

A little boy stares enchantedly at a globe spinning rapidly around its axle. The colours blur into a motley universe in the swift movement. Imagination transports the young schoolboy into a myriad of places. Even in the dark, the fantasy globe glows on the desk and sends a mysterious glimmer, full of longing for faraway places, into the room. This is geography lived as reality, cosmopolitanism experienced in one's whole being.

Later on, this same boy has travelled in many countries – almost on every continent of the world. It was during these visits and journeys that the idea of an international travel book was incepted. Conversations at scientific conferences, at various universities and with a number of fellow researchers only intensified the feeling that a cultural philosophical anthology was needed. The final impulse for commencing the work came while rambling along the narrow cobblestone streets of Valletta and Florence. In those footsteps, history whispered and time echoed.

An ancient dream emerging from afar, from the depths of childhood, has led the man towards an existential truth. Creativity and the fervour of writing are most vividly present at the precise moment when a person is immersed in the art of philosophical wonderment. It is essential to have the skill and the desire to ask questions, to stand puzzled in the face of being. Only then, one can find some exhaustive answers. These are the most important of all souvenirs – and they shall never be forgotten.

The Illuminating Traveler

Edited by
Matti Itkonen & Paul Majkut & Gary Backhaus & V. A. Heikkinen &
Edward H. Huijbens & Sam Inkinen & Jarmo Valkola

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