui parle ne sait pas, celui qui sait ne parle pas”. D’accord Auguste?” (Bouvier, 1996:89). Bouvier also keeps reading on the journey: “J’ai sorti de ma valise la première traduction anglaise des ‘Essais’ par Floriot (1610) et un dictionnaire de poche plus solide qu’une bible mais dont l’humidité a gauchi la reliure” (Bouvier 1996:38), and the texts he has already read follow him on his journey: “un vers de Hafiz me revenait en mémoire: ... ‘Si le mystique ignore encore le secret de ce Monde je me demande de qui le cabaretier peut bien l’avoir appris...’” (Bouvier, 2014:316).

The story is also influenced by the comparably high number of people that the narrator quotes. The travellers show that it is not only their story but numerous other stories that need to be told and handed over to the readership, who have to be reminded of phrases, books, and authors. The narrators are thus not only telling the story by writing it down but also by transmitting what has already been written and said.

4.8 The Meaning of Home

*“Wer nicht ein Weltbürger ist, der überall sein Vaterland hat,
sollte nicht reisen; der Grund seines Verhältnisses
wird erschüttert und er hat viel zu tun,
sich wieder darin zu befestigen”²⁰⁵*
Caroline Herder

If one thinks of travelling literature, associations of longing for distance and vastness and of continuous movement quickly arise. This chapter will speak about a phenomenon that appears on a journey: The more one travels, the more important the meaning of home becomes. This is made clear through ethnographic studies²⁰⁶ and within the travelling narration: “Home is always an absent presence in narratives of travel and mobility” (Germann Molz, 2008:326). There is only a

205 Herder, 1988:550.

206 See Brah, 1996; Ahmed, 2000; Castles and Davidson, 2000.

fine difference between a permanently-travelling world citizen and a feeling of non-belonging and homelessness. It is probably no coincidence that many travel authors who were on a journey for most of their lives returned to or died in their country of origin. Even though the wish of a nomadic life is present in many works, the connection to the place of origin and the one harbour that is always ready to welcome them back stays. The fifth point of Stephen Greenblatt's manifesto on cultural mobility may give a clarification here:

[...] mobility studies should analyze the sensation of rootedness. The paradox here is only apparent: it is impossible to understand mobility without also understanding the glacial weight of what appears bounded and static (Greenblatt, 2009:252).

If mobility cannot be understood without rootedness, travelling might not be understood without the understanding of being settled, or in other words, without the understanding of home. Jennie Germann Molz has therefore reasonably formulated the question in the 21st century, which has, however, always played a role, both in earlier centuries and in the 20th. The literature of Schwarzenbach, Maillart and Bouvier shows this:

The question, then, is not whether home matters anymore amidst all this mobility, but rather how home matters. How can we understand the ongoing significance of home in people's material and emotional lives, even as the concept of home is being destabilized and redefined by new patterns of international travel, transnational migration, global media, and mobile communication technologies? (Germann Molz, 2008:326).

Schwarzenbach's texts, in particular, reveal on the other hand that the probably suitable and ideal type of home as a global abode under Germann Molz' definition is difficult to reach:

Abode has two meanings: (1) sojourn: a temporary stay; and (2) home: the place where one abides. In its dual meaning as both sojourn and home, abode allows us to think of home as emplaced and stationary yet simultaneously in flux and temporary. With the notion of global abode, I aim to contribute to

theoretical attempts to under-stand home as fluid, mobile, and plural as well as a site of attachment and grounding (Germann Molz, 2008:327).

This counts even for a permanent traveller, who is, as Germann Molz correctly argues, voluntarily moving and thus, voluntarily putting himself in a homeless situation:

Unlike many migrants and refugees who are displaced under conditions of political, religious, or economic oppression, travelers become ‘homeless’ voluntarily. Thus, their efforts at feeling at home may not be fraught with the same sense of urgency or constrained by the same obstacles as other mobile groups. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, round-the-world travelers do not necessarily express a desire to settle in the places they visit. In other words, unlike a migrant “homing desire” that seeks to put down roots and carve out spaces of belonging in a new home country (Brah, 1996), travelers enact a kind of mobile attachment that allows them to feel at home in many places. For round-the-world travelers, finding home in mobility is not about “home-making” or “place-building” elsewhere (Castles & Davidson, 2000, p. 131), but rather about engaging such strategies to feel at home anywhere and everywhere (Germann Molz, 2008:327).

While Maillart’s narrator aims to be at home in the world, the narrators of Bouvier and Schwarzenbach reflect the difficulties and problems that this global abode brings with it.

4.8.1 Space and Identity

Home as a geographical space and home as an identity are two terms that are linked together and often treated as inseparable. The connection between space and identity is stated in the following expression of the French philosopher, Jacques Rancière: “It ensures that things and people stay at ‘their’ place and cling to their identity” (Robertson et al., 1994:31). It seems to be reasonable to start with the relationship to the travellers’ country of origin, for example their automatic rather than their chosen homes in the country they were born in. The authors’ return to their home country after many years of travelling closes a circle at the end of a long journey. During their journeys, they always found their way

back to Geneva, sometimes only for a short stay; this shows that they felt the importance of staying in touch with the place they came from. What role does that play for the narration? Switzerland is mentioned in all the authors' books, often as a comparison between places and people on the journey and in Switzerland or in Europe in general.

If it is the case, though, that space forms one's identity, one can assume that travellers must have several identities, and thus, numerous places they call home. At the beginning of his book, *L'Usage du monde*, Bouvier speaks about his first long journey from Geneva to the capital of Afghanistan, he says: "I thought of a cat's proverbial nine lives: it seemed to me that I must be starting on my second" (Bouvier, 2007:14). He compares his life to the several lives of a cat. Just like Odysseus wears the scarf marking his identity on his body, the traveller wears a scarf of more than one identity which shows the places that he or she has visited: "Avez-vous quarante-neuf ou cinquante ans?' m'a-t-il demandé. J'ai dit mon âge. 'Vous faites bien plus vieux' a-t-il dit. Attends-toi au pire. 'C'est peut-être les voyages, a-t-il ajouté [...]" (Bouvier, 2013b:121). In *Le vide et le plein*, the narrator confirms that the traveller is marked by the journey:

Le voyage ne vous apprendra rien si vous ne lui laissez pas aussi le droit de vous détruire. C'est une règle vieille comme le monde. Un voyage est comme un naufrage, et ceux dont le bateau n'a pas coulé ne sauront jamais rien de la mer. Le reste, c'est du patinage ou du tourisme (Bouvier, 2004b:221).

But how long does the traveller need to stay in one place to make it his or her home? According to the literature, time and space do not seem proportional to each other. Schwarzenbach's narrator asserts that time won't change a foreign place into a home: "Die Europäer fürchten sich in diesem Land [Türkei]. Keiner von ihnen wird heimisch; daran ändern Jahre nichts" (Schwarzenbach, 2016:13). One of the best examples might be taken from Bouvier on the island Sri Lanka, still named Ceylon at the time Bouvier travelled there. He stayed there for quite a while compared to other places visited and did not consider Sri Lanka his home, whereas the Irish island, Aran, on which he spent less time, became much more meaningful to him. Another example of Bouvier identifying with a home can be found at the end of his book, *Chronique japonaise*, when Bouvier's narrator says about himself: "Me voilà bien Japonaise!" (Bouvier, 1991:286). What is it, then,

that may make a place a home for a traveller? One of the most likely answers can be found in landscapes: “sur des champs d’un vert soûlant qui me descend tout droit de l’œil à l’estomac. Une herbe avec du trèfle dedans, une herbe comme je n’en ai pas vu depuis bientôt deux ans” (Bouvier, 1991:219). He is enraptured by the green colour and the fresh grass of the fields in Japan; their connection to the memory of Switzerland is probably one of the reasons why he likes the country. When he wrote that Nicolas Bouvier loved the deserts, François Laut noticed the missing feeling: the homesickness of green, fresh grass. The only thing that he regretted on his journey was missing the fresh green colour of the grass.²⁰⁷ Schwarzenbach’s narrator speaks about a similar feeling and the green colour of the grass as well: “dann von grünen Wiesen, die schon heimatlichen Alpmatten glichen, und herberen Geschmacks waren” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:117). Besides the grass, she also adds the mountains and lakes into her description of home: “Und dort, siehst du die in Glanz getauchte Rossweide, die schiefereglatten Halden der Steinböcke, siehst du das Grün deiner Heimattäler, die tiefen Seen, und, hinaufführend zu den letzten Höhen, den Gletscher?” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:144–145). Whenever Schwarzenbach’s narrator expresses a feeling of being at home, it is in places that remind the narrator of the home that she left. The Mediterranean Sea as a symbol of Europe is also represented as a home by Schwarzenbach’s narrator: “diese grau bewegte, schaumgekrönte, für dein Auge von verhangenen Horizontlinien begrenzte Fläche ist das Mittelmeer, ist fast schon die so bitter erwünschte und ersehnte Heimatküste, ist eine Art von Versprechung, versprochenes Land” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:179)²⁰⁸ and by Kini:

Its coast turning purple in the later afternoon, here was my rieuse Méditerranée, the caressing sea where trees bend over the water, that Middle Sea whose culture and atmosphere are made to the measure of man. How could I be

207 See Laut, 2008:19: “Nicolas Bouvier a aimé les déserts, mais la seule chose de Suisse qu’il avoue avoir parfois regrettée en voyage, c’était le vert de l’herbe”.

208 See also at Schwarzenbach, 2016:38: “Wir hatten vom ersten Augenblick an grosse Sympathie für Beirut; das Leben muss dort leicht sein, der syrische Winter dringt nicht bis über den Libanon, und das Meer verspricht die milde Dauer von Riviera und Côte d’Azur”.

foolish enough to turn my back on the world that I belonged to? (Maillart, 2013:31).²⁰⁹

Along with Switzerland, Geneva and the house in Switzerland, Europe is imagined as a home: “Oh Heimweh, oh Europa!” (Schwarzenbach, 1996:37). This sentiment is also shared by Bouvier’s narrator in *Le Poisson-scorpion*: “Souvent je pleure sans savoir pourquoi. Les postiers me perdent crânement ces lettres d’Europe dont j’ai autant besoin que de sang” (Bouvier, 1996:130). Mathilde Jegou is questioning if this is affected by the landscape or rather by the nostalgic memory of childhood? Looking at another example in Schwarzenbach’s text, it is the landscape and childhood memory that arouses the feeling of home and homesickness: “Der Himmel dieses Landes, der persische Himmel hat nichts mehr gemein mit dem vertrauten Himmel meiner Kindheit. [...] Aufatmen! Geborgenheit!” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:31). Home is distant; without describing where it is, it is described as a vivid place rich with fruits and water: “Irgendwo, sehr weit von hier, ist meine Heimat, ein Seeufer, Obstgarten und Erntezeit, untadelige Lieblichkeit” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:158). Such aspects seem to be decisive for a feeling of home: “Beirut, vorgebaut auf die Landzunge einer weissen Bucht, eine südliche Küstenstadt, geschützt durch das Gebirge, reich an Gärten, Palmen, Pinien, hellen Häusern, kleinen Hotels. [...] Wir fühlten uns schnell heimisch in Beirut” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:37).

For Kini, home is also linked to a space in Switzerland or Europe. One can see this when she says: “while at home where, Prometheus-like, men have wrested in all the powers of nature to themselves, life drives everyone to insanity” (Maillart, 2013:112). At a later point, the narrator removes the connection to a specific place. She speaks about Earth in general as her home: “Whereas I belong nowhere – unless it is everywhere” (Maillart, 2013:203). As it is physically not possible to be everywhere at the same time, her sentence could be an allegory for a space in which many different people and cultures meet. When Bouvier’s narrator has the impression that he is starting his second life, it seems to be his departure that is

209 In *Oasis interdites* the narrator had already referred to the Mediterranean Sea as a familiar place: “Et voici enfin la radieuse Méditerranée, une mer où je me sens chez moi, où les couleurs, l’atmosphère et les voiliers mêmes ont des forms qui me sont familières”, see Maillart, 2002:312.

responsible for it. That is assuming that the narrator does not necessarily need a stable place for a home. On the journey, it is the journey itself and its movement that makes him enter a new life and into a new home. It is important to get to know and bond with a place, its heritage, history, and inhabitants:

Aber welcher zivilisierte Mensch könnte sich ohne Bedenken in ein Land versetzen lassen, nennen wir es Brasilien, mit dem ihn keine Erinnerung verbindet, keine Herkunft, kein Kult, keine Historie und Legende, kein Zeichen des Namens und der Sprache? (Schwarzenbach, 2016:55).

What Schwarzenbach's narrator addresses here has nothing to do with the country of Brazil, but with names she is unfamiliar with due to a lack of knowledge about the country and its culture. As neither Schwarzenbach, nor Maillart nor Bouvier travelled to South America, the country of Brazil is used here as an example of a completely unknown place. Just as Afghanistan becomes familiar to the narrator, Brazil for example becomes home to traveller Stefan Zweig, who went to Brazil during his exile and chose to die there.

4.8.2 House and Home

There is a particularly important space for Bouvier that may connect all his homes in one: his house in Geneva. He lived there for more than forty years. In the interview with Irène Lichtenstein-Fall he even denies having missed Switzerland during his tours. Instead, he was thinking more about his house: "Pendant les quatorze années que j'ai passées à l'étranger, je n'ai jamais eu le mal du pays, de la Suisse, mais quelquefois l'ennui de cette maison" (Bouvier, 2004:39). One reason for that may be the important materials stored in the house: memories of his time abroad. Bouvier describes this relationship as follows: "C'est une maison très disparate, mais où chaque objet correspond à un voyage, à un souvenir, à une émotion, à une rencontre. Au mur, il n'y a pas une surface peinte ou photographiée qui ne soit pas chargée" (Bouvier, 2004:235). To put it briefly, every single object in his house corresponds to a memory from a journey. This small world that the author has created also supported him in his writing: "Quand j'écris un livre, les murs de la chambre où j'écris se couvrent de gribouillis, de photos ou de documents relatifs à ce texte" (Bouvier, 2004:236). A similar situation can be observed with the writer Tiziano Terzani, who built his microcosm in a small Italian village named

Orsigna, close to Florence. There he also had his own small house, where he collected all of his memories, where he wrote his books and where he died:

[...] l'Orsigna sarebbe stato il mio ultimo amore. Mi ci sento così a casa, così bene in questo abbraccio della natura allo stato puro, che è il più bell'abbraccio di grandezza e di bellezza che puoi avere. Questa bellezza in qualche modo ti entra dentro e ti dà una dimensione di qualcosa che non ti appartiene, ma che è anche tuo e di cui sei parte (Terzani, 2006:456).

Looking at Bouvier's dedication to Maillart in the book, *Le voyage vers le réel*, it seems that Maillart also built her own world in Switzerland:

Plus de quinze ans après être partie à sa recherche, Ella Maillart a trouvé sa 'Vallée de la Lune' en 1946 sur le flanc est du Val d'Anniviers et son Tibet au village de Chandolin, à près de deux mille mètres. De ce balcon vertigineux, on voit jouer la lumière sur les pics et les glaciers des Alpes et, un peu plus bas, sur des pentes dont les tons rappellent les montagnes du Kurdistan. Elle y passe six mois de l'année dans un petit chalet à odeur de mélèze qui, par culottage, cristallisation, alluvions successifs, repiquage de grains himalayennes est devenu comme un îlot d'Asie montagnarde. Le vent fait tinter les cloches tibétaines au bord du toit, de superbes pavots bleus du Népal escaladent la forte pente (Lombard, 1983:19).

It is suitable to use the metaphor of the harbour; Bouvier himself uses the metaphor of a port: "J'ai toujours eu de longues périodes de sédentarisme dans cette maison: tout bateau a besoin d'une cale sèche et d'un port d'attache dont le nom figure sur l'étrave" (Bouvier, 2004:235). The harbour stands not only for the arrival, but at the same time, for a new departure.²¹⁰ It is a coming and going, and it is probably also this movement that evokes the feeling of home: The freedom of returning and leaving at the same time. The port is a well-fitting metaphor for the house. The house functions as a stable and safe place where the traveller may come back and leave at any time, like ships in a port.

210 See Ette 2005:73: "Denn jeder Hafen steht für einen neuen Aufbruch."

However, Hartmut Rosa writes in his paper, “Heimat im Zeitalter der Globalisierung”, from 2007, that nowadays home does not have to be linked to space anymore: a statement that seems reasonable in a world of constant movement. Instead of a place, one’s job, family, hobbies, and rituals may form one’s home. Does this ‘new meaning of home’ appear in Bouvier’s works? So far, Bouvier’s home has still been linked to space. François Laut also describes it in a different, rather psychological way: “Son pays sera simplement l’endroit où vivent les gens qu’il aime” (Laut, 2008:158), which could imply that for Bouvier, the places that his wife accompanied him to, or the place where his parents live (and that goes back to his place of birth) are still his home. Could family and friends thus form one’s home? He also refers to his father: “on n’en finit pas de chercher son père et j’avais un peu perdu le mien – le vrai – voix et visage le long de la route” (Bouvier, 1996:145). The fact that he keeps forgetting his appearance could be interpreted as losing one’s sources or as losing the relationship to one’s home: “Mes rapports avec le temps ne sont depuis longtemps plus ce qu’ils étaient autrefois: retrouver le prénom de mon père me prend parfois plusieurs minutes” (Bouvier, 1996:166). Schwarzenbach’s narrator refers to her mother: “Mutter, denkt man (wie der Name zum Weinen verhilft!)” (Schwarzenbach, 2003:39) or: “und ich weinte nach meiner Mutter” (Schwarzenbach, 2003:65). Whereas Bouvier’s narrator needs time to remember the name of the father, thinking about the name of her mother makes Schwarzenbach’s narrator cry. In any case, the process of distancing oneself from a parent seems to be painful, as is the distancing from one’s home. However, family and friends are not necessarily needed for a feeling of being at home. When Bouvier’s narrator is walking alone through Aran, he says: “Dans ces paysages faits de peu je me sens chez moi, et marcher seul, au chaud sous la laine sur une route d’hiver est un exercice salubre et litannique qui donne à ce peu” (Bouvier, 2013:62). He emphasizes his situation of being alone. Therefore, there can be a feeling of home without company or relatives. Here, the fact that the countryside is like what he was used to in Switzerland could be decisive. It is interesting, though, that neither Schwarzenbach, nor Maillart nor Bouvier write about their Swiss houses in the travelling narrations, although in Bouvier’s case, the interview with Lichtenstein-Fall reflects the importance of the house to him. Even if the house might be important to the author, it may not have much of an influence on the narrator, who rather refers to the known landscape, memories of childhood, language, literature, food, and cultural aspects, which will be discussed in the following.

4.8.3 Home, Mother Tongue, and Objects

Another portable aspect of home is one's mother tongue. Bouvier experiences nostalgic feelings for his mother tongue while hearing French music from speakers in a public space in Macedonia: "Depuis ce jour, l'opérateur de Radio-Prilep qui compose les programmes à sa guise nous envoie, pour nous obliger, un peu de musique française sur les haut-parleurs de la place" (Bouvier, 2014:75). Later, he reflects that he misses his mother tongue, which he has not been using since Belgrade: "depuis Belgrade, je ne m'étais plus mis une page de français sous la dent" (Bouvier, 2014:122). It must be taken into consideration, though, that he was travelling with Thierry Vernet, who shares the same native language as he does, unlike the situation of Schwarzenbach and Maillart, who communicated in French despite it not being Schwarzenbach's mother tongue.

He also missed French literature, which can be observed in many of his books, especially in the *Poisson-scorpion*, where right after the narrator's arrival on the island, he looks for French books in the town's best library: "ce que la meilleure librairie de la ville pouvait m'offrir en français" (Bouvier, 1996:47). Literature, or rather, reading literature, can also arouse a feeling of home: "Pourquoi pas commencer par Montaigne: j'ai besoin de familiers pour équilibrer tout ce qui m'échappe encore ici" (Bouvier 1996:37).

Bouvier's narrator is not only speaking about his own homesickness, but also includes characters in his writings that share his feelings, like a priest he meets: "Pauvre Père! J'aurais voulu lui déboucher une bouteille de Muscadet sous le nez, poser un paquet de Gauloises sur la table, et le faire parler de sa province" (Bouvier, 2014:124). The example shows that small objects – in this case, a bottle of champagne and a pack of cigarettes – can also arouse a feeling of home. The final part of his quote refers to letting him speak about his province – language, again. The fact that Bouvier's narrator imagines the priest wanting to have a conversation with him reflects how much he misses speaking French. Kini experiences a similar situation. At Meshed, they meet a French couple, and Kini is finally able to speak proper French again. Kini's behaviour transforms into pure happiness in Christina's eyes:

Christina's French – we spoke French together – was not very colloquial, her mother-tongue being German, and she had been surprised to see how gay and clownish I could be with Nicole and Raymond. She inferred that she bored

me and that I should prefer to travel with our new friends (Maillart, 2013: 112).

On the other hand, it reflects the problem of language and of not being oneself when one is not able to properly express oneself. This goes for Kini, who is usually speaking with a non-French native, and for Christina, who has to express herself in a foreign language. Language might thus be one of the reasons why a feeling of home abroad, *in der Fremde*, is difficult to achieve, as even if communication can occur thanks to a common language that one of the interlocutors has learned, it is still not the same as the mother tongue.

Aside from native languages, objects gain another type of importance on the road. This has already been discussed by Germann Molz in other travelling literature and is, thus, not a phenomenon restricted to the three authors:

Objects and possessions can be material symbols of home whether one travels or not, but for round-the-world travelers, certain objects can act specifically as signifiers of familiarity and continuity through which homely feelings are evoked. By embodying particular rituals, establishing small routines and carrying certain familiar items with them, travelers are able to quickly make themselves at home in a variety of environments (Germann Molz, 2008:334).

In most examples, Bouvier writes about a missing object or about the happiness of seeing or being with something or someone after a long separation. Distance and time may thus combine to create what is important for him to be able to call a place his home. The limited number of objects that can be physically taken on the journey demonstrates their enormous importance:

Gegenstände haben in dieser Einsamkeit eine neue Bedeutung. Ihr Dasein bestätigt mir das meine, ich vergewissere mich ihrer, um sicher zu sein, dass ich noch da bin, ein isoliertes Lebewesen, ein Mensch, und dass ich einen Namen trage, eine Herkunft habe, auf irgendeinem Weg bis hierher gelangt bin (Schwarzenbach, 2010:36).

They can remind the traveller of where he or she comes from and where he or she has travelled. The journey, however, also teaches the traveller which objects are of

less or no importance at the same time. Again, a very suitable example of this observation can be found in Tiziano Terzani's *La fine è il mio inizio*:

Perché ovviamente tu non sei il tuo nome, tu non sei la tua professione, non sei la casetta al mare che possiedi. E se impari a morire vivendo, come hanno ben insegnato i saggi del passato – i sufi, i greci, i nostri amati rishi dell'Himalaya – allora ti abitui a non riconoscerti in queste cose, a riconoscerne il valore estremamente limitato, transitorio, ridicolo, impermanente. Se la casa che ti sei comperato al mare un giorno – vrumm! viene portata via dalla marea; [...]! allora capisci che non è possibile che tu sia quelle cose che scompaiono così semplicemente. E se, vivendo, incominci a capire che non sei quelle cose, allora piano piano te ne stacchi, le abbandoni (Terzani, 2006:12–13).

This quotation from Terzani reflects the question of capitalism very well, as well as the traveller's view regarding his property, which is also discussed in Schmid's philosophy of *ars vivendi*:

Die Philosophie der Lebenskunst versucht in jedem Fall anzusetzen bei der individuellen Haltung, um der ausschließlich materiellen Orientierung des Individuums entgegenzusetzen und deutlich zu machen, dass die Frage des Eigentums noch eine andere ist als die des Eigentums im materiellen Sinne, nämlich die eines Eigentum im ideellen Sinne: Aneignung von Selbst und Welt, Einübung von Selbstmächtigkeit, Wahrnehmung von Freiheit, Eingehen freier Verpflichtungen. Materielles Eigentum und ideelle Aneignung können entschieden divergieren; man kann sogar die These vertreten, dass die Frage des materiellen Eigentums umso stärker dominiert, je weniger die ideelle Aneignung von Selbst und Welt geschieht [...]; dass sie umgekehrt umso weniger das Denken und Fühlen in Beschlag nimmt, je mehr Selbst- und Weltaneignung erreicht wird (Indiz des erfüllten Lebens) (Schmid, 1998: 162).

It is also interesting to observe the way Bouvier makes himself at home in his new accommodations. The subtitle "GUEST HOUSE, 22 Hospital Street, CHEZ NOUS", seems like an oxymoron. Then, Bouvier describes the act of getting settled as a ritual:

S'installer dans une chambre pour une semaine, un moins, un an, est un acte rituel dont beaucoup de choses vont dépendre et dont il ne faut pas s'acquitter avec un esprit brouillon. [...] Dans le coin le plus sombre, là où l'escalier débouche, j'ai posé la guitare qui donne à cette composition une touche de gaieté havane clair et cubiste. Punaisé au-dessus de la table une grande rame de papier blanc [...] Enlevé le paquebot qui navigue dans la mauvais direction et mis à sa place la photo du Christ goanais [...] j'ai besoin de protections et ce petit Bouddha roublard ne peut pas se charger de toutes les besognes (Bouvier, 1996:36–37).

The journey has made him care about rituals: “Le voyage, comme la modicité de ma vie, m'ont rendu un brin ritualiste. Rasé, douché. Balayé ma chambre” (Bouvier, 1996:89). Those mundane rituals reveal the daily habits of Bouvier's narrator that he practices in every part of the world: an everyday life – a hint of a feeling of being at home? Bouvier's narrator also refers to small objects and cultural habits earlier in *L'Usage du monde*: “Parfois, une modique nostalgie de vin blanc, de noix, de camembert, mais aucune envie de rentrer ni de s'établir” (Bouvier, 2014:369). This quotation also shows that “to go home” still means going to Switzerland.

If it is possible to divide the meaning of home into different pieces, home could be interpreted as a collage, a puzzle of languages, people, landscapes, rituals and places: both stable and unstable. For Bouvier, Geneva is the place in which his puzzle is most complete, but it was the journey and the feeling of being at home elsewhere that made him aware of it: “Trois ans d'Asie ont sans doute fait de moi un excellent Européen...” (Bouvier, 1956:158), just as Maillart learned: “But the pines gave such relaxation and joy: Asia teaches you beautifully how to appreciate trees” (Maillart, 2013:132). That is probably what Schwarzenbach was thinking about when she named her novel *Das Wunder des Baums* and why Bouvier dedicated one of his poems to trees, calling it “Poème vert”.²¹¹ There is probably no place that keeps the travellers from feeling homesick, not even Switzerland, but living in a state of constant departure helps them suffer less. Even if communication methods have changed and developed a lot since the time when Maillart and Schwarzenbach travelled in the 1930s and Bouvier between 1950s and 1970s, the

211 See Bouvier, 2005:88.

question of home remains and its definition for each individual gains importance in a globalised world.

4.8.4 Homesickness

Just as longing for distances is one of the travellers' main drives, a feeling of homesickness also chases them. It has already been discussed that the feeling of homesickness, in most cases, is a longing for home and the landscape of Switzerland. Homesickness is discussed in Schwarzenbach's texts especially, in which the narrator often speaks directly about the problem of homesickness. A feeling of homesickness is also expressed through other foreigners met on the journey: "Seine Frau war zart, blond, still, von Heimweh verzehrt. Sie war auf einem Bauernhof in Holstein aufgewachsen, und dort hätte sie ihr ganzen Leben bleiben sollen" (Schwarzenbach, 2003:28). What Schwarzenbach's narrator is recommending to the other woman here, she may find mirrored in herself as well. Neither Bouvier's nor Maillart's narrator questions the choice of the journey as much as Schwarzenbach's narrator does. She keeps asking herself if she made the right choice and if she will regret her decisions, which is a common problem in the modern world that *ars vivendi* tries to overcome: "Werde ich eines Tages bereuen? Und nicht mehr umkehren können? Werde ich eines Tages den Heimweg nicht mehr finden? Zu spät! – Mein Gott, ich werde zu spät bereuen ..." (Schwarzenbach, 2010: 95). However, Schwarzenbach's narrator is aware of this problematic and tries to fight against it: "Ich hatte es mir in Therapia zugesagt, dass ich von dieser Stunde des Heimwehs an nicht mehr über Sinn und Zweck einer Reise nachdenken und keinen Zweifel mehr hegen wolle" (Schwarzenbach, 2008:118). Homesickness is a topic avoided by the travellers within the story. Schwarzenbach's narrator claims, "Aber wenn jemand Heimweh hat, spricht er nicht darüber" (Schwarzenbach, 2003:75). The traveller in *Orientreisen* seems to suppress a powerful feeling: "ich könnte auf einer Schafalp sein, hoch oben am Julier-Pass. So denke ich, beim Anblick der grünen Matten –, aber was sollen solche Vergleiche! Sie sind nur Umwege der Erinnerungen, Schleichwege des Heimwehs –, und dieses Wort möchte ich schon gar nicht laut werden lassen" (Schwarzenbach, 2010:19) and later on, the narrator asks herself: "Soll ich eingestehen, dass ich Heimweh habe?" (Schwarzenbach, 2010:89). Homesickness is described as a nameless disease²¹² that can never

212 See Schwarzenbach, 2003:63.

be cured: “das war der Anfang der Furcht. Und nie werde ich sie besiegen, nie sie wieder vergessen können. [...] Die Gefahr hat verschiedene Namen. Manchmal heißt sie einfach Heimweh. [...] Manchmal gibt es keinen Namen, dann, wenn man von der namenlosen Furcht heimgesucht wird” (Schwarzenbach, 2003: 65–66). It is a topic to be avoided, although it appears in all of her texts, sometimes in very short comments: “Wir hatten Zeit, an Weihnachten zu denken und Heimweh zu bekommen” (Schwarzenbach, 1996:31). And still, it is something. It is a feeling that the traveller can hold on to: “Man kann sich manchmal noch an Schmerzen klammern, an bitteres Heimweh” (Schwarzenbach, 2003:12). It is one stable feeling in the life of a permanent traveller. The homesickness that always accompanies him or her. Maillart’s narrator indirectly addresses homesickness, as the earlier example has shown: “How could I be foolish enough to turn my back on the world that I belonged to?” (Maillart, 2013:31). Perhaps she actually does avoid speaking about what Schwarzenbach’s narrator calls a taboo topic.

4.8.5 Lost Home

Hartmut Rosa sees the danger of being homeless in the modern world in the steady movement between places. Peter L. Berger has also addressed this predicament of the modern individual in a modern culture:

The correlate of the migratory character of this experience of society and self has been what might be called a metaphysical loss of ‘home’. It goes without saying that this condition is psychologically hard to bear. It has therefore engendered its own nostalgias – nostalgias, that is, for a condition of ‘being at home’ in society, with oneself and, ultimately, in the universe (Berger, 1973:82).

This is a legitimate assumption, which can be observed in the three books of the authors discussed and in travelling narrations in general, for example in the literature of travel author Lorenzo Pestelli, who was half Italian/half Belgian, born in England and who grew up in Switzerland wondering if he was a stranger who has no place on Earth.²¹³ Doesn’t this show that in terms of *Heimat*, people still have a high affinity for space?

213 See Pestelli, 2000:39.

Hartmut Rosa uses an anchor instead of a port as a metaphor for one's need to feel at home. Still part of the nautical vocabulary, the anchor could be a new portable harbour. Rosa proposes that possible anchors can take the form of work, a partner, a place, a religion, a hobby, or a ritual. Even though in the travelling narration the travellers may have had such anchors, the authors knew the place to finally drop them and did not question the existence of the one and only harbour called home, which is probably more the house than the places themselves. Still, the journey and movement are needed because just as Adorno and Horkheimer said, it is not possible to find one's home among people who have stayed in one and the same place, and thus they associate the traveller with an artist:

Noch in der entsagenden Distanz vom Dasein, als Kunst, bleibt es unehrlich; die es praktizieren, werden zu fahrenden Leuten, überlebenden Nomaden, die unter den seßhaft Gewordenen keine Heimat finden (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2006:25).

The permanent traveller cannot simply *go back*. Within the narration, this issue of not being able to return is mentioned several times. The most decisive example is probably provided by Annemarie Schwarzenbach:

Ja, ich bin aus Gewissenhaftigkeit weggegangen, und viele haben mich um meine Freiheit und um meine Wahl beneidet. Aber hier verliert auch die Freiheit ihren Sinn. Ich will keinen Anspruch mehr auf meine Freiheit erheben, ich möchte nur zurückkehren, und ich kann nicht, ich kann nicht, und ich weiss es (Schwarzenbach, 2003:120–121).

Even if, theoretically, there is a way to return, the traveller cannot go back as the same person he or she was upon his or her departure, and time at home does not stop when the traveller leaves. In *Das glückliche Tal*, the narrator thinks back on her time at home:

[...] dieses Ich, das früher einmal gespielt hatte im Schatten der Laubbäume, der Geruch von Heu, warmem Gras und feuchtem Waldboden geatmet, sich gespiegelt hatte in blauen Seen – lachend die Anhöhen erobert auf federnden Sohlen, das Gesicht der Sonne zugekehrt – über Herbstwiesen geritten, glän-

zende Schneefelder durchquert, vertraut mit allen Strassen, in allen Gassen der Stadt beheimatet, alle Türme erstiegen und hinausgeschaut in das schöne und blühende Land. Ach, den Kopf bergen in zärtlichen Händen! Wie waren die Abende sanft, zu Hause! (Schwarzenbach, 2010:59).

What still exists to an extent in the memory of the narrator here is lost in the later part of the journey:

Würde ich jetzt, nach einer einzigen solchen Nacht, in Euren Gassen auftauchen, die Nachbarn würden mich nicht mehr erkennen. Ich wäre nicht anders als die Blinden, Stummen und Bettler. Ich höre: 'Wohl bekomm's' –, aber ich würde die Suppe verschmähen, die Euer Mitleid den Armen reicht. Der Hunger ist mein Freund (Schwarzenbach, 2010:115).

The well-known streets of childhood become unknown, and the narrator even despises them. On the other hand, however, the Afghan streets are only hosts to a temporary guest and not a replacement of the streets of childhood: "Da erinnere ich mich, dass ich in Istalif nur ein Fremder bin, zufällig des Weges gekommen und in ihre Gassen, ihre Gärten, ihre Höfe geraten, nur als Zuschauer geduldet an der Schwelle ihres nach friedlichen Gesetzen geregelten Daseins" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:94). Schwarzenbach's narrator seems to have lost her previous home and does not seem to have gained a new one, even if she could: "Gast, Fremder, Abenteurer, was noch – neugierig, wissensdurstig, ungeduldig, unterwegs –, allein. Aber sie vergassen es. Sie nahmen mich auf. Und begierig, zu erfahren, wie sie leben, lebte ich mit ihnen. Welche Versuchung: mit ihnen leben. Mit euch. Zusammenleben" (Schwarzenbach, 2010:75–76). This concept of living together remains a temptation: a temptation of a stable life that the traveller needs to resist, as otherwise, he or she would no longer be a traveller, and the temptation of the departure, of the world and of movement is bigger than the temptation to stay:

[...] einen Augenblick glauben können, ich sei nun an irgendeinem Ziel und hätte dieses tausendfach klingende Wiedersehen redlich verdient. Aber da hätten sich bald furchtbare Zweifel eingestellt, ob dies auch der rechte, der allerletzte Ort sei; im Traum hätte ich die Dome anderer Städte gesehen, und

im Wachen ihre tönenden Namen auf Wegweisern und Landkarten gesucht (Schwarzenbach, 2000:16).

The traveller does not want to have a final destination to be reached: “Ich wollte *unbeschwert* sein: hatte ich vor mir einen so weiten Weg? – Und kein Ziel!” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:74). No place but the road and movement can offer the traveller stability in the end, which he needs to build on: “Nicht auf das Ziel kommt es an, sondern nur auf den nächsten Schritt und danach auf den nächsten und jeden folgenden” (Aurel Schmidt, 1990:12–13).

Maillart’s previously mentioned quotation, “Whereas I belong nowhere – unless it is everywhere” (Maillart, 2013:203) could also imply that the traveller simply does not feel at home anywhere, as being everywhere is impossible. For the traveller who is permanently on the move, this lost home is no new phenomenon, as one may expect in the fourth phase of globalisation. But it can already be observed in the 29th and 30th verses of Oliver Goldsmith’s poem from 1764: “My fortune leads to traverse realms alone, and find no spot of all the world my own”.

The lost home should not be the end. Even if the travellers, narrators and authors do not migrate to a country other than Switzerland, it can still be observed, which Ette discovers in the example of Amin Maalouf: “Die Transversalität bedeutet keineswegs, dass dieser Prozeß nicht schmerzhaft verlief; aber er steht [...] nicht mehr vorrangig im Zeichen des Verlusts, sondern der Möglichkeit, etwas Anderes, Neues zu entdecken und für sich hinzuzugewinnen” (Ette, 2010:122). Bouvier discovers this as well at the end of *Chronique japonais*: “Me voilà bien Japonais!” (Bouvier, 1991:286), which tells him that it is time to leave the country. It thus seems that it is not the intention to migrate to another place or to find a home in an elsewhere, but rather to collect these homes in an elsewhere and to find a place where they can be connected. In the end this *Inklusionsimperativ*, to use Ette’s term,²¹⁴ can be found only in the Self as the Other.

214 See Ette, 2010:122.

4.9 Religion and Spirituality

In this ninth motif, we go back to the very beginning, to the creation of the world. Even though the authors do mostly include references to Genesis, their annotations are not limited to the Christian faith. Besides intertextual connections to the different religions, the narration also includes spiritual and metaphysical thoughts. That is why this element not only includes interpretations of religious fragments, but also discusses the spiritual and holy characters within the narration. What kind of role do religion and spirituality still play in an *ars vivendi* of a modern world? Even if spirituality is only a short chapter of Schmid's new approaches to an *ars vivendi* in Foucault's philosophy, it is also the last topic that he discusses and a topic he did not discuss in his earlier approach. In the works of Maillart, Bouvier and especially Schwarzenbach, there is a high amount of experiences and expressions of something divine. Aspects of Mircea Eliade's *The Sacred and the Profane* from 1957 have been most suitable to this approach and are mirrored well within the narrations, and it is probably no coincidence that Eliade was a world traveller himself.

4.9.1 An Approach to Religion

Different religions are compared and brought together. Regarding the meeting with the Other, the Christmas Eve with Moussa has already been mentioned as dialogue between the local and the traveller. It is, however, also a nice gesture to respect the holy holiday of the Other and show this respect, which Moussa does. Again, it is curiosity which will be presented as one of the motifs of a journey in the following chapter. The approach to religions can also be found in curiosity:

Les Baloutchs sont bons musulmans sunnites, sans trace de fanatisme. Un chrétien sera aussi bien reçu qu'un coreligionnaire, avec en plus une nuance d'intérêt, et des questions, car ils sont curieux comme des belettes (Bouvier, 2014:287).

While driving on the Hindukush with a camion, he meets a Mullah who is watching him, interested. The Mullah offers him a piece of melon, and the traveller gives him a cigarette in return. It is not clear if the two are having an actual conversation, but the narrator interprets religious thoughts into their interaction:

Ce n'est pas tous les jours qu'on voit en étranger voyager au sommet d'un camion. Chrétien, en outre. Il ouvrit son couteau, m'offrit une tranche de son melon et accepta une cigarette qu'il fuma assis sur ses talons sans cesser de me dévisager. Intrigué, mais sans doute plus à l'aise avec moi qu'avec ces Hindous du Bazar de Kaboul qui ont un million de dieux dans les prunelles. Après tout, nous étions entre 'gens du Livre', attestateurs de l'Unique, et cousins en religion. Qu'on se fût massacré pendant mille ans n'y changeait pas grand-chose, ici surtout, où l'on s'est beaucoup entretenu en famille et où le même mot: tarbour signifie à la fois cousin et ennemi. Nos dieux ont bon gré mal gré un long passé commun. Le folklore afghan fourmille de références bibliques et l'Ancien Testament y est comme cousu à la vie quotidienne. On sait que Cain a fondé Kaboul, et que Salomon a son trône sur une montagne au sud du Khyber Pass. Quant à Issa – le Christ – ils le connaissent mieux que nous, Moïse ou Jérémie. [...] On le plaint donc, Issa, on le respecte, mais on se garderait bien de suivre son exemple. Voyez plutôt Mahomet! (Bouvier, 2014:356–357).

Even though the two religions find common sources, the two Gods are quite different:

Le Dieu de l'Hindou Kouch n'est pas, comme celui de Bethléem, amoureux de l'homme, il est son créateur miséricordieux et grand. C'est un credo simple, mais qui frappe. Les gens d'ici l'éprouvent avec plus de force et de verdeur que nous. L'Allah ou Akbar, tout tient à cela: ce Nom dont la magie suffit à transformer notre vide intérieur en espace, et cette ampleur divine qui, à force d'être inscrite à la chaux sur les tombes ou vociférées à la pointe des minarets, devient véritablement la propriété de chacun (Bouvier, 2014:359).

It is probably also due to the influence of people the travellers meet on the journey that they spend a lot of time thinking about the divine and feeling this great power, thanks to the landscape that they visited. In *Le Poisson-scorpion*, Bouvier's narrator ridicules religious symbols, but in the same way, he is also connecting the two Gods somehow: "Enlevé le paquebot qui navigue dans la mauvaise direction et mis à sa place la photo du Christ goanais [...] j'ai besoin de protections et ce petit Bouddha roublard ne peut pas se charger de toutes les besognes" (Bouvier,

1996:36–37). Maillart’s narrator also speaks about the historic moment of converting from one religion to another:

[...] quoted by Upham Pope: ‘Great art makes one strong and young and glad.’ Standing silently at one of the crossroads of Asia it was the symbol of a time when rulers were of Mongol character though baptised in the Christian faith and converted to Islam—strength, new faith and ruthlessness were blended in this unique monument (Maillart, 2013:80).

She also includes on her road, “The paradise of Zoroaster, the Eran Veg or Airyana Vaego, with its sacred mountain where Ahura Mazda answered his questions” (Maillart, 2013:60) and has knowledge not only of the Bible, but also of the Quran.²¹⁵ Bouvier’s narrator, for example, reads the Old Testament while in prison: “je feuilletais la Bible de l’Assyrien et le temps ne me durait pas” (Bouvier 2014:183). He not only refers to the Bible, but also quotes Isaiah 7, Verse 18: “L’Éternel sifflera les mouches qui sont à l’extrémité des canaux d’Égypte” (Bouvier, 2014:265) at a later point. While he was just speaking about the beautiful gardens, the purpose of this reference seems rather ironic, as he later describes the insistence of the Asian fly. Maillart’s narrator quotes Asanga:

‘By countless trials,’ Asanga wrote, ‘by countless accumulation of good, total knowledge is achieved. All obstacles disappear and the Buddha-state is revealed like a shrine of precious stones, great in Power.’ If such is the case, that state implies none of the negativeness that I thought was meant by Nirvana. ‘The universality of the Buddha state in the multitude of beings is attested by the fact that it admits all of them into itself. As space is universal in the multitude of forms, so it is universal in the multitude of beings.’ A state that admits all beings into itself cannot be a negation! (Maillart, 2013:175).

Kini seems to be extremely interested in understanding religions and beliefs of the places visited. Instead of mainly referring to Christianity or the Bible, she quotes texts of Asanga or about the Naqshbandis:

215 See Maillart, 2013:163: “his actual motto was a sentence from the Quran”.

Khwaja is a name given to a sect of holy men who once acquired sovereign power over the Khans of Turkestan and whose tombs are found all over Central Asia. This name is perhaps derived from khojagian, a teacher. They belonged to the darvish order of the Naqshbandis and they developed the 'Power of Will' through perfect concentration: 'It is impossible to conflict with an arif or 'knowing person' possessed of the 'Power of the Will', is written in their books. [...] The Naqshbandis (painters) were so called because their founder Naqshband 'drew incomparable pictures of the Divine Science and painted figures of the Eternal Invention which are not imperceptible' (Maillart, 2013: 153).

Kini communicates this in a rather informative way here, however, as will be also seen in the divine greatness, she may think of something besides the Christian God as being divine. More important to her seems to be the understanding of different religions and thus of the ways of thinking of different religious groups:

I realised that Islam is the main force that links together a population in which blood, language and customs differ so widely. I have seen Afghans praying not only in mosques, but in fields, in shops, on the road – till I came to understand that it means much to them. And I think he was an exception, my neighbour in the bus who when I had remarked that Europeans do sometimes pray but mostly when alone, retorted: 'But what is the good of praying if you aren't seen doing it?' [...] It is only because he had successfully reawakened the faith that Ibn Saud could draw to himself allegiances that formerly went to the tribes: thus he brought together in the army or in the fields men whose ancestors had for generations been at feud (Maillart, 2013:184).

Again, it is the journey that transforms the traveller's knowledge gained from books into a practice, an *ars vivendi* that makes the traveller appear so vivid and full of life.

4.9.2 Healing the Blind

From Goethe's depictions of the colours of the Divan, Le Rider interprets a creative act of respect towards an ethic of nature:

Dieser Abschnitt liefert uns den Schlüssel zur Farbenästhetik des Divans: Es handelt sich um ein quasi-religiöses Entzücken vor der sichtbaren Welt, in der die Pracht der Schöpfung sich offenbart. Diese Lebensfreude und Zelebration der sinnlichen Erscheinungen gehören nicht in den Bereich des Ästhetizismus. Sie sind vielmehr Teil einer Naturverehrung, die mit einer Ethik einhergeht, welche den anderen und die Gegenstände der uns umgebenden Welt zutiefst respektiert (Le Rider, 1997:105).

Interestingly, Maillart's narrator also combines the oriental colours of the carpets with religious awareness and the beauty and power of the sun and nature:

That morning we had visited a carpet workshop. And now I felt that a richly coloured prayer-rug is a version in wool of the mosaic façade of an arched portal; and that in its turn is intimately related with the gorgeousness of Quranic illuminations. These three summits of Persian art can perhaps be traced to the bright flower-beds of Persian gardens, compact geometrical fields of multi-coloured flowers that frame every moment of life in this sun-scorched land (Maillart, 2013:108).

The experience of the colours and the knowledge about the process of haft-renghi²¹⁶ convey a colour theory gained on the journey, in which colours give the impression of something divine, not only because of the likely coincidental similarity of the number seven in the seven colours needed for the process of the carpet and Jesus' seven signs in the Gospel of John.²¹⁷ Goethe wrote in his *West-Eastern*

216 See Maillart, 2013:108: "it means that as many as seven colours may if necessary be applied side by side on a tile before it goes to the kiln."

217 The number seven appears again in Schwarzenbach, 2008:146–147: "Und die sieben Aehrengarben neigen sich in diesem wie in jedem wiederkehrenden Sommer".

*Diwan*²¹⁸ that love, life and sound rise from a colourful world lit up by the sun. It is therefore also possible to reinterpret the following quotation, which has been discussed in cultural heritage in relation to the divine perception of colours:

[...] mausoleum of Gohar Shad, a building that gave peace to one's whole being. Flashes of turquoise glaze gave a note of gaiety. The higher you climb on mountains, the deeper is the cobalt of the gentian, the green of the turf, the scarlet of the alpine rose (Maillart, 2013:123).

In this example, the colourful world brings peace to the person perceiving the colours. Schwarzenbach also combines colour and nature with God: "eine hellrote Blume aus dem – weiss Gott! – wunderbar bewässerten Garten namenloser arabischer Könige" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:130). When Schwarzenbach's narrator tries to continue her writing, she starts speaking to herself, reminds herself of sounds and colours and draws a line between human beings and God. She refers to Genesis and to the six days of continuous work, and suddenly she can write again.

[...] weisst du nicht, dass der Mensch seinem Gott gleicht, und nur ihm, und Töne auffangen kann aus dem wogenden Nichts, die jedes Herz rühren, und Farben sehen, die schöner und zarter sind als alle Träume, und Linien der Anmut erfinden, Licht und Feueraltäre errichten; dass er ohne Hoffnung leben, mutig sein und sein Gebet dem furchtbaren Abgrund seiner Einsamkeit entreissen kann? [...] 'Sechs Tage sollst du arbeiten', ich schrieb auf, gewissenhaft, klagte nichts mehr an, verlangte nichts, war ohne Voraussicht. Über was ich schreibe, so eifrig und fleißig? (Schwarzenbach, 2000:99).

218 See Goethe, 1981:13–14:
Stumm war alles, still und öde,
Einsam Gott zum erstenmal!
Da erschuf er Morgenröte,
Die erbarmte sich der Qual;
Sie entwickelte dem Trüben
Ein erklingend Farbenspiel,
Und nun konnte wieder lieben
Was erst auseinanderfiel!

The question regarding what she was writing to her readership seems to be a cynical attitude towards the reader, as if her audience is demanding her to strictly report “the experienced”. She answers the imagined question of her readership straight away:

Über die Städte und Dörfer Afghanistans, seine Eigenart, seine bösen und guten Geister? Über Herat die Prächtige und seine ragenden Minarette, über Balkh, seines historischen Namens wegen, über die weißen Taubenschwärme von Masar-e Scherif? Ach, fragt nicht immer, behaltet eure Kenntnisse, die Namen, Ratschläge, und lasst mich in Frieden, blind und taub sein, schreiben bis zur letzten Stunde (Schwarzenbach, 2000:99–100).

The imagined questions of her readership seem to put her under pressure. Schwarzenbach is referring to the blind and deaf, who can write until death without interruption. In the text edition of *Die vierzig Säulen der Erinnerung*, the narrator has the impression that she is blind and deaf but is nevertheless able to see and hear:

Meine rechte Hand weiss nicht was die Linke tut, und ich schreibe wie Einer, der blind und taub ist, – und doch einmal das Murmeln des Wassers vernahm, die Eisschmelze auf fernsten Gipfeln, und eines Vogels Herzschlag erkannte unter dem schimmernden Gefieder (Schwarzenbach, 2008:143).

As has been already seen, this is not the only moment in which Schwarzenbach refers to the blind and deaf:

Ich wäre nicht anders als die Blinden, Stummen und Bettler. Ich höre: ‘Wohl bekomm’s’ –, aber ich würde die Suppe verschmähen, die Euer Mitleid den Armen reicht. Der Hunger ist mein Freund (Schwarzenbach, 2010:115).

And she is also not the only one writing about it. The sentence, “Ich wäre nicht anders als die Blinden, Stummen und Bettler”, (Schwarzenbach, 2010:115) is written nearly identically by Maillart in *The Cruel Way*.²¹⁹ These fragments about

219 See Maillart, 2013:85–86.

the blind and the deaf clearly remind the reader of Jesus' healing of the blind and deaf, in which Jesus metaphorically explains that he came to this world, so that the blind may see and the deaf may hear. Schwarzenbach's narrator has changed sides: from a girl playing in the streets of Switzerland to a beggar. However, she is satisfied with that change, as only these blind and deaf conditions enable her to see and hear and thus lead her to write. The important conditions are "Genug Licht zu Schreiben, Feuer, eine Schaffelldecke, Raki – nicht mehr braucht man und nicht weniger, wir haben es genau erfahren" (Schwarzenbach, 2016:24), which satisfy all five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch.

4.9.3 Divine Greatness

The inability to picture God is expressed in terms of the landscape as well, as there is a lack of words and the impossibility of expressing that which could not have been created by a human being:

Anatolian, Iranian, Tibetan – three vast plateaux commanding each other, each greater and higher than the last, each plexus of hills harbouring groups of greatly differing men. Enough variety to occupy many a lifetime of travel, beauty enough to thank whatever is responsible for a diversity no human brain could have devised (Maillart, 2013:47).

Maillart's narrator is not directly implying that God created the greatness of the land, nor does she refer to a specific god, but she is referring to something holy which is clearly not a human being: "a Universe different in quality, an entirely different world, transcendent and holy" (Eliade, 1988:188–189). Like in Eliade's theory, the symbols of sky, sun, moon, water, stones, and earth play an important role in the travelling narrations, even though the interpretations of the elements differ. Bouvier, however, sees the sun more and more as a symbol of death.²²⁰ "J'avais souvent pensé au soleil, jamais comme à un tueur" (Bouvier, 2014:247), in Eliade: "the moon is often linked to death" (Pals, 1996:172). However, it also reminds one "psychologically of the double nature of our human condition: Rooted in the realm of the profane, the place of shadows and death, we nonetheless long

220 See also Jaton, 2011:39.

for the sacred, the sphere of those things real and undying” (Pals, 1996:173), and in *L’Usage du monde*: “la nuit prend de plus en plus de place dans la vie des voyageurs et d’importance dans le récit du voyage” (Jaton, 2011:39). Besides the symbols of sky, sun and moon, Schwarzenbach’s narrator also connects the greatness and height of the mountain range of Mount Damavand by comparing the mountain to a “son of the sky”: “Es war ein *anderer* Demawend als der, der hier den Ausgang unseres Tales versperret. Dieser ist ein Gigant, ein Unberührbarer, Ungeborener, ein Sohn des Himmels” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:62). The inexpressible, invisible divine is joined by the untouchable and uncrossable: “Und diese Grenzen, diese Barrieren, Flüsse, Wüsten waren für mich und meinesgleichen unüberschreitbar!” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:85). In *Tod in Persien*, Schwarzenbach’s narrator experiences the large country as superhuman: “Asiens desperate Grösse ist übermenschlich: ‘Nicht einmal feindlich, nur zu gross’” (Schwarzenbach, 2003: 11). Although she denies the hostility of the vastness, it becomes deadly in *Das glückliche Tal*: “Hatte etwa eine fremde Hand eingegriffen, ein Zufall, und mich auf diese Spuren der Fremdheit geworfen? – Dieses furchtbare Zwielficht, diese tödliche Grösse! – Das war mir nicht bestimmt, dem war ich nicht gewachsen, nicht ich hatte diesen Weg gewählt” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:58–59).²²¹ The *way* Schwarzenbach’s narrator speaks of can be interpreted as the actual road, but so can the life of a permanent traveller and life in general. Just as people that Bouvier’s narrator met in Afghanistan ask them, “Kodja miri inch’Allah? ... – où t’en vas-tu ainsi si Dieu permet?” (Bouvier, 2014:352) or as Bouvier’s narrator interprets from the inscriptions of the vehicles they see: “Le véritable propriétaire du véhicule, c’est Allah” (Bouvier, 2014:353), the traveller feels led by something divine, feels that the traveller is not the leader of the road and is facing something that could not be created by humans: “aber was wir sahen, war vollkommen und gigantisch und fast übermenschlich” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:36). It is not clear if they refer to a God and if so, to which God they refer, but the power of this God is clear: “the authority of the sacred controls all” (Pals, 1996:166). It may be the patron of the traveller as well. Maillart is not speaking about Saint Christopher, but about: “Imam Reza is the patron saint of travellers and I like to think it was he who helped us the day we left Meshed for the Afghan border”

221 See also Schwarzenbach, 2010:60: “Was vermochte so viel über mich? Welcher Gewalt war ich preisgegeben? Ich war preisgegeben! Mir selbst entfremdet!”

(Maillart, 2013:110) or about Simurgh the noble from the Persian mythology: “And who knows if Simurgh the noble vulture was not among them, keeping watch over us?” (Maillart, 2013:116). Maillart’s reference to Iranian mythology implies the search for self-consciousness and truth at the literal border of the world behind the Demavend and Hindukush, the unreachable place of the world, which made Simurgh realise the connection of the inner and outer world. It also reveals the author’s knowledge of Iranian mythology. Schwarzenbach’s narrator combines earth and sky by meeting a version of the paradise on Earth: “Es ist ein Bild wie aus den Frühzeiten der Erde, und ich will nicht zweifeln, dass die Menschen, [...] sich so und nicht anders den Garten des Paradieses vorstellten” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:64). Bouvier’s narrator also considers an Iranian garden to be an earthly paradise:

Jardin de roses entouré de hauts murs et centré sur un bassin rectangulaire. [...] Mais c’est un paradis abstrait, impondérable: le reflet d’un jardin plutôt qu’un jardin véritable. Le luxe des jardins d’Europe prend en pleine terre et s’empare avec effusion de la plus grande quantité possible de nature. Ceux d’Iran ne pré-tendent pas à cette abondance qui oppresse, mais à ce qu’il faut d’ombre, et à la paix (Bouvier, 2014:227).

Instead of a European garden, the Iranian garden gives him peace. The paradise on Earth is closely experienced by the traveller on the road: “Es war ein vollkommener Platz, dem Paradies benachbart” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:51). Not only paradise is shared by the human and the angel, but also by forces of nature, which do not fear God and the fight for their daily bread. “Der Kampf mit den Wolken, mit dem atemverschlagenden Wind, gegen Kälte und Müdigkeit, gegen gottlose Furcht, der Kampf mit dem Engel und um das tägliche Brot, es ist alles eins, und uns nicht anders bestimmt” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:78–79). Bouvier’s narrator expresses divine greatness through his travel companion: “c’était dans sa nature de penser que d’invisibles rouages, de larges mécaniques célestes travaillant jour et nuit en sa faveur” (Bouvier, 2014:243). Just like archaic peoples in Eliade’s view, the travellers seem to “wish not only to mirror the realm of the sacred but somehow actually to *be in it*” (Pals, 1996:168). In other words, they wish to experience paradise on Earth.

4.9.4 (Abandoned) Hope and Prayers

Hope and prayers are a steady companion in the three works. This cannot be taken for granted, especially in a time of war and post-war. Hope is lost at home in Europe, that is why hope might also be a motive for leaving in the first place:

On the other side of the border, ahead of us, we were to see a way of life that was simple, patriarchal and harmonious, probably because it is still left room for an unknown agent called divine; while at home where, Prometheus-like, men have wrested in all the powers of nature to themselves, life drives everyone to insanity (Maillart, 2013:112).

Although there is no longer a place for the divine in Europe, it might be found behind the border, where people still live in peace:

Daran erinnere ich mich genau: an den sanft verwirrenden Schleier irdischen Taus, und wie ich fröstelnd, von der Hitze des steilen Anstiegs erschöpft, im Gärtlein des Emirs sass und eine junge Bäuerin mir den Wasserkrug an die Lippen setzte. Denn so sind wir, wir erfreuen uns an Perlen, Meeresblau, einer Friedensstunde trotz brausender Brände, sehen über Trümmerfelder hinweg, damit wir alle das gleiche Gebet lernen: Herr, hilf uns, unser Leben zu fristen (Schwarzenbach, 2000:27).

Schwarzenbach generalises the human being as profiting from peaceful moments, being ignorant of the sorrows of the world and enjoying treasures like pearls and the blue of the sea. She prays for everybody studying the prayer to endure one's life. While walking on the open road, she asks herself in the second person singular form: "und du fürchtest den von weissem Flügelschlag begleiteten Weg, möchtest Halt machen, umkehren?" (Schwarzenbach, 2008:158). And again, the narrator answers herself:

Umkehren? Ja, ich möchte umkehren. [...] Ich brauche den Mauerschutz, die Kirchenschwelle, – ach, ein Herdfeuer. Diese Nacht ist zu lang, ich habe vor mir kein Ziel, und würde es, jedenfalls, nie erreichen. Ich bereue. Lieber Gott, ich bereue, Herr, Du hast mich betrogen, und hast für die arme Seele keinen

Trost bereit, – lass mich also Halt machen, sei nachsichtig. Herr, Herr, Herr!
(Schwarzenbach, 2008:158).

In this fragment, the return does not necessarily imply a spatial return back home but may also refer to a return of faith, like a reference to John the Baptist speaking to the people: “Kehrt um zu Gott!” Schwarzenbach praying to God shows that the journey has become a curse that only God could end. Schwarzenbach, who sees her life led by God, is waiting to be released. In *Tod in Persien*, *ars vivendi* becomes *ars moriendi*:

Was mich jetzt hier hält, ist die äusserste Hoffnungslosigkeit. Mich hält die Hand aus den Wolken, und sie wird sich im rechten Augenblick zurückziehen. Darauf warte ich noch – auf nichts anderes, auf keine Abreise, auf keine Heimkehr (Schwarzenbach, 2003:118).

Schwarzenbach is waiting for God's hands to take her: no rebirth of the departure and no end of returning. Her hopelessness seems to be shown in the failing prayer of: “Herr, hilf uns unser Leben zu fristen”. Again, it is the divine's hand that saves the traveller, just like the sky as a symbol in archaic cultures: “The sky conveys a sense of transcendence, of a span raised high above us, something infinite, sovereign, and eternal – full of authority and reality” (Pals, 1996:171). This time, however, the divine hands do not come out of hopelessness and not out of a cloudy sky which takes the traveller, but a handshake from the cloudless sky, so there is still the chance to heal the wounds: “Daran [journey] kann man sterben, wie an irgendeiner Krankheit, – und dann zählt nur noch die aus wolkenfreier Höhe sich neigende, beschwichtigende, zu versöhnendem Gruss ausgestreckte Hand” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:118).

The transcendence and eternity of the landscape and the sky has already been shown in the chapter ‘4.5 Aesthetics of Landscape’. The nomads are also described in this dependence on the power of the sky and Earth, more archaic symbolism:

Denn solche Völker, umgeben von einer kargen und übermächtigen Natur, bewahren sich das Gefühl für Notwendiges und die fromme Abhängigkeit von

den Mächten der Erde und des Himmels. Da wird das einzelne Leben geringer bewertet, man handelt ohne Eile und Ehrgeiz; was aber mit den grösseren, von natürlichen Bedürfnissen vorgeschriebenen Handlungen zusammenhängt, tut man ernst und unwandelbar, wie einen religiösen Akt (Schwarzenbach, 2016:9).

The traveller is constantly making allusions to something bigger than everything guiding the life of the human being: “über nichts bestimmen wir weniger als über unsere Erlebnisse” (Schwarzenbach, 2016:59). This can also be seen in Bouvier’s text with a reference to Proust: “D’ailleurs, nous ne sommes pas juges du temps perdu” (Bouvier, 2014:46). The narrators keep telling themselves and their readers that there must be something more and that there still must be something that happens afterwards, even if they do not know what this might be or what it could look like:

Derrière ce dénuement terrifiant, au-delà de ce point zéro de l’existence et du bout de la route il doit encore y avoir quelque chose. Quelque chose de pas ordinaire, un vrai Koh-i-Nor c’est certain pour être à ce point gardé et défendu. Peut-être cette allégresse originelle que nous avons connue, perdue, retrouvée par instants, mais toujours cherchée à tâtons dans le colin-maillard de nos vies (Bouvier, 1996:136–137).

The traveller is inevitably confronted with death by way of dangers on the journey, including the diseases which the travellers suffer from. They are aware of their limited time on Earth and are thinking less about a time after death, an *ars moriendi*, and more about what kind of power was able to create such a beautiful landscape and form one’s destiny.

4.9.5 Pilgrimage

Pilgrimages are interesting for travelling narrations as they combine journeys and religion. Whereas the travellers in the narrations do not have the intention of being pilgrims, the power of a pilgrimage is fascinating to the traveller, especially Kini: “I had seldom been so moved. I wondered if any of the great pilgrimages in Europe were causing such religious fervour” (Maillart, 2013:107). The divans and the graves of holy people are even fascinating for non-believers:

Once more I am charmed by this atmosphere saturated with a deep peace, and with a richness due, perhaps, not only to the good proportions of the enclosure but also to the mood of pilgrims who through the ages have been inspired by the character of the saint (Maillart, 2013:127–128).

Kini utters her admiration for the person who believes in reincarnation in heaven:

As I once more came in the sight of the golden dome of Meshed, this time with Christina at my side, I envied the state of mind of the faithful who believe that: 'On the day of the resurrection, four of the earlier holy men, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus; and four of the later ones, Mohammed, Ali, Hassan and Hussein will be in the highest heaven and will draw a rope across the front of the throne of God. All those who have made the pilgrimage to the tombs of the Imams will sit on the ground at the foot of the throne; but those who have made the pilgrimage to the grave of the Imam Reza will sit nearest and the favours shown them will be greater than any other. The person who makes a pilgrimage to the Imam Reza will on resurrection day which is of seventy thousand years' duration, have a pulpit of his own placed in front of God's throne and at this pulpit he will sit until God will then take him to Heaven' (Maillart, 2013:102–103).

Pilgrimage remains a distant part of the journey, however, which can be admired by the traveller but not shared. It is nevertheless interesting that all three authors refer to Noah several times:

In einem Dorf hinter der Grenze – von baumbestandenen Kanälen umschlossen, lag es in der einsamen, lepragelben Fläche Persiens, ein schattenloser blauer Berg an seinem Rand glich einem Trugbild des Ararat –, dort, sagten sie mir, liege der Erzvater Noah begraben, in einem Rebengarten (Schwarzenbach, 2000:25),

without commenting on him in more depth or appearing particularly interested: "the tomb of Noah's wife is at Marand: we did not try to see it. But we thought that many myths are at home in this part of the world [...] they [Muhammadans]

maintain that Noah's ship landed on Mount Djoudi in Irak" (Maillart, 2013:59–60). The history of Noah seems to have a subconscious impact on the traveller. Is the story of Noah and his survival not a way to think of the world as a family? Bouvier mentions this idea: "C'est là, au cœur de l'ancienne Arménie, que Noé, dans un bouillonnement d'eaux hostiles, échoua l'Arche dont nous sommes tous sortis" (Bouvier, 2014:126), while Maillart also asks herself if the people will be able to be one family again: "Will it happen again? Shall we all depart but for one who will try to succeed where Noah failed?" (Maillart, 2013:52). This thought helps to overcome the boundaries between countries, races, and cultures if one considers all people his or her relatives. The fact that the travellers are all thinking of the divine and actively engaging with the topic makes their journey a kind of pilgrimage, to a certain extent.

4.10 Journey – Awakening and Parting

*"Le voyage – intérieur où extérieur –
N'a pas de sens s'il n'est pas justement un chambardement constant des attitudes
que l'on avait au départ. Ou un ajustement.
On ne voyage pas pour confirmer un système, mais pour en trouver un meilleur,
auquel on fera bien d'ailleurs de ne pas adhérent trop longtemps.
Ce qui importe c'est le passage"²²²*
Nicolas Bouvier

Within their narrations, the authors reflect upon the ideas and the motives of the journey several times. They put the journey into sentences that are intended to share their wisdom on life, such as: "La vertu d'un voyage, c'est de purger la vie avant de la garnir" (Bouvier, 2014:27). Here, the connection between life, travelling and writing becomes visible once more because "purger la vie" is like a piece of white paper that must be decorated with words. In another similar sentence, Bouvier says, "On voyage pour que les choses surviennent et changent; sans quoi on resterait chez soi" (Bouvier, 2014:158). The journey evokes changes and con-

222 Bouvier, 2004b:165.

stant movement. The traveller needs to be open to that challenge and needs to travel with unobstructed senses in order to profit from the journey. The journey is just as ambiguous as the other motifs of *ars vivendi*. It is the traveller's drive as well as a deadly disease that continues to destroy him. It is his greatest love and his greatest enemy.

4.10.1 The Journey as an Active Voice

L'Usage du monde is such an equivocal expression that it appears designed to start a discussion on the topic. Does Bouvier intend to write instructions on how to use the world? Or could the world take on an active voice, meaning that we would be speaking about the 'usage du monde', the use *of* the world which sneaks under the traveller's skin: "Distraitement, par l'usage qu'on en faisait, Belgrade empoussiérée nous entrait dans la peau" (Bouvier, 2014:26). While the two travellers "used" the city, it is the city that actually used them. That also explains Bouvier's often quoted statement when he writes: "Un voyage se passe de motifs. Il ne tarde pas à prouver qu'il se suffit à lui-même. On croit qu'on va faire un voyage, mais bientôt c'est le voyage qui vous fait, ou vous défait" (Bouvier, 2014:10). Bouvier may refer here to Michaux' phrase, "Non, non, pas acquérir. Voyager pour t'appauvrir" (Michaux, 1981:11). The journey is not passive anymore, but has taken over the active part of the empowered traveller. In Schwarzenbach's narration the narrator implies a similar thought: "Es ist nicht an mir, Gruss und Abschied zu bestimmen und die Grenze zu ziehen zwischen Wirklichkeit und Vision" (Schwarzenbach, 2000: 61).²²³ Schwarzenbach's statement can be read as an invitation for the reader to decide in which way he or she wants to read her literature, or more likely travelling narrations in general. Another option for reading these lines is that Schwarzenbach's narrator is speaking indirectly to the journey, which is speaking for itself. The journey decides the road and the way the traveller is going: "Die Reise verlangt von uns keine Entscheidungen und stellt unser Gewissen vor keine einzige Wahl, die uns schuldig und reuig, demütig und trotzig macht" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:16–17). The traveller becomes the servant of the road: "bin ein treuer Knecht, ich werde alles sehen und meine Pflicht tun, Bericht erstatten, die Reise antreten" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:98), a servant who is just following the path along

223 This quotation has already been discussed in chapter 4.2.1.

which the road takes him. The journey demands the traveller's complete devotion. Otherwise, the traveller would equate himself with the tourist, whom he despises: "die nie anders gereist sind als mit einem sorgfältig vorbereiteten kalten Lunch in der 'Tiffinbox', mit einem Dutzend eisgekühlter Bierflaschen und einem Boy neben dem Chauffeur, der abends das Bad richtet und das Smokinghemd bügelt" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:103).

According to Christine Kanz, who compares Felicitas Hoppe and Yoko Tawada, the place one travels to has an impact on how one sees or even imagines reality: "Erst von einem 'ganz anderen Ort' aus lässt sich 'die' Wirklichkeit neu sehen oder sogar erfinden" (Holdenried, et al., 2017:97). Life is a journey, and a journey is life. It shows the traveller the meaning of reality:

Unser Leben gleicht der Reise..., und so scheint mir die Reise weniger ein Abenteuer und Ausflug in ungewöhnliche Breite zu sein als vielmehr ein konzentriertes Abbild unserer Existenz: ansässig in einer Stadt [...] fühlen wir uns oft allzu sicher, glauben unser Haus für alle Zukunft gebaut, sind leicht verführt, an eine Beständigkeit zu glauben, die dem einen das Altern zum Problem macht, dem anderen jede Veränderung äusserer Umstände als Katastrophe erscheinen lässt (Schwarzenbach, 2000:31–32).

Like life itself, the journey is a difficult lesson that the traveller is going through, and that has nothing in common with light adventures:

Die Reise aber, die vielen als ein leichter Traum, als ein verlockendes Spiel, als die Befreiung vom Alltag, als Freiheit schlechthin erscheinen mag, ist in Wirklichkeit gnadenlos, eine Schule, dazu geeignet, uns an den unvermeidlichen Ablauf zu gewöhnen, an Begegnen und Verlieren, hart auf hart (Schwarzenbach, 2000:34).

And with life also comes death. That is why the journey can be fatal as well: "Daran kann man sterben [Reise], wie an irgendeiner Krankheit" (Schwarzenbach, 2008:118), as can its side effects, such as homesickness: "Die Glocken von Kiew! – Lässt man seinen Kameraden an solchen Giften sterben? [...] Carl Bergner –, starb auch er an Haschisch und Heimweh?" (Schwarzenbach, 2010: 194–195). The journey changes its reputation among travellers for being adven-

turous: “Zuerst hiess es Abenteuer, dann war es Heimweh, dann begann ich, mich zu fürchten” (Schwarzenbach, 2003:113). What is Schwarzenbach afraid of at that point? Homesickness, as has been discussed in the earlier chapter, yes, but it is more than that. She discloses it shortly afterwards: “Vorbei, zu Ende die Abenteuer, aber tausend Wirklichkeiten sind zu bestehen” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:114). The journey changes from being adventurous to being real. The journey shows the traveller reality until he or she forgets that it was intended to be an adventure: “Was ist, in eurer Vorstellung, das Abenteuer? Dieses Wort sagt mir nichts” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:97). Keeping Bouvier’s words in mind: “c’est le voyage qui vous fait, ou vous défait”, the journey is not only an experiment of self-discovery, but also of self-destruction, and the traveller is not able to defend him or herself: “Cela n’a pas de sens d’aller en visite avec un pistolet. Encore moins lorsqu’on sait mal s’en server. Nous étions partis pour voir le monde, pas pour lui tirer dessus” (Bouvier, 2014:166). And finally, the journey is questioned: “Ce voyage? Un gâchis... un échec. On voyage, on est libre, on va vers l’inde... et après?” (Bouvier, 2014:235). Bouvier had already given an answer to his question earlier: “Aucun besoin d’intervenir; la route travaille pour vous. On souhaiterait qu’elle s’étende ainsi, en dispensant ses bons offices, non seulement jusqu’à l’extrémité de l’Inde, mais plus loin encore, jusqu’à la mort” (Bouvier, 2014:53).

The journey is the endless research of one’s origin: “on n’en finit pas de chercher son père” and simultaneously it destroys relationships to touchable origins: “et j’avais un peu perdu le mien [père] – le vrai – voix et visage le long de la route” (Bouvier, 1996:145).

Though, as much as the journey is destruction, it is also an engine of life: “Le Voyage, les surprises, les tribulations, cette mystique du chemin si vivace au cœur des Orientaux et dont nous aurons si souvent profité” (Bouvier, 2014:230). Bouvier constantly plays with this ambivalence: “On s’aperçoit que si les voyages forment la jeunesse, ils la font bien passer aussi. Bref, on s’aigrit”, (Bouvier, 2014: 369). Not only an engine, but as has been mentioned earlier, a school of life. Kini very clearly addresses the successful schooling she went through in the beginning of *The Cruel Way*:

I am glad that I left home when I was young and followed the wake of the subtle Ulysses, glad to have lived the sea and the desert [...] glad I accomplished most of what I set out to do: once and for all I know how short-lived the joys of

vanity are. Now, like a spider that has spread its web to the end of the branches, my horizon has been enlarged: as if I had left everywhere something spun out of myself, I am directly stirred by what happens along the far-flung threads of my experience (Maillart, 2013:45).

The experience of the elements and of life on the water and on land can always be enlarged on the journey itself and on the journey of life.

4.10.2 The Journey's Best Part: The Departure

Although the journey is criticised and questioned at a certain point, as for example this repetition in *Alle Wege sind offen* reveals: “Es lohnt sich nicht die Mühe. Es lohnt sich nicht die Mühe” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:88) or in a text by Maillart, who writes directly: “But travelling is questioning” (Maillart, 2013:37), the departure gives the impression that the journey is a positive event: “Der Aufbruch, die nie bereute Stunde” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:157). It is not the goal that evokes a feeling of triumph, but the departure that does, according to *Alle Wege sind offen*: “Die Fanfare des Aufbruchs – und ein schöner Tag” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:98).²²⁴ The moment of departure is full of relish. Not least of all because the departure can also always be compared to a border crossing and turning over a new leaf (*purger la vie*) by starting a new life and inevitably leaving the past behind: “Je pensais aux neuf vies proverbiales du chat; j’avais bien l’impression d’entrer dans la deuxième” (Bouvier, 2014:11). Bouvier repeats that thought throughout the rest of the journey: “Le départ est comme une nouvelle naissance et mon monde était encore trop neuf pour se plier à une réflexion méthodique” (Bouvier, 2014:146). Desire, which has been already discussed in the motif landscapes, reaches its climax at the departure: “Begierde, den Strassen zu folgen, den weissen Spuren, den Flüssen – Begierde, die Städte zu entdecken, die Oasen, die goldenen Dome über Palmen – oh, unstillbarer Durst!” (Schwarzenbach, 2010:51). Bouvier also compares the journey and food:

L’humeur du jour qui était répartie sur des hectares de campagne se concentre dans les premières gorgées de vin, dans la nappe de papier qu’on crayonne,

224 See also Schwarzenbach, 2008:157: “Aufbruch ist Fanfarenklang”.

dans les mots qu'on prononce. Une salivation émotive accompagne l'appétit, qui prouve à quel point dans la vie de voyage, les nourritures du corps et celles de l'esprit ont partie liée. Projets et mouton grillé, café turc et souvenirs (Bouvier, 2014:51).

The pleasure and desire of the journey are close to the necessity of eating and drinking, and at the same time, they are triggered by experiences of new flavours. Like the journey itself, the departure begins to sway when it becomes an addiction:

Zuerst nennen wir das: starke Eindrücke empfangen. Wir sind hingegeben der grossen Landschaft, ihren herrlichen Farben und reinen Formen, ihrer königlichen Eigenart. Wir empfinden fremdartige Lebensweisen, zuerst mit Neugierde, bald mit Widerstand; aber wie der Widerstand von uns weicht, wissen wir schon nicht mehr. [...] Kluge reisen rechtzeitig nach Hause. Aber viele sind schwach und ich bin 'der Schwächsten einer' (Schwarzenbach, 2003:74).

The departure is also compared to the feeling of falling in love, but this exciting feeling leaves the traveller at some point. Further encounters with one and the same place cannot be experienced the same way the first ones were. That is why Maillart writes: "This was my fifth journey to the East. I knew the way as far as Herat in Afghanistan, so till then I could not be entranced by the feeling of discovery" (Maillart, 2013:26). The awakening gives no satisfaction anymore because the need to depart is insatiable:

Dies, – Palmenhain, zarter Dunst, Heimkehr versprechendes Grün, und die Meeresküste, ich habe alles, alles erreicht, – und getrennt vom herben Atem des Hindukusch den Tod verspürt. Das Ende von Etwas. Ich weiss es, – und vernehme noch die Namen – und ruhmlose, die unsterbliche Zärtlichkeit, die tiefste Bewegung? Und nie genug! (Schwarzenbach, 2008:177).

The need to depart again, to start a new journey is comparable here to an addiction: to an unreachable status, as the ideal status is always changing. At this point, the connection to *ars vivendi* is close: "Lebenskunst ist nicht das, was wir haben, sondern das, was uns fehlt und immer wieder auf terrible Weise fehlen

wird" (Schmid, 1998:94). And the key to travelling literature probably cannot be expressed better than in this sentence, in which Schmid tries to define *ars vivendi*. It is exactly this feeling of lacking something that shapes travelling literature and which can be summarised very well by the Portuguese word *saudade*, the longing for infinite and always new journeys on the one hand, and nostalgia and the longing for home on the other. The departure is, therefore, not necessarily entirely positive. Restlessness and the continuous need to depart can become a curse and an emptiness:

Du arme Seele, hast genug Rede und Antwort gestanden, hast, vielleicht vergeblich, alles versucht, die Goldschmelze, den Stein der Weisen, – und bis jetzt ohne Gebet und Segen entlassen. Alle Wege offen, die Wüste baumlos, die Horizonte ohne Hindernis, – und du bereust? – Möchtest es stockenden Atems hören: 'Reise mit Gott', wie man es früher einem treuen Sohn, einem lieben Kind, dem Abschied nehmenden Freund zu sagen pflegte, – und seine Stirn küsste, seine Augen zum letzten Mal mit Tränen benetzte, und ihm ein Amulett umhing, das Bild der Jungfrau oder des Drachentöters. Aber du hast es doch mehr als einmal erfahren: Aufbruch ist Fanfarenklang, und immer unwiderruflich, das Herz leer wie die Brunnentiefe und ihr trügerisches Spiegelbild, – vor dir das Nichts, ringsum trauernde Felder, Wintererde, klirrende Schollen, die düsteren Vogelschwärme, Dörfer aus Lehm, frierender Rauch, am Wegrand die hungernden Kinder, immer bereit, mit Steinen zu werfen (Schwarzenbach, 2008:157).

This fragment from *Die vierzig Säulen der Erinnerung* describes the departure from Kabul for the Indian border. Kabul was the initial aim of that journey, but it is only a pit stop because the journey is ending, however the departure is always repeated. The departure contains the goal that is never reachable, at least not on Earth, as the previous chapter discussed. These stones, however, that the kids are prepared with at the wayside, are part of survival, they feed the traveller and make him or her stronger:

Ich bin ja nicht genügsam, will jeden Tag das Einzige und das Letzte, und lebe von Brot und Steinen, Daseinskampf, Himmelnahrung. Das Einzige und das Letzte, – und du warst, gnädig-irdische Begegnung, genug und zuviel, ge-

eignet mein Herz zu wappnen und meine geballten und kalten Hände mit nichts zu füllen als zärtlicher Ohnmacht. Aber wie ich lebte! (Schwarzenbach, 2008:159).

The departure, like birth and death, is a never-ending farewell and a steady companion to the traveller for all of his or her life, which is also symbolic. Like the ever-returning moon in the archaic religion²²⁵ as hope for personal renewal and immortality, the departure becomes an ever returning necessity for the journey. The departure can be also interpreted as a refuge: a refuge from facing things. Not only in terms of the decision to first start the journey, but also during the journey itself. When the travellers of *L'Usage du monde* are returning to their hotel in Prilep, the electricity goes out, which happens regularly according to the barber, Eyoub, who had invited them there that evening. This is of little interest to the travellers, however, as they are leaving the next day: “Nous bien sûr, la gaieté nous est facile: nos valises sont faites et nous partons demain” (Bouvier, 2014:77). The traveller does not need to face such problems, as he has the freedom of choice, the possibility of leaving a place at any time. Finding refuge from the Self is more difficult:

We were both travellers – she always running away from an emotional crisis (not seeing that she was already wishing for the next), I always seeking far afield the secret of harmonious living, or filling up time by courting risk, caught by the clean sharp ‘taste’ it gives to life (Maillart, 2013:75).

What Kini says here about her companion, Christina, describes the refuge from the Self and the circumstances that can be a motive to start a journey, but can also be seen in any departure within the journey. Perhaps Christina is searching for a refuge, but still looking for a harmonious life as Kini does. The free choice that the traveller has to depart is one of his or her biggest gifts, independent of the reason he or she travels.

225 See Pals, 1996:173.

4.10.3 The Journey's Hidden Part: The Return

To experience the departure as this special and specific moment, the journey needs to come to an end. Only at the finished stage or the end of a journey can the traveller depart again:

Der bewusste Gebrauch der Lüste kann darin bestehen, sie zu vielfältigen und zu intensivieren, sie jedoch auch im Maß zu halten und nicht auf einmal aufzuzehren. Die vorsätzliche Begrenzung der Lüste hält die Sehnsucht nach ihrem Genuss wach, denn Sehnsucht gilt nur einem Gut, das nicht beliebig verfügbar ist. Die Begrenzung ist ein Signum der Selbstmächtigkeit, und vom Selbst hängt es ab, die Grenzen aufrecht zu erhalten, sie durchlässig zu gestalten, sie aufzulösen oder sie anders zu ziehen (Schmid, 2005:43).

It is interesting that travelling narrations usually exclude the return. They end on the road, just as they started. The never-ending chain of departure, arrival, departure is thus not broken by the structure of the text. How is it even possible to speak about the return, then? Schwarzenbach's *Alle Wege sind offen* includes such a narration about the way back to Switzerland. One can only speculate whether she herself would have added the text to her travelling narration about Afghanistan. It does not really suit the genre and especially not Schwarzenbach, whose narrator repeatedly states in her narration that there is no way to turn back home. There is little possibility to compare the texts with each other regarding this aspect, as neither Bouvier nor Schwarzenbach write about the return in the other travelling narrations. The journey ends when it ends, and the return back does not count as part of the journey anymore: "Ich möchte, dass dieser Wald von Säulen sich auflöse und weghebe. [...] Aber es war keine Täuschung. Ich habe mich nicht geirrt. Es war, was ich soeben erzählt habe, eine wirkliche Reise, und eine gelungene, nun glücklich abgeschlossene im Hafen von Suez" (Schwarzenbach, 2008: 177).

It is nevertheless interesting to have a closer look at the few pages that are dedicated to the return. Maillart includes two pages of her 313-page book, *Oasis interdites*, about the flight back home:

Ce retour en avion reste pour moi un souvenir surtout ahurissant. [...] Quel contraste prodigieux que de sauter des vingt à deux mille kilomètres par jour

sans transition! J'avais tellement pris l'habitude de me déplacer comme on le faisait il y a mille ans au pas lent des chameaux, que maintenant j'ai peine à réaliser que chaque jour je survole de nouveaux pays, habités par des races différentes. Les siècles d'histoire, les berceaux des religions, tout me semble si ramassé sur un petit espace, après que de Pékin aux Indes, l'Asie m'ait paru sans fin. Et malgré la petitesse de ce continent européen, plus que jamais la mécontente règne entre ses occupants... Pourtant ils ont tout de l'eau douce et de l'herbe sur leurs terres (Maillart, 2002:311).

The perception of time and space are contrary to what has been experienced on the journey. The world suddenly becomes so small; the borders between the countries and landscapes and the changes of culture and religion cannot be recognised. The way one travels seems to be of decisive importance. The touristic mode of going by plane or ship does not include any of the motifs of *ars vivendi* that can be found in the narrations. Schwarzenbach also only writes a few pages about her return in *Alle Wege sind offen* and *Die vierzig Säulen der Erinnerung*. It can be guessed from the small number of pages that describe the return in comparison to the long way of the arrival that everything that happens on that journey back home happens extremely fast. Schwarzenbach is travelling home by ship, another quick mode of travel, in comparison to her arrival:

Die Reise durch den Suez-Kanal – Von dieser Reise ist nicht viel zu berichten. Es ist der gewöhnliche Heimweg der Schiffe aus Indien, die von Bombay bis Genua ungefähr dreizehn Tage brauchen, und in Aden, Port Said Halt machen, vielleicht noch in Massaua, einem italienischen Hafen in Eritrea (Schwarzenbach, 2000:132).

Schwarzenbach seems to experience culture shock from the tourist's mode of travel: "Ägypten in zwölf Stunden, für fünfeinhalb Pfund Sterling!" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:134). The places that she sees remain devoid of emotions to the narrator: "Die ganze, recht hässliche Stadt bestand aus Warendepots, Zoll- und Amtsgebäuden, Exporthäusern und pseudoitalienischen Cafeterias [...]. Das ist alles, was ich von Eritrea gesehen habe" (Schwarzenbach, 2000:132). The colourful descriptions of the long way to Kabul are covered in complete darkness: "Wir brauchten durch das Rote Meer vier Tage. Nie habe ich einen so düsteren Himmel

gesehen!” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:133). A similarly depressing atmosphere is created in the places of the return in *Die vierzig Säulen der Erinnerung*: “Dort, und in Port Said und Aden, habe ich fürchterliche Stunden verbracht, und sie schon wieder vergessen, gründlich vergessen. Man erinnere mich nur nicht an das eritreische Massaua und den auf allen Schildern zu lesenden Namen Addis Abeba!” (Schwarzenbach, 2008:177).

The hours on the sea are described as pleasant, though, and Schwarzenbach’s narrator addresses the motif of the river again, as well as the two banks while travelling through the Suez Canal:

Hingegen war die Fahrt durch den Suez-Kanal, die Niemanden erstaunt, weil das Wort so geläufig ist und zur Geographiestunde gehörte, – diese Fahrt war wunderbar, wunderbar, – als trage sie sich ausserhalb unserer Welt zu. Und war doch in der Welt, – nämlich zwischen afrikanischen Wüsten ein schmaler, blaugeschliffener Weg, eine Rinne mit unaufhörlich rieselnden Sandufern und Möwen, – ja, es waren Möwen wie in Stockholm und am Zürichsee, die auf und nieder schossen, hungrig wie kleine Falken, zwischen der weissen Wand unseres Dampfers Biancamano und den winzigen Booten aegyptischer Fellachen. Ihr sprühendes Gelächter, ihre Rosenlippen im schwarzen Knabengesicht aus Ebenholz, und wie sie den mageren Oberkörper vorneigten, wie um das sich schwellende Segel zu beschleunigen! – Ach, der jubelnde und gedankenlose, der selige Wettkampf! (Schwarzenbach, 2008:178).

The narrator finds herself in between the two banks, and the metaphor of the river appears again. The journey that seems to be pleasant and promising is interrupted by the end of the narrator’s dream, in which it becomes clear that she is travelling into the war and that she is worried about how the people at home will welcome her:

Von was aber spreche ich eigentlich? – Und bin so erschüttert, so ehrlich, – so von Träumen und Säulen trunken, als sei es gleichgültig, in der nächsten Stunde zu sterben, das Liebste zu verlieren, – gleichgültig, mir ein- und dasselbe, ob sie mich noch verstehen, meine armen Brüder, mir freundlich gesinnt sind, oder schon ihren eigenen Schmerz deswegen folgen, während ich noch aus tiefem Schlaf geschreckt an der Brüstung stehe, am Ausgang des Kanals, wohl

wissend: diese grau bewegte, schaumgekrönte, für dein Auge von verhangenen Horizontlinien begrenzte Fläche ist das Mittelmeer, ist fast schon die so bitter verwünschte und ersehnte Heimatküste, ist eine Art von Versprechungen, versprochenes Land (Schwarzenbach, 2008:178–179).

The long-missed and familiar Mediterranean Sea is suddenly covered in grey. The fear arises that the promised land may not be as promising anymore, and the return is shrouded in a heavily loaded uncertainty. Surely, this has to do with World War II here, which the narrator will face when coming to Europe. It also stands for a return after a long journey, though, in which part of the traveller dies: He or she is leaving behind another life, but the life “at home” has continued in the meantime. Thus, the traveller will not return to the place he or she left. The journey has formed the prefiguration of the individual.

4.10.4 The Traveller on the Road

Due to all of the brutality on the journey, one may ask why the traveller is taking part in it at all, when the armchair traveller avoids all such difficulties on the journey. However, it seems that such awful moments open the traveller’s eyes, just as Bouvier recognises inexpressible life running through his veins as cockroaches are run over his face: “Des cancrelats à demi noyés nous passaient en trombe sur la figure. Avec des grognements de plaisir, on sentait la fatigue lâcher prise, la nuit nous quitter, et revenir la vie ineffable” (Bouvier, 2014:260). The narrators’ most important argument is the sensitivity of the five senses: “Man kann, was man nicht mit eigenen Augen gesehen und umarmt hat, nicht wirklich lieben; selbst Sehnsucht ist immer nur verströmende, verblutende Einsamkeit” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:115). As much as the traveller may hate the journey, Bouvier’s narrator first expresses his feeling of hate through the Asian flies: “J’aurai longtemps vécu sans savoir grand-chose de la haine. Aujourd’hui j’ai la haine des mouches. [...] Aux mouches d’Asie s’entend, car, qui n’a pas quitté l’Europe n’a pas voix au chapitre” (Bouvier, 2014:323). Kini complains about them too: “And the millions of flies are far too sticky and affectionate” (Maillart, 2013:59). The travellers also deeply love the journey, as books cannot replace the in-person meeting with the culture, the border, freedom, time and space, the people, home, or religion. Besides reading and writing, the traveller needs to be active on the journey in order to live, understand and use the world: “Und ich wusste jetzt, was mich vorher

Bücher und Landkarte nur ungenügend gelehrt hatten [...]. Und ich sah diesen Bereich zum ersten Mal” (Schwarzenbach, 2000:36). The traveller must leave a place with traces on his own personality, otherwise the journey did not really take place:

Il a pourtant vu toute l’Europe, la Russie, la Perse, mais sans jamais vouloir céder au voyage en pouce de son intégrité. Surprenant programme! conserver son intégrité? rester intégralement le benêt qu’on était? aussi n’a-t-il pas vu grand-chose, parce que le kilo de chair de Shylock – je le sais maintenant – pas de pays qui ne l’exige (Bouvier, 2014:367).

The journey does not need any reason. Just as Bouvier’s narrator says, “Un voyage se passe de motifs” (Bouvier, 2014:10), and as Maillart’s narrator says in *Oasis interdites*:

[...] mais ce qui importe, c’est moi, qui vis au centre du monde. Ce moi qui n’a pas encore eu le temps d’accomplir quelque chose de valable, quelque chose qui me prolonge, me sauve du néant et satisfasse – ne serait-ce que petitement – à ce goût de l’éternel qui m’habite. Mais, pour le satisfaire, quel bizarre moyen je prends en faisant vingt-cinq kilomètres par jour pendant des mois... Une fois de plus, comme au cours des nombreuses heures vides de ce voyage, je me demande ce qui me pousse vers les quatre coins du monde? Oui, je sais, je veux voir toujours du nouveau et je répète avec le poète: ‘Mais le vrais voyageurs sont ceux-là seuls qui partent pour partir; cœurs légers, semblables aux ballons de leur fatalité jamais ils ne s’écartent et sans savoir pourquoi, disent toujours: Allons! (Maillart, 2002:281).

The traveller travels in order to travel: in order to move. This is not realisable from the armchair at home, nor within the book that the traveller reads, but it helps her to understand its meaning in addition to the experienced journey. It is thus not only the names that the journey makes come alive, but also the literature read by the traveller, which becomes much clearer and easier to understand after experiencing its meaning on one’s own.

Those experiences also include the danger of discomfort on the journey: the fear of suffering from diseases the body is not familiar with or of accidents. Bouvier’s

narrator, for example, cuts four fingers of his left hand down to the knuckle in a ventilator:

Nous n'avions plus de cigarettes, en outre, la fièvre me rendait si maladroit que j'engageai la main gauche dans le ventilateur qui m'entailla quatre doigts jusqu'à l'os et m'envoya dinguer sur la route, le soufflé coupé par la douleur (Bouvier, 2014:317).

The fear of others is seldomly expressed in the narrations. Only once does Bouvier's narrator announce his fear directly:

Il est temps de faire ici un peu de place à la peur. En voyage, il y a ainsi des moments où elle survient, et le pain qu'on mâchait reste en travers de la gorge. Lorsqu'on est trop fatigué, ou seul depuis trop longtemps, ou dans l'instant de dispersion qui succède à une poussée de lyrisme, elle vous tombe dessus au détour d'un chemin comme une douche glacée. Peur du mois qui va suivre, des chiens qui rodent la nuit autour des villages en harcelant tout ce qui bouge, des nomades qui descendent à votre rencontre en ramassant des cailloux, ou même, peur du cheval qu'on a loué à l'étape précédente, une brute vicieuse peut-être et qui a simplement cache son jeu (Bouvier, 2014:97–98).

As a method of overcoming such moments and thoughts, he uses humour as his best defence. Travel author Tiziano Terzani had an experience that caused him to come to a similar conclusion:

E lì – secondo quella grande lezione che ti ho poi insegnato, che se uno ti punta un fucile in faccia, sorridi! – cominciai a ridere e, tirando fuori il mio passaporto italiano, che allora era verde e che tenevo sempre in tasca, mi sono messo – chissà perché – a gridare in cinese 'No, sono italiano! Sono un giornalista italiano, italiano!' (Terzani, 2006:136).

Laughing as a method of communication, which was discussed in the chapter regarding the Other, becomes a method of survival. The art of surviving on the road may simply lie in the ability to smile and laugh and in communication in general. His reaction of laughter saved him from being shot in Cambodia. Bouvier's

narrator is talking about a similar experience with the lieutenant Pottinger of the English West Indian Company:

[...] qui, à l'époque de Bonaparte, parcourait le pays sous un déguisement que les Baloutchs ne manquaient pas de percer à jour, sauva sa vie dans quelques occasions difficiles en mettant les rieurs de son côté. Cette gaieté est une vertu cardinale. Plusieurs fois à Quetta, j'ai vu des vieillards d'une grand noblesse tomber de leur vélo Raleigh, terrassés par les rires, parce qu'une plaisanterie lancée d'une boutique les avait atteints au cœur (Bouvier, 2014:287).

The power of laughing seems not only to be a key to good communication, but also to surviving on the road, and a sensibilisation for those who have forgotten how to smile: "Au bout d'un moment, on éprouvait un intérêt compatissant pour ces gens qui avaient désappris le rire et, à cause de cela, paraissaient si démunis" (Bouvier, 2014:340).

5 Arrival – Pit Stop

The journey is never complete. Every aim, every goal is just another step achieved: an episode in life. And so, this conclusion does not end this work. It leads to an arrival on the last page, which inevitably causes another departure and another: a continuation of “the examined”, and therefore more of a pit stop than a final destination.

At this pit stop, the dissertation can present new approaches in travel literature studies by reading the travel texts as narrations, by creating the new term travelling narration and by comparing and combining it to an *ars vivendi*. It follows Ottmar Ette’s *Literaturwissenschaft als Lebenswissenschaft* and continues the narratological discussion of Bekim Agai and Stephan Conermann.

The traveller is always on the move and so is literature, travelling literature in particular. Instead of reading the three examined books *The Cruel Way*, *Alle Wege sind offen* and *L’Usage du monde* as travel reports and focussing on the authors who have travelled on the route and written the texts, the books have been examined here as narrations, in which the distinction of fiction and fact and the historical background do not dominate the method of interpretation. Rather than focussing on what the text may say about the author, this research looks at what the narrator tells the implied reader. To emphasise the movement in Bouvier’s, Schwarzenbach’s and Maillart’s books and the meaning of movement in this time of accelerated globalisation, the more active term *travelling narration* has been proposed. The research discusses the strong connection between the journey and life. Be-

sides the journey and life, the terms and actions travelling, writing, and reading have been found to be inseparably linked. This opened up the idea of putting the travelling narration into context with the term *ars vivendi* and initiated a new approach in comparative literature: to read the travelling narration within the concept of Wilhelm Schmid's philosophy of *ars vivendi*. I would like to recall the question posed by Ottmar Ette which stands at the beginning of this journey: "What, then, does literature want? What can it do?" (Ette, 2016:4). The answer in this research lies in the way of reading the texts, of setting the texts in motion. This implies the importance of reading, which the narratological examination of this research has proven with regards to the narratee. The ten motifs that have been defined with the aid of Schmid's philosophy of *ars vivendi* provide answers to the second part of the question, "And what can it contribute to meet globalization's challenges to find new, imaginative answers that will lead the way out of the blind alleys of thought?" (Ette, 2016:4). The travelling narration from the perspectives of transarea and life science can only "do" something if they are read and more precisely, if they are read in this context of *ars vivendi*.

Travelling Narration

Before creating the new term *travelling narration*, this work gives an overview of and organises the numerous terms, genres, and categories that already exist to describe various travel texts. This did not solve the probably impossible as well as unnecessary task of strictly defining and distinguishing several travel genres – but opened up a new perspective from which to read the discussed works. The travelling narration looks at the text from a narratological perspective that distinguishes the author, narrator, and protagonist within the narration. Thanks to this method, the texts could be examined apart from their authors' backgrounds and history, which also opens up the possibility of looking at the texts written by three Swiss authors from a transareal perspective, namely from the perspective of narrators that have travelled in many different parts of the world and do not necessarily define themselves as Swiss anymore.

The examination also highlighted the amount of intertextual usage and intermediality within the narrations and created different "landscapes": iconic, phonic, and tangible landscapes that could be observed in the texts. Those characteristics of the travelling narration have strengthened earlier theories that travelling, writ-

ing, and reading are inseparably linked. The travelling narrations therefore need to be examined within a chain of tradition, as travelling literature always builds on earlier travelling texts.

The different landscapes that one can find within the narrations make the texts vivid but also address the limits of language and the discourse of mimesis. The problematic of describing only with words becomes clear through intermediality, for example when paintings and photography but also the style of “writing with colours and sounds” are included. Furthermore, this specific way of travelling and writing brings attention to the importance of travelling (writing and reading) with the five senses. Travelling and thus writing and reading mean experiencing the world by seeing, feeling, hearing, tasting, and smelling “the experienced”. The travelling narration is literature on the move. It reveals movement within the movement: It thematises movement through the protagonist as a traveller and through the movement within the genre as a tradition of travelling literature in the form of the books that are physically travelling with the protagonists and the narrators, taking their implied reader with them on the journey.

The narratee also finds their place in the narratological examination because a narration asks for a narratee. The travelling narration has shown that names on a map only come alive through personal experiences of a place. The narrator needs a narratee that he or she can tell the story to, thus a travelling narration can only survive when it is heard. Even if the narrators claim that the knowledge of life cannot be taught exclusively in books, their narrations transmit important knowledge that may help the respective reader to find or at least to think about his or her *ars vivendi*.

Ars vivendi

The ambiguity that has been found in the travelling narration can be also observed in *ars vivendi*. It leads us to an *ars vivendi* of happiness, which inevitably includes an *ars vivendi* of disappointments and unhappiness. I would like to repeat Schmid’s statement at this point: “Lebenskunst ist nicht das, was wir haben, sondern das, was uns fehlt und immer wieder auf terrible Weise fehlen wird” (Schmid, 1998:94). This lack that the traveller continuously experiences, a lack of friendship, home, words, freedom, time, and belief, is probably the key to an aim that Ette calls *Babel heureuse*:

[...] nicht nur Logos, sondern auch Mythos im Sinne eines glücklich verwirrten Babel, dessen zentrierender, den Versuch einer einsprachigen Machtergreifung repräsentierender Turm nicht länger im Zentrum stünde. Die unendliche Differenz der Sprachen wäre in Babel heureuse, im glücklichen Babel kein Ärgernis und kein Hindernis mehr, sondern die Chance, möglichst viele Logiken zum Sprechen zu bringen und zwischen ihnen jene Reibung herzustellen, welche die Lust in der Kohabitation mit dem Anderen erzeugt. Diese Lust wäre gleichzeitig physisch und psychisch, körperlich und geistig, ein simultanes Zusammensein und 'Woanderssein' (Ette, 2004:126).

Doesn't that explain the incessant need for every single departure after the arrival at the goal, which in some cases has been a moment dreamt of for a long time? The answer is the road that counts; this "in-between" in between every single one of the discussed aspects. This in-betweenness might be a *modus vivendi* that Butor already spoke about. Writing on the road can be seen as a road to *ars vivendi*, the life that we are living between birth and death.

It is wrong to expect *ars vivendi* to transmit the complete happiness of a human being, which more than likely does not exist, in the travelling narration. The texts have proven that the journey is not at all about perfection. The texts reveal though that every person needs to find his or her *ars vivendi* in a world on the move. The journey becomes an allegory for the road of life itself; it cannot be taken literally. Not every human being can travel, nor does everybody have the wish to do so. That is also what the travellers have learned on their journeys and what Bouvier directly addresses in his contribution to a "literature voyageuse" just a few years before his death: "grand voyage ou petit voyage, Chine centrale ou Suisse orientale, le voyage n'étant pas affaire de kilomètres mais d'état d'esprit. Une fois gagné ce point central, reste à raconter avec les moyens du bord ce qui s'y passe, ou plutôt, le peu qu'on en aura compris" (Borer et al., 1992:42). A journey can appear in many different forms, and every individual needs to find his or her own journey. Independent of which journey one may decide on, the individual motives are what's important, which in this case, the autodiegetic narrator has transmitted to the reader. The travel book as an *ars vivendi* of the author became a travelling narration transmitting *ars vivendi* to its readership.

Ten motifs

Thanks to the comparison of the three texts, ten motifs could be found to characterise the travelling narration: *Culture, Crossing Borders, Freedom, Time and Space, the Aesthetics of Landscapes, Writing and Reading, the Self and/as the Other, Home, Religion and Spirituality* as well as *the Journey*. These motifs can be all interpreted using Schmid's philosophy of *ars vivendi*. The importance of each individual motif does not only apply in the 1930s or 1950s but also transmits important findings for living together today and in the future. Such findings cover the continuous movement of culture, which is never static, among other things. Movement is a condition of travelling and experiencing the world, and culture also depends on this movement.

In order to understand not only different cultures but the Other (and at the same time the Self), it is necessary to change perspectives, to look at the world and its inhabitants through different eyes. The texts show that the journey helps the traveller clear his or her mind of a prefigurative way of thinking. This "clear mind" is needed for a successful convivence within cultures on the move. The river has emerged as a useful metaphor on the journey to describe the meeting with the Other. Literature not only builds bridges leading across the water, but uses the water which touches both banks of the river as a metaphor for a culture that is intermingling and in constant movement and transformation. Examples have shown that the meeting and communication with the Other is inevitable and significant to experiencing and getting to know the world, the Other and the Self. Especially verbal communication often fails due to a missing common language. On the other hand, the instances in which the traveller finds an interlocutor with a common language reveal the importance of a verbal communication. However, other mediums such as music and painting enable people on the road to understand each other without words. Furthermore, smiling or laughing became a method of survival throughout the texts.

Most interesting is the ambiguity that can be observed in *ars vivendi* as well as in the travelling narration. The following examples of the ambiguity of the single motifs also may offer answers that "lead the way out of the blind alleys of thought": Boundaries can only be crossed if they exist, and a common ground can be only found through differences. If boundaries and differences disappear, there can be no variety anymore and community loses its value. A night in prison may cause one to discover or rediscover freedom, but there is no such thing as a state of

total freedom either, especially not in a world that seems to offer endless choices. Without time and space, the suffix, *-lessness* has no meaning. Time needs to be valued in order to be able to be released. Infinity can only be seen and felt with the acceptance of the finite. *Ars vivendi* and the travelling narration have shown that limitation, and especially the limitation of time, is necessary for giving the time lived and experienced a significance. Nature and landscape gain importance, if one can compare them to the grey buildings in the cities. To find or invent, *finden* or *erfinden*, there need to be other cultures and other people with whom to find the common ground in a community. This may be transmitted through books but cannot be taught exclusively with them. Bouvier's narrator in *Le vide et le plein* explains this very well:

Gosse, j'aimais beaucoup L'Île mystérieuse de Jules Verne et je comprends mieux maintenant pourquoi. Notre condition spirituelle ressemble à celle des naufragés du livre: ce dont on manque on doit le fabriquer ou le trouver soi-même. Vous aurez beau chercher chez vos meilleurs auteurs et chez les saints, cela précisément qui manque, vous ne le trouverez pas. Des encouragements, des provisions de route peut-être, mais c'est à vous de découvrir où vous allez et pourquoi (Bouvier, 2004b:170).

One must see, meet, and experience otherness in order to grow from it. Without forgetting, it is not possible to memorise, and sometimes memorising and writing something down can help to forget and still communicate the knowledge gained to the Other. The meaning of home and the understanding of what and where home is only becomes visible from a distance. The departure of a journey asks for an arrival and the arrival for a departure. Sometimes it may help to believe in something, and the individual needs to find out by him- or herself who or what to believe in. The travelling narration reveals that the Earth consists of elements that the individual must respect and take care of. Thanks to the comparison of the authors, the motifs of *ars vivendi* and the travelling narration were able to be defined, and they have proven that the narration, as well as the philosophy of *ars vivendi*, is full of ambiguity, and this ambiguity makes up the genre in all its facets.

Next departure

A proposal for further research is the examination and comparison of *ars vivendi* and travelling narrations from earlier centuries as well as the 21st century. It would be remarkably interesting to see if the motifs change with the time, and if that is the case, how this occurs. *Ars vivendi* is constantly on the move, as Schmid's second publication, *Auf der Suche nach einer neuen Lebenskunst*, already implies. This search for a new art of life includes aspects that were not mentioned in Schmid's first published philosophy of *ars vivendi*, especially the rising discourse of the environmental change but also of spirituality that had not directly been discussed in his earlier edition.

The travelling narration may help to figure out the focus of different generations and how they create and reflect on their art of life, art of living and art of survival. It may also express what is worth keeping as an *ars vivendi* from earlier narrations. As the three chosen examples have already proven, the narrations may also contain previews of an *ars vivendi* that could be especially important for the future.

Another interesting approach would be to see what happens to the narration written from the perspective of an Iranian or Afghan travelling to Europe. Are the same motifs of *ars vivendi* presented, and how are they perceived?

The dialogue between the cultures in the discussed travelling narrations remains one-sided, as it is always told from the perspective of the Swiss narrators. The question is also how much of one's own identity one can lose or get rid of. And what of the prefiguration that travels with the individual? Does it become modified with each journey? Even a permanent traveller can, if possible, only integrate parts of the identities and cultures of the places visited into his or her way of thinking, including his philosophy, his values, and his or her individual *ars vivendi*. What about the places that have not been visited or that have not become part of one's personality? It seems nearly impossible to look at the world from a global point of view without focussing on specific places and leaving out others, but the amount of travelling narrations and their careful examinations may help to take a step in this direction. To avoid ethnocentrism, it would be also extremely helpful to see how the three authors have been examined and discussed in Iran, Afghanistan, India, Japan, China, and other countries which the travellers have been writing about.

Just like the theory of the literatures of the world, travelling literature would need to be modified, not only into a single travel literature, but into travelling literatures, literatures from around the globe, moving around the globe and moving the globe itself.

I would like to finish this particular journey with the aid of Ella Maillart's words, as it is probably not possible to summarise the results of this dissertation in a better way than by saying: "une seule chose compte, envers et contre tous les particularismes, c'est l'engrenage magnifique qui s'appelle le monde" (Maillart, 2002: 313).

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The book compares the texts of three Swiss authors: Ella Maillart, Annemarie Schwarzenbach and Nicolas Bouvier. The focus is on their trip from Genève to Kabul that Ella Maillart and Annemarie Schwarzenbach made together in 1939/1940 and Nicolas Bouvier 1953/1954 with the artist Thierry Vernet. The comparison shows the strong connection between the journey and life and between *ars vivendi* and travel literature.

This book also gives an overview of and organises the numerous terms, genres, and categories that already exist to describe various travel texts and proposes the new term travelling narration. The travelling narration looks at the text from a narratological perspective that distinguishes the author, narrator, and protagonist within the narration.

In the examination, ten motifs could be found to characterise the travelling narration: Culture, Crossing Borders, Freedom, Time and Space, the Aesthetics of Landscapes, Writing and Reading, the Self and/as the Other, Home, Religion and Spirituality as well as the Journey. The importance of each individual motif does not only apply in the 1930s or 1950s but also transmits important findings for living together today and in the future.

ISSN 2629-2548

Online

ISBN 978-3-86956-537-8



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