LANDSCAPE AND TRAVELLING EAST AND WEST

A PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNEY

HANS-GEORG MOELLER
AND ANDREW WHITEHEAD

BLOOMSBURY

Landscape and Travelling East and West

Also available from Bloomsbury

Classical Chinese Philosophy, Manyul Im
Confucius, Charlene Tan
Confucius: A Guide for the Perplexed, Yong Huang
Daoism: A Guide for the Perplexed, Louis Komjathy
Understanding Asian Philosophy, Alexus McLeod

Landscape and Travelling East and West

A Philosophical Journey

Edited by Hans-Georg Moeller and

Andrew K. Whitehead

B L O O M S B U R Y

LONDON • NEW DELHI • NEW YORK • SYDNEY

Bloomsbury Academic
An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

50 Bedford Square
London
WC1B 3DP
UK

1385 Broadway
New York
NY 10018
USA

www.bloomsbury.com

Bloomsbury is a registered trade mark of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

First published 2014

© Hans-Georg Moeller, Andrew K. Whitehead and Contributors 2014

Hans-Georg Moeller and Andrew K. Whitehead have asserted their right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as the Editors of this work.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publishers.

No responsibility for loss caused to any individual or organization acting on or refraining from action as a result of the material in this publication can be accepted by Bloomsbury or the Editors.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: 978-1-4725-1421-9

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Landscape and travelling east and west : a philosophical journey / edited by Hans-Georg Moeller and Andrew K. Whitehead.
pages cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-4725-1306-9 (hardback)-- ISBN 978-1-4725-0923-9 (epub)-- ISBN 978-1-4725-1421-9 (epdf) 1. East Asia--Religion. 2. Aesthetics. 3. Travel. I. Moeller, Hans-Georg, 1964- editor of compilation.
BL1055.L36 2014
111'.85095--dc23
2013031413

Typeset by Fakenham Prepress Solutions, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 8NN

Contents

List of Contributors vii

Introduction (Hans-Georg Moeller and Andrew K. Whitehead) 1

Part 1 Contemporary Paths

1 Crossing Boundaries: Zhuangzi and Bashō on the Art of Travel (Mario Wenning) 9

2 Wandering and/or Being at Home (Franklin Perkins) 23

3 Locality and Journeying in Migration (Andrea Martinez) 35

4 On the Way: Foolish Notes of an Old Nomadic Poet-Philosopher (Günter Wohlfart) 45

Part 2 Strolls and Scrolls

5 Travelling with Laozi and Plato (May Sim) 53

6 Yinyang Landscape: *Fengshui* Design and *Shanshui* Painting (Robin R. Wang) 71

7 Detachment and Reunion: Travel and Human Presence in Landscape (Ouyang Xiao) 81

8 Landscape as an Aesthetic Person: On the Conceptual World of German Romanticism (Rolf Trauzettel) 95

Part 3 Buddhist Journeys

9 A Walk through Some Zen Landscapes of the Heart (John C. Maraldo) 111

10 Hōben as Pedagogical Landscape (Andrew K. Whitehead) 127

11 Poets and Pilgrims: From Saigyō to Shikoku (John Harding) 137

12 Images and Mirages in Travelling through and Writing about Tibet (Snježana Zorić) 149

Part 4 Confucian and Daoist Ways

13 Travelling through Time with Family and Culture: Confucian Meditations (Henry Rosemont Jr.) 169

14 Travelling Together with *Gravitas*: The Intergenerational Transmission of Confucian Culture (Roger T. Ames) 183

15 Going Along – a Daoist Alternative to Role Ethics (Paul D'Ambrosio) 197

16 Landscape, Travel, and a Daoist View of the 'Cosmic Question' (Chris Fraser) 211

17 The Moving Subject: Transcendence and Reification in the Philosophy of Tang Junyi (Ady Van den Stock) 225

Index 237

List of Contributors

Roger T. Ames, University of Hawai'i, USA

Paul D'Ambrosio, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China

Chris Fraser, University of Hong Kong

John Harding, University of Lethbridge, Canada

John C. Maraldo, University of North Florida, Emeritus, USA

Andrea Martinez, University College Cork, Ireland

Hans-Georg Moeller, University College Cork, Ireland

Franklin Perkins, DePaul University, USA

Henry Rosemont Jr., Brown University, USA

May Sim, College of the Holy Cross, USA

Rolf Trauzettel, Bonn University, Germany

Ady Van den Stock, University of Ghent, Belgium

Robin R. Wang, Loyola Marymount University, USA

Mario Wenning, University of Macau, Macau

Andrew K. Whitehead, Kennesaw State University, USA

Günter Wohlfart, University of Wuppertal, Germany

Ouyang Xiao, University College Cork, Ireland

Snježana Zorić, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Korea

Introduction

Hans-Georg Moeller and Andrew K. Whitehead

Despite the eminence of landscape and nature, inhabiting and home, and journeying and crossings in virtually all of the major philosophical traditions, surprisingly little has been published on the topic academically. There is, of course, a great deal of scholarship concerning landscape and travelling in literature and art, but the philosophical and religious dimensions of these themes have not yet been adequately appreciated. It may thus be a timely endeavour to address this topic and, given its intrinsic connection with 'trans-locality', to do so from an inter-cultural perspective.

The lacuna of philosophical studies on landscape and travelling is all the more surprising given the features of contemporary academic life. Like their colleagues in other disciplines, contemporary professional philosophers tend to be constantly on the move: they attend conferences all over the world, present lectures in various countries, and, of course, travel intellectually to different places and times on a regular basis. They expose themselves to different landscapes, both literally and figuratively. Perhaps it is in order to reflect on such an essential aspect of their mode of being in the world, of interacting with others, and of doing their job.

The itinerant life is nothing new for philosophers. Travelling through diverse landscapes has been an important aspect of living the philosophical life in many historical and cultural settings. Confucius travelled from state to state for years; legend has it that Laozi wrote the *Daodejing* at a border crossing on his journey to the Western mountains, and that the Buddha experienced his spiritual conversion sitting underneath a tree. Ancient Greek philosophers, like Socrates, often talked and thought out in the open; the man considered the founder of modern Western philosophy, René Descartes, travelled through numerous European countries and cities; and for Martin Heidegger, the place he called home was relevant in quite complex ways. The essays in this volume look at these philosophical protagonists and others, trying to explore what travelling, landscape and related notions meant for them as thinkers and writers – as an

aspect of their lived experience, as well as one of the central metaphors shaping their thoughts and texts.

The essays of the first section of this volume approach landscape and travelling as contemporary philosophical issues that raise existential, political, ethical and methodological questions. To conceive of oneself as 'on the way' or, conversely, 'at home', can be of great significance for how we see our place in the world and our relationships with others.

Mario Wenning looks at travelling as a form of 'leaving behind the everyday' and of 'breaking with established norms'. Travelling thus means the crossing of boundaries. On the one hand, travelling can thereby be understood as a form of liberation, 'as a model of the exercise of freedom', but it also comes with a predicament: How can one hope to do well at what one is not used to doing? Specifically, Wenning refers to the Daoist notion of *you* ('roaming', 'rambling', 'wandering') and the poetry of Bashō, the seventeenth-century Japanese poet-philosopher, as expressions of an existential engagement in the art of being and moving in a realm beyond conventional limits.

Franklin Perkins also notices a certain 'liberating' aspect of travelling. When on a journey, we have fewer obligations; there is 'no one who can legitimately make demands on us, unlike when we are at home'. This 'freedom', however, also implies 'a kind of superficiality'. When we are merely passing through, we tend to move on the surface. Turning to Descartes and Heidegger, Perkins contrasts the notion of being away with its implied counterpart, the return to home. Through its contrast with the 'foreign', the home becomes more authentic and real. For Descartes, the home thereby signifies the 'community of rational beings', whereas for Heidegger it indicates historical and cultural roots. As a counterpart to such a dialectics of return, Perkins finally points to the *Zhuangzi* and the contemporary philosopher Alphonso Lingis as representatives of a 'radical wandering' that allows for the establishment of a 'community without commonality'.

Andrea Martinez, too, discusses Heidegger's understanding of being at home and the related notion of 'dwelling'. She uses Heidegger's terminology for different purposes, however, relating it to a contemporary – but also historically important – issue: migration. The migrant is, by definition, someone who has left his or her home behind. Rather than merely conceiving of this situation as a lack, and accordingly, of the migrant as a victim in need of help, Martinez points to the creative potentials involved in migration, making room for the reinvention of home and for new forms of dwelling that incorporate the unfamiliar into the familiar and vice versa.

Günter Wohlfart's chapter asks a question of method: How to arrive on the way? Referring to Zhuangzi, Bashō, Nietzsche and others, Wohlfart answers this question by returning to a notion that was central to his earlier philosophical work and predates his own 'Daoist turn', namely the *Augenblick*, or, in English, the 'instantaneous moment'. To arrive on a way such as, for instance, a poetic or philosophical way, points to a form of existence or practice that allows for the experience of suchness in an instantaneous moment. Philosophy and poetry emerge from 'frozen moments in the flow of time', which may open up on a journey *sans sujet*.

The second section of chapters presents historical vistas. Landscape and travelling have been 'classical' subjects of philosophers in the East and in the West. Over time, and in both geographical and cultural regions, these subjects manifested themselves in works of art, particularly in painting, giving rise to a highly dynamic interchange between aesthetic philosophy and artistic practice.

May Sim compares the attitudes towards landscape and travelling in the works of Plato and in the *Daodejing*. She pays specific attention to core metaphorics in both philosophical projects. While Plato's depiction of Socrates is not quite that of a traveller, the quest for truth is nevertheless repeatedly described in terms of a journey. In the *Daodejing*, according to Sim, one is not encouraged to travel geographically, but still supposed to travel the 'way' (*dao*) towards death and even beyond. Despite all the philosophical differences between Plato's works and the *Daodejing*, the natural landscape can serve in both as an indicator of beauty.

Robin R. Wang investigates the relation between the human and the natural world in Chinese philosophy, and, in particular, how it is reflected in the practices of *Fengshui*, or geomancy, and *Shanshui*, or landscape painting. She shows, with the help of a wide range of source materials, how the natural world was conceived as an extension of human life and, conversely, the human body and its 'heart-mind' (*xin*) as an internal landscape. This conjunction gave rise to the elaborate arts of identifying and constructing an auspicious environment for the dwelling places of both the living and the dead, and of producing images embodying human emotions in the shape of a landscape.

Ouyang Xiao reacts to 'an awkward predicament in comparative philosophical studies', namely the fact that while it is considered appropriate, for instance, to 'comment on Confucianism using Western philosophical concepts, e.g. "Aristotelian" or "Platonic"', the same method is not usually adopted when speaking about Western sources. Against this convention, Ouyang ventures to interpret the landscape paintings by Caspar David Friedrich from a (albeit not

exclusively) Chinese perspective. He discovers certain points of convergence with the Chinese tradition of landscape painting regarding composition, motifs, and, in particular, the human experience of nature.

Rolf Trauzettel's contribution also discusses paintings by Caspar David Friedrich. Trauzettel identifies a direct link between German Romanticist art and the philosophy of nature in the German Idealism of the same period, specifically that of Schelling. While Schelling and others imbue nature with reason, resulting in something close to a modern return of animism, the painters and poets of the time adorn nature with at least quasi-subjective attributes. In this way, landscape appears in the form of an 'aesthetic person' and attains a form of personhood and identity not unlike that of today's non-human 'legal persons'.

The third section includes chapters dealing with landscape and travelling in Buddhist contexts. The Buddhist tradition, comprising its often-inseparable philosophical and religious aspects, has itself travelled. It left its former home in India and moved eastwards to China, Japan, and then even further on to America and Europe. At the same time it has emerged as a destination for many who feel no longer at home in their old-European religious or philosophical edifices.

John C. Maraldo's chapter can be read as a surprisingly reversed mirror image of Rolf Trauzettel's analysis of the landscape painting, poetry and philosophy of German Romanticism. While Trauzettel found that the German Romanticists constructed the landscape as an aesthetic person, Maraldo describes how Japanese Zen Buddhist poets (as well as some native Americans and Australians) construct the person as an aesthetic landscape. In the Japanese Buddhist context, the human person and its subjectivity are, by means of poetry, aesthetically dissolved into their non-human and impersonal environment.

Andrew K. Whitehead describes Buddhist religious and philosophical instruction practices, the methods of 'skilful means' (hōben in Japanese), in terms of an emergence of a pedagogical landscape. Several major Chinese and Japanese Buddhists, including Linji and Ikkyū, are cited as examples for the contextualisation of Buddhist teachings in diverse circumstances. Whitehead points out how in each case 'shared landscapes' are established which allow the teaching to 'hit home'. Buddhist practice thereby proves capable of adopting itself to whatever particular setting or 'conventional reality' it may find itself in.

John Harding explores the roles of travelling and landscape in another form of Buddhist practice: in pilgrimage and in the poetry produced at its occasion or as its description. While, along with changes in scenery, the modes of travelling have changed since the times of the twelfth-century monk Saigyō,

both pilgrimage and poetry remain important aspects of religious life in Japan. Visiting sacred spaces, being on the way towards them, and, in particular, poetically relating to them, continue to shape the concrete experience of Buddhists even today.

Snježana Zorić reflects on problems of Tibetan religious and political identity arising from the multiplicity of Tibetan communities in Tibet and in exile. Based in part on her anthropological field studies of the Tibetan Buddhist diaspora in India, Zorić presents a Tibet of 'doubles' in the form of copied religious spaces and personae and of parallel communities, resulting from several dis- and relocations. She presents a picture of a somewhat paradoxical struggle to construct an essential or authentic 'Tibetanness' that may be difficult to reconcile with Buddhist notions of impermanence and non-substantiality.

The last section of the present volume continues the perennial Confucian-Daoist dialogue about the 'way', or *dao*, in a contemporary form. Some established and some not yet established Western philosophers express their understandings of Confucianism and Daoism in relation to the central vocabulary and imagery of spatial and temporal paths and realms that is shared by the two traditions.

Henry Rosemont Jr., understands *dao* as 'the governing metaphor' of Confucianism and paraphrases it as 'making one's way'. Rosemont emphasises the difference between this Confucian 'way-making' and certain Western, specifically US-American, individualist conceptions of life that envision the person as ultimately distinct and isolated from others. 'Like it or not,' Rosemont says, 'we belong to a family, and moreover, a family with a history.' He thereby embraces a conception of personhood and one's 'way' that is irreducibly based on an inclusion into social and temporal landscapes.

Roger T. Ames interprets *dao* as 'forging our way together in the world'. Using the title of a relatively recent album by Bob Dylan, his picture of Confucian practice could be called a journey 'together through life'. This journey through time not only encompasses one's individual life period, but also connects generations. The Confucian community establishes 'a shared cultural landscape' within which one assumes one's identity by the roles one develops in relation to one's fellow travellers. Ames points in particular to the social lineages emerging from cultural transmission that can establish communities, for instance, of literati and landscape painters over the course of several centuries.

Paul D'Ambrosio agrees with Ames' and Rosemont's reading of Confucianism as 'role ethics'. That we are shaped through the social roles we assume in our life, D'Ambrosio suggests, is something that Daoism can equally affirm. However,

from a Daoist perspective, we are free to *play* these roles and become what he calls 'genuine pretenders'. The genuine pretender can, as was said about the ancient Daoist Liezi, 'ride the winds' and develop an ability 'to go along with common practices' – perhaps even truly excel at them while remaining uncommitted to them in an essentially or existentially binding way.

Chris Fraser's chapter, similar to D'Ambrosio's, considers what the Daoist form of 'making one's way' may be in contrast with, but not contrary to, Confucian 'way-making'. Fraser identifies *you* ('roaming', 'rambling', 'wandering') as 'an ideal mode' of Daoist agency. Looking at related notions such as *de* (virtuosity) and *xing* (path, to walk) and their connotations of the motion of water and movement through channels, he concludes that the cultivation of Daoist agency aims at identifying, embarking on, and navigating 'courses through the "landscape" of our circumstances'. For Fraser, such virtuosity in navigating through all fields of our activity can also serve as an answer to Thomas Nagel's 'cosmic question' about how to connect with the whole of reality and make sense 'of everything'.

Ady Van den Stock complements our Confucian-Daoist dialogue by examining the oeuvre of the twentieth-century Chinese philosopher Tang Junyi. In his works, Tang combines a vision of journeying as 'free, self-sufficient movement not oriented towards any preestablished goal' with the advocacy of a 'teleological' historical and cultural movement towards a 'fixed trajectory' by 'a Hegelian meta-subject'. One such historical 'meta-subject', for Tang, is the '"spirit" (*jingshen*) of Chinese culture'. Tang's philosophy thus represents a not entirely resolved synthesis of contemporary Confucian (historically purposeful) and Daoist (free and self-sufficient) perspectives on 'way-making'.

The editors would like to thank all of those who have helped make this volume possible. In particular, we would like to thank Dean Feeney, Leticia Nemeth, Jason O'Donnell and Alan Quinn for their invaluable assistance in preparing the final versions of the text. We would also like to thank Andrew Wardell of Bloomsbury Publishing for his patience and support.

Part One

Contemporary Paths

1

Crossing Boundaries: Zhuangzi and Bashō on the Art of Travel

Mario Wenning

Humans are travelling animals. Characterised, and at times driven, by wanderlust, they follow an unquenchable thirst to embark into the blue. Few activities embody leaving the known for the unknown as well as that of travelling. Travelling consists of the crossing and transcending of boundaries: external boundaries such as physical demarcations including doorsteps, rivers, mountain ranges, or political borders; but also internal boundaries like deeply seated convictions and the limits of the space of known experience. When people travel, they are motivated by a desire to leave behind the everyday. The allure of travel thus lies in breaking with established norms, patterns of behaviour and modes of thinking and acting and to (re)discover or invent new norms, behaviours, thoughts and practices, even if just for a little while. In spite of its importance to human lives, travelling is not commonly considered to be a topic of philosophical reflection. Travel guidebooks tell us where to go and what to see there. Yet, as Alain de Botton highlights in *The Art of Travel*, rarely are the questions pursued of why and how to travel, at least not in an explicitly philosophical register (de Botton, 2003, p. 9). There is a distinct need to take up the question concerning the motivation for and the modalities in which travelling is not just done, but should be done well. Philosophical Daoism is a noteworthy exception to the notorious omission of philosophical reflections on the whys and hows of travel. This chapter focuses on the role of travel as overstepping boundaries, as it has been developed in the proto-Daoist text *Zhuangzi* and by the *Haiku* poet Bashō, who was significantly influenced by *Zhuangzi*. I shall interpret these philosopher-poet-wanderers as pursuing the question of what human beings do when they cross a boundary well.

Zhuangzi

Daoists are known to be travellers and border crossers. The legendary sage Laozi is said to have crossed the Western border gate where he wrote the *Daodejing* to bribe the guard to let him leave the politically rotten middle kingdom. This act of border crossing documents the birth of Daoism out of the spirit of travel. Not only were Daoists travelling sages who, to use Ernst Bloch's phrase, 'appear by way of disappearing' (Bloch, 1973, p. 1444), they also reflected upon the whys and hows of entering the 'swinging gateway of the manifold mysteries' (*Laozi*, chapter 1). Travel was not unconditionally affirmed in the Daoist tradition though. Laozi already characterises himself as a restless and solitary wanderer who has nowhere to go and is incapable of bonding with the masses (*Laozi*, chapter 20). He issues a warning against those who step outside of their door. Sages, Laozi claims, 'know without going anywhere' (*Laozi*, chapter 47). The wisdom of sages, on this account, crucially depends on not going too far but to see the world they always already inhabit in more attentive ways. Those who go for long marches and follow distant goals easily lose sight of what is in front of their eyes. As a self-confessed stayer, the Daoist sage, as Laozi perceives him or her, does not suffer from itchy feet. He or she is not torn by going after distant goals. In short, the wise person refrains from embarking on journeys and rests content with being attentive to the here and now. This valorisation of staying as opposed to leaving is extended to the level of the community. Chapter 80 of the *Daodejing* depicts a utopian village in which the inhabitants live in great proximity to their neighbours and yet feel no need to visit or even talk to them.

Zhuangzi, too, establishes a connection between travelling and practical wisdom, but in radically different terms. In marked contrast to Laozi's warning against the dangers of crossing one's doorstep, *Zhuangzi* presents an invitation to, depending on how one translates the title of the first chapter '*xiaoyao you*', 'wander at ease' (Roger Ames), engage in 'free and easy wandering' (Burton Watson), or 'ramble without destination' (A. C. Graham). Perhaps most fitting for our present context is Steve Coutinho's translation, 'wandering beyond', since it preserves the sense of distance and reaching across the limits of the here and now that is implied by the Chinese character *yao*. Despite Laozi's warning against travelling beyond, *Zhuangzi* focuses on what it means to engage in transgressing boundaries. What interests *Zhuangzi* is the question of what a wanderer does when he takes a step outside and ventures beyond a limit. Coutinho aptly explicates what is involved in wandering beyond:

> We need at the very least to undo preconceptions that prevent us from seeing things and events in new ways; we need to see how we can structure and restructure the boundaries of things. But we can only do so when we ourselves have 'wandered beyond' the boundaries of the familiar. It is only by freeing our imaginations to reconceive ourselves, and our worlds, and the things with which we interact, that we may begin to understand the deeper tendencies of the natural transformations by which we are all affected, and of which we are all constituted. (Coutinho, 2004)

As Coutinho describes it, in the *Zhuangzi*, travelling is a symbol for renegotiating the boundaries of things as well as the boundaries of our experience in light of our observation of natural transformational processes. Travelling well means to react to processes of transformation in an attentive and spontaneous manner with a heightened state of consciousness. As A. C. Graham remarks, the word for travelling or wandering used in the *Zhuangzi*, *you*, is 'used rather like the "trip" of psychedelic slang in the 1960s' (Graham, 2001, p. 8). Embarking on a trip, tripping, and coming down from a trip are forms of art, since they can be learned and cultivated. Rather than requiring drugs or other external stimuli, however, Daoist trips are triggered by processes of unlearning rigidified habits of dwelling with established norms and patterns of thinking and acting. Zhuangzian trips emerge from fostering a play-like attitude, enabling one to 'walk without touching the ground' (Crandel, 1983, p. 120) in never resting content with one given way of drawing boundaries.

Travelling is thereby presented as a model of the exercise of freedom. Freedom for the one who knows how to wander beyond means to effortlessly resist the gravitational pull of conventional norms and ideals, such as striving for fame and recognition or aiming for perfectly secure knowledge. Zhuangzian travellers move without resistance through the air, since they are not hindered by the desires for such questionable and fleeting goods and see their surrounding as an opportunity for adventure. Their environment is the medium of experience rather than an obstacle in need of transformation according to prefabricated plans and ideals. There is no need for discovering Archimedean grounds from which one could launch one's trips. By embodying the principle of dynamic interaction with their environing pathways, wandering sages complete or accomplish their *Dao* not by abstractly knowing, but by way of walking it (*Zhuangzi*, chapter 2). Their way-making is a form of knowing. Thus, the strolling Zhuangzi can dismiss Huizi's scepticism concerning the justification of Zhuangzi's certainty of the happiness of fish by simply pointing out: 'I know it [the happiness of fish] by standing here beside the Hao' (*Zhuangzi*,

chapter 17). The strolling and day-dreaming Zhuangzi does not play the all-too-serious game of responding to the sceptic, but changes the nature of the game by effortlessly wandering on. Just as the fishes happily swim without being aware of what they do, the wanderer observes and creatively adjusts to the various adventures along the way without looking to ground these observations and reactions in absolute justifications.

To explore the whys and hows of Daoist travel in the context of East–West encounters poses a challenge. Compared to their Chinese counterparts, European reflections on travel in the tradition of travel narratives take on a different form. For Dante, for example, life is symbolised by a '*peregrinatio vitae*' – a pilgrimage of life following a perfectionist, teleological and linear logic. The *Divine Comedy* depicts the journey of a middle-aged lost soul towards God. It is structured according to a clearly delineated beginning (hell), a middle (purgatory), and an end (heaven). In the travel literature of the European canon, especially that of the Romantic tradition, this trope of successive stages of deliverance and salvation has been transformed. The medieval goal of finding God was gradually superseded by the modern goal of finding oneself. In both cases, however, the journey of life is depicted as a linear process of human (self or God) discovery. The travelling protagonist starts off from a perspective of a loss of self and gradually recovers, or, for the first time, finds his or her true and authentic self and personal vocation. What is characteristic of European travel narratives is a promise of progress and ultimate arrival. The three features of linearity, teleology and progress, which we find in the background of Western accounts of travel, are not present in Daoism. Arthur Danto captures this East–West difference centred on different conceptions of what counts as a way and what as the art of wandering:

> Taoist literature and art is full of wanderers: but the road they are on leads nowhere particularly. It is not *la diritta via* that Dante lost in middle life and found again. It is simply a thread through space […] Bashō is not a man with a destination. He is no Dante, puffing up an arduous path through a hierarchical universe to a permanent lodging in Paradise. The Way has no vector. One cannot get lost. The Way is everywhere. With Dante, and the road he emblemized, the price of being lost is momentous, and men need a guide if not a savior to find their way. (Danto, 1987, p. 105)

For Daoist travellers, wandering – and, through wandering, cultivating a sense of tripping beyond – does not follow a teleological pattern of self-discovery after a feeling of loss, since there is no one correct *Dao* one could lose, find, or fail to

find. If there is not one right route and measure to evaluate whether one travels this route correctly and in the right direction, we are faced with a radically distinct conception of freedom and fulfilment from that common in the West. For the Daoist, in contrast to the European traveller, freedom is not the *freedom towards* a given goal (say God or self-discovery). However, it is also not simply the *freedom from* somebody else's authority or the freedom from being led astray either. Rather than discovering his or her authentic self or overcoming mistakes, the wandering sage possessed by the spirit of crossing boundaries engages in a *freedom in* the very act of travelling. The travelling sage possesses knowledge of how to wallow in the midst of things without being disturbed by ulterior goals or rationalisations; he knows how to change without being the victim or master of transformation processes. Being on the road means to engage in practices of transformation by way of performativity; unlearning the obsession with progress and directedness. A traveller who knows how to travel well is a virtuoso (*de*) in the art of transformation without beginning or end. *Zhuangzi* does not deny that the journey of life does have limits:

> Life has a point from which it springs, death has a point to which it returns. Beginning and end succeed each other without obvious turning points, and no one knows what possible limits they may have. If it is not an ongoing process like this, then who runs this whole shebang? (*Zhuangzi*, chapter 21)

Life is framed by birth and death, but the nature of these limits remains opaque to the one who knows how to wander beyond, since he understands that there is no one, including himself, deciding over the nature or exact arrival of these limits. The wandering sage takes the limits as they come. Because the origin of these limits remains unknown, there is not much use in searching for their roots or absolute demarcations. Human beings find themselves necessarily in the middle of a labyrinth of intersecting, crisscrossing and overlapping life-paths with their own respective contents and boundaries. They are not characterised by an absolute natality, nor are they running towards death. Rather they are being born and are dying at any moment of their journey. As liminal travellers, they are constantly changing as the environment they traverse is subject to changes.

Life itself is understood as a process of wayfaring and, by extension, the art of wandering is not just an episode, but is the art of living understood as a cultivation in boundary-crossing competences. The dual transience of a wandering person with specific, albeit changing limits and of the limitless *Dao* creates a dynamic web of relationships. Limits are thus never absolute limits,

but demarcate provisional fields of experience that change as the wanderer or the landscape traversed changes. It is tedious to construct a fixed metaphysics of limits, as Kant has done in a European context. To claim that there are no metaphysically fixed limits does not mean that there are no limits to every given journey. Every journey begins with a departure and ends with an arrival. In addition to its temporal limits, journeys are also framed by the landscape travelled, by the places one has seen, the people one has encountered along the way and the distance travelled. The fact that one embarks on *specific journeys with specific limits* also implies that these journeys leave certain sights unseen and passages untravelled. The person who sets or even acknowledges the necessary existence of these limits has already halfway overstepped them. He implicitly accepts that there is another side to the limit. To draw a line means to already have crossed it, at least in thought.

Zhuangzi is sometimes read as suggesting that the task of setting up limits in terms of fixed categories or moral standards is self-contradictory and should, therefore, be abandoned (Kohn, 2009, p. 43). Delineating thinking is, on this reading, replaced by 'seeing things as equal'. According to this interpretation, the message of *Zhuangzi* consists in teaching us to refrain from setting up limits through determinative judgement. Indeed we do find the seemingly straightforward advice: '[F]orget distinctions. Leap into the boundless and make it your home' (*Zhuangzi*, chapter 2). The paradox of setting up limits as both demarcating an insight from an outside and overstepping this demarcation hardly justifies inferring that the sage should refrain from judging. Even though 'the Way has never known boundaries' (*Zhuangzi*, chapter 2), human wayfaring brings about boundaries. Apart from the reason that judging and thereby making distinctions is an integral feature of conscious life, there is ample evidence that *Zhuangzi* promoted certain forms of delineating judgements and, in particular, delineating and even dissecting actions. The famous story of butcher Ding, for example, illustrates how to cut reality – here symbolised by the ox – into pieces in a way that makes use of the naturally existing empty spaces between the bones.

Rather than engaging in the impossible task of refraining from delineation, Daoists refrain from resting content with setting up any absolute limit, judgement or perspective. David Wong writes: 'Zhuangzi undermines the assumption that our own perspectives are uniquely correct not by discrediting them but by undermining their claim to have exhausted what there is to see, and this involves opening our eyes to perspectives other than our own' (Wong, 2006, p. 235). The Daoist sage who judges does not regard a *particular* judgement

or value as being without alternatives. The person seeing the particularity and contingency of any limit remains committed to his or her momentary perspective, but remains aware of its outside and thus of the limitations of this very perspective. He knows about the existence of a plurality of different and possibly equally justified standpoints and crosses over to these perspectives when seen to be appropriate. Although Wong rightly emphasises the significance of the insight into the pluralism of perspectives in *Zhuangzi*, he fails to highlight the *moral significance* of the invocation to wander beyond limits. Wandering beyond is born out of the insight into the necessity of *both acknowledging existing boundaries* and, at the same time and ever again, *leaping beyond these boundaries*. Zhuangzi, for example, acknowledges the butterfly domain of experience as well as the human domain while travelling back and forth between these domains in his dream. There is no linear continuity and no progression in switching from the butterfly to the philosopher episode. The limits between butterfly and human form remain intact, and yet there is a natural and spontaneous change from the one into the other. What is of philosophical significance is that the act of crossing calls into question the seemingly natural and clear cut demarcation between what is taken to be a dream and what reality.

Hans-Georg Moeller has argued that the butterfly allegory does not suggest the transcending of barriers, but their acknowledgement and acceptance. According to his interpretation, the famous allegory suggests that one should rest content with one's natural limits. It hinges not on an act of recovery of self through memory or the overcoming of existential doubt, but rather an act of self-contentment through forgetfulness:

> Because the butterfly does not know about Zhou, it is 'self-content.'
> Because Zhou does not remember his dream he is 'fully and completely Zhou' – and without doubts! Since Zhou and the butterfly do not remember each other, because the barrier between them is not crossed, the change between them is seamless, spontaneous and natural! (Moeller, 2004, p. 48)

If we regard the story from the perspective of the narrator who 'does not identify with either Zhuang Zhou or the butterfly, but who affirms both equally' (Moeller, 2004, p. 53), we gain an insight into the nature of the transition or boundary crossing from one side to the other side.

What does it mean to transcend a limit in a way that is 'seamless, spontaneous and natural'? Such acts of transcending are not the same as passing through sequences of experience in a linear learning process with the goal of (re)discovering one's authentic self. Spontaneous travel beyond limits in a mode

that is different from travelling from A to B requires an attitude of effortlessly passing back and forth through porous boundaries and calls into question claims of exclusive validity raised on either side of those boundaries. This process takes place without thereby denying that there are different domains demarcated through their experiential limits. At least for the moment, butterflies cannot wander, just as philosophers cannot fly. Yet, philosophers can travel beyond the tendency of fixing one field of experience by refraining from absolutising their contingent perspective and postulating it as certainty. We lack a richer vocabulary for characterising the act of travelling understood as such moving beyond a limit in seamless, spontaneous and natural ways. Let us turn to Bashō's adaptation and transformation of Zhuangzi's idea of acknowledging *and* overstepping limits in search of such a vocabulary.

Bashō

Matsuo Kinsaku was born in 1644 in the Japanese town of Ueno and named Bashō after a tree in his garden that inspired a number of his *haiku* poems. Bashō took the Daoist philosophy of wandering to heart and repeatedly hit the road. He left five travel diaries in which he jotted down his reflections of his journeys. Bashō continued the Daoist tradition of philosophical travel. Deeply influenced by Daoism, and the *Zhuangzi* in particular, Bashō transforms stories such as that of the dream of the butterfly. Following Zhuangzi, Bashō was particularly intrigued by transformation through travel and focused on the crossing of borders, gates and experiential boundaries. The literary form of *Haikai* and its eccentric mode of juxtaposing opposites would not have been possible without drawing on *Zhuangzi*. Peipei Qiu comments on the importance of *Zhuangzi* for Bashō: they (the *haikai*) 'imbue the travel journal with enlightening humour and deliberate eccentricity that characteristically reflects the shoyoyu (*xiaoyao you*) spirit, re-envisioning and redefining the poetic landscape through the haikai imagination' (Qiu, 2005, p. 60). Bashō not only wandered, he brought the movement of wandering across boundaries to language. This is mirrored by the form of the *haiku* in which moments of travel are juxtaposed to mark and accentuate their respective limit and conjure up a poetic space in which this limit is being renegotiated and crossed without fixing a final resting position.

The first moment of travel happens before the journey begins. Every traveller knows the joy of anticipation. Triggered by the promise of leaving the everyday routine in favour of entering adventurous lands, the *haikai* imagination seems