

## 16. Juni ·Fitzcarraldo 2015

Maybe the reader knows the film “Fitzcarraldo” by Werner Herzog. - In short, Fitzcarraldo wants to sail up on a Brazilian river to cross a mountain at a place where another river on the other side of the mountain goes down again. By the way, he undertakes this cruise with the intention to build an



Fig. 1 A shot from Werner Herzog's Fitzcarraldo

opera house at the mouth of the second river, a wonderful plot. In an interview Werner Herzog declared that the mountain traverse with the huge steam boat is the key sequence of the film, which actor Klaus Kinski contributed to in various other aspects. When asked about the meaning of this cinematographic metaphor, Herzog replied yes, a strong metaphor indeed, and everyone in the audience can interpret it in his/her personal context. It is nothing Herzog wanted to tell about or explain, but it is rather a present to everybody in the audience.



Fig. 2 C.S.Forester on board of Annie Marble in Germany

So here comes my personal Fitzcarraldo experience across the Bayrischer Wald / Bohemian Forest. (When writing, my smartphone text editor just suggested "Forester", i.e. Cecil Scott Forester, who plays another important role in the D.E.M.O.I.R.E. project).

My original idea was to cover the mountain distance from Danube to Vltava (Lake Lipno), which is about 45 km, including some kilometers across Austria: from Oberzell (last village in Germany with a small harbor infrastructure, 300 m above NN) via

Aigen (Austria, 600m above NN) to the last ascent (840m above NN) up to the Czech border and then 3km down to Lake Lipno (760m above NN).

However:

In Donaustauf, the village below Walhalla, I moored on a very modest boat pontoon. The infrastructure of the place was made of an open wooden shed, a closed toilet house, a concrete sewage pipe ring to make a campfire, and a bench right at a water ramp, to comfortably smoke a cigarette and watch somebody taking a boat in or out of the water.

A car came down the gravel road, and a corpulent senior-aged person hobbled out of the car, looked around, and started to clean up the place, with the aid of a garbage grabber, from cigarette butts and other minor garbage, finally to be dumped into the concrete ring.

Then he sat down on my side, lighted a cigarette and we chatted the usual things. „Please don't drop cigarette butts on the ground, this place should remain clean!“ And from where, whereto, the boat club. His motor boat times ago, my boat. He is pensioner now, but every now and then he undertakes longer car rides, to release deliveries of Chinese plastic toys from the custom offices, which are subsequently sold by his son on weekly street markets. He has been the president of the motor club until recently. And so on. Yes, he has done such Danube trips on his boat, too. And he likes my idea to cross the mountains to reach the Vltava. His name is Toni.

„Shall I drive you over there? I am bad on foot, but I like driving cars. You may also phone me when you have arrived in Oberzell, I will then come with my car and a trailer to bring you to the other side of the mountains. You may pay me something if you like. “

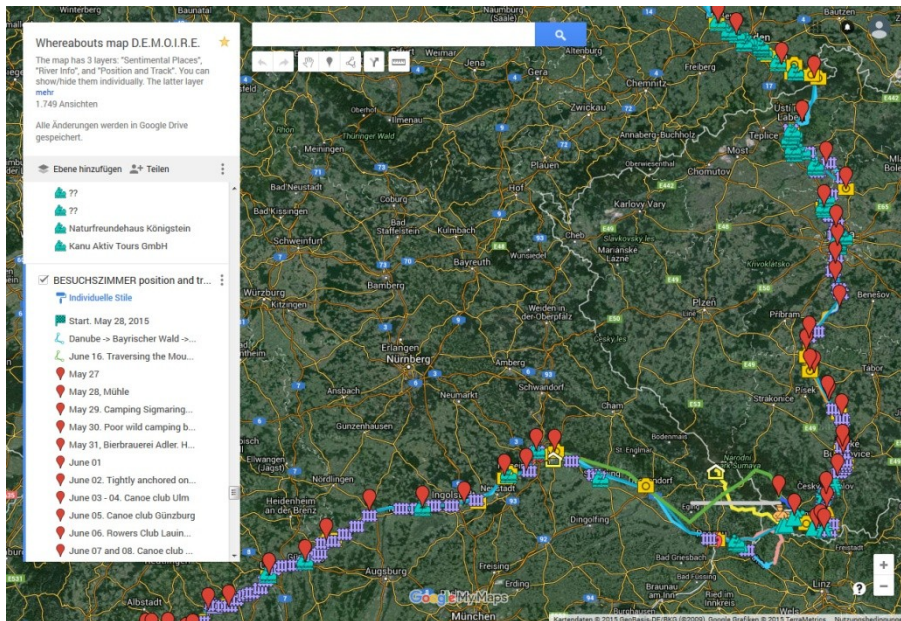


Fig. 3 Danube and Vltava area of D.E.M.O.I.R.E. Overnight places are marked with red.

So far, my plan was to find such a transport opportunity in Oberzell – but now the opportunity hit me and I had to decide. What does the guy intend? Any strange hidden agenda? What about the irritating formulation „... you may pay“? Shall I cut off some 200 km of my Danube track – with heavy ship traffic – and disdainfully betake myself into the car of an iridescent person? How many days will

the bad headwinds continue to blow? The passage through huge locks, together with big transport ships, will it be adventurous? Shall I skip the visit of Straubing and the library of Metten abbey? And did I not intend to go with Rosi to another Milonga in Passau? The Milonga in Regensburg in „TangoAmFluss“, only two days ago, was so nice, with Tandas and Cortinas and classical tango music.

I quickly decided: take what comes, let other things go, choose the adventure. „Ok, let's do it. Tomorrow morning 08h?“ „Ok, and what do you pay me?“ - Slightly used to bargaining I started with 50 €, we soon agreed on 100 €, which anyway I had considered as adequate for 2 x 180 km (to and fro). Although Toni said, that I should pay only for the seriously needed 45 km across the mountains, the rest to be left to his own fun.

The route would take us along the Danube to Austria, and then, via Aigen to Lake Lipno. „Oh, no, this is impossible. I cannot go via Austria. You must know that I have been Bavarian heavyweight price fighter some time ago. One day, it seems that I behaved strangely on an Austrian road. Two policemen came and wanted something. So I knocked them down. The third policeman was friendlier. Anyway, now I am allowed to go into Austria only once per year after written request. I own a house in Austria. By the way, I also own a house in Hungary .... “

Several cars, Mercedes and the like, are also owned by Toni, 13 in total if I remember correctly, with astronomical horse powers. For our little trip he would take the rover, 275 PS, and the trailer.

„See you tomorrow morning!“

Less than five minutes after Toni had left, two younger men strolled down and investigated the club area. I told them about Toni „he was here a few minutes ago and cleaned the ground from cigarette butts. Wasn't he the president of your motor club? So nice that he still cares for the place!“ His club mates raised their eye brows in a meaningful manner. „We do not like seeing him here anymore“. I told about our appointment. They raised their eye brows even higher, and showed that hand waving gesture at breast height, with fingers high up as if warding something off, expressing doubt and uncertainty. „Anything to say against it?“, I asked discreetly. „Hum, well, you never know with that person. Typically there are problems. About money at best. We would not recommend going with him“.

Take what comes, let other things go, choose the adventure.



Fig. 4 Beginning of the ride through hell.

Toni came on time, with car, trailer, and pet dog Lili ("my wife"), lots of cigarettes, very strong painkillers, and cola. First, the 100 € were collected for refueling. Then the trailer was left down on the ramp into the water, BESUCHSZIMMER was pulled inside, and off we went, at 120 km/h where 80 were allowed (anyway, with a trailer only 80 are allowed). Toni said that normally he would drive even faster, since he was a truck driver in past times. Toni could drink, eat, and caress Lili on the rear seat while overtaking heavy trucks in narrow construction sites.



Fig. 5 Walhalla

I got used to my sweat and paid him some Bavarian breakfast meat. He told about his women, about his almost fatal car accident, or commented the women waiting at the road sides behind the Czech border. To speak about something else I mentioned that in Walhalla (Bavarian, if not German Hall of Fame, inaugurated 1842) I had missed one person, who may have been too much of a European at that time: Franz Liszt. „Oh no, you have overlooked him: left side, second row from above, at the end of the row. “

Wouh! Toni knows more than only cars, trucks, women, and accidents. An interesting person. "Just a bit different from the others".

Right now, when writing this, I checked the internet, where exactly I would have found Liszt in the Walhalla rows of busts – but didn't find him. All Walhalla-personalities are properly listed in Wikipedia etc., but Franz Liszt is not. The best hit I received was a reference by the German Franz-Liszt Society that in the Liszt year 2011 they proposed to immortalize Franz Liszt in Walhalla.

Wouh ....

We arrived in good diversion and safely at Lake Lipno, after a 2 ½ hours ride through hell. "Finally tell me: why do you need that money when you own numerous cars and houses?" "Erm, I am a bit short of cash money in the moment."

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So where is the metaphor? I leave this up to the reader. I am a bit crazy, and so is Toni – he corrected me with "just a bit different from the others ". We just entrusted each other.

I have been thinking intensively about this section of the journey for months, if not years. How will it be effected? I remember that for quite a long time in my mind it was definitively a street and footpath job, pulling BESUCHSZIMMER on her wheels. I even plotted a "minimum use of roads" track in the Google map. This might have been effected in a month's time if I would not have died before I had arrived at Lake Lipno. I think I waved this solution after my test cruise around Berlin in 2014. Subsequently I remember having permitted myself hitchhiking with trucks passing by. They would have taken me probably up to the Czech border. I checked Google street views and Panoramio photos in the area. And finally I envisaged an owner of a car and trailer who would take me from Oberzell up to the Czech border. So my imagination came pretty close to how the traverse has been finally effected.

Months before I had read about two young Dutch people having effected a journey from Amsterdam to Istanbul in a camping trailer WITHOUT car, and I rather felt eased off. Typically, a person waiting for a lift would take a position at some starting point and would ask supportive drivers if they would drive to this or that place. In my case the destination was freely selectable, but the start point was different from what I thought and was proposed by the driver – a crazy experience!

At the end it took just a few hours, close to nothing when compared to the three months for the whole journey.

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Now I am at the upper Lake Lipno and still feel like in a space/time warp. The tent is pitched 8 m from BESUCHSZIMMER and the waters of young Vltava, populated by a flock of screaming youngsters in canoes.



Facebook comment by member of Board of Trustees: "As you've said, sometimes you just have to leave things to chance and hope they work out. And often, they do. On another note, apparently when Herzog was shooting "Fitzcarrado", Klaus Kinski was such a pain in the ass that the Indians offered to kill him for Herzog. Of course Herzog turned them down, but you wonder with how much regret."

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## 17. Juni · CEO of D.E.M.O.I.R.E. retained by Austro-Czech Secret Service



Fig. 6 Baffled Secret Service officer sees off D.E.M.O.I.R.E. CEO at Dolni Vltavice, Lake Lipno. First medical inspections show our CEO in relaxed and healthy condition. Photo by our correspondent through a camera hidden in his life vest

As has been reported from internal sources, The CEO of D.E.M.O.I.R.E. has been retained by the Austro-Czech Secret Service yesterday. The CEO has been inculcated to having tried to clandestinely import French sausages, fermented with natural ashes, into the Austro-Czech border zone, where a strict balance of endemic flora and fauna is protected not only by naive conservationists, but also by the secret service, who clandestinely employs Russian blondes, camouflaged as tourists, to divert possible nature lovers from observing recent efforts to build new power plants in an area that officially

should strictly be protected for recovery from the Saurer Regen in the 1980s.

After a full day of arrest our CEO was able to convince the officer that the sausages

are indeed from Berlin, and that the kind of sausage in question is endemic in Berlin, thus having a long genetic footprint of absolutely comparable genetic conditions originating from the highly similar "iron curtain"<sup>1</sup> situation of Berlin and the Lake Lipno area, until 1989. In both places, the usage of the natural waters ("sport"! ) was permitted only up to the middle of the water surface. And the size and width of Lake Lipno is comparable to, if not larger than, the Havel and Wannsee in former West-Berlin.

Thanks to the Secret Service officer Mr. Karl, having accepted the details of this delicate affair, and thanks to the interference of one of the Russian blondes (see photo background), our CEO has been set free today and can continue his mission.

Fig. 7 10 km on a bicycle track from Lake Lipno through the forest to Vyší Brod was another two days solid ground experience to be told later.



<sup>1</sup> Around the beginning of the journey a friend asked if I would pass the Iron Gate. No, I replied, but I will pass the Iron Curtain.