

## **Alienation and In-Habitation: The Educating Journey in West and East<sup>1</sup>**

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The concept of ‘the whole world as a school’ is deeply rooted in the European tradition. We find it in Nicholas of Cusa as well as in texts of Paracelsus, Alsted, and Comenius. And not much younger is the practice that embodies this concept like no other: the educating or formative journey, or – as it is known in German: die *Bildungsreise*.

Theory and practice of journeying have their fixed places in the history of education – not only in Europe. This paper endeavours to introduce two concepts of the educating journey: the European version which arguably found its most theoretical expression in the German ideas of *Bildung* and *Bildungsreise* and is based on an idea of a deliberate *alienation*, and the Japanese concept of an educating journey as *inhabitation* as expressed in the itineraries of Matsuo Bashō 松尾 芭蕉, the famous *haiku* poet. However, going beyond a mere presentation, in contrasting both, the concepts do not only become more distinct but they hopefully can also offer a critical perspective on each other. And, maybe even more importantly: they can offer a foundation for relating those two traditions which so often are perceived as being very different.<sup>2</sup>

A first approach to the subject brings to mind two dimensions with regard to which we usually talk about formative journeys: We either talk about journeys in a more **metaphorical** sense, or we do mean **literally** a journey that takes us and our bodies from one place to another one. Usually those two forms can be distinguished by the first one, the metaphorical one, being a movement of mind and spirit, whereas the second one emphasises a spatial change inasmuch as it is our bodies that move, too, and not only (or not at all) our minds and spirits. However, already our creation of the metaphor, i.e. the addressing of the changing of mind and spirit as a movement, as ‘journey’, bears witness to our tendency to frame non-material changes as mirroring bodily travel: For good reasons we relate thinking to travelling, for example, when talking about the ‘train of thought’ – and whereas extensive bodily journeying only started quite late to be of greater relevance (if we take a journey to be different from an escape, a nomadic lifestyle, etc.) human thinking, imagination and fantasy always have travelled extensively through space and time, leaving the body behind. With the help of books, stories and substances, the mind was supposedly freed from its domestic cage to explore the universe of possibility. None of this was mere play: most people were quite aware of the eminent consequences this kind of travelling has or could have, as whoever returns, if at all, does not return unchanged – a change that might be sought for or feared, that might accidentally occur and then is either welcomed or resisted: Those who ban drugs or burn books are very much aware of the changing power of such spiritual travels, as well as those who deliberately use this kind of help to induce a spiritual journey and embrace the change that this results in.

Looking at Plato’s allegory of the cave (*Politeia* 514a-520a), we are presented with the archetypical image that subsequently shaped Western educational thinking in that it frames a spiritual, mental or psychological change as a material travel or journey. The image of the ascent of the mind from the cave upwards to the outer world, to the real world of ideas, conceptualises the internal change of the

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter takes up ideas explored in Kenklies (2015).

<sup>2</sup> This is not the place to engage with the long standing discussion about the apparent uniqueness of especially the Japanese culture. Those discussions usually circle around the notion of *Nihonjinron* 日本人論 or *Nihonron* 日本論.

person as a journey in time and(!) space. The whole talking about inside and outside, lower spheres and upper spheres, of climbing up and leaving the cave – all those are spatial metaphors for something that is not at all spatial. Anyway, this metaphorical way of speaking about ‘internal’ processes was successful enough to still let us talk about the ‘wanderings of our minds’.

However, this metaphorical conflation of the inner and the outer change as journey is neither new nor specific to Western cultures. Looking towards Japan, we do encounter the same usage of spatial metaphors of journeying for a sort of change that is not spatial.<sup>3</sup> Those who are at least vaguely interested in Japan can hardly avoid encountering one of the most important notions of traditional Japanese education: *dō* 道. Maybe one has encountered notions like: *karatedō* 空手道, *judō* 柔道, *aikidō* 合気道, *kendō* 剣道, or maybe *chadō* 茶道. *Dō* actually means ‘path’ or ‘street’ – it’s the path one walks on to get from here to there, or the street that leads to somewhere. However, in the names of what are known as classic Japanese arts, like martial arts but also tea ceremony, this little syllable denotes a concept of self-formation that is characteristic of those practices. Here the way one walks becomes the way one develops, changes, transforms, and grows (Kenklies 2018). This is not contingent or accidental: The classic ways of Japan are highly codified. However, we can perceive the same tendency to conflate the associative space of the material journey, of actual walking and travelling, with the notions that refer to ‘internal’ educational formations and transformations. The arts that seek to change the whole self of a person, aim at spiritual, mental, and psychological transformations which then express themselves in visible changes of a person, e.g. in the capacity to do something specific in a specific way (e.g. fighting or drinking tea), or to exist and live in a specific way (e.g. in constant awareness that reduces mistakes originating from moments of abstraction).

However, the metaphorical journey of mind and spirit is just one of the dimensions that should interest educators. Whereas the reflection on the allegory of the cave or the Japanese art-ways can teach us important aspects about the ways we use spatial metaphors of travelling and journeying to describe educational processes (and also about the ways those metaphors trick us into conceptualising those processes in a helpful or maybe even unhelpful way), it still remains worth noting that the actual travel and journey, the movement of bodies, has played an important part in educational thinking in East and West for quite some time. Even though, as hopefully I will be able to show, those educational appropriations of the journey tend to be quite different, they are very much relevant in both educational traditions. Let me therefore start with an exploration of what became famous as the German concept of *Bildungsreise* – the formative journey that became the topic of a whole genre of literature, the *Bildungsroman* (Abrams 2015). Following this exploration, I will draw attention to the Japanese concepts of *angya* 行脚 and *shugyō* 修行 and the way those are epitomised in the life and works of Bashō.

A brief exploration into the history of Western education reveals that the formative attributes of travelling have been known for quite some time. It was for this very reason that Plato, in his dialogue *Nómoi* (*Nomoi*/ *Laws* 949e-951c; see also Kenklies 2007), demanded that only those of unshakeable character and integrity would be allowed to leave the city and travel abroad: The danger of being exposed and subsequently influenced, changed by different cultures were too great for Plato to allow free travelling for just anyone. The assumed necessity for stability had to counter the imminent threat of change: The danger that the already formed character would be overwhelmed by those influences was contained through a clear separation from in- and outside, keeping the outside out as much as

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<sup>3</sup> The very idea of ‘education’ is based on a very specific understanding of space and time; ‘education’ as notion is at its heart chrono-topological, as shown in: Kenklies (2012).

possible. The possible dangers which external influences posed to those in the process of formation were very much acknowledged even by those who deliberately promoted travelling as part of an education. In Francis Bacon's essay *Of Travel* (1625), we are presented with such an account. It is widely known that the *Grand Tour* began to play an important part in the education of the young aristocrats (for England see: Chaney & Wilks 2013). As Bacon puts it:

TRAVEL, in the younger sort, is a part of education, in the elder, a part of experience. He that travelleth into a country, before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. (Bacon 1625, p. 50)

He does, however, not embrace an idea of free travelling: Not only are the travels of the young gentlemen accompanied by a wise tutor who decides where to go and what to look at, he also emphasises that only that which does not(!) result in a thorough change of the traveller may be chosen:

For else, young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little. [...] And let his travel appear rather in his discourse, than his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse, let him be rather advised in his answers, than forward to tell stories; and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners, for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers, of that he hath learned abroad, into the customs of his own country. (Bacon 1625, p. 52)

Maybe it can be seen as the Cunning of Reason that it was especially Bacon's earlier works *De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum*, *Novum Organon*, and *Instauratio magna* which contributed to a complete turnaround in the history of the Western mind: The *Querelles des anciens et des modernes* – the battle between the Old and the New at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century – was not at last fought and won with the weapons Bacon provided. With the victory of the Modern, the idea that human salvation ultimately lies in the discovery and appropriation of the new rather than in reciting and getting acquainted with the Ancient and Classic became central to Western civilisation and education. Since then we are bound to find our luck as individuals and as societies in what has been termed as 'progress'.

In those countries that later became known as 'Germany', the *Querelle* was not fought as harshly and violently as for example in France: The idea that a certain kind of knowledge had to be acquired through the new ways of experimentation and observation was embraced without denying the relevance of the Classic culture of Europe, and it was only a matter of discussion whether it was the Greeks or the Romans who provided the paradigm for every culture that aspired to some sort of cultural perfection. (Kapitza 1981) We can witness an almost dialectical interrelation of the Old and the New, and it was the individual who provided the stage for this dialectical interplay, and the formative journey, the *Bildungsreise*, became the medium of this exchange. This is the background then for Goethe's famous journey to Italy – the travel that became the paradigm for every journey the German cultural elite subsequently engaged with. "I shall come back a new man, and live to the greater joy of myself and my friends" (Goethe 1884, p. 296), declared Goethe in a letter from Rome to his mother (4<sup>th</sup> November 1786), and he was determined to shape the official account of his travel according to this principle. This official account – the *Italienische Reise (Italian Journey)* of 1829 (Goethe 1993) – represents a theoretical reworking and reshaping of his memories of the original travel in 1786-88: His notebooks give a very different picture of the realities of travelling. However, it was the official book that turned into a bible for German culture – and it was the official account that

made such a huge impression on Humboldt that he framed his *Theory of Bildung*<sup>4</sup> around Goethe's travel mythos and its idea of a Re-Naissance of the Individual through the encounter with the world of Classic Antiquity.

What then was Humboldt's idea of *Bildung*? (Humboldt 1793a) The foundation for Humboldt's theory of *Bildung* is provided by a normative anthropology or theory of the human:

It is the ultimate task of our existence to achieve as much substance as possible for the concept of humanity in our person, both during the span of our life and beyond it, through the traces we leave by means of our vital activity. (Humboldt 1793a, p. 58)

Humboldt hereby introduces what he thinks every person should achieve in her/his life. Far from having a clear image of what the human should strive for (e.g. Godlikeness), Humboldt sets the goal of all human aspirations as the richest possible life – to enhance the general idea of what it could mean to be human. The idea of humanity, the concept of being human, is not pre-given, is not already known or spelled out. What it means to be human will be unveiled in the process of the development of the human race through time, and every person, so Humboldt says, should attempt to enhance this idea of humanity as much as possible and take precautions for those achievements not to be forgotten by later generations by making them part of that culture which is transmitted through what we might call education and socialisation. Everyone participates in this enhancing of the general idea of humanity through the (trans)formation of oneself. Everybody should turn her/himself into an example of a human – an example that is as rich as possible, expressing in the most distinguished way what it could mean to be human, bearing witness to the capacities of all humankind.

It now has to be asked how Humboldt envisions this enhancement to be achieved. Humboldt calls for conscious relating to a relation the self already entertains, namely it's relation to the world:

This [achieving as much substance as possible in a person, K.K.] can be fulfilled only by the linking of the self to the world to achieve the most general, most animated, and most unrestrained interplay. (Humboldt 1793a, p. 58)

In a complete reversal of the traditional pedagogical teleology of Godlikeness, Humboldt states that it is the human who leaves its mark upon the world by shaping it according to its ideas:

[H]is nature drives him to reach beyond himself to the external objects, and here it is crucial that he should not lose himself in this alienation, but rather reflect back into his inner being the clarifying light and the comforting warmth of everything that he undertakes outside himself. To this end, however, he must bring the mass of objects closer to himself, impress his mind upon this matter, and create more of a resemblance between the two. (Humboldt 1793a, p. 59)

How does this process enhance the capacities of the human?

Using all of these as so many different tools, he must try to grasp Nature, not so much in order to become acquainted with it from all sides, but rather through this diversity of views to strengthen his own innate power, of which they are only differently shaped effects. (Humboldt 1793a, p. 59)

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<sup>4</sup> Even though this text of probably 1793 only saw the light of day in 1903 when it was graced with a headline by the editor and published in the *Collected Works*, it still is regarded as the paradigmatic text for Humboldt's theory of *Bildung*.

In the end, changing our relation to the world serves only one purpose: “the heightening of [our] powers and the elevation of [our] personality” (Humboldt 1793a, p. 60), because

[a]t the convergence point of all particular kinds of activity is man, who, in the absence of a purpose with a particular direction, wishes only to strengthen and heighten the powers of his nature and secure value and permanence for his being. (Humboldt 1793a, p. 58)

This clearly is founded upon ideas of the Enlightenment which, despite the emphasis on anthropology in all its versions (philosophical, biological, social, etc.) would regard the nature of the human as a mystery as long as it hasn't completely unfolded in history. The fate and future of the human are not prescribed but open – the self is given to itself and has itself as a project of development and (trans)formation – the self is the result of its own *Bildung* into the realms of the undiscovered country that is its future. (Kenklies 2018) The fact that all this unfolding is based upon changing an existing relation to a non-self also secures traditional theories of *Bildung* from becoming theories of poetical constructivism<sup>5</sup> because there always is something else that is not the self but to which it does have a relation that then has to be changed. And it is also the non-self that to some extent restricts the ways in which the self can (trans)form itself. Usually in these kinds of theory the relation that one has to act upon and that at the same time sets the limits of all formation is the relation to the non-self as world, as matter, as that which is not *Geist* (spirit). In correspondence to this idea of a non-self to which the self holds a relation that it then can begin to act upon (hereby establishing a relation-relation), those traditional concepts of *Bildung* are often based upon the idea of an unfolding of something pre-existing that strives to express itself into the world, an expression that is initiated by the encounter with the Other.

What now has this to do with the formative journey? What is the *Bildungsreise*? As can be seen, Humboldt envisions an inner transformation by the means of an encounter with the Other that is the world. It is through alienation – being ripped out of one's old self – that the individual begins to transform, to change, to expand; only after one has left its old self, risking everything, one can return renewed, reborn, reformed. Humboldt, in comparison, is very clear about the idea that the self leaves its home only temporarily – only to then return changed and transformed:

Although all these demands are limited to man's inner being, his nature drives him to reach beyond himself to the external objects, and here it is crucial that he should not lose himself in this alienation, but rather reflect back into his inner being the clarifying light and the comforting warmth of everything that he undertakes outside himself. (Humboldt 1793a, p. 59)

– and hereby leaving it to Hegel and his theory of *Aufhebung* to introduce a concept of *Bildung* that does not include an idea of return but of constant negation and transformation.<sup>6</sup> Later, Nietzsche will revive the idea of a closed horizon that is just wide enough to accommodate and appropriate everything alien one is confronted with – blocking out that which is too much to digest. (Nietzsche 1874) Or, in other words: The alienation through the journey is formative only inasmuch as it does not completely negate the self in its former state; the formation of the self still is the formation or expansion of a specific self.

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<sup>5</sup> As, for example, then defended by Friedrich Nietzsche: Nietzsche (1873).

<sup>6</sup> A transformation whose distinct qualitative features are completely missed when presented in the formula theses – antithesis – synthesis; Hegel's Logic is not a formal logic but a qualitative logic.

Even though Humboldt in a very general sense talks about the world as that to which the individual has to relate in order to expand its capacities, it is the world of Antiquity that provides the superior object of relation. (Humboldt 1793b) From Goethe he learnt that it is the challenge of encountering the ancient high culture that enables the individual to ascend to unknown heights. Not through simple appropriation of antique culture but through encountering the challenges this culture represents for the contemporary individual. With the declaration of Greek and Roman culture to be the exclusive reference points for the necessary processes of alienation upon which *Bildung* can only be founded, Humboldt attempts to contain the same dangers that led Bacon to declare that not everything should be interesting for the traveller. And in declaring those cultures to be exclusive reference points, Humboldt embraces Goethe's and the Germanic hellenophiles' fascination with Italy and Greece – hereby once more conflating the concepts of an inner journey and transformation with those of an actual external encounter with the Other.

In Goethe's footsteps and Humboldt's spirit, millions of Germans subsequently travelled to Italy in search for *Bildung* and transformation, and it could be said that Italy still seems to be the declared paradise for many German travellers and holiday-makers (even though the historic roots for this longing might be very much unknown to most of those contemporary Italy lovers); it might even be assumed that Germans did inherit this attitude to travel more generally, and other travellers also have absorbed the general idea, at least in part. That, however, was not the end of the *Bildungsreise*: The idea that embarking on a journey is a necessary part of the formation of the young still is very much alive in German educational thinking. Moreover, it did find its way in a way of philosophising that became so central for the German ways of reflecting: Hermeneutics. "To be in a conversation, however, means to be beyond oneself, to think with the other and to come back to oneself as if to another." (Gadamer 1985, p. 110) Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is structured according to Humboldt's and Goethe's concept of the formative journey: It's only the encounter with the Other – the text – that one becomes aware of one's own preconceptions and prejudices, and it is this encounter that may lead to a transformation of those preconceptions and therefore of the self in general. Hermeneutics is as much about the understanding of the Other as it is about the understanding and the reformation of the self – the medium of the Other offers the necessary alienation to create the sort of self-reflection and self-consciousness that can justifiably be called self-awareness, or, as Dewey puts it: Freedom:

One thing, then, that a University education should do for a man is to rid him of his provincialisms. [...] There may be touches of provincialism in manner which nothing but actual contacts will destroy, or which will always remain as the outer tokens of a sturdy, genuine 'home-keeping' spirit. But the voyage one takes in entering college life is a voyage to a far port, and through many countries foreign in space, in time, in manner of speech and thought. If such travelling of the spirit does not remove the narrow and small cast of one's opinion and methods it is failing of its aim. The Germans call the period of youthful culture a period of 'self-alienation', because in it the mind gives up its immediate interests and goes on this far journey. [...] But all this ought a man to expect from his college course. Its name is Freedom. (Dewey 1890, p. 27)

With this observation, we are back to where we started: The inner journey and the outer journey which go hand in hand in transforming and educating the individual, to make it larger, greater, somehow more itself.

However, this is only one way to look at the benefits of a journey. Let's change now the perspective and meet the most famous of the Japanese *haiku* poets: Matsuo Bashō 松尾 芭蕉 (1644-1694).<sup>7</sup> And, as can be seen from this structure, this chapter itself is structured according to the idea of the *Bildungsreise* inasmuch it hopes to increase understanding through enabling an encounter with the Other: The alienation that is attempted here may help to transform the reader; as an author who has been socialised into Germanic ways of reflection, I am very much caught in this German tradition, I cannot escape.

Bashō was not only a great poet but also a determined wanderer who left his humble hut several times to undertake different journeys through Japan. Those experiences then were codified in the 5 travel notebooks (Bashō 2005) which he wrote and which present the reader with an elaborate composition of texts and poems, of *haiku* 俳句 – each notebook as much a stylisation and literary re-working of real experiences as Goethe's *Italian Journey*, proving that journeying in the sense presented here is in itself a result of a certain interpretation that gives form to the raw experiences of travelling (as much as we use spatial, i.e. external and bodily, metaphors to describe internal, i.e. non-spatial and spiritual/ cognitive, processes, we still need cognitive concepts to make sense of our bodily experiences; both go always hand in hand). One of Bashō's notebooks rose to particular fame: *Oku no hosomichi* 奥の細道 (1694), *Narrow road to the Interior*, which, much like Goethe's text, offers not so much an account of the actual travel as an account of the mythos, the theory of the formative journey. It is this text that we now draw our attention to. It starts with the following declamation:

The months and days are the travellers of eternity. The years that come and go are also voyagers. Those who float away their lives on ships or who grow old leading horses are forever journeying, and their homes are wherever their travels take them. Many of the men of old died on the road, and I too for years past have been stirred by the sight of a solitary cloud drifting with the wind to ceaseless thoughts of roaming.

Last year I spent wandering along the seacoast. In autumn I returned to my cottage on the river and swept away the cobwebs. Gradually the year drew to its close. When spring came and there was mist in the air, I thought of crossing the Barrier of Shirakawa into Oku. I seemed to be possessed by the spirits of wanderlust, and they all but deprived me of my senses. The guardian spirits of the road beckoned, and I could not settle down to work.

I patched my torn trousers and changed the cord on my bamboo hat. To strengthen my legs for the journey I had moxa burned on my shins. By then I could think of nothing but the moon at Matsushima. When I sold my cottage and moved to Sanpū's villa, to stay until I started on my journey, I hung this poem on a post in my hut:

草の戸も	kusa no to mo	Even a thatched hut
住替る代ぞ	sumikawaru yo zo	May change with the dweller
ひなの家	hina no ie	Into a doll's house. <sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> There is not enough space to give a full introduction to Bashō's life and works. For an introduction see: Shirane (1998).

<sup>8</sup> Here in the Classic translation of Donald Keene: Bashō (2012, p. 158f.).

3 aspects are relevant for us here: 1) Bashō feels somehow driven to leave his house and to submit himself to the adventure of a long journey; 2) Bashō perceives his individual journey as an expression (or active instantiation) of the general being-in-movement and being-in-change of all existing things and of being itself; and 3) he is drawn to specific places at specific times: the barrier of Shirakawa in the mists of Spring, and the bay of Matsushima in the light of a full moon. Those three aspects can be taken together as an expression of Bashō's intention: Bashō aspires to encounter his tradition and ancestors – an encounter that is more than a mere meeting or getting acquainted: it's the kind of encounter that really transforms someone.

Of course, Bashō's idea of travelling has predecessors, too. On one hand, there was a tradition of especially Zen monks who practiced *kyōgyō* 經行 (Keown 2008, p. 142) – a walking or hiking meditation. On the other hand, there are *angya* 行脚<sup>9</sup>, the traditional pilgrimage of monks from temple to temple, and *shugyō* 修行 (Yuasa 1987, p. 85), an established practice of self-cultivation of the samurai, the ancient warriors of Japan, to travel the country in search of challenge, exercise, and wisdom.

With his interpretation of the travelling as an expression of the eternal change of the world, Bashō deliberately relates himself to the tradition of the famous ancient Japanese wandering poets, namely Saigyō 西行 (1118-1190). Keeping an eye on those poets, Bashō attempts to truly understand and grasp their view of the world even if this adventure puts his life in grave danger:

I felt uneasy over my illness, recalling how far away our destination was, but I reasoned with myself that when I started out on this journey to remote parts of the country it was with an awareness that I was risking my life. Even if I should die on the road, this would be the will of Heaven. (Bashō 2012, p. 138f.)

Bashō aspires to truly understand, that is to relive the teachings of the old masters and of the tradition: He is not setting out to gain something new or unknown – he sets out to regain something very old and ancient – he sets out not to be reborn as a new individual but as keeper of old wisdom. That becomes even more obvious if we are looking at where he is travelling to. The places Bashō intends to visit are *uta-makura* 歌枕 or *hai-makura* 俳枕. (Kamens 1997) *Uta-makura* – which translates as *poem-pillows* – are those places in Japan which are loaded with meaning – places which are famous as wonders of nature or for being part of the real or mythological history of Japan (a difference that was not made in Japan in the days of Bashō; Japan's history was recorded in the *Kojiki* 古事記 'Records of Ancient Matters'/'An Account of Ancient Matters' and *Nihon Shoki* 日本書紀 / *Nihongi* 日本紀 'Japanese Chronicles'); *hai-makura* are those places which have been made famous by poets through repeated citations throughout the history of poetry in Japan. The medieval geography of Japan is shaped more by ancient legends, stories, and poems than by geographic-scientific features – a map of Japan becomes meaningful only through what is related to a specific place (in the same way Pierre Nora has described France as a net of *lieux des memoire* (Nora 1999-2010)). Bashō's journey takes him to such places for continuing what tradition has taught him to do: As every other poet before him, Bashō adds his own poem to the reservoir of already existing poems – every single one of those places is already the object of hundreds of poems, and Bashō puts forward yet another poem as an expression of his own appropriation of this place and the tradition it represents. Bashō's journey is a journey that leads him to in-habit the country through its tradition – Bashō relives the experiences of

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<sup>9</sup> Bankei would be a good example for this type of wandering: Haskel (1994).

his ancestors and writes himself into this tradition. In composing a new personal poem for the already traditional places, he not only expands the lore of what Japan is but also finds a contemporary expression of the ancient wisdom.

This is what the formative journey is for Bashō: the immersion into the tradition, the adoption of the ancestral lore, and the existential comprehension of the ancient wisdom – in the ways of the tradition, on the ways of the tradition, and towards the tradition – this is travelling as in-habitation for Bashō. Now, it is time to step back and pause for a moment on our journey through space and time, to ask what the difference is between the two concepts of the formative journey presented here. As became hopefully clear, the German concept of the *Bildungsreise* is founded on the idea that through deliberate alienation and return as appropriation the individuality of the traveller is expanded, re-formed, or in general: developed. The journey to the Other renews the individual and deepens the pre-existing personal individuality. It is not the acquisition of new knowledge that drives the person undergoing *Bildung* – it is about expanding and broadening the personality of an individual. For Bashō, individuality and its expansion or broadening appear not to be the goal of travelling. On the contrary: He seems to travel to give birth to the tradition in his own self, to help to reanimate it, to take care for its continuation through re-presenting it. There is no obvious aspiration for individuality, particularity, difference. Whereas with Goethe and Humboldt, *Bildung* is about the unfolding of an ingrained possibility towards an individual and singular representation of humanity that begins with an alienation from the known, formation with Bashō is about the re-presenting and re-living of tradition through in-habiting of the known.

We could stop here: Presenting that which is different as part of our necessary alienation to increase our understanding of ourselves, fulfils the structure of the formative journey that was introduced earlier. The journey, on which you, my patient reader, have accompanied me, could end here. However – one last step can be made: We still might return to ourselves to render this journey even more formative; we still could look with Bashō's eyes upon our own culture, and with our eyes on Bashō. The new found awareness of different interpretations of what is maybe going on while travelling enables us to create some distance to both positions – a distance that now opens the horizon for questions, for puzzlement, or, in short: for criticality. With Bashō, we now need to ask whether or not the *Bildungsreise* really is enabling the rise and expansion of individuality; and with Goethe and Humboldt we become encouraged to ask, if Bashō's travels truly only led him to recapitulate the tradition.

Looking at Goethe and Humboldt, the idea that the individual unfolds through the encounter with the Other on a journey might be challenged in at least three different ways. At first, we would need to ask how this process of unfolding is to be imagined as it includes a concept of some sort of individual essence ingrained into the very structure of the individual from the first moments of its existence. Humboldt does not align himself with older ideas of essentialism, of a preformed seed that just unfolds to what has been ingrained before: On the basis of Blumenbach's idea of the *Bildungstrieb* (Blumenbach 1780), the formative impetus or energy, Humboldt presupposes an individualised (and therefore individualising) tendency of growth. However, already Goethe sees (Goethe 1892, p. 73) that we don't gain a lot by substituting the preformed seed with the preformed formative energy: Both are essentialist versions of preformation, predetermination, and predefinition – concepts that seem to contradict an idea of a free and maybe even autonomous formation of the self through the self. Secondly, it might be noteworthy to remind us that Goethe too takes his Italian journey as reason to substitute his old aesthetics of genius with an aesthetics of the Classic (Fischer 1997) – hereby departing from a concept that saw the artist as an absolutely independent creative self, to accept a

concept of a more dependent and embedded creation and formation that is shaped by and through the paradigm of that which is more general, even universal. And, thirdly, on a more empirical note, it can be seen that the *Bildungsreise* in its realised form quickly became nothing more than a tourist tour that ticks the right boxes of the sights deemed to be necessary to visit – a hollowing out of the original conception of risking oneself to re-form oneself on a higher level – a hollowing out about which to complain became a standard exercise of all German culture critics from Nietzsche to Adorno and which still can be perceived in the never-ending repetition of the same travel pictures and photographic poses in even those snapshots which are assumed to be somewhat individualistic. Not many really engage in journeying, in risking oneself in order to regain a new self, and it most certainly does not need the encounter with the Classic to become reborn: For most of us academics, to leave the gentrified areas where we often live and to visit the deprived areas in our hometowns may be more alienating than any visit of Greece or Rome could ever be. In summary, the *Bildungsreise* and its supposed emphasis on the re-naisance of the individual through the alienating encounter with the other might turn out to be more of a mythos.

And what about Bashō? His in-habitation is far more than just an immersion into the tradition. Not only does the very idea of a relived understanding of the traditional lore mean to give birth to a completely new self (*enlightenment* is understood to be the most radical *re-naisance* of the self) – it also has to be noted that Bashō himself enacts a form of individuation that goes far beyond the formation in the image of the known tradition: His travel into the interiors, to the margins of the country is radically opposed to the general tendency of contemporary Japanese travellers to gravitate towards the centre of the empire, to Edo or Kyōto; he travels where no-one else usually travels, and he begins to draw attention to the simple life, in which people hitherto weren't interested. He went as far as to withhold adoration for traditionally highly praised places through refusing to add another poem to the existing collection of poems. As much as his travels were a repetition of tradition – they were also a performative creation of a very special individuality that sets out to “envision the new in the old, to recuperate, revive, and refigure the cultural memory as embodied in the landscape” (Shirane 1998, p. 253). As in other Japanese arts, individuation maybe was not the proclaimed purpose of his journey, but that is surely what happened. (Kenklies 2018) And this is not devalued by the fact that subsequently his ways themselves became formalised into a tradition, into a school.

Are we, in the end, arriving at the same point, just coming from two opposite directions? Could this encounter be described in terms of a familiarity that embraces the known and unknown at the same time: Whereas *Bildung* was initially assumed to be a process which unfolds and makes visible something previously very much unknown, and which now turns out to be resulting in something quite familiar, Bashō thought to simply relive the already known and still he changed the course of history in quite substantial ways.<sup>10</sup> Was the starting point that talked about two different traditions a diversion, pre-formed by prejudices of difference? Did I want the reader to see differences to be then welcomed as reconciler? Or are the similarities that begin to emerge only caused by the single-mindedness of the interpreter who cannot deny that he is part of really only just one tradition? But then – is the mere possibility of similarities not already a prospect that should cause excitement given the fact that usually both traditions claim to be very different from each other – always using the Other as a point of opposition in order to create one's own identity? Are Japan and Germany, are East

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<sup>10</sup> My gratitude to David Lewin for suggesting this interesting perspective.

and West so different, or are they just products of strategic essentialisms which construct an Other to secure oneself?

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