9.

Journeymen's Mobility and the Guild System: A Space of Possibilities Based on Central European Cases*

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Prologue: An Encounter

Anton Baumgartner, an Austrian journeyman dyer, had already been on the road for four months by the time the following episode – described in his fragmentary and unpublished travel-diaries – took place in Laibach (modern-day Ljubljana) in 1847:

> I got my *Geschenk* [*money to travel*] in the suburb of Polana from the head of the craft guild, who pointed me to the *Herberge* [*inn serving as shelter and meeting point for journeymen and masters*] … After some sauntering around, I entered the *Herberge* in the afternoon, around two; I entered the guest room and sat down at a table. There were many journeymen from different metiers and one of them approached me and said: 'Are you a dyer?' 'Yes.' '*Hui* dyer,' he said. '*Hui*,' I answered. 'It seems odd to me,' he now began, 'that you come so late to the *Herberge* and that you don't get round the table with us.' This address stunned me immensely. I took my hat and walking-stick and followed him to the table. He let me drink and eat and I did so but was terribly frightened. I knew the customs but had never taken part in something like that and therefore couldn't behave properly. He soon discovered that I wasn't instructed and said really harshly: 'I spend no *Kreutzer* [no coin] for an *unzünftigen* [not belonging to the guild] journeyman. Clear off from our table and pay for what you eat.' I had tears in my eyes from this treatment. Most of all I was ashamed to be banished from the table in front of the fellows present.[1]

The innkeepers sympathised with the writer who, according to his own description, was penniless and weak. They gave him money for a beer and a bed for the night which again shamed the Moravian journeyman, who was so rude before: 'The fellow now came and became more mild as he saw a poor and needy comrade treated so kindly by strangers.'[2]

Baumgartner knew in advance about journeymen customs and, although he was unfamiliar with these traditional symbolic forms of interaction, he acknowledged their binding nature.[3] Moreover, he was frightened of failure and his inevitable exposure shamed him to tears. Here the interaction between journeymen apparently implied much more than an invitation to a meal; this kind of mutual exchange transformed a stranger into a fellow journeyman and through that defined the meaning of his tramping. Since Baumgartner did not know how to behave he was not acknowledged by the other journeymen as belonging to the guild, despite the fact that he had already successfully proved his identity to the local head master of the guild. Baumgartner's encounter highlights a central question of this essay: does the existence of conflict between different ways of being a journeyman signal that, by the nineteenth century, the old central European guild-system and its tramping tradition were in decay? This essay will describe a spectrum of journeymen's ways of tramping and how they wrote about it, and the variety of ways in which these affected the guild system and perceptions of it.

The Guild Context

Up until the late nineteenth century, the *Wanderschaft*, the designated years between apprenticeship and mastership spent 'tramping'[4] and working in different places, was an essential part of the image of central European journeymen.[5] *Wanderschaft* ideally represented a phase of training for young and single journeymen, who were subject to the domestic authority of the master when not on the road. In this sense it was considered as a stage in the artisan's lifecycle, to be followed by settling down, marrying and becoming an independent master. As a rite of passage for craftsmen it was officially overseen by the craft guild. Although central European guilds were primarily organisations of master craftsmen, the guild's masters and journeymen were closely linked through both solidarity and conflict. Journeymen were related to the guild and often included some way, although in a dominated way.[6] Likewise, the guilds' statutes did not merely prescribe a certain number of years to tramp (usually about three) but, together with journeymen's own brotherhoods,[7] they also regulated, organised, and facilitated tramping through various customs and rules that served to control and integrate journeymen in to the craft. The guilds' masters and/or journeymen supported journeymen on the move, with the most important institution of integration being the *Herberge* which provided job placements, shelter, information and mutual support for journeymen.[8] Although the general concept of journeymen tramping was quite similar across central Europe, the significance of the journeyman's economic role, the organisations involved in integrating him and regulating his job-placement, work, and the distances that he might be prepared to travel all varied from craft to craft.[9]

Guilds had an astonishing ability to deal with a remarkable degree of spatial mobility. As Josef Ehmer states:

> While journeymen migration was one of the most important peculiarities of Central European small commodity production at least from the late Middle Ages, in the 18th and early 19th centuries guilds were involved in the regulation and control of an increasingly mobile and fluctuating labour market.[10]

During the early modern period and particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the majority of apprentices and masters in the urban crafts and trades of Central Europe and at least three-quarters of the total number of journeymen working in big cities were immigrants.[11] Between 1830 and 1840 for example, around 140,000–160,000 journeymen arrived in Vienna each year, a city which had 356,000 inhabitants in 1840.[12] From an economic perspective, this high degree of mobility is connected with the changing demand for skilled labour within the system of small-scale production which remained dominant into the late nineteenth century.[13] Even after the *Wanderschaft* ceased to be compulsory and the guilds were formally abolished during the nineteenth century journeymen kept tramping.[14] Journeymen's high levels of mobility contributed significantly to the mass migration of the late nineteenth century; nevertheless this has been largely neglected by migration historians who have concentrated instead on early-modern journeymen's migration.[15] Moreover, *Wanderschaft* even in late nineteenth century should not be merely understood as labour migration: the prospect of eventually owning a workshop remained realistic and most craftsmen did not consider the position of journeyman to be permanent. To them, *Wanderschaft* thus remained a rite of passage, an ambition, and a proof of professional training. In the years after World War I, not only unemployed workers and craftsmen but also official publications about migration continued to contrast the model of the *Wanderschaft* with contemporary disorganised drifting and vagrancy. From this perspective, the official abolition of guilds – which occurred, for example, in Austria in 1859 – did not mark the absolute cessation for either the tramping systems or the craft in general.[16] Almost immediately afterwards, the guilds were replaced by 'corporatives' with binding membership; these fulfilled various important functions which above all concerned matters of training and the social welfare of its members.

Recent research on the central European guild system has cast doubt on many of the traditional assumptions of guild history. Most notably, the old picture of a blooming medieval guild-system followed by a long period of decay and corruption leading to eventual abolishment is no longer sustainable. However, most central European guilds were founded not in medieval times but during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[17] Furthermore, our overall understanding of guilds has developed. As Ehmer argues, 'guilds are no longer regarded as

stable institutions of equals, but as highly stratified and dynamic fields of social relations.'[18] From these new perspectives, guilds appear as flexible and functional institutions that served their members' interests and from the eighteenth century onwards increasingly also fulfilled official administrative functions for the state. Austrian guilds often included crafts in small towns and in the countryside, but their jurisdiction never covered all craft production. In Vienna in 1736, just 30% of self-employed craftsmen were organised in guilds, although this is an extreme example it is clear that the level of integration into the guilds varied between towns and between professions.[19] Despite these surprisingly low rates of coverage, guilds served as a dominant model and reference for craftsmen beyond actual membership.[20]

The widespread characterisation of guilds as decaying and dysfunctional in the nineteenth century seems to derive primarily from contemporary political debates.[21] Guilds and their practices were criticised – but also defended – for being traditional. In nineteenth-century economic and political discussions, guilds were often considered to be an obstacle to technical progress and industrialisation while, from a liberal perspective, their corporate ideals of solidarity and equality seemed to run counter to those of a modern society. However, other contemporaries saw guilds as upholding of the quality of goods and justice in the market, with journeymen's integration into the masters' households seeming to sustain social control and morality. In this sense the old craft system acted as a counter model to industrialisation's apparent chaos, alienation and proletarisation. Despite their divergent conclusions, these views evoke a common idea about the history of guilds – that guild values were crucially bound up with tradition and its endangerment or decay.

Although tramping was often acknowledged, and welcomed, as a means to learn and transfer technologies within these accounts,[22] writers often questioned whether the guild's tramping system actually achieved this in practice. They claimed that journeymen lacked the educational background necessary to gain much from travelling. Such criticism also emphasised the potential moral dangers of being on the road and hence temporarily out of the control of a master's household. Mobility, from this perspective, was seen as a breeding ground for work-shyness, moral neglect, and political conspiracy. The *Herberge* was imagined as a place for gambling, drinking and vice. In addition, the customs and solidarity of both the guilds and journeymen were seen as a rigid context that prescribed and allowed tramping at the same time as undermining its functionality: the social and cultural norms that the guilds fostered hindered individual ambitions, enforced tramping even where there was nothing to gain, and enabled mobility even if it did not accompany work. Guilds and journeymen's brotherhoods controlled journeymen's mobility through customs that seemed to outsiders to be ridiculous, dysfunctional, immoral and senseless and which threatened to instil the wrong kind of discipline.[23] Craftsmen's autobiographical writings from this period refer

explicitly or implicitly to these debates. Throughout the nineteenth century and beyond, they describe their tramping as part of an apparently dying tradition and yet simultaneously attest to – and exemplify – its persistence. In important ways, therefore, these practices of tramping and writing contribute to the controversial history and historiography of guilds.

Craftsmen's Autobiographical Writings

Their years spent tramping form the major topic for most craftsmen's autobiographical writings. These writings are not just simple autobiographical accounts; rather they consist of a sequence of often generic episodes that are told and retold by different journeymen. It seems that, for journeymen, certain things had to be done and certain stories had to be told. There is, however, variety and contrast within journeymen's mobility: there are successful and happy years of travel but there are also stories of frustration, hardship and distress. The texts include varying degrees of romanticism, wanderlust, adventure, and ambitions for self-education. In some writings, journeymen seem to improve their craftsmanship and skill, while in others they experience loss and suffer as a result of their social position and its obligations. The years spent on the move can also appear in these writings to be a time of potential danger or an opportunity to escape the craft and one's own expected career-path. This diversity of experiences and representations of tramping reflects more than just the variety of crafts, craftsmen and their practices, it also reveals a range of self-representational contexts. These writings refer not only to the craft, but also to familial and local contexts; in addition, they draw on contemporary political debates, travel writing or literature. Finally, a nineteenth-century interest in popular culture seems to be behind the descriptions of the crafts themselves as 'old and authentic' customs. As a result, in analysing these artisan autobiographical writings, it is not sufficient to consider them only in relationship to the relevant crafts or professions since tramping – and writing about tramping – is linked with many different ambitions and contexts beyond that.

Craftsmen's autobiographical writings have often been used in German-speaking historical research on crafts.[24] The texts have been interpreted and judged according to current historical theories about craft history, with episodes selected to illustrate and prove those theories. However this approach has considerable shortcomings. Instead, we have to acknowledge the contrasting nature of these representations and analyse their composition and structure in order to understand mobility as a disputed and multi-dimensional practice.[25] To learn something about guilds and journeymen mobility we therefore also have to deal with the logic of this writing in all its various forms. Rather than postulating that the writings follow just the logic of writing or otherwise evaluating them

in terms of their realism, I will put the relationship between representation and practice to empirical test.

In order to historically reconstruct the 'credibility', the varying effectiveness, and the success or failure of a journeyman's mobility and its representation, I have made a systematic comparison of a broad range of artisanal autobiographical writings.[26] Forty-three printed and manuscript accounts were selected, representing as wide a variety of different kinds of writing from the elaborate to the fragmentary as possible. The texts date from the seventeenth century through to the beginning of the twentieth as it is only through such a historical span that it is possible to consider fully the issue of the tradition's endurance or decay. The writers of these autobiographies come from a variety of professions, and were from the Austrian and German regions and Switzerland.

The comparison was based on 153 questions applied to the texts about each author's attributes, his training, work, and the practices and dimensions of his mobility. The questions also considered the text's style and context: particular episodes and details may reveal a certain representational context, which is otherwise often not acknowledged explicitly. Based on this data (forty-three cases defined by 533 answers in total), a multidimensional space of representational possibilities has been constructed using the statistical tool of multiple correspondence analysis (see Fig. 9.1).[27] From this, it is possible to formulate hypotheses about the structures that underlie *both* the mobility of the journeymen and their representation of that mobility, and about how different modes of 'being on the road' and writing about that relate to one other in a positive or negative way.

The resulting space of possibilities is of course not constructed merely in relation to the journeymen's own practices. It also includes the description, the literary style, and the attempts of the police and other authorities to control the journeymen's mobility. Those who are on the road and even those who do not tramp at all, such as the sons of masters, married journeymen and so on, both contribute to the space of possibilities and its hierarchy.[28] The differing kinds of mobility constitute a hierarchical system of varyingly legitimate ways to tramp and to write. The precise position of a single case within this space of possibilities is not, then, a matter of an individual person's declaration, intention or decision; instead the cases and attributes are defined though their position within this space of possibilities. This makes it possible to consider the question of 'credibility' in a historical way. For example, in the introduction to his diary, the dyer-journeyman Baumgartner cites the oft-used and most legitimate ambition of journeymen's mobility: to gain experience in one's profession and to learn to know the world and mankind. However, since his journey and his writing do not actually realise either of these aims, his actual position is not where he claims and wishes to be. Nonetheless, Baumgartner here identifies two fundamental 'dimensions' of the space of journeymen's mobility, which for convenience I will

describe respectively as *wandering* (tramping to gain craft skills) and *travelling* (tramping for general educational aims). By definition, no journeyman could avoid these aspects of their experience: every journeyman had to deal with them either through affirmation or through avoidance and opposition.

Wandering and the Craft's Tradition

In the nineteenth century, craft tradition represented both the most official, most legitimate and most debated reason for being on the road as a journeymen. Their level and manner of engagement with craft tradition thus defines the variety and hierarchy of the first and more important dimension of the space of journeymen's mobility, ranging from mere wandering to the full *Wanderschaft* (the horizontal variation in Fig. 9.1). This context and meaning has to be repeatedly proved – to other craftsmen, to others on the move, and to all those involved in describing, administering or controlling journeymen.

A journeyman's wages did not usually last long enough to fund extended periods of wandering in search of a new job; begging seems common and was often unavoidable. Begging was the complaint most frequently levelled against journeymen by contemporaries, and journeymen on *Wanderschaft* defended themselves against this charge by explaining away such behaviour as either the result of unusually extreme hardship or by stressing the lengths journeymen went to to avoid begging in the first place. In a positive sense, being a journeyman within the guild tradition was most significantly demonstrated by the *Geschenk*, the support – whether financial or in kind – they received from the local guild masters and/or journeymen. Receiving the *Geschenk* meant having walked from town to town and so come into contact with a variety of guild journeymen and masters. On each occasion, as Baumgartner realised, a newly arrived journeyman had to act, talk and greet others in a certain distinctive way, according to custom. This showed that he was trained within the guild system, that he had successfully completed his apprenticeship, and had made the ritual transformation into a journeyman (*Gesellentaufe, Gesellenmachen*), a transformation that included instructions in these symbolic forms and customs. The *Geschenk* also implied mutual reliability. Arrangement of employment was part of asking for the *Geschenk* and receiving the *Geschenk* obliged one to work, if required, for at least fourteen days. Through the exchange of the *Geschenk,* then, a social alchemy took place, which transformed a single wanderer into part of a trans-regional collective of guild craftsmen. It turned a foreign place into a specific home.

The autobiographical account (1836–38) of the German tanner journeymen Johann Dewald manifests this mode of mobility in a particularly concise way.[29] His apprenticeship had equipped him with the relevant craft skills and knowledge about customs. He already had a picture of how and where to wander,

Sceptical journey   Tourism   University of
                                                                           old guild craft

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                          Work < 50%
                            Bilk

                      ?Social background

                   ?Career


                      Written 1830-1845
                             |Close descriptions
                      |Unclear ratio |of sights
                      |of tramping          |Author is
                      |and time      ?Return    |<30 years
                 |<20%  |as journeyman ?Choice of profession
                 |jobs for  <2 jobs per year
                 |14 days       ?Migration after Wanderschaft
               |?Town of   ?Start of apprenticeship
               |apprenticeship    (Marriage) Theatre
               |?Durance of   Hospital  ?Settling down
               |apprenticeship |Age of    Nature
         (National identity)    Disease |marriage Baumgartner          |Stresses the
               |?Start of ?Money for the journey (Takeover)            |liability to
               |apprenticeship   ?Job placement        Dewald          |work
                 ?Master    (Children)          Bad treatment as a journeyman
            ?Religion                           Complains about the government
         (Outside of the old German Reich) |Criticises |Plans his journey according
      ?Dismisses (Peril to life)(Begging)   |Herbergen  |to information from his father
               (Ritual) (National character)            |and other journeymen   Positive summary
   |Doesn't talk about  (Music (Lends money)   |Criticises   Factory and Manufacture
   |Wanderschaft    (Pittance)(Thieves, frauds) |journeymen Route/Profession Frequently mentions the Geschenk
        (avoids work)    (Alcohol)     |        |Works     Tramping educates
←  Distance<3   (Criticises journeymen) ---+1# (%Φ²=7,04) |outside the old    Costumes   Vagabonds  Hearsay →
Direct     ?Jobs/year       (Route/Profession)    |German Reich  Diary  Physiognomy   Welfare  |Published
journey        |(Criticises the     2# (%Φ²=5,54)  Rituals Pittance  Journeymen's language  |1933-1945
        (Government))|Herberge)                 Thieves Gipsies        Provisos against begging
        (Correspondence)                        Lends money   Sleeps outdoors
   Written 1936-1953 (Sights)               <3 jobs/year         Control of health
           (History)                       Peril to life            Insecurity
               Pilz                       Students   Riedel Bugs
        |Apprenticeship                            <50% jobs for 14 days
        |instead of  |Marriage
        |school      |<30 years  Grandparents       |Unease because of
                       Becomes a master             |religion        |Thinks about
                    Takeover or start-up                             |joining the military
             |Goes immediately |Profession mentioned |Dangerous
             |on journey       |in title             |inns
                  1-4 children       Problems caused by religion     |Avoids the
             |Enlists  Time as journeyman=time on journey            |liability to work
             |to military     Money from home
                            |Author is
                            |60-69 years |Returns to
                            |old          |his master
                Distance>Europe           |Kin provides
                                          |care
          2 and more marriages
          >4 years as apprentice
             6 years of journey      |Apprenticeship
             |Conflict about         |when 16 or more
             |legacy                 |years old

                       Widow


                                      |Refuses occupational
                                      |change



             |No possibility to
             |work within the trade
                   Pewterer
                   Written 1608-1657


                 Published 1896-1915
          Doesn't get robbed
          Written 1736-1738
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Critical and disastrous journey   Journeymen's adventures

Barber

Fig. 9.1. The space of journeymen's mobility
(Primary factorial plane of a multiple correspondence analysis)

Notes: The diagram, opposite, shows the structure of the space of journeymen's mobility in a two-dimensional approximation. This approximation integrates the sub-space of wandering (horizontal distribution) and the sub-space of travelling (vertical distribution). The directions marked by arrows at the fringe of the diagram (vanishing points) indicate the most important references of mobility and their mutual relations. The points, i.e. the expressions shown in the diagram, represent the positions of practices (codes for attributes and stories) and individuals within this structure. (The diagram only shows the statistically most important practices and the individuals described in the text.) The basic rules of reading the graphic are the following:

- The two dimensions represented in the diagram are the two most important dimensions of the whole space-structure; they are not of equal importance.

- The interpretation aims at defining the principles of the variation and contrast, i.e. the structure of the two-dimensional distribution of points within the space.

- The interpretation does not deal with 'persons', or 'humans', and 'actions', or 'events' as a whole. It deals with two-dimensionally approximated persons and actions, i.e. with individuals and practices.

- The middle of the diagram (axis of coordinates) represents a transitional, in-between neutral zone of the structure.

- Closeness of points which are placed in a similar direction of the structure manifests a positive relation: The represented agents and practices 'are likely to go together'. Distance beyond the neutral zone defines a negative relation: The represented agents and practices 'are not likely to go together'. The closer to a vanishing point a point is positioned, the more directly the agent or practice represented by the point it is oriented toward the reference indicated by the vanishing point.

? or brackets means: unknown, no information

not least because of his father's and master's own experiences. His method of wandering marked him out as respectable and self-confident in comparison to other wanderers, as is apparent in his proud comment that: 'More than anything else I'd rather walk as a wandering journeyman on the dusty streets than being carried around in upholstered chairs through the parks.'[30] Dewald's wanderlust led him to Italy and Prague, the geographical borders of the German tramping system and hence to the limits of the German guild system's validity. Even in German regions, though, he observed the decay of guild morals and customs. He discovered that such customs were neither universal, equally valid nor reliable but he nonetheless stuck unshakably to them, insisting on describing his wandering as that of a guild journeyman, as for instance in Milan:

> I…was glad to sneak into the *Herberge*. However, there was the same misery with the journeymen like everywhere recently. Most of the guests were in no way like decent journeymen; it seemed to me that they didn't honour their profession and didn't behave according to guild custom. No questions about 'where are you from' or 'where are going to'; instead a rude spectacle of the most ordinary kind. The old customs are wholly fading. No solidarity and the worst performance. …Then I went to the town *umschauen* [*to look around, calling at masters to ask*

for the Geschenk and for work]. In the factories however – there are no masters' workshops at all – one considered me as beggar and thought I was asking for a pittance. The idea that the journeyman has a right to the *Zeichen* [*i.e. Geschenk*] has entirely vanished; and when calling at [the factories] one looks like a layabout. I gave up because I'd rather starve than bear dishonour like that. Time hadn't come yet, I still had florins in my pocket.[31]

Dewald indignantly refused the offer of bread instead of the usual *Geschenk*, an offer that to him appeared totally 'against the *Zunft*', i.e. the guild custom.[32] As rest of his account shows, Dewald's experience in Milan was repeated elsewhere: the distinction between begging and calling for the *Geschenk* had to be clarified over and over again. Wandering was, however, his ambition and Dewald kept wandering despite the doubts and troubles caused by such ambiguities and misunderstandings. Such descriptions of the guild system's decline reveal more than a real or imagined historical process; they have a practical function in framing the context being described. Dewald evoked what he conceived of as an authentic and unadulterated custom through which he also imposed a hierarchy upon the craftsmen he met. When Dewald visited the *Herberge* and a factory in Prague he again behaved in the traditional way. He exchanged an honourable greeting with every journeyman although the factory's workers laughed at him. Even here he refused to disregard the custom: 'My father bound it to my soul never to break with the custom except in an emergency.'[33] Despite this first encounter, Dewald worked in this factory for three months and described the difference between this and a master's workshop:

> Everybody goes his ways and doesn't care about the others… Additionally I didn't like the work, because everybody had to do the same thing all day long and loses sight of the whole. It probably has to be like that in a factory, but I can't resign myself to that; I thought to practice my trade by halves.[34]

To Dewald, his colleagues appeared insidious and unqualified. They were strangers to him in both nationality and their way of being craftsmen. From Dewald's perspective, the competence of decent craftsman included the right behaviour and solidarity according to the traditional German guild custom; those who did not know the customs could not 'know' their profession. At the factory in Prague, on his tour through Italy, and sometimes even in Germany, Dewald faced modes of being on the road that were similar yet contradictory and hence, when mapped onto the constructed space of possibility, were far apart. It was at the edges of the traditional guild system that Dewald had to show clear evidence of his being a decent traditional journeyman.

Through *Wanderschaft,* the traditional guild system constituted a trans-regional home. Even when Dewald experienced strangeness and a lack of

traditional collectivism, his ambitions were to continue wandering. Dewald soon decided to quit the Prague job and planned to wander to Paris, despite his expectations of official restrictions and police harassment and his belief that he would not be able to learn anything from French craftsmen that he would not be able to learn in German lands. In Dewald's *Wanderschaft,* the concept of being a decent traditional journeyman was bound up with qualifications, work, and professional training. Wandering from town to town would make him into a better journeyman and this was not to be sacrificed for the gain of 'mere' technical knowledge. Wandering became a valid aim in its own right, even when it carried the risk of Dewald 'losing his craft' all together and becoming a vagrant by straying beyond the limits of the existing guild system. The duty to take work after receiving the *Geschenk* might have impeded his wanderlust but this responsibility also underwrote the guarantee to remain a decent journeyman. He therefore sharply criticised those journeymen who broke the rules and, following on from that, also insisted on solidarity with the guild masters.

Dewald's and Baumgartner's accounts do not just describe their own wanderings. From different perspectives, they demonstrate the variety and hierarchy within tramping. They manifest a sense of the space of possibilities and the hierarchies within the *Wanderschaft*. The legitimacy of a journeyman and his behaviour was, however, not created simply by approval but also by criticism and avoidance. For example, there were wanderers who completely avoided everything related to the guild; they wandered because it seemed unquestionably normal to tramp as a journeyman, but their accounts do not locate *Wanderschaft* within a guild context or a journeyman tradition. In such accounts, tramping appears more as a short episode in a longer biography than as a matter of a larger significance. These accounts lack certain narrative details, revealing that these wanderers avoided seeing their mobility in terms of either a change in their economic status or the solidarity of journeymen: all the distinctive ambitions, practices, episodes, and encounters of traditional wandering are missing. Here, mobility had no sense of professional experience but instead becomes simply a way to a job: the emphasis of the accounts shifts from wandering to finding work. These journeymen did not want to wander abroad but to settle down in a new home, a home which was not seen as part of the craftsmen's trans-regional collectivism. At first sight, these stories seem simply deficient from the perspective of the guild context, but there are other references to their mobility and representation of that mobility – to family, to acquaintances from their hometown or to ethnicity – which speak against such a straightforward reading.

Although this mode of wandering appears to be a more modern form of labour migration, these accounts were not necessarily written later than those that refer to the traditional tramping system. The date of writing or of being on the road is just one aspect of the text which affects its proximity to tradition. This kind of journeymen migration was less official not just because the journeymen

did not consider themselves to be part of a larger, officially acknowledged guild context; their accounts are also often unpublished, with the manuscripts having been collected and considered by historians interested in the history of the movement of labour rather than in the wandering tradition as a matter of German popular culture.

Journeymen's Travelling and General Education

Publishers, collectors, contemporary scholars, and historians have all contributed to the making of this wandering tradition; they also have intervened in the reproduction of the tradition and in the interpretation of these texts. Dewald's account was edited in 1936 and has been often cited as a realistic description of the best 'a craftsman can make out of his years of wandering'.[35] This specific mode of mobility has been seen by scholars as analogous to higher education, a 'University of Craft' (*Hohe Schule des Handwerks*). To understand how a craftsmen's mobility can be seen as a *Hohe Schule*, we need to include a second axis of variation and hierarchy dealing with foreign places within the space of possibilities, which I will refer to as *travelling*. Just as the *Wanderschaft* was understood as the most legitimate way to wander, travelling for educational benefit was considered as the most accepted means for journeymen to travel; just as no wanderer can ignore *Wanderschaft* as the dominant mode of wandering – whether through affirmation or avoidance – no traveller can avoid the educational journey. Whereas *wandering* manifests a spectrum of varieties of collectivism, *travelling* represents the variously legitimate ways one can individualise oneself when faced with foreign places. The secondary dimension of the space of possibilities (the vertical variation in Fig. 9.1) varies from educational travel on the one hand through to ways of travelling that avoid and refuse education on the other. These experiences manifests themselves in the accounts through adventure, particularism, and materialism.

To practice mobility as a *Hohe Schule des Handwerks* a journeyman had to cope with partly contradictory requirements: to act as part of a collective and yet simultaneously to operate as an individual in the right way. He had to gain experience as a craftsman, and also achieve knowledge of human nature and the world. This required prior knowledge and some freedom from material constraints. The tanner journeyman Dewald, for example, did more than prove himself to be decent journeymen who was 'at home' everywhere that the guild system was functioning properly; he simultaneously faced foreign places, armed with his prior knowledge and his desire to further his own education: 'I wander as a journeymen through the world, just to see everything that dear God created for our joy.'[36] He had an aesthetic sense for nature and landscapes, an interest in sights and the specifics of foreign countries. He made foreign people and societies a subject of

interest which he could observe and describe with the distant perspective of an uninvolved traveller. As a result, he masterfully managed to combine different purposes. *Wandering* required going from town to town, interacting correctly with other craftsmen, and involving oneself permanently in dealing with other craftsmen in the right way. *Travelling*, on the other hand, demanded distance, a purposeful focus on famous cities and places and their aesthetics. Dewald represents his status as an honourable craftsman and also ambitiously exceeded it by gaining and representing universal – and not just craft – culture. A fragile balance, however, had to be kept in order to maintain his connection with the the context of craft and to avoid too much travelling. He had to distinguish himself from the ordinary journeymen who had craft culture but lacked universal education. It is this secondary sense of the pure and authentic craft spirit that Dewald repeatedly invoked. His dominant position on these two axes enabled him to 'represent' guilds in general and not just his own individual position as a journeyman. He made his tour a matter of craft but also generalised it into part of national popular culture.

The specifics of this aspect of the travelling journeyman's identity become clearer if we compare it with other modes of mobility. Benjamin Riedel tramped as a linenweaver journeymen between 1803 and 1816 through Central and Eastern Europe.[37] In his account he declared his tour to have been a *Hohe Schule des Handwerks*. This ambition, however, was not fulfilled. From the perspective of tramping, he was as close to the guilds' tradition as Dewald: he was able to wander in the proper and traditional way. Nevertheless, he lacked the means and preconditions for an *educational* journey. Although Riedel presented himself as well read and described how travel writings gave him the initial idea to go abroad immediately after finishing his apprenticeship, he failed to achieve any kind of educational travelling, and instead travelled in an adventurous way. His account lists an incredible number of towns and cities he passed through, restlessly wandering hither and thither. During almost thirteen years on the road, he worked at least in thirty-two different places. His unsteady mobility, work, and lifestyle followed a labour/consumer cycle rather than any plan of accumulation. Riedel, in fact, described himself as a 'bird of passage.' In his reflections about his travel, we find both a sense for the 'dominated' character of his mode (as mapped on the space of possibilities) and a proud – or even pretentious – insistence on it:

> A hostile disaster drove me away without stop and didn't allow me to find a port… One will reproach me that I exaggerate the satisfaction of my need to travel and that I exposed myself to problems and troubles of free will. Why did the author not stay at one place for a longer period of time, why did he not prefer a quiet workplace to restless drifting? Why didn't I reduce myself according to my little income and cut my coat according to my cloth? Wouldn't it be better to earn less under the roof of a workshop than moving around under the open sky, exposed to the changing moods of weather? ... But it's not my fault that many

journeymen are of a different opinion. I confess, I'm among them. It's true I would have been able to spare myself a lot of troubles in my earthly career, if I had less thirst for knowledge. I was convinced that my years of travel would pass by without advantage if I stayed longer at an unimportant place where I couldn't learn something. The lust to learn more, to see more, to hear more and know more than others as a result drove me from a city where others would stay for years but would leave as idiots. Finally it wasn't good enough for me to walk in poor, humble clothes. ... But I couldn't find the financial means for that at badly-paid workplaces. I often was disappointed in my expectations. I had to travel for months to find work at all. What I earned with exertion, hard work and thriftiness was lost on long and far travels.[38]

His journey then did not obey the recommendations of travel guides or consist of a search for famous cities, landscapes, and beauty. Instead it was prompted by a desire for entertainment and change. The learning he referred to was not of a distant aesthetic perception of foreign regions, Riedel exposed himself to danger in a physical and material way, experiencing remote areas of Europe: dark woods, treacherous swamps, rapids, storms, and dangerous inns. His world was populated with robbers, potential murderers, suspicious journeymen and drifters, madmen, savages and half-savages, and generally uncivilised people. He passed a series of trials and tribulations and demonstrated his capacity to cope with them. His adventurous mode of travelling, bound together with his involvement in the guild's context, allowed him to present the hardships and set-backs as entertaining adventures. The experience of these trials and tribulations manifests, however, a dominated position within the space of possibilities which prevented him from extrapolating from his perspective and becoming educated in an officially sanctioned way as Dewald did.

Although Riedel showed a loyalty to his craft, it seems to have been a precarious and difficult bond. His reference to the guild, his restlessness and his adventurous travels seem to mutually reinforce each other. For journeymen, identifying with their master seemed difficult and did not easily square with their own position, as masters seemed to represent simultaneously the dominant status and position that one could arrive at by the end of one's journey and also the dominated and exploited experiences of journeymen themselves. These conflicts of interest remained implicit and were not fully confronted or criticised by Riedel. Instead, mobility seemed to serve him as a temporary solution again and again, a way of maintaining a fragile balance by escaping a particular workplace or employer, without leaving the system. The widespread emphasis in these writings on the youth of journeymen therefore makes a particular sense in this context: by stressing journeymen's differences from the masters while keeping a common basis. While his relationship with his masters was potentially very fragile, Riedel's integration into the journeymen's brotherhood was tightly

binding. He even refused to leave the brotherhood behind in order to become a master. He declared instead that settling down, becoming an independent master and marrying was illusory. In this, of course, Riedel's hesitation challenged the very notion of being a journeyman as a rite of passage.

Riedel somehow made necessity into a virtue. His mode of mobility appears to have been a particular choice. To him, academic travelling lacked adventure and entertainment; he made fun of university students he met on the road, although he did also acknowledge the importance of education and other more legitimate styles of travel. Now and then he tried to escape and change his lifestyle. This was only possible by isolating himself from his fellow journeymen and so, instead of joining in with the journeymen's collective, their drinking and feasting, he attempted to separate and educate himself but, since he relied on this collectivity so heavily for his employment and subsistence, it never worked out for very long. He lacked the means to escape from his most immediate and pressing needs. The journeymen's social integration was a force, an arbitrary factor just like the changes of his life on the road or the ups and downs of the market. His particular mode of mobility is shown by the fact that he always managed to deal with these conditions in a way that enabled them to be retold as entertaining adventures. These adventures might provide status among other journeymen but discredited him from the perspective of legitimate travelling revealing his partly dominated position.

Journeymen who avoided both the *Wanderschaft* and the educational journey described mobility in sorrowful terms as a loss. Some who did travel missed the 'home' of craft because they failed to join the collective of journeymen in the right way, or they were unable to gain education or pleasure through travelling. The family chronicle of the Bohemian baker Augustin Pilz from 1869 illustrates this well.[39] The description of his apprenticeship fits into contemporary criticisms of craft: his uneducated and rough master trained him very poorly, requiring the apprentice to do lots of housework. In 1834, Pilz goes into the so-called *Fremde* [foreign parts], which he finds both anonymous and irritating:

> Arriving in Vienna at the *Herberge*, there were no fewer than 375 baker-journeymen present – there was no thinking of finding a job – whereas at home it was said that there was a lack of workers in Vienna. I wasn't prepared for the situation in a big city. I gave my knapsack in for safekeeping, got a ticket with a number, went up and down in the nearby surroundings to see the big houses, actually to admire and look at everything; I however didn't find the place I was looking for and needed.[40]

Pilz could not cope with the craft or foreign places; instead he avoided them as much as possible. In Vienna, and later in Prague, he first looked for friends and fellows from his hometown. His account concludes by describing his tour as miserable, distressing, and futile. Although he failed as a decent journeyman, with his failure providing a critique of the guild system as a whole, he was nonetheless

admired for his trip by colleagues in his hometown. This kind of credit, however, did not count for much within the context of journeymen's mobility, where he occupied a fully-dominated position, whatever other virtues he might have as a person. His account contributed to the criticism of the tramping system at the same time as acknowledging it as the frame for his failure and suffering.

Conclusion

The German-speaking history of guilds has traditionally seen them as collective entities that rigidly enforced equality and neglected individuality. Their culture has been seen as an isolated world whose authenticity was lost over a period of long decline and decay. As an indication of that, changes in the nature of tramping have been dismissed as inauthentic, as craftsmen attempting mere imitation of a lost original. A systematic comparison of autobiographical writings, however, suggests a different perspective. These texts enable an analysis of how this collectivism was created and maintained for the individual journeyman and how such collectivism fitted with differing modes of individuality. It was impossible to be simply 'inside' or 'outside' of the guild system; rather a spectrum of variations existed for all journeymen that referred simultaneously to collectivism and individualism. References to the craft system and to forms of travelling in these texts imposed a hierarchy on both journeymen's actual mobility and their writing about that mobility, a hierarchy that was constructed through acknowledgement, avoidance and criticism. This hierarchy cannot be understood only in terms of the guild system alone, but also must acknowledge a larger context of contemporary perceptions, discourses, and practices. As this essay has argued, constructing a space of possibilities for these journeyman and analysing the basic principles of variation and hierarchy allows one to gain a better overall sense of individual cases, details and episodes and how they contributed to the structure and maintenance of the tramping system. In this way we can leave behind the opposition of objective models of migration as simple effects of labour markets and subjective descriptions of individual motives and decisions. Perceptions, interpretations, ambitions, and strategies can all be understood as constitutive parts of the central European tramping system.

NOTES
* I would like to thank Alexander Mejstrik, Seth Killian, Ian Gadd and Patrick Wallis for reading and commenting my paper.

1. University of Vienna, Institute for Economic and Social History, Dokumentation lebensgeschichtlicher Aufzeichnungen, A. Baumgartner, *Reisetagebuch von 18. März 1847 bis 20. Juni 1853* (typescript), p. 18 (author's translation).

2. Baumgartner, *Reisetagebuch*, p. 18.

3. R. Reith, 'Arbeitsmigration und Gruppenkultur deutscher Handwerksgesellen im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert', in H.-G. Haupt and P. Marschalck (eds.), *Städtische Bevölkerungsentwicklung in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert. Soziale und demographische Aspekte der Urbanisierung im internationalen Vergleich* (St. Katharinen, 1994), pp. 1–26 (p. 22).

4. In German, the terms 'wandern' and also 'reisen' are commonly used to describe journeymen mobility. In everyday usage these terms are not strictly defined and have various meanings and associations. To describe, and analytically distinguish between, the most important aspects of mobility I make a distinction between 'wandering' and 'travelling' in the second part of the paper, but will use 'tramping' to refer to the general discourse of journeymen mobility.

5. R. S. Elkar, 'Umrisse einer Geschichte der Gesellenwanderungen im Übergang von der frühen Neuzeit zur Neuzeit. Problemskizze und Zwischenergebnisse', in R.S. Elkar (ed.), *Deutsches Handwerk im Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Göttingen, 1983), pp. 85–116 (p. 112); H. Bräuer, 'Einige Grundzüge der mitteleuropäischen Zunfthandwerksgeschichte – Vom Spätmittelalter bis zum Ancien régime', in P. Hugger (ed.), *Handwerk zwischen Idealbild und Wirklichkeit: kultur- und sozialgeschichtliche Beiträge* (Bern and Stuttgart, 1991), pp. 15–36 (p. 29).

6. J. Ehmer, 'Artisans and Guilds, History of', in N. J. Smelser and P. B. Baltes (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences,* vol. 2 (Oxford, 2001), pp. 816–21 (pp. 817–18).

7. 'Although journeymen's association had been banned in many European countries, at around 1800, confraternities, *compagnonnages*, houses of call and similar institutions continued to exist on an informal or illegal basis' – Ehmer, 'Artisans and Guilds', p. 819.

8. A. Grießinger, *Das symbolische Kapital der Ehre. Streikbewegungen und kollektives Bewußtsein deutscher Handwerksgesellen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main, Berlin and Wien, 1981), p. 221; W. Reininghaus: 'Vereinigungen der Handwerksgesellen in Hessen-Kassel vom 16. bis zum frühen 19. Jahrhundert', *Hessisches Jahrbuch für Landesgeschichte*, 31 (1981), pp. 97–148.

9. See Reith, *Gruppenkultur*.

10. J. Ehmer, 'Guilds in early modern Austria', in S. R. Epstein, H.-G. Haupt, C. Poni and H. Soly, *Guilds, Economy and Society* (Sevilla, 1998), pp. 121–34 (p. 131); J. Ehmer, 'Zünfte in Österreich in der frühen Neuzeit', in H.-G. Haupt (ed.), *Das Ende der Zünfte. Ein europäischer Vergleich* (Göttingen, 2002), pp. 87–126.

11. See also J. Ehmer, 'Worlds of mobility: migration patterns of Viennese artisans in the eighteenth century', in G. Crossick (ed.), *The Artisan and the European Town, 1500–1900* (Aldershot, 1997), pp. 172–99.

12. J. Ehmer, 'Tramping artisans in nineteenth-century Vienna', in D. J. Siddle (ed.), *Migration, Mobility and Modernization* (Liverpool, 2000), pp. 164–85 (p. 169).

13. J. Ehmer, 'Gesellenmigration und handwerkliche Produktionsweise. Überlegungen zum Beitrag von Helmut Bräuer', in G. Jaritz and A. Müller (eds.), *Migration in der Feudalgesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main and New York, 1988), pp. 232–37; M. Sonenscher, 'Journeymen's migration and workshop organization in eighteenth-century France', in S. L. Kaplan and C. J. Koepp (eds.), *Work in France. Representations, Meaning, Organization, and Practice* (Ithaca and London 1986), pp. 74–96 (p. 87).

14. W. Reininghaus, 'Wanderungen von Handwerkern zwischen hohem Mittelalter und Industrialisierung. Ein Versuch zur Analyse der Einflussfaktoren', in Jaritz and Müller, *Migration in der Feudalgesellschaft*, pp. 179–215; Elkar, 'Umrisse', p. 92.

15. See, for example, D. Hoerder and L. P. Moch (ed.), *European Migrants. Global and Local Perspectives* (Boston, 1996); J. Lucassen and L. Lucassen (eds.), *Migration, Migration History, History. Old Paradigms and New Perspectives* (Bern, 1997).

16. J. Ehmer, 'Guilds in early modern Austria'; J. Ehmer, 'Zünfte in Österreich', pp. 87–126.

17. J. Ehmer, 'Traditionelles Denken und neue Fragestellungen zur Geschichte von Handwerk und Zunft', in Friedrich Lenger (ed.), *Handwerk, Hausindustrie und die historische Schule der deutschen Nationalökonomie.* (Bielefeld, 1998), pp. 19–77 (p. 36).

18. Ehmer, 'Artisans and Guilds', p. 820.

19. Ehmer, 'Traditionelles Denken', p. 67.

20. F. Lenger, *Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Handwerker seit 1800* (Frankfurt am Main, 1988), p. 16; H.-G. Haupt and G. Crossick, *Die Kleinbürger. Eine europäische Sozialgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (München, 1998), p. 37.

21. Ehmer, 'Traditionelles Denken', pp. 19–77.

22. R. Reith, 'Arbeitsmigration und Technologietransfer in der Habsburgermonarchie in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts – die Gesellenwanderung aus der Sicht der Kommerzienkonsesse', *Blätter für Technikgeschichte*, 56 (1994), pp. 9–23.

23. S. Wadauer, 'Disziplinen der Wanderschaft', *Beiträge zur historischen Sozialkunde*, 3 (1998), pp. 128–37.

24. S. Wadauer, 'Der Gebrauch der Fremde. Wanderschaft in der Autobiographik von Handwerkern', *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften*, 2 (1998), pp. 159–87.

25. See P. Bourdieu, 'Das literarische Feld', in L. Pinto and F. Schultheis (eds.), *Streifzüge durch das literarische Feld* (Konstanz, 1997), pp. 33–147.

26. For a description of this approach in detail see S. Wadauer, *Die Tour der Gesellen. Handwerk und Biographie vom 18. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main and New York, 2005).

27. Multiple correspondence analysis is one of the most popular methods in French Sociology, see for example: K. M. van Meter, M.-A. Schiltz, Ph. Cibois and L. Mounier, 'Correspondence analysis: a history and French sociological perspective', in M. Greenacre and J. Blasius (eds.), *Correspondence Analysis in the Social Sciences. Recent Developments and Applications* (London, 1994), pp.128–137. For a detailed description of my usage of this research tool, see Wadauer, *Tour*.

28. J. Ehmer, '"Weiberknechte" versus ledige Gesellen. Heirat und Familiengründung im mitteleuropäischen Handwerk', in *Soziale Traditionen in Zeiten des Wandels. Arbeiter und Handwerker im 19. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt and New York, 1994), pp. 24–51.

29. G. M. Hofmann (ed.), *Biedermeier auf Walze. Aufzeichnungen und Briefe des Handwerksburschen Johann Eberhard Dewald 1836–1838* (Berlin, 1936).

30. *Biedermeier*, p. 61.

31. *Biedermeier*, p. 170.

32. *Biedermeier*, p. 153.

33. *Biedermeier*, pp. 82–83.

34. *Biedermeier*, p. 101; see also Grießinger, *Kapital*, p. 71.

35. R. Stadelmann and W. Fischer, *Die Bildungswelt des deutschen Handwerkers um 1800. Studien zur Soziologie des Kleinbürgers im Zeitalter Goethes* (Berlin, 1955), p. 212.

36. *Biedermeier*, p. 96.

37. F. Zollhoefer (ed.), *Gut Gesell, und du mußt wandern. Aus dem Reisetagebuche des Leinenwebergesellen Benjamin Riedel. 1803–1816* (Goslar, 1938).

38. *Gesell*, pp. 145–46.

39. University of Vienna, Institute for Economic and Social History, Dokumentation lebensgeschichtlicher Aufzeichnungen, ANTM-Prag – No 351, *Familienchronik von Augustin Pilz, Gerichtsschreiber unter dem Namen „Pilzschreiber" bekannt, der Vater von dem rühmlichst bekannten Porzellanmaler Robert Pilz in Wien* (Typescript, 1869).

40. *Familienchronik*, p. 13.