



SIEBENQUELL

Longing as a Guide



On our paths through life there have been and still are moments of captivation, times of a very specific longing, something occupies and entices us. Then, at some point, it is over, often imperceptibly. We remember it, sometimes we take it into our words, but after some time this particular topic seems to have been lost in our everyday lives.

Has this former lure of a special longing really disappeared?

Don't we sometimes find that this longing rises in us again and, if we don't choke it off, warms our hearts anew? Hopefully we will then seize the opportunity and track it down again.

That's what happened to me this summer. During a week's holiday in Bavaria, the Buchheim Museum on Lake Starnberg came to mind. I had followed its development, I had been interested in it in the past, and now I decided to visit it - finally, finally, as it turned out on the journey. My anticipation grew like that of a child before Christmas, and on the spot I realised that I had long ago been so keen to get to know this museum of the painter, writer and great collector Lothar Günther Buchheim - because of the extraordinary architecture, the fascinating location on the lake, because of the versatile man whose plans and decisions in the 1980s and 1990s were often the subject of controversy and commentary? I couldn't remember

exactly. However, it was clear that an old longing was making itself felt and filled me with exuberant joy throughout the day. I enjoyed the building, the location, the marvellous collection of expressionist paintings and also what was written about Buchheim on the walls. However, this trip was not a flash in the pan, but has had a very impressive and lasting effect to this day. Since then, I have read a lot by and about Buchheim and I am gradually discovering facets that are important to me right now. It probably wasn't there back then, over 20 years ago. Because every day I marvel at what studying Buchheim triggers in me and it goes much deeper than just admiring the boat-like architecture of the museum or the impressive collection of expressionist artworks or his probably best-known work »Das Boot«.

What was leading me there right now and why? My »old« longing was probably never completely extinguished. It came back and became a guide for me. And I am struck by the thought that Moses was once such a guide for his people: 40 years of exile had passed when he returned to Egypt after his encounter with God at the thorn bush and reawakened in the people the old longing for home that they had thought had disappeared. He offered to revive the slaves' old dream of freedom and the promised land and became their guide on this rediscovered trail. To this day, Moses' guidance unto freedom is existential for believing Jews, and for us Christians it belongs to the foundational stories of our faith.

We are repeatedly irritated by the long time that often passes before we literally 'get going'. We then like to complain about so many useless or wasted years. When an old longing awakens and I follow it, allow myself to be led by it, it meets me in a different state than it once did - I am older, more experienced and more mature. It will lead me deeper than would have been possible back then. The joy of the fulfilment of the longing from before is widened and deepened and the new experience gives us much more fullness of life.

I am sure that I would have enjoyed a visit to this museum two decades ago. Now, however, it's not just the pictures, the rooms and the marvellous surroundings that inspire me. No, I am far more amazed by the ability of this unconventional man, Lothar Günther Buchheim, to live his passions, to be fully committed and to always be true to himself. He didn't negotiate about his life and what he had collected, he honoured it.

Hasn't my longing led me marvellously?

Rosemarie Monnerjahn

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