

Philosophy and Journey

PHILOSOPHY AS JOURNEY

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Abstract

Inquiry into truth is often compared to the figure of journey. In this sense, there should be certain affinity between philosophy and journey. This affinity seems to be widely accepted, although the reason for it remains unclear. This paper explores what makes this affinity possible as well as the subtle difference between philosophy and journey. In order to do that, first, with the help of philosophers on philosophizing and of the phenomenological description of philosophy, I attempt to describe what is happening in our mind when we are philosophizing. Second, I will endeavor to describe phenomenologically the experience of journey in an effort to lay down its essential features. Finally, based on these phenomenological descriptions of both philosophy and journey, I compare their characteristics in order to isolate what they have in common and uncommon, aiming to throw light on what makes their affinity possible.

Introduction

Affinity of Philosophy and Journey

Inquiry into truth is often compared to the figure of journey. In this comparison, the inquirer is associated with a traveler who aspires to reach the truth, which is seen as destination of his/her journey. In Plato's allegory of the cave, one of the inhabitants of the cave, being used to seeing only shadows projected on the wall enabled by the light of a torch, goes outside to see the reality of the sun, which very much illustrates the soul's travels to the world of the ideas, where it lived before, to recollect memories of truth. This image of philosophical inquiry as journey becomes the central idea for Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit, where Spirit travels from the certainty of perception (of now, here, I), to the absolute Spirit. This is nothing other than a phenomenological description of the human mind aspiring for truth as a long travel from a certain starting point to a final destination.

This would not be without connection with the first usage of the Greek word "philosophein" recorded in Herodotus. The usage was related to "traveling the world for the sake

of seeing it.” In the first book of Herodotus’ *Histories*, Croesus, who had welcomed Greek Athenian Legislator Solon at Sardis, asked him,

Our Athenian guest, we have heard much of you, by reason of your wisdom and your wanderings, how that you have travelled far to seek knowledge [*philosopheon*] and to see the world.¹

Here we can observe the verb “philosophein” standing for travel. That is, the idea of travel is expressed by the word which literally means love (*philia*) for wisdom (*sophia*).²

In the history of philosophy, we find a lot of stories (some of them anecdotal) about philosophers that have to do with traveling. Plato’s teacher, Socrates, was not traveler himself, but often dialogued with Greek speaking travelers coming from other cities. Plato travelled twice to Sicilia to help Dionysius the II. Born in Italy, Thomas Aquinas taught in Paris after having studied in Germany. Moses Maimonides, a Cordovan Jew, travelled through the North African countries to Egypt to flee from the persecution of Jews. The Catalan philosopher Raymond Lull travelled through many Mediterranean countries to promote dialogue between religions. The French philosopher Descartes traveled a lot in his youth and throughout his professional life lived in several countries. About one year before his visit to Sweden, and one year and a half before his death, he wrote to the Swedish Queen Christina, “one foot in one country, and the other in another country, I find my condition very happy, in that it is free.”³ Immanuel Kant, known for having remained in his hometown Königsberg throughout his life, knew a lot about foreign countries to such an extent that he gave lectures in geography “for almost his entire career.”⁴ He was, so to say, “traveler” through books.

Based on the above essentially empirical observations, one might suppose that travel promotes philosophy, or that the experience obtained in travel helps doing philosophy, which suggests a certain affinity between philosophy and journey. However, as it is not immediately clear how traveling helps philosophizing, or how travel itself relates to philosophy, we need to focus on the question of this peculiar affinity between these two distinct kinds of human actions or experiences. Indeed, they seem to be even contraries in the sense that philosophizing itself does not require moving from one place to the other, whereas journey is, by definition, moving from one site to the other.

To address this question, I will examine, in the first section, what is happening in our mind when we are philosophizing. Likewise, in the second section, I will examine what is happening when we are traveling. Finally, based on the results of previous sections, I will assert that philosophy is journey “in its existential sense,” even if there are differences between the two. More specifically, I will argue that whereas philosophy begins with ‘nostalgia’, journey

¹ Loeb Classical Library, *Herodotus I*, trans. A.D. Godley, London / Cambridge, 1946, Book I, 30, pp. 33–35.

² See also Rossen Roussev, “Thinking and Philosophizing as the Journey of Waving and Homecoming: Heidegger, Lao-tse, and Herodotus,” *Global Conversations: An International Journal in Contemporary Philosophy and Culture*, Vol. II, No. 01 (2019), especially pp. 38–40.

³ « un pied en un pays; et l’autre en un autre, je trouve ma condition très heureuse, en ce qu’elle est libre. » Lettre à Christine de Suède, juillet 1648, quoted in Barbara Cassin, *Nostalgie* (Fayard / Pluriel, 2015), p. 7.

⁴ Robert B. Loudon, “The Last Frontier: Exploring Kant’s Geography”, in Robert R. Clews (Ed.), *Reading Kant’s Lectures* (De Gruyter, Berlin / Boston, 2015), p. 505. The phrase is quoted by Loudon from “the dust jacket for Natural Science.”

begins with ‘exodalgia’, and that whereas ‘being-moved’ (in Heideggerian sense Cf. 1.3) comes first in philosophy, it comes second in journey.

1 Phenomenology of Philosophy

1.1 What is philosophy? – Two types of answers

What is happening when we are philosophizing? This is a version of the more common expression of the question: What is philosophy? Here, it is interesting to look at the answers that philosophers gave to that question, because their answers could help us answer our question.

There are generally two types of answers to the question “What is philosophy?” The first type stresses the contents of philosophy as “courses taught in the schools of liberal arts or in the faculty of philosophy,” or “what you can read in the history of philosophy.” This is often regarded as “doxa” by philosophers who emphasize the act of philosophizing as being essential to philosophy. For them, philosophy does not consist in the answers it gives to the question, but in the very inquiry into the truth. In other words, to these philosophers, the answer counts for less than the question. Kant’s statement on what we can learn from philosophy is a good example of this type of answer. In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, he says,

Among all rational sciences (*a priori*), therefore, only mathematics can be learned, never philosophy (except historically), rather, as far as reason is concerned, we can at best only learn **to philosophize**. (B865)

One can only learn philosophize, i.e., to exercise the talent of reason in prosecuting its general principles in certain experiments that come to hand, but always with the reservation of the right of reason to investigate the sources of these principles themselves and to confirm or reject them. (B 866)⁵

Here, Kant makes distinction between philosophy as system (or history, with some contents) and act of philosophizing. He gives even a definition of the act of philosophizing as using the talent of reason in following the universal principles of reason always under the condition that when reason passes a judgment on something for which it does not have a right to do so, this judgement must be rejected. In other words, philosophy is not what we can learn as knowledge, it is just the act of philosophizing. Kant’s perspective allows us to orient ourselves to the second type of answers, namely, that philosophy is an act, rather than a system of contents. We can thus continue to observe philosophers’ comments on the definition of philosophy and to identify their answers pointing to philosophy as act, as well as to a close connection of intellectual action to emotion.

1.2 Plato, Aristotle – philosophy and passion

From the ancient Greek thinkers, we have inherited the view that philosophy begins with a sense of wonder. Thus, in *Theaetetus*, Plato says, “for this feeling (*pathos*) of wonder (*thaumazein*) shows that you are a philosopher, since wonder is the only beginning (*archē*) of

⁵ Immanuel Kant, *Werke IV Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Wilhelm Weischedel (hrsg.) (Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1968), S.699-700. *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer & Allen W. Wood (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge / New York / Melbourne, 1998), p. 694.

philosophy.” (155d)⁶ Similarly, Aristotle details this process of beginning of philosophy as follows,

It is through wonder (*thaumazein*) that men now begin and originally began to philosophize; wondering in the first place at obvious perplexities, and then by gradual progression raising questions about the greater matters too, e.g. about the changes of the moon and of the sun, about the stars and about the origin of the universe. Now he who wonders and is perplexed feels that he is ignorant (thus the myth-lover is in a sense a philosopher, since myths are composed of wonders); therefore if it was to escape ignorance that men studied philosophy, it is obvious that they pursued science for the sake of knowledge, and not for any practical utility. The actual course of events bears witness to this; for speculation of this kind began with a view to recreation and pastime, at a time when practically all the necessities of life were already supplied.⁷

Aristotle provides here elements for a phenomenology of philosophy, or of how we begin to philosophize in our mind. According to him, philosophizing begins with wonder, stimulated by the perplexities of not knowing. Knowledge is thus seen as pursuit for itself, without extrinsic advantage, but with the help of “recreation and pastime.”

Here Aristotle seems to suppose that the pursuit of knowledge has an intrinsic advantage. Now Aristotle himself does not state what this intrinsic advantage might be, but we can guess that it has something to do with a certain first emotion which is the cause of realization of our ignorance and subsequently of the pursuit of knowledge. The pursuit here indicates a desire for the object of pursuit, whereas the need of it presupposes a non-possession of this object. It is indeed the awareness on the non-possession that arises a need, which is a state of mind demanding satisfaction as in the cases of hunger or thirst. The need is a kind of passion in its original sense, which, as derived from the Greek *pathein*, is ‘suffering’). For its part, this state of suffering needs to be cured by the pursuit of knowledge, which, if successful, results in an intrinsic advantage, namely, the satisfaction of the need of knowledge, which is also an intellectual pleasure.

Aristotle’s description of the act of philosophizing can be compared to Husserl’s phenomenological approach to consciousness. Because his description of “gradual progression” of consciousness (along wonder, perplexities, realization of ignorance, pursuit of knowledge) allows us to see what is happening in our minds when we begin to philosophize, although, unlike Husserl, Aristotle does not go through a process of *epoche* (by putting things in parenthesis to let things (*Sache*) appear themselves). For him, it involves a suffering from ignorance and the ensuing need to relieve its pain through the pursuit of knowledge.

1.3 Heidegger and the Philosophy as Nostalgia

As for Heidegger, he says philosophy is originally pain. In a lecture on winter semester of 1929/30, *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics – World – Finitude – Solitude*, quoting Novalis, he defines philosophy as nostalgia, in German *Heimweh*, literally, “home pain.”

⁶ *Plato II Theaetetus Sophist*, trans. Harold North Flower (The Loeb Classical Library, London / New York, 1928), p. 55.

⁷ Aristotle, *Metaphysics Books I-IX*, trans. Hugh Tredennick (Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge / London, 1933), I.II, 6-11, 982b 12-25, p. 13.

But what is the human, [what does it mean] that at the core of his essence he philosophizes, and what is this philosophizing? What are we in it? Whither do we want to go? [...] *Novalis* said once in a fragment: 'Philosophy is originally nostalgia (*Heimweh*), a desire to be home everywhere'. A wonderful definition, of course romantic.⁸

This statement is similar to those of Plato's and Aristotle's in that it also points to the aspect of passion in philosophizing. He makes clearer this passive aspect, and puts it in relation to the verb *greifen*, 'grasp' in English. Philosophy is not something a teacher can teach by letting students repeat after him or applying it, but needs, first of all, being moved (*ergriffen*) by what the concepts (*Begriffe*) shall grasp (*begreifen*).⁹

Philosophy begins with being grasped by what the concept will grasp but has not yet grasped. Being grasped (*ergriffen*) in German means being moved in an emotional sense, which corresponds to the state of passion (wonder and desire to know) that was discussed above. Here, what Heidegger calls 'nostalgia' is just the desire to know, whereas its object of knowledge is 'home' (*Heim*). In this sense, for him, very much as for Plato, the truth is something that we knew before but subsequently forgot, and now we aim to discover again. That is, the pursuit of knowledge (here the ontological truth of being) is to return to the home place which we left before. As in the pursuit of ideas by the soul in the anamnesis of Plato, in this pursuit the act of knowing is a recovery through discovery.

Regardless of other differences with Plato and Aristotle, for Heidegger the beginning of philosophy was also a passion, which is now called being-moved (*Ergiffenheit*). This state comes from the fundamental mood (*Grundstimmung*) of *Dasein*, which he calls Anxiety (*Angst*).¹⁰ Thus, for Heidegger, philosophizing has its roots in the existential structure of the human being, and here, by using the word *Heimweh*, deliberately or not, he puts forward the aspect of suffering.¹¹

This aspect can be made more conspicuous with a note on the etymology the word 'nostalgia'. The word is composed of two Greek words; *nostos* (return) and *algos* (pain). There is no such word in ancient Greek. It is a modern coinage which is used to describe medically a "home sick" person. There are two theories on its origin. According to the first one, the word was invented by Jean-Jacques Haader of Switzerland in 1678 as a medical term equivalent to the German *Heimweh*. According to the second, it was coined by the Alsatian Jean Hofer in 1688 but again with the same designation, namely, a state of suffering associated with being far from home. According to a medical report from that time, this sickness can be cured by returning to their home or even by hearing the cow bell of home village.¹²

⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik Welt – Endlichkeit – Einsamkeit*, Gesamtausgabe Bd. 29/30 (Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 1983), S. 7. My translation.

⁹ *Op.cit.*, S.9.

¹⁰ *Op.cit.*, S.10.

¹¹ On Heidegger's perspective on Novalis' *Heimweh*, see also Rossen Roussev, "Thinking and Philosophizing as the Journey of Waying and Homecoming: Heidegger, Lao-tse, and Herodotus," pp. 33ff.

¹² Barbara Cassin proposes a succinct report on the history and a reflection of the term. *La Nostalgie – Quand donc est-on chez soi ?*, Pluriel, 2015, pp. 16-23.

To sum up, philosophizing presupposes a peculiar type of suffering – the need to go back ‘home’. ‘Home’ here represents a philosophical truth, which for Plato was associated with the world of ideas, whereas for Heidegger with the “forgotten” truth of Being. In this sense, we can associate our reaching the truth in our pursuits of it with a relief of our suffering. We need to note, though, that these philosophers do not explicitly point to such a therapeutic effect of philosophy. Thus, we might as well say that such an effect could be equally felt by non-professional “philosophers” whose inquiry germinates in a discussion in a philosophical café.

1.4 Observations from a Philosophical café

Philosophical cafés are everywhere around the world. I also organize a philosophical café in my town once a month. Participants would frequently say that the conversation was interesting to them because they learned something (an idea) they did not know before the discussion. They often pointed that through this kind of learning they were relieved from a peculiar type of suffering which they associated with individual or cultural values but lacked a necessary clarity on it. Here is an example.

In 2018, we had a philosophical café in which we discussed personal “dreams” and their possible fulfilment in life in the future. As we began, some participants talked about their own dreams, but others said that they do not have such dreams and appeared to be suffering from the fact that they do not have what to fulfil in life. To be sure, this peculiar suffering presupposes that they thought that they should have such a dream. Later on, as the conversation went on, some participants began to notice this presupposition and to raise the question of how we came to have such a feeling of obligation. In search of an answer, they reflected on the education they had received in school and began to realize how their teachers or the way of education imprinted on their mind a message like “it is better to have a dream to realize in one’s life.”

This is how they understood the cause of this peculiar suffering they had, and we can relate here that at the moment of uncovering this previously unknown part of their own selves, participants felt free.¹³ They felt emancipated from what oppressed them, their own assumed values, which were originally foreign to them but became their own unwittingly. In his introductory book on philosophical dialogue, the Japanese philosopher and philosophical

¹³ This process may at first appear to be similar to the experience of patients in the psychoanalytic practice, where when analyzed via the methods of the psychoanalyst, they discover what is practically unknown to them in their personal life history, which has been suppressed by an memorable traumatic experience. However, psychoanalytic experience of this kind (discovery of trauma) and the experience in philosophical café are different in two points. First, the facilitator in philosophical café does not play the same role as psychoanalyst. Second, the discovery of something forgotten in one’s personal life may not necessarily relate to a traumatic experience suppressed in one’s unconscious. With regard to the medical practice in psychiatry, I think that philosophical café is rather closer, besides differences, to the so-called “open dialogue,” a psychiatric method which was developed in Finland for patients with mental illnesses. This difference needs a more detailed exploration, though, and we would rather reserve it for another study.

practitioner Shinji Kajitani describes this feeling of relief and emancipation as intellectual but also as “almost physical” one.¹⁴

This is a peculiar therapeutic effect of philosophy. Here, we need to ask, with regard to the ‘truth’ of the professional philosophers’, what is the truth for participants in philosophical cafés and whether this truth can be considered to be same one as Plato’s truth of the ideas or Heidegger’s truth of Being. The ‘truth’ in the above-mentioned case of the participants in the philosophical café would be, to be short, a discovery of a certain veiled part of the self. It is identical neither with the Platonic idea nor with the Heideggerian Being. However, it can be identified as ‘truth’ because it was pursued by inquirers; it was something hidden in the memory, forgotten secret of the self, which was discovered after inquiry.

Now we can briefly sum up our findings on the question of this first section; namely, what is happening when we are philosophizing? First, we linked philosophizing to a suffering from sickness, a sickness of knowing, which presupposes an awareness of a certain ignorance of the knowledge that we pursue. Second, we also linked philosophizing to an attempt to cure this sickness through inquiry. And third, we associated the discovery of the ‘truth’ with the recovery from this sickness.

The next question we consider is If philosophy is this kind of therapeutic process, how does it relate to journey?

2. Phenomenology of Journey

2.1 Empirical observations

To answer this question, we need to ask first what is happening when we are traveling. This will be a key element of our investigation of the experience of journey in this section. We will then finalize our discussion on what philosophy and journey have in common.

In the ordinary English language, the word ‘travel’ is more widely used than the word ‘journey’. ‘Journey’ can be used to mean ‘long travel’, but I do not see an essential difference between the two terms here. There are in fact a number of English words meaning journey or travel with regard to a specific destination or purpose, such as pilgrimage, sight-seeing, mission, relocation, migration, etc.

Historically speaking, human beings have never stopped changing their places of living. In many myths or religious stories, various characters have been said to have traveled for very long periods of time (including Abraham, Moses, Ulysses, Aeneas, etc). Sometimes they travel for a war in foreign countries (Ulysses, Alexander the Great, crusaders, Napoleon, U.S. army, “Blue Helmets,” etc); or they travel to propagate their teaching or ideology (Jesus, St. Paul, Jesuits, Revolutionists, etc.); or they set out on a journey to visit some sacred place (Jerusalem, Mecca, Santiago de Compostela, Ise shrine etc.). People also travel for commerce, which sometimes creates roads for travel like “silk road,” railway, highway, or low-cost airlines; and sometimes they are made to set out on a risky journey of immigration.

What these examples have in common is the aspect of moving from one place to another, but the variations in its sense can be immense. We may assume that we travel from

¹⁴ Shinji Kajitani, *What is thinking? – Introduction to philosophy from 0 to 100 years old* [in Japanese], 2018. Here we use the term philosophical practitioner for a person who engages in a philosophical practice such as philosophical café, philosophical dialogue in school, philosophical consulting, philosophical counseling, etc.

home to another place and vice versa. But we, as *homo sapiens*, have never returned to the place where we were born, supposedly somewhere on the African continent. Likewise, some immigrants have never gone back to their country of origin, which has transformed their identity to such an extent that, for instance, some Japanese immigrants in Hawai'i or in Latin America have forgotten their mother tongue. Whereas in the case of the nomads, for whom traveling is a part of their everyday life, journey itself has become a kind of home.

Amidst this motley mosaic of traveling examples, one can easily get lost without the help of elucidating concepts. We are therefore fully justified to search for phenomena of affinity between philosophy and journey, and we will now focus, first, on travel from home, and second, on the experience of moving from one home place to another.

2.2 What is happening when we are traveling? – Phenomenology of Journey

To answer the question of what is happening when we are traveling, we need to clarify what *home* is, as well as the experience of leaving home and arriving to another place. 'Home' can be understood in wider than ordinary sense. For instance, when we get out of home to go to workplace or school, we have in a sense not left it, as this is not actually traveling but commuting. That is, we understand 'home' in a wider sense that is not confined to the building we live in. Instead, home represents the sphere of our everyday life, the world with which we are familiar, which is what in *Being and Time* Heidegger called being-in-the-world (*In-der-Welt-sein*). It should be noted, though, that this sense of 'home' is different from what he called *Heim* in his above-mentioned lecture. Here, being-in-the-world does not have the sense of a geometrical or geographical space but that of the human being's existential structure. The 'home' in this existential sense is where we live and feel at ease. On the opposite side, when we are in the state of anxiety, we are out of home (*unheimlich*). The world in this state becomes foreign to us, very much as when we get lost in a town, we feel anxious and the world appears as foreign to us. On Heidegger's view, anxiety (*Angst*) is the fundamental mood of *Dasein*.

In journey, we tend to feel this fundamental mood. This means that existentially we leave our everyday life world and our being-in-the-world becomes a world that is foreign to us. This observation allows us to distinguish a mere travel from an existential travel. Traveling in an empirical sense can be either existential or non-existential. For example, even if we travel to the other side of the earth, it is possible that we do not at all travel in an existential sense if we feel at home throughout. Traveling becomes existential only when we are outside the 'home' of our being-in-the-world. That is, we can travel existentially even when we remain in a house we are living in, so long as we are in the fundamental mood of being solitarily separated from the world in anxiety.

It will not be an exaggeration to say that today we are living in a world where 'mere traveling' has become easier whereas existential traveling more difficult. In many cities around the globe, we find the same coffee shops, the same fast food or fashion chains, the same resort hotel chains and free WIFI internet, which makes it possible for us to flee from our solitude, for instance, by connecting to the same social networks. We can say that all these function as a kind of shelter in the unfamiliar world we dwell during travel. Indeed, such a sheltering experience presupposes that the traveler is out of his or her familiar world. And yet, this is also what the traveler wants – to exit his or her everyday existence and obtain some special experience

which cannot be found in the familiar surrounding world, regardless of the uncertainty that it can be found in this way.

We find one of the classical criticisms of the traveler in a passage in Augustin's *Confessions*, to which the Italian poet of 14 century Petrarch paid special attention,

Great is this force of memory, excessive great, O my God; a large and boundless chamber! who ever sounded the bottom thereof? yet is this a power of mine, and belongs unto my nature; nor do I myself comprehend all that I am. Therefore is the mind too strait to contain itself. And where should that be, which it containeth not of itself? Is it without it, and not within? how then doth it not comprehend itself? A wonderful admiration surprises me, amazement seizes me upon this. And men go abroad to admire the heights of mountains, the mighty billows of the sea, the broad tides of rivers, the compass of the ocean, and the circuits of the stars, and pass themselves by [et relinquunt se ipsos] ...¹⁵

Travelers go out to find something wonderful in the great nature, and by doing so, they miss to heed at what is wonderful inside their own nature. For the author of the *Confessions*, the quest for the truth of the mind is to unfold within our own self, not outside it. Petrarch went up to the top of the mount Ventoux in 1335 with his favorite book *Confessions*. He sought to compare the climbing of the mountain and the exaltation of the soul to the beatitude promised by the Christian religion; at the top, he opened the book and read this passage in surprise.

The German philosopher Joachim Ritter gives an interpretation of this episode from the viewpoint of the history of ideas, considering it as one of the sources of the concept of landscape.¹⁶ According to him, great landscapes will become destinations for travelers in the course of time. People then will go to foreign lands to see something wonderful in the great nature, just as Petrarch did in the 14th century. This is surely the case in our time, and Augustine's critical viewpoint, namely, that in traveling one turn one's back on what is wonderful, mysterious, foreign, or uncanny in the self, may still come to mind.

Taken together, Petrarch's travel and Augustine's critique are indicative that the notion of traveling is open to the possibilities to become a mere traveling or an existential traveling. But if travelers are not forced to travel (*unlike* refugees), they essentially aim at moving away from their everyday life. They need to leave their everyday world and, in this sense, to reinvent their own being-in-the-world in order to satisfy this need. Still, this need is not just a mere need of pastime and recreation – even if travel helps and, as Aristotle said,¹⁷ begins “with view of pastime and recreation” – as it has something more than that. Emmanuel Levinas called it the “need to escape” – the need to flee from our own being when we feel shame or nausea.¹⁸ For him, this is not a simple state of mind. The need to flee my own being is not just a fact that I am in a certain state of mind, but that this fact has a special weight for me. When we feel

¹⁵ Augustine, *Confessions*, Book Ten, Chapter VIII, translated by E.B. Pusey, (Project Gutenberg eBook, 2002) http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3296/3296-h/3296-h.htm#link2H_4_0010 (2019.11.29)

¹⁶ Joachim Ritter „Landschaft“, *Subjektivität ; sechs Aufsätze* (1974), Suhrkamp Verlag, 1980, p. 144. Cf. Tomokazu Baba, “Déconstruction du paysage : Esquisse d'une problématique chez Jean-Luc Nancy” in Danielle Cohen-Levinas, Gisèle Berkman (eds.), *Figures du dehors - Autour de Jean-Luc Nancy*, Éditions Nouvelles Cécile Defaut, 2012, pp. 311-326.

¹⁷ Cf. *supra* 1.2.

¹⁸ Emmanuel Levinas, *De l'évasion*, Le Livre de poche, 1998, pp. 96-123.

shame or nausea, we feel this “weight of being” [poids de l’être],¹⁹ from which we want to flee. To contrast the aforementioned notion of ‘nostalgia’ as the need of homecoming, I would like to call the Levinasian need of exit ‘*exodalgia*’. The word is composed by ‘*exodus*’ (exit) and ‘*algos*’ (pain). Thus, nostalgia is the need to come back home, whereas *exodalgia* is the need to go out of home.

Travelers have this need of exit, *exodalgia*, before they start their journey. As *exodalgia* pushes people to travel, to recover from this “sickness,” they become travelers. In traveling in an existential sense, the world appears different from the one in our everyday life. The world becomes first wonderful but foreign, strange, uncanny, and then the traveler feels isolated and estranged. This makes it possible to distance from, observe, and inquire into oneself in an existential sense, not to “pass oneself by” as Augustin said in his criticism of the traveler.

2.3 Answer to the Question of the Section

In this section, we tried to answer the question, what is happening when we are traveling? After some empirical observations of traveling and various modes of travel in human history, we focused on the very experience of traveling in the sense of leaving ‘home’. We made distinction between mere traveling and existential traveling. The latter traveling can be understood as a peculiar kind of journey in which the world appears foreign to the travelers who feel out of their existential ‘home’ in Heideggerian sense. In this sense, they feel isolated and find themselves in a position of facing their own being. And yet, they needed this strange experience, as they needed a peculiar exit from their own existential home. We called this need ‘*exodalgia*’ and described it as the opposite to nostalgia, which is the need to come back at home.

Throughout the process of this existential journey (*exodalgia*, travel, inquiry into the self), the travelers can rediscover their own individual and cultural values, as well as their worldviews. This process is somewhat similar to what appears to take place in a philosophical café.²⁰ The participants in it can be seen as existential travelers. We can call this experience a philosophical meta-cognition,²¹ which we can attain by virtue of a journey as existential traveling. This experience can be prompted also by a ‘mere traveling’ (to go abroad, for example), but it can also do without it. For instance, in his *Persian Letters*, Montaigne takes the readers outside their “home,” which is the world of their Eurocentric and Christian values, by putting them in the perspective of a Persian traveler in Europe. In this way, the European readers can get out of their “home” by way of an existential traveling without actually moving in reality. From our viewpoint, in this story, the reader, as an existential traveler, can be understood as emancipated from his or her own ‘home’. That is, if they had *exodalgia* before reading it, they could recover from this peculiar “sickness” upon reading it.

¹⁹ Levinas, *op.cit*, p. 121

²⁰ Cf. *supra*, 1.4

²¹ On the notion of ‘metacognition’ and its relation to philosophy and self-knowledge, see Rossen Roussev, “Philosophy and the Transition from Theory to Practice: A Response to Recent Concerns for Critical Thinking, in *Telos*, Vol.148, 2009, especially pp. 88-90, 93-94, 104-108.

Conclusion

In this paper, I tried to answer the question What does the affinity between philosophy and journey consists in? In order to find the answer, I undertook phenomenological descriptions of both philosophy and journey with the help of some notions of philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Heidegger, (1.2, 1.3), Augustin, Levinas, and Montaigne, (2.2). I also approached in the same way the experience of the discussions in the philosophical cafés (1.4), as well as that of journey again (2.1).

As a result, we can now identify three characteristics that philosophy and journey have in common: 1) a “sickness of the soul” (Nostalgia and Exodalgia); 2) the act of relieving the sickness (inquiry into the truth, getting out of “home”); 3) a therapeutic effect (discovery of truth, finding something wonderful outside our everyday life or in a foreign world). This is why we can assert that philosophy is a journey in an existential sense.

At the same time, our inquiry shows two differences between the experiences of philosophy and journey. First, philosophy begins out of nostalgia, whereas journey out of exodalgia. Second, the feeling of being-moved comes first in philosophy, whereas it comes second in journey. Philosophy is said to begin with wonder,²² whereas in journey this feeling comes upon the encounter with the foreignness of the world and of the self. In this sense, however, the process of journey appears to come before the feeling of wonder, which would enact any philosophizing (see the figure below).

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|---------|-------|
| Journey | exodalgia | traveling | foreignness/ wonder | | | |
| Philosophy | | | wonder /nostalgia | ignorance | inquiry | truth |

Thus, in our sense, journey begins before philosophy. As can be seen in the figure above, there is nothing in the 1st and 2nd columns for philosophy. This accords with Aristotle’s view that we can do philosophy when all our other necessities (than philosophizing) are satisfied, i.e., when we have pastime.²³ And, in reality, we cannot travel, if we have no time for it, if we are not free from the obligations of our everyday life. In our view, the exodalgia, as the motivation to leave our home and search for the foreignness of the world and of the self, precedes the nostalgia, which motivates philosophy. In this sense, we can say that journey promotes philosophy, whereas a mere traveling ends up in step 3, in just encountering what is foreign. The figure also suggests that journey can become existential only when it goes through the steps 4, 5, 6 of philosophy. Whereas the initial need to get out of home can be prompted by a hunch of philosophical wonder. Otherwise put, exodalgia can be the precursor of nostalgia.

²² Cf. *Supra* 1.2, see the statements of Plato and Aristotle.

²³ Cf. *Supra* 1.2, see the end of the quote from Aristotle.