



plate 42 from *Yesterday's Sandwich* - Phaidon Press

Because if it stays the same then I stop...change is important since life changes, you change, time changes, age changes, you need to find out what is important for this time.

— *What are the important questions for you in photography?*

— It is complex...everything together. It is important to find something for your mind, to understand how life has changed and what you can do with this life now; how to organize it in photographs. All times are interesting, like a discussion, like everything.

— *I don't think time is important in that work.*

— When you think about the past, you talk in an aesthetical way. For example, in Russia, artists did not make so many images since it was forbidden. Now, after twenty years, they take a picture and put it in the context of history. Artists must make something about the present time but they talk about past. Many Russian artists work like this. — *But are you not mixing future and past?*

— No, I don't think like this, I only think about the present and the past. I do not think about the future. I talk about what is happening now, not only about the past. — *What is your weak point?*

— Organization. All the time I have to push myself to get organized. I have to organize. To talk with people "hello! Can I come to you and take pictures?"... I have to organize this, I feel sometimes a little bit ashamed. This is a social reality, you have to take yourself away and go for this task. It is easier for me to work in Russia.

— *Did the work 'Case History' change you?*

— Maybe a little bit, because now my eyes are looking at these people constantly. I think all the time that this is my patient. It is a new reaction because if my eyes keep following these people it makes a change. It changes mind and the feeling about life. If you are looking only at beautiful women it is one thing, but when it is about homeless people, there is another sense of life.

— *And why homeless people and not beautiful women?* — Because I recognize and react. I am not looking; my eyes are looking.

— *And why was 'Case History' an important work?* — I think it is important to show what Russia became. Because when Russia was Soviet it had one life and now it became another, a new life. — *Do you take pictures of homeless people in Berlin?*

— I do not take many pictures of homeless people here. Because I don't understand why this would be important for me now, here... Some people help the homeless, it isn't the main question of the society here. I live here but I do not understand what is the main question: the main question for the German. What is real, I do not understand. And when I come to Russia, I must live there some time in order to understand what the Russian idea is now. The new generation is thinking differently and again I don't understand... like here in Berlin. This is why I have difficulties to take pictures because a photographer must understand. If a photographer does not understand then it is a problem.

— *Berlin is changing. Have you noticed this?*

— Berlin lost something because it became more bourgeois. Everything became normal and proper. For the visual perception it became standardized. — *How has Berlin changed you?* — Well, I become not lazier but perhaps more bourgeois, because my life became calmer and quieter. I got a visa from DAAD and now I can live here.

— *How do you see being a guest in a country?*

— The main problem is that my eyes do not work now, they don't see enough within the new reality, and new reality is a main question. The first time I came here I was looking everywhere, everything was interesting. Now I know that reality, but something I can't see is happening inside of it. This is what I need to find. I have to become more open to people again. I have to try and to push myself.