

Between Ages

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**Pilgrimage as starting point
in a process of encountering, discovering
and perceiving oneself**

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Based on the contingent and deficit experiences of the youth regardless of any religious interpretation. Anyone can be generally searching as he or she is situated on his or her own path of life for which there is no preconceived goal. Pilgrimage as a method can represent an appropriate approach to reflection of human existence. youth regardless of any religious interpretation. Anyone can be generally searching as he or she is situated on his or her own path of life for which there is no preconceived goal. Pilgrimage as a method can represent an appropriate approach to reflection of human existence.

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Introduction: Pilgrimage – the phenomenon is here

A survey concerning ‚pilgrimage‘ in all probability would emphasize two keywords: ‚Camino de Santiago‘ and ‚Hape Kerkeling‘. Reason for that can be reduced to the publishing of the book ‚I’m Off Then‘¹ by the well-known German TV-host and comedian. This personal report about his pilgrimage on the Way of St. James is one of the most success full books in the last decade in Germany, has been filmed and voted as ‚book of the year‘ from German booksellers in 2006.²

However, it is not easy to answer the question whether the revival of a phenomenon like the pilgrimage is based on the publishing of a prominent person or if this publishing is rather a sign that the phenomenon does exist for several years. Maybe it is simply an interaction: pilgrimage, at least, is ‚in‘. Who can say ‚I go on a pilgrimage‘ will not face suspicion but respect, admiration and support for the project. Who goes on a pilgrimage takes her or himself and her or his life seriously, is looking for experiences, wants depth and a time-out from every-day life, wants change and undistracted from the fuss of the world follow the path of her or his life.

But what really happens when people go on a pilgrimage? Even journals are concerned with these questions today. Susie Reinhard for instance is posing the following questions in *Psychologie heute*: What do people do? Why do they do it? What are they looking for? What kind of people go on a pilgrimage and what are they hoping for? When pilgrimage is described as a social-pedagogical method in this paper, it refers to the fact that this phenomenon has become a topic that concerns mainstream society. It is accepted as a challenge to make space in one’s own life to think about things, to find oneself, to take a break from the routine of every day life, to enjoy the silence, or to feel a spiritual atmosphere.³ The charm of an extraordinary experience is just part of this like the admiration of nature and the possibility to meet other pilgrims.⁴

Significant to the initial objective of this paper are the types of pilgrimage, as scientists have identified the ‚transitional pilgrims‘ and the ‚newcomers‘: ‚transitional pilgrims‘ are situated on a threshold in their life. Normal transitions are for instance the step from school to college, or the beginning of marriage or retirement. These people use the pilgrimage as transitional or transformational ritual towards a new stage of life. They especially look forward to their future, they evaluate, want to figure out their possibilities and the pros and cons of the alternatives. They experience physical effort as examination. The exchange with other pilgrims is of biggest importance to them. Newcomers on the other hand want to finally and deliberately close a chapter of their life after long suffering. In contrast to the pilgrims who manage their crisis, newcomers have caused the break in their life, such as divorce or occupantional change, themselves. The pilgrimage to them is symbol of a new beginning in their life. Physical effort is important to them, keeping up while walking is seen as a proof of courage and

¹ Kerkeling, Hape: *I’m Off Then: Losing and Finding Myself on the Camino de Santiago*, Free Press, New York.

² <https://www.piper.de/verlag>, State: May 2016

³ Reinhard, Susie: *Pilgern ohne Glauben ...*, S. 31

⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

willpower for the upcoming stage of life.⁵ Therefore pilgrimage can be seen as an act of self-care and has sort of therapeutic value.⁶ Thus it probably is of importance as a modell of self-counseling, as school for personality or as method for self-awareness.

The aim of this paper is to ask how far pilgrimage is suitable as socio-pedagogical method when dealing with juveniles and NEETs⁷ provided that the question is not geared towards the possibilities of the external framework, but wants to know intrinsically what pilgrimage actually includes. Therefore primarily the tradition of pilgrimage and their references as well as its meaning now and then have to be determined. At the same time one has to refer to this papers' limitations, as the origin and the traditions of the pilgrimage can not be discussed in detail, essential characteristics should be adequate for the understanding in the light of this papers' objective. The preparation of these aspects will be done in a first chapter by Ansgar Hoffmann, whose field is religious and adult pedagogy. Currently he works as educational referent in the Bischof-Benno-House in Schmochtitz, an institution for adult education of the diocese Dresden-Meissen. This institution is joint founder and cooperation partner of the pilgrim path for juveniles in Saxony, furthermore training and meeting center as well as pilgrim station on the ecumenical pilgrim path.

The author of the second chapter, Sven Enger, is social pedagogue and Beccaria professional for criminal prevention and is working as program manager for the Sächsische Jugendstiftung (Saxon Youth Foundation). The Sächsische Jugendstiftung was founded in 1997 by the Saxon state parliament. It is thought as an inspiring meaningful platform which enables young people to exchange respectfully and compensates shapes of disadvantages. With the program 'Zwischen den Zeiten' (Between the Times) the Sächsische Jugendstiftung proves and evaluates the applicability of pilgrimage as a method of social work. In his contribution Sven Enger presents a rather practical and conceptional perspective.

The third and final part is eager to combine part one and two in sort of a conversation: in the documentation of correspondence between the two authors, Ansgar Hoffmann and Sven Enger, various references, differences and questions are discussed. This part purposely is open and missing a concluding answer as it wants to motivate further consideration, invite to enter the discussion and add own thoughts.

⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, S. 34

⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, S. 35

⁷ Youth that are 'Not in Education, Employment or Training'

1 Aspects of pilgrimage from an anthropological - theological consideration

1.1 What we are talking about

The term 'pilgrimage' derives from the Latin word 'Peregrinus', which means 'stranger'.⁸ Not until the 13th century the term 'peregrinari' has been used for the pilgrims who started their journey to Santiago de Compostella.⁹ The German equivalent to the verb 'pilgern' is the outdated term 'wallen'¹⁰, whereas the corresponding substantive 'Wallfahrt' is still in use. The *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (LThK, Lexicon for theology and church) refers to pilgrimage as a journey to especially important religious centers aiming at focusing on the locally worshipped deity, founders of religion or sacreds in order to experience their merciful or interceding proximity and obtaining help or religious merit through prayers, vows, offerings, washings and touching.¹¹ The *Lexikon Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (lexicon religion in history and presence, RGG) characterizes the term significantly more general. There it is merely described as a religiously motivated individual or collective journey which is mostly to be taken on a longer distance and (foremost in former times) connected to immense efforts.¹²

Pilgrimage is not a decidedly Christian phenomenon. Even in other religions pilgrimages are a significant element of religious worship. In Judaism besides pilgrimages to the caves of the patriarchs the pilgrimage to Jerusalem to the temple is handed down by the Bible.¹³ After its destruction pilgrimage today is geared towards the remains of the wall which enclosed the temple, the Wailing Wall.¹⁴ Once in a lifetime every Muslim is obliged to go on a pilgrimage to the Kaaba to Mecca which is an integral part of the five pillars of the Islam. In addition the Islam knows other places of pilgrimage as Medina or Jerusalem.¹⁵ In Buddhism and Hinduism there are a lot of different traditions of pilgrimage as well, which have various origins and are partly supra-regional important, while at other places only specific regional types of religious worship exist.¹⁶

The term pilgrimage therefore can not only be reduced to a certain religion or religious worship within a religion. From an anthropological and religious-historical perspective pilgrimage in general can be described as a process which takes place as a journey beyond the every day life, oriented towards foreign regions aiming at a certain place of worship and is basically not linked to distance or duration.

⁸ Cf. Art. „Pilger“ in: Etymologisches Wörterbuch, 702

⁹ At this time there were basically only two pilgrim paths: The pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela were known as *peregrinari*, those to Rome were called *romei* since the 14th century, Cf. Art. ‚Wallfahrt‘ in LThK3, Sp. 964

¹⁰ Cf. Art. ‚pilgern‘ in: Duden

¹¹ Cf. Art. ‚Wallfahrt‘, in: LThK, Sp. 961

¹² Cf. Art. ‚Wallfahrt/Wallfahrtsorte‘ in: RGG, Bd. 8, Sp. 1279

¹³ Cf. e.g. Tob 1,7; Ps 122; Jer 31,6

¹⁴ Cf. Art. ‚Wallfahrt‘ in: LThK, Sp 961

¹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁶ Cf. Art. ‚Wallfahrt/Wallfahrtsorte‘ in: RGG, Bd. 8, Sp. 1291-1297

The change in terminology concerning the word 'pilgrimage' is not to be overlooked in this context. Until now the present lexica do not or only have referring articles about this term.¹⁷ That's why we can conclude that the terms 'pilgern' und 'wallfahrt' has been used synonymously over a long period. Due to the revival of the pilgrimage and the tourisms around that, not later than since the end of the 20th century the term 'pilgrimage' is not any longer necessarily connected to religious motives. Rather it is conceived as a process helping people to look for new experiences by walking on a traditional pilgrimage path, who want to find a break from every day life and a reorientation in their life or are on the way to find themselves.¹⁸ Only 23 per cent of those who walk the Way of St. James give religious motives as a reason.¹⁹ In this respect a differentiation of the terms 'pilgern' and 'Wallfahrt' can be charercterized more specifically: While 'pilgern' is not any longer only ascribed to a direct religious motivation, as stated before, 'Wallfahrt' is still connected to its initial meaning and is explicitly standing for a religiously motivated journey to a certain holy site.

1.2 How it was and is: Pilgrimage as journey to a 'holy place'

The initial and actual goal of the pilgrimage is, according to Christianity, Jerusalem.²⁰ In addition besides Rome Santiago de Compostella 'at the end of the old world' became a pilgrimage destination in the High Middle Ages and the nowadays as 'Way of St. James' designated trip is a pilgrimage path which is said to be an arduous journey.²¹ All over Europe different pilgrimage paths were established over time that have regional and even national significance. Destinations of these pilgrimage paths always have been 'holy places' that are based on a relic of a sacred or have been worshipped as a place of grace because of a miracle.²²

Already in the 6th century so-called repentance pilgrimages especially on the Irish site are documented which aimed at the walkout to foreign regions as well as the search for the close orientation to god. Destinations of these pilgrimages initially have been the 'classical' pilgrimage sites Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago de Compostella as well. Over time this type of repentance, which has been embedded in the canonical law of the Catholic Church in 1983, has also gained regional 'holy sites' as destinations, such as St. Mary's Churches.²³

One of the specifications of pilgrimages has been the crusades, which primarily aimed at the reclamation or the defense of holy sites in the 11th and 13th century and especially in the beginning were labeled and known as 'peregrinatio'²⁴ as well as 'a personal practice of repentance and a special service to god'²⁵. Already here the

¹⁷ In very important books of theology, the word „pilgrimage“ is not mentioned or simply explained as „Wallfahrt“, which is the German translation of “Pilgrimage”, while the German “Pilgern” was not used as a religious term until the last 20 years in history of churches. See LThK 1993 and RGG 2003.

¹⁸ Cf. Reinhard, S.: Pilgern ohne Glauben, 33

¹⁹ Cf. Reinhard, S.: Pilgern ohne Glauben, 32

²⁰ Cf. Art. ‚Wallfahrt‘, in: LThK, Sp. 964

²¹ Ibid.

²² Cf. Art. ‚Wallfahrt‘ in: LThK, Sp. 964

²³ Cf. Art. ‚Bußwallfahrt‘, in: LThK, Sp. 859

²⁴ Cf. Art. ‚Kreuzugbewegung/Kreuzzüge‘, in: LThK, Sp. 470

²⁵ Ibid.

reformatory critic on the happenings concerning pilgrimage owes its origins which sharpened in the following centuries. Reason for that is the heavily growing pilgrimage movement in the Late Middle Ages and the modern times respectively due to the fact that the pilgrims were held out the prospect of total indulgence. That pilgrimage movement was foremost oriented towards Rome involving a growing trade of relics, an ostentatious piety, addiction of miracles and other excesses of this sort.²⁶ Despite the total rejections of the pilgrimage movement by the reformers this tradition remained in the Catholic Church as part of the popular piety. That's why after the elimination of misuse and a reflection of their holy basics pilgrimage was set more under control of the church as for instance the pilgrimage pastoral care was connected to recognized religious community.²⁷

Typical elements during the pilgrimage predominantly have been religious chants, the prayer of the rosary, various litanies and intercessions as well as biblical impulse texts. At the goal the Eucharist was celebrated together with a lot of other pilgrims and was seen as the real highlight of the pilgrimage.²⁸ Even today common pilgrimages are enshrined to the popular piety to designated pilgrimage places have largely kept these textual elements as a pattern.

This external rite of joint praying and walking towards a holy goal only helps the innermost of a person when he does not only stay in his external shape but leads to a psychological process within the person. This consideration was already of interest to the Church Fathers at the beginning of Christianity as they criticized: The pilgrimage only really is understood if there is an appropriate inner attitude which serves the spiritual renewal and encouragement of faith.²⁹ To be even more clear: the hiking and pilgrimage towards a holy goal is a ritual and holistical process that expresses a significant inner attitude and conviction of Christian faith: That a person understands himself as 'foreign' in the world while his earthly presence, that he is in this respect earthly pilgrim towards his last, holy goal, in particular the encountering of a living god at the moment of death and resurrection.³⁰ Insofar the external rite of a pilgrimage is always (just) symbol and executive expression of the human for his interpretation of his existence in front of god: It is the 'actual' pilgrimage of the human. The joint walking towards a goal thereby is a holistical process, connecting external action (heart) and inner reflecting (soul).

1.3 What it means: Pilgrimage as interpretation of human existence

Just as general ritual actions of the human are always external expressive forms of inner processes, pilgrimage is – as implied in chapter 1.2 – also always external expression of an existential basic experience: That the human is 'on his way' between birth and death, that he is 'at home' in the world, but stays 'foreign' to himself due to his sense, his interpretational liberty and his experiences of contingency.³¹ If then

²⁶ Cf.. Art. ‚Wallfahrt/Wallfahrtsorte, in: RGG, Sp. 1284

²⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁸ Cf. Art. ‚Wallfahrt‘, in: LThK, Sp. 963

²⁹ Cf. Art. ‚Wallfahrt/Wallfahrtsorte, in: RGG, Sp. 1284

³⁰ Cf. Art. ‚Wallfahrt‘, in: LThK, Sp. 963, auch: Hebr 13,14; Offb 21,2 ff.

³¹ Cf. Nocke, F.-J.: Eschatologie, 451

people are looking for a certain 'holy goal' while on their pilgrimage, this itinerancy always is a reflection of their own interpretation and experience of life. The Christian theology refers to the 'pilgrim's state' of the human, that can be for instance found in different chants.³²

Although the term 'pilgrimage' has spread his meaning in the last decades and has dropped his explicitly religious connotation, it remains that pilgrimage is, despised to this change in termination, an external and holistic process that expresses inner proceedings of a human providing a framework for them. This can be extracted from the predominant motivations why people go on a pilgrimage: Primarily it is about a 'notching' from every day life, as well as the experience of a spiritual atmosphere just as to consider and mature a forthcoming decision.³³ The modern pilgrim is looking for a spiritual experience says Susie Reinhard in an essay for the paper *Psychologie heute* and it is this inner experience that differentiates pilgrimage from mere walking or hiking that serves for recovery and the consideration and admiration of nature. The key lies – as often – in the intention of those who set out: Therefore it is not be denied that people without firm religious reference and a corresponding motivation see and call themselves pilgrims without meaning the explicit term which has a long Christian tradition.

By using this term the 'modern' pilgrims – maybe in the sense of the old tradition – pick up a spiritual issue that already has and is been immanent to the traditional pilgrimage: That the human in particular encounters himself in this procedure, that he puts his innermost before himself in the reflection of the experience of his own finiteness as well as with his search for sense and interpretation of his life in this context. The pilgrimage with its very specific challenges like the search for a new lodging, the uncertainty of the right path, with its easy sections but its pitches and exhausting tracks as well, becomes the portrayal, the ritual epilog of the own personal experienced life with all its facets.³⁴ 'My pilgrimage can be interpreted as a parable of my path through life', summarizes Hape Kerkeling at the end of his bestseller 'I'm off then'.³⁵ It is this inner fundamental concern, this search for experience and encounter, that makes people go on a new way and become a pilgrim – and eventually place them along a traditional line of people who made a 'classic' pilgrimage in former times.

1.4 What constitutes the inner core: intensive stories of encounter

'I went into the co-op, the air-conditioned air so strange on my bare limbs. I'd been in convenience stores and small tourist-oriented general stores in a few of my resupply stops along the PCT, but I hadn't been in a store like this since I'd begun my trip. I walked up and down the aisles looking at things I couldn't have, stupefied by their offhand plenitude. How was it that I had ever taken these things for granted? Jars of pickles and baguettes so fresh they were packed in paper bags, bottles of orange juice

³² Vgl. das Lied „Pilger sind wir Menschen“ (GL 820), in dem entsprechend in der 2. Strophe von „Menschen auf dem Wege“ gesprochen wird. Auch das Lied „Wir sind nur Gast auf Erden“ (GL 505) nimmt den Gedanken des Pilgerns und der Erfahrung der ‚Fremde‘ in der Welt auf.

³³ Cf. Reinhard, S.: Pilgern ohne Glauben, 32

³⁴ Cf. Reinhard, S.: Pilgern ohne Glauben, 35

³⁵ Kerkeling, H.: I'm Off Then, 330

and cartons of sorbet, and, most of all, the produce, which sat so brightly in bins I felt almost blinded by it. I lingered, smelling things – tomatoes and heads of butter lettuce, nectarines and limes³⁶ Cheryl Strayed is writing in her book 'Wild' about the experiences when being on her way on the Pacific Crest Trail. She approaches apparently usual things but suddenly perceives them as new, precious and extraordinary. Normal Music becomes 'Sustenance'³⁷, few kilometers become – in a time of fast speeds and short distances actually no barrier any more – a real challenge that has to be handled step-by-step, accompanied by monotony, effort, patience and discipline.³⁸ Pilgrimage then becomes an intensively new experience and encountering with apparently natural things. Making slow progress enables an intensive and true perception of the 'outside world'.

Thus not only the encountering and (re)experience of the environment are crucial but the meeting of other people is of highest importance. That can be other pilgrims, going along jointly, or people who decide to partly accompany the pilgrim because of the random encounter. Just the same as the people whom one meets at different stages of the path: in the lodge, in the villages and towns along the way. These people initially seem to be 'just' companies or participants in the sense that they for instance take care of the lodging of the pilgrims. In this situation different experiences can be made and insights can be gained, by irritation in an unusual situation, confrontation with others or by experience of a certain community on the way.

The meeting of others can also become an experience in a significantly deeper meaning, which leads to the innermost of the own self and therefore to a fundamental concern of the pilgrimage per se. It does so if a relationship between the pilgrim and another person is growing, which expresses in real listening, in mutual conversation, perhaps with an understanding look, which develops from purposeful and indirect to immediate and confronts oneself to the other in his perception of the person.³⁹ In this way reflection and experience of the own ego enables the 'I at You'. Questioning and Searching the own self, the interpretation of the own life, the question 'Who Am I'⁴⁰ sets off in the mutual relationship, in the 'mode' of I and You; 'my You acts on me, how I act on him'.⁴¹ That is what constitutes the inner core of the pilgrimage: Encountering. The human finds and identifies himself, he sees himself before him with his existence and encounters himself, maybe firstly via simple experiences that are not commonplace, but then in a profoundly more crucial way by another person, by himself, be the relationships he encounters. Pilgrimage therefore is not exclusively focused on the goal of the path but the process of the pilgrimage is crucial part of the goal: the reflection of oneself.

³⁶ Strayed, C.: Wild, XXX

³⁷ Ibid, XXX

³⁸ Cf. Ibid, XXX

³⁹ Cf. Buber, M.: Ich und Du, 12

⁴⁰ Kerkeling, H.: I'm Off Then, XXX

⁴¹ Buber, M.: Ich und Du, 16

2 Pilgrimage, a method of social work?!

A category of pilgrims who have been barely perceived in society and hardly described in science could be called ‚socio-pedagogical pilgrims‘. Those are groups or individuals that mostly go on a pilgrimage with a pedagogical objective. The pilgrimage thereby serves as methodological framework for the encountering of acute problems or used for support in difficult transitional times. Especially in the area of help for juveniles this approach has an European tradition lasting for several decades – as one can read in the pilgrims‘ guide of the ecumenical pilgrim path along the VIA REGIA.

‚As a punishment to Santiago [...] in 1965 a law was passed in Belgium for the protection of minors, that provides reduction of sentence or remission for young people that participate on a walk to Santiago. Therein the pilgrimage is classified as ‚performance of educational nature‘.⁴²

Further on one can read: ‚ Even today projects to resocialise imprisoned youths are undertaken by the Sächsische Jugendstiftung (Saxon Youth Foundation).‘⁴³

Pilgrimage was and is used in this context without a religious or spiritual orientation but in all of its other facets to reopen possibilities and framework conditions to young people that promote development. The main focus is set on the question, how pilgrimage can support the search for meaning of young people and possibly be strengthening their identity.

In the following an attempt shall be made to consider pilgrimage as a method of social work besides the religious-traditional context but from a pedagogical-conceptual perspective.

The understanding of social pedagogic, which is underlying, corresponds to the international definition of social work of the International Federation of Social Workers, passed in July 2014 in Melbourne:

“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels”.⁴⁴

The practice-oriented special theoretical background of this text is essentially based on a concluded five-year process evaluation associated with a new work approach of

⁴² Zeiher, Ester: „Der Ökumenische Pilgerweg“ in: Ökumenischer Pilgerweg e.V. [ed.], 8th Ed., Weimar 2003, p. 62.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ <http://ifsw.org/get-involved/global-definition-of-social-work/>

the Saxon Youth Foundation, the program ‚Zwischen den Zeiten‘ (Between times).⁴⁵ The practical background of experiences that is taken for reflection in this paper, includes 40 pilgrimage tours with 330 participants and a total 3.500 kilometres distance, which has been walked accompanying young people. With this model project an attempt to do explorative research according to the methodological recommendations of Jürgen Friedrich has been undertaken.⁴⁶ The aim was to approach the question if pilgrimage can be understood as an independent socio-pedagogical method, how this could be used specifically, and if accordingly measuring instruments could be developed that deliver sufficient confidence. The sociological theory and the currently available results of evaluation can be found in the Intellectual Output No. 3 ‚Theoretical framework of pilgrimage‘ of this document. A rudimentary exemplary schedule including the corresponding educational sequences of a typical five-day socio-pedagogical pilgrimage can be found as Output 8 of this project.

2.1 Which key assumptions can be made for pilgrimage in a socio-pedagogical consideration?

When pilgrimage is considered as pedagogical method, excluding a spiritual-religious background, the following could be assumed:

Pilgrimage is an image of existential, human search, which at the same time in its special form provides a temporary relief from this search. As one follows temporarily an externally prescribed route while walking on traditional pilgrimage paths.⁴⁷ A young person who goes on a pilgrimage is shorn of his habits and home during this walk. He is going by feet through the landscape and is constantly facing new things. The strongest constant in this permanent transformational process is the pilgrim himself, in connection with monotone walking usually leading to an intensive self-confrontation. A further, although weakened constant, is the group of other pilgrims, who face the same challenges. This group represent a shelter, having own rules of social interaction and solidarity. The environment is less predictable yet not to be neglected. It provides a framework on traditional pilgrimage paths that is characterized by current societal/cultural perceptions of the term ‚pilgrim‘. The environment is an adventure area to some extent that formulates independent expectations and attributions to the pilgrims⁴⁸ and confronts with societal untypical ways of life (as e.g. the unconditional and unbiased hospitality).

This construct can be understood as image of the society for the purpose of educational measures in the learning dimensions individual, group and strangers.

⁴⁵ Cf. Zwischen den Zeiten, <http://www.saechsische-jugendstiftung.de/zwischen-den-zeiten>, accessed 2016-07-30.

⁴⁶ Cf. Friedrichs, Jürgen: „Methoden empirischer Sozialforschung“ Opladen 1980, p. 52.

⁴⁷ Remark of the author: The signage of traditional pilgrimage paths is only made in one direction. That’s why there are no uncertainties regarding crossways etc.; you can only walk towards your destination.

⁴⁸ Remark of the author: Pilgrims are faced completely other expectations and questions along the route as e.g. mountaineers who spend the night of their track in a mountain hut; which means hikers are not automatically associated with people seeking the meaning of life.

Thereby it is significantly less verbal cognitive centered than other processes due to its high ability of experience.

Assuming the above mentioned, following assumptions have been taken as a basis for the framework of the program 'Zwischen den Zeiten':

'Upheavals and beginnings in principle belong to every biography and want to be shaped. In the early days of childhood and adolescence development stages become detached faster than later. Decisions have far-reaching and lasting effects and consequences for the future life paths and courses. Times of upheaval turn out especially well if they are arranged consciously. Then they could be times of retrospect, of pause and of departure. If necessary to manage them requires assistance.

To go on a pilgrimage, alone or in a group, is a practical and meaningful form of expressing and shaping those times. Hitting the road (going on a pilgrimage), really walking a path, can be helpful finding clarity for the next steps. For people whose biography is significantly based on education, cultural values, religion/spirituality and community, the access to pilgrimage is conclusive and less elusively. For people whose previous life has not concluded before mentioned aspects the access is more difficult.⁴⁹

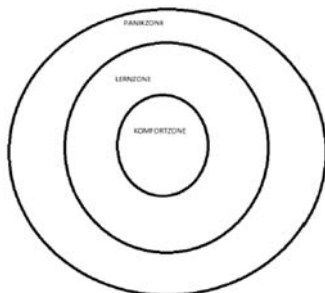
The pilgrimages that have been carried out by the Saxon Youth Foundation were characterized by the joint search for meaning of young people, which worked in a group with a focused topic and in a set period on development tasks typical for their age. Religious/spiritual or touristic objectives of the pilgrimage were clearly in the background, whilst an aspect of pilgrimage, 'to be foreign' came to the fore.

'To be foreign' has created to focuses: on the one hand it means to leave the usually familiar environment and by that the own comfort zone.⁵⁰ On the other hand the

⁴⁹ Translated from Steinke, Rüdiger & Enger, Sven: „Grundkonzeption zum Programm 'Zwischen den Zeiten'“ Dresden 2012.

⁵⁰ Cf. Senninger, Tom: „Abenteuer leiten- in Abenteuern lernen: Methodenset zur Planung und Leitung kooperativer Lerngemeinschaften für Training und Teamentwicklung in Schule, Jugendarbeit und Betrieb“ Münster 2004, p. 8.

Modell of Learning-Zone



The zone of comfort (Comfortzone) describes a state of pleasant custom and safety, in which learning is not necessary. This zone can grow during the whole life by each new experience of a person.

participants should encounter unknown ways of life along the route and in various pilgrims refuges intensively and accordingly examine their own life story. The consequently emerging stay of the participants in the learning zone can be said to be invasive. By conceptually embedding the voluntary nature of the participation eventually it analogously corresponds to the current German recommendations, especially for the sector of ambulant measures in the area of juvenile legal support.⁵¹

2.2 Which basic conditions for social learning result from implementing such a concept?

From the described learning field and the physical challenges of pilgrimage resulted special frameworks and requirements for social learning beyond the group that are presented in the following. The learning processes have significantly been supported by the fact that the participants had to accept a structured daily routine during the tour which differed for the most of them clearly from their everyday life.

Developed and used has been:

- perception of the own limits (physical as well as mental)
- requirements for abilities of communication
- immediate experience of individual responsibility (e.g. by missing items of equipment)
- willingness to behave solidary and modesty 'in all weathers'
- courage to engage in something new as well as tolerance and empathy towards the foreign

2.3 Major Objectives

,With this working approach we especially want to strengthen the individual responsibility and the ability of the adolescents to smart decision regarding their individual living situation. This aim is crucial in two respects: on the one hand adolescents are often on a biographical critical stage, in which deviant orientation and actions are not any longer considered as within limits tolerable deviations for example in the frame of educational and developmental processes but as totally responsible actions of mature persons. On the other hand this fact is often not or not sufficiently

In the he learning-zone (Lernzone) someone facec a new sitation and tries to develop possibilities of action in order to sove the situation. This is the place of growing wisdom and a place, wehre the state in the zone of comfort may be reflected

The zone of panic (Panikzone) is the space, where someone feels unwell and stressed, fear is dominating this zone. Having fear it is hard or unliekely to learn something new. The compagnion on a walk has to try to ceep al participants in the learning-zone and avoide zone of panic.

⁵¹ ,To consider the statutory principles just as permission for intervention is a simplistic view. The legislator is not at all giving the permission for intervention generally, but takes up strict conditions regarding procedures and obligations to assistance that have to be complied with, as exemplified on § 8a Social Insurance Code Vol. VIII. [...] The same is to be said regarding imprisonment within educational assistance.'

Translated from: Otto, Hans-Uwe & Thiersch, Hans [eds.]: „Handbuch Soziale Arbeit II / Grundlagen der Sozialarbeit und Sozialpädagogik“, 4th ed., München 2011, p. 302.

appreciated: the very own actions and their long-term consequences are not clearly apparent to the young adults due to the time horizon of their living situations which are often determined by their short-term and immediate nature.⁵²

2.4 Details and restrictions concerning the target group

Restrictively it has to be considered, that the overwhelming part of the pilgrims consisted of young men in a not solely voluntary context of entrance. A crucial part of the quoted research results⁵³⁵⁴ arose from these general conditions. Hence it must be questioned if the results can be adapted for young women to the same extent. That is not what should be doubted in general, but what has to be kept in mind when reading this works' results.

The main target group of this project comprised firstly adolescent offenders in terms of the German Youth Courts Law § 1 aged 18 to 21⁵⁵ and secondly young job-seeking people from the context of vocational assistance under 25 years⁵⁶.

While trying to classify these young people to the categories that has been stated in the very beginning, a special feature appears: they are in all probability transitional pilgrims, newcomers and those who manage crises⁵⁷ in personal union.

Whereas the role of the transitional pilgrims results relatively, clear from the age of the participants and corresponds to the following questions, which are not atypical for that age:

- Which profession shall I choose?
- Is it wise to live like my parents?
- Should I go abroad?
- What can I do without a graduation?
- How important is money to me?
- Do I want to start a family?

Their role a managers of crises and newcomers is by far not as homogenous in their questions but often characterised by massive personal variations, considering requirements but also the individual resources of processing. Especially in the target

⁵² Translated from Enger, Sven & Hein, Stephan: „Erfolgskriterien und -aussichten moralischer Bildung am Beispiel eines sozialen Trainingskurses“, in: Kerner, Hans-Jürgen & Marks, Erich [eds.]: „Internetdokumentation des Deutschen Präventionstages“ Hannover 2015.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Teichert, Angela: „Expertise und Ergebnisbericht, Pilgern mit straffällig gewordenen Heranwachsenden im Rahmen des § 10 Abs. 1 Nr. 6 JGG - Sozialer Trainingskurs“ Dresden 2014.

⁵⁵ Section 1. Scope as to persons and substantive scope. (1) This Law shall apply if a youth or young adult engages in misconduct punishable under the provisions of general law. (2) “Youth” shall mean anyone who, at the time of the act, has reached the age of fourteen but not yet eighteen years; “young adult” shall mean anyone who, at the time of the act, has reached the age of eighteen but not yet twenty-one years.

⁵⁶ Cf. German Social Insurance Code Vol. II, downloaded from http://dejure.org/gesetze/SGB_II, accessed 2016-07-30.

⁵⁷ Cf. Introduction

group of adolescent offenders a limited scope for action appears. The imminent transition to the adult criminal law at the end of the 21st year of life⁵⁸ includes a missive external aspect of change, as from this day on not only the level of penalties is much higher but the principle of the youth criminal law 'education before punishment' has not to be applied any longer.

2.5 The European Perspective

Relating to the above described model project and based on the Saxon Youth Foundation resulted the present Erasmus+ project 'Between Ages' which inter alia aims at connecting and comparing similar European projects of this kind. A first rudimentary comparison between the various methods of the participation European partners shows that the chosen procedures partly differ significantly.⁵⁹ Differences on a structural level can be especially found:

- In the duration and length of pilgrimage tours
- In the extent of the corresponding time of the participants for preparation and follow-up
- In the vocational qualifications of the assisting mentors – ranges from voluntary committed but professionally interested layperson to solely pedagogical qualified personnel with university degrees according to the national policy for professionals⁶⁰
- In the size of the pilgrims' groups and in the age of access of the participants

The pedagogical approach differed also especially regarding the contrast between a clear confrontational and a more empathic-supporting method of the assisting persons. All approaches however have in common, that they

- use traditional pilgrimage paths and their special infrastructure in principle
- leave the familiar living conditions/comfort zones of the participants and subsequently the meeting of the foreign/ers
- don't understand pilgrimage as traditional or ritual regarding practice of religion.

2.6 Conclusion

The final attempt to categorize pilgrimage according to the three main methods of social work (individual case work, social group work, community work) shows the whole complexity of this matter. Socio-pedagogical pilgrimage is mostly done within groups. The different physical and mental capacity of the participants inevitably leads to a wide methodological repertoire for the social group work. People who rise jointly to a lengthy and highly physical burden will usually hit their individual limits on different times. Also, the perception and appreciation of the environment (nature, weather, sights, and encounter of other people) will differ significantly among the participants. To perceive

⁵⁸ Cf. German Criminal Law, accessed 2016-07-30.

⁵⁹ Cf. Protocoll Private Fachhochschule Dresden Erasmus+ meeting in Brussels, 10/2015.

⁶⁰ Cf. Fachkräfteportal, downloaded from <http://www.revosax.sachsen.de/vorschrift/16882-Fachkraefterrichtlinie>, accessed 2016-07-30.

and appreciate these individual aspects imposes considerable demands on the social behavior of a group going on a pilgrimage jointly.

From the perspective of individual case work every individual will gain a learning effect and ideally knowledge regardless of the group which doesn't necessarily has to emerge from the social interaction within the group but intrinsically as well. Especially for the personal reflection and possibly reevaluation of the so far travelled way of life/pilgrimage the method pilgrimage seems to have a high potential.

In the area of the method community work pilgrimages with adolescent offenders achieve a high potential: For one thing fulfilling societal compensation through charitable work and also by the involvement of sponsors, stake-holders and the charitable environment of the lodging. Thus a societal perception of young offenders that clearly differs from the image drawn by mass media can be achieved. As a result a contribution can be made to strengthen the pedagogical principle 'ambulant before stationary' and to counteract stronger 'Punität' which is frequently demanded by the public.

Socio-pedagogical pilgrimage is at the moment not explicitly assignable to a method due to its complexity. Even if pilgrimage is reduced to the entirely physical procedure and tried to present it as special method of experiential education it is not satisfied to the fullest. To successfully define pilgrimage as a socio-pedagogical method requires a dynamic definition that includes the current societal perception of pilgrimage.

Based on the assumption that every human in general can be seen as 'seeking' and understanding pilgrimage as a possible method to support this search in a special way and considering the above mentioned conceptual aspects the following discourse shall be opened.

3 Under Discussion

Friday, 24th June 2016

Dear Sven,

I have read your contribution with great interest, that leads us back to the initial question of our work: In how far is pilgrimage suited as starting point in a process of encountering, discovering and perceiving oneself?

I myself had tried in the first place to point out the religion-scientifically, theological and inseparably linked anthropological aspects of pilgrimage. Your contribution shows in the description of the specific implementation in the program 'Zwischen den Zeiten', how certain aspects, which are mentioned in my article as well, get a meaning: to be in the foreign place, the encountering and thus triggered confrontation or irritation with something new, as well as the fundamental requesting of future lifestyle of young people, who are necessarily made aware of their own life and the current challenges of their personal situation while being on a pilgrimage.

But first let's have a look on the word 'necesserarily'. Isn't there a significant difference between the concept of the 'classical' pilgrimage, where the pilgrim hits the road because of an inner concerns – maybe even an inner constraint -, because he wants to address a question, because he feels an emptiness, that he wants to fill, because he is on the search for something that he might find on the pilgrimage? The secret certainly lies in the intention...

Are young people who are on the pilgrimage actually clearly aware of this 'inner concern' – even though it is obvious to me, that such a 'inner concern' can be triggered and motivated externally by a guidance – or are the participants just going along to 'serve' this action and enter this as a sanctionary measure, that will eventually end?

I'm looking forward to your reaction, kind regards!

Ansgar

Saturday, 25th June 2016

Dear Ansgar,

I'm very pleased that you have rediscovered crucial aspects of pilgrimage in our basic conception. As it was not our aim to reinvent a form of expression of human search that has existed and to an extent proven, but to make it useable to an audience that most likely wouldn't have found access on their own.

The 'little word necessarily' here is labelling one of the few but probably significant distinguishing criteria in contrast to the 'independent' pilgrims.

Thinking of the many young people who i could accompany, the utmost part of them has not hit the road voluntarily. And even less would have chosen exactly this form to encounter 'themselves'. The main motive of the most participants wasn't even the

'selfencountering' but the completion of a certain sanction. The framework for penalties ranged from reduction in benefits of the Jobcenter/Social Welfare Office to the completion of judicially decreed hours of unpaid services up to the avoidance of arrest and imprisonment.

,Necessarily' never means that a young person was condemned to go on a pilgrimage without alternatives. It was often strived but I have always refused. Because to my opinion this practice would affect the result negatively.

These young people were send by an authority and this for me marks a difference as there is a difference to all other pilgrims in the very first active part of a pilgrim's journey, the conscious, seeking and self-chosen start.

This difference to my opinion can show one of the possible manifested deficit-experience of these young people. Their limitation can be illustrated with a sentence of the guiding principles of Kolping international. It said 'Handeln, nicht behandelt werden' ('act, not be treated')!⁶¹ Until the start of their pilgrimage they have been rather treated, by having the opportunity to keep up or to terminate the pilgrim's journey independently, we demonstrate them their scope of decisions and self-efficacy, that they basically always had but never used. The joint reflection of this contrast not seldomly lead to a very intensive and sometimes painful self-encounter.

In the following and rather passive parts of pilgrimage, in finding and encountering, the young people seemed to differ significantly lesser from 'traditional pilgrims'. Quite the contrary, not seldomly I have experienced them more open and less limited than traditional pilgrims. Maybe it is that they have fewer or other expectations of a pilgrimage and are much more in the foreign world as a religiously motivated pilgrim for example ever could be? What do you think?...

Wednesday, 29th June 2016

Dear Sven,

If I got you correctly, the adolescents are 'forced' in the sense that in their concrete situation other sanctions would apply if they hadn't decide for the 'offer' to go on a pilgrimage. Insofar the difference to the 'normal' pilgrim is not as big as I initially assumed. A 'normal' pilgrim is not just hitting the road because he doesn't know anything better at that moment. Sure, he is consciously deciding to take all these strains, to have deprivations for the upcoming time, to invest time and money etc. But isn't it – in the same sense - also motivated by a certain 'force': of a deeper question or of a search, a life crisis, a decision that has to be made (see above)? Are those 'sanctions' then also some, that hadn't been imposed on me by an authority, but by 'life', in which I'm further agonized by questions, chick out of decisions and don't make any progress or stick in a crisis that draws me even deeper into the hole... Maybe it is not as important from which impuls the force derives to go on a pilgrimage, but rather that there is something happening in doing so. And that seems to be

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encountering – encountering a foreign world and people, encountering eventually one self.

Thereby an interesting thought has come to me: In my contribution I clarified that pilgrimage always is also a holistic and ritual activity and an image respectively of a fundamental experience that constitutes the human: to find oneself in foreign places being in a world that gives meaning and interpretation from within. The human confronts himself with a lot of insoluble questions, in a (foreign) world full of secrets, he can only search for meaning and interpretation by himself. This is also a certain 'force', if you prefer, the force of freedom, in which a human is embedded. The freedom forces him throughout his life to pose the question about the meaning of life and the interpretation of the own Self, whereby today to a lot of people – as it seems to me – distraction in many facets is a variant to just live on a certain 'surface' and don't perceive the depth and search after this question any more... but that would be another topic ...

The human (or the pilgrim respectively) in the foreign world: seems to be a quite substantial aspect as well as the confrontation with this. In your contribution you have, amongst others, referred to the 'Learning Zone Model' and that the crucial focus of the support was set to keep the adolescents in the 'learning zone'. In this aspect I see a parallel to the 'normal' pilgrim: You only have to take a look into the book of Hape Kerkeling⁶² to see that at the beginning of his journey he refers to experiences that could be classified in the 'panic zone'.

But what specific experiences of processing of 'being-in-foreign-places' have been made in this case? What can be recorded that happened to the adolescents regarding self-encountering, which steps forward have been made in this week (or afterwards)? 'Normal' pilgrims are for instance writing down their experiences and the resulting question in some sort of pilgrim's diary. Do the adolescents have something comparable? How can 'self-encountering' be identified?

Wednesday, 17th of August 2016

Dear Ansgar,

Involuntarily voluntary?

It is as you have written it... even if a part of the pilgrims was literally sent on a pilgrimage, the choice to eventually choose this form of a sanction has been up to them.

Even if one can assume that these young people wouldn't have chosen pilgrimage as a possibility of self-encounter and reflection by themselves, it remains not ineffective to them. A young person who is on a pilgrimage, is shorn of his comfort zone while this procedure. He is walking by feet through the landscape and is constantly facing new things. The essential constant in this process of change is he himself, in combination

⁶² Kerkeling, H. I'm off then.

with monotone walking leading to intensive self-encounter. A further, although weakened constant is the group of like-minded fellow pilgrims, who rise to similar challenges and provide a shelter with own rules of social interaction and solidarity.

The above described involuntary approach shall in no case be misunderstood. It doesn't mean that these young people are not exposed to the existential challenge of 'being slammed into life', as every other person is. It rather implies that the objective of socio-pedagogical pilgrimage is approached with smaller thinking. That means that not the whole meaning of life should be considered but rather a more specific, not seldom acute, challenge. That corresponds in all other respects with the rather structural approach of social work. Social work is usually steered by principals. Normally these principals are not focusing the clientele's search or obtaining of personal happiness in life, but the achievement or the retrieving of social functionality. That means the gaining of personal happiness stays anchored within the responsibility of the individual and seldom becomes social mission.

The whole personality can be also considered from the perspective of a professional socio-pedagogic, as one can assume that a human that is happy with his found decisions is questioning them less in the future and thereby a higher sustainability of the invention can be acquired. Hereto one could note that the search for happiness could be quite evaluated under the aspect of sustainable efficiency. Basically, to my opinion, it makes little sense to measure the quality of self-encounter, being methodically difficult anyway, but consider the sustainability of the decisions which had been made in the period of pilgrimage. One could assume that they are more sustainable the more intensive and honest the self-encounter took place.

Thursday, 18th August 2016

Dear Sven,

I will come back to your statement that pilgrimage should 'consider the whole meaning of life', whereas pilgrimage as a socio-pedagogical method is about a specific, acute challenge. When describing pilgrimage as a process – as I have done it in my article – through which human can radically encounter himself in his existence by also performing something ritually that in a certain manner represents an experience of the 'conditio humana', namely the 'being-on-the-road' of the human in his life towards a goal – however this may look and be interpreted – so that is not to say that while being on a pilgrimage the human is always facing the *whole* big question of his meaning, his interpretation, his human existence and seeks to answer that issue whilst wandering, apart from if he could even survey it. Certainly this would imply a tremendous overstrain of the idea of pilgrimage and the associated expectations by the pilgrim. Rather it seems to me that the question of meaning is connected to the – that's where I repeat your statement – specific and acute challenges: by the contact with the finite nature of life, by the outbreak of diseases, by experiences of loss and frustration ... Exactly those are also moments, when motivation breaks up to set out from this internal experienced conflict for the pilgrim's route – in the introduction we have mentioned various motivations of pilgrims: transitional pilgrim, conflict manager, newcomer, etc. At this point I see no difference at all concerning objective and not so many details respectively: The specific challenges are of focus in this moment, but they lead to reflection on a higher level referring to the 'last' big question of meaning – if it exists. The

simply every-day coping with being a pilgrim, new challenges, experiences of deprivation, being right in the middle of a foreign place, insecurity ... all these seem to me are small, specific challenges that can be handled and can be 'ticked' unreflected, but in the most cases will initiate reflection. Deprivation of things that are seen as apparently important for instance will cause the question of really essentially significant things. (That of course not only applies for pilgrimage ... in our holidays a few weeks ago we had no dishwasher. And soon we noticed that is not as important as we first thought but quite good discussions aroused when manually dish washing.)

A second thought came to me concerning your statement about the sustainability of decisions that has to be considered rather than the 'if' and 'how' of the occurrence of a possible 'self-encounter' while being on a pilgrimage. I would fully endorse this consideration. Instantly I remember parallels to the work with people – in my context here in our educational house. Even here I can not measure which statement, action, gesture has what 'effect' with people. Usually such sustainable 'effects' of people is not articulated as feedback but it is about the content of seminars, the frameworks, the methods, the settings, etc. But what 'happens' to the participant concerning explicit contents or rather casual happenings on the edge as well as the interaction in the group with other participants ... from my point of view all of that eludes the measurable frame. Thus it seems to me that there are at most certain indicators that could suggest – and nevertheless stay open – that a certain action has made a certain 'effect': When participants repeatedly join, when they are 'consolidated' as personality, appear to be 'home' by themselves and are suggestive of being 'on a good way', getting along with themselves and life ... you may notice that it is getting vague at this point and my assessments are quite daring and could be felt as quite subjective. I'm almost thinking that it is easier here in socio-pedagogical work and specifically while being on a pilgrimage with adolescents due to the significant difference that will be recognized between the before and after: meaning the constitution of the person before and whilst the pilgrimage and a certain time afterwards, how consolidated he is 'in life', refrains from crimes etc.

On an overall basis the differences between the 'classic' pilgrims and the application of it as socio-pedagogical method to me seem to emerge in the external frameworks and the structure of the participants, but not in the internal processes and their concern: the 'reflection of human existence' how the subtitle of this work is headlining. That applies in a certain sense to the pilgrimage of delinquent adolescents (even if not intended by socio-pedagogical work in the first place and also – as already described – not as sufficiently reflected by the adolescents in this situation) as well as to the pilgrim who walks on the Way of St. James out of a personal impetus. Thus a passage from Hape Kerkeling's book occurs to me which is stated right at the beginning, before the title: 'The path is posing just one question to everyone: 'Who are you?''⁶³

Well, my answer has got longer than I would have thought in the beginning. Now I'll call it a day – I'm looking forward for your further thoughts ...

Thursday, 18th August 2016

⁶³ Translated from: Kerkeling, Hape: Ich bin dann mal weg, 5

Dear Ansgar,

Thank you for your detailed answer. My final statement will be very short. I agree to your thesis, that there is no difference between pilgrim in a social-pedagogical way and in a traditional way in the perspective of the typical existential idea of seeking and the quality of the improvement of knowledge on the pilgrimage. But I see differences, though also connected with some questions. As I learned in my work as a social worker, there is a difference between people, who has experienced a stroke of fate (like illness or death of a person in his near), or who has reached a biological brake (like menopause). This person starts a pilgrimage because of something, what come over him from the outside.

The young offenders, which went with us, start the pilgrimage to think about a part of their own life, which they have also created by themselves. This leads to different main topics in the conception of a pilgrimage: for instance the strengthening of personal responsibility. In a social-pedagogical view not the idea of seeking has to be questioned, but some most important questions are in the focus:

“What has been fate in my life – and what is the result of my own acting?”

Or – having your words in mind:

“Where have I been thrown in – and where did I jump in by myself?”

This is in my opinion a smaller perspective in the moment.

I thank you for the inspiring exchange and I am interested, if this will continue in a bigger context later on.

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Also available in this project

<http://www.betweenages-project.eu/results.html>

Youth in Stress – Prerequisites for European projects in regard to socio-pedagogical walking	Output 1 English
Jugend im Stress – Voraussetzungen für europäische Projekte zum sozialpädagogischen Pilgern	Output 1 German
Pilgrimage as starting point in a process of encountering, discovering and perceiving oneself	Output 2 English
Pilgern als Einstieg in einen Prozess der Selbstbegegnung, Selbstfindung und Wahrnehmung von Selbstwirksamkeit	Output 2 German
Socio-pedagogical Walking as an European Alternative in the Work with Young People in NEET and young Offenders. A theoretical perspective	Output 3 English
Sozialpädagogisches Pilgern als Europäische Alternative in der Arbeit mit benachteiligten und straffälligen jungen Menschen – eine theoretische Einordnung	Output 3 German
The Who is Who of Walking as an Instrument to Work with NEET's and Young Offenders in Europe	Output 5 English
Walking to break with the past – the 3 month way from Belgium	Output 7a English
Walking to break with the past: the French way	Output 7b English
Walking to the future – Concept of the first developed way in Belgium	Output 7c English
Five days between imprisonment and Santiago de Compostela Social educational pilgrimage in Saxony	Output 8 English
Fünf Tage zwischen Haft und Santiago de Compostella Sozialpädagogisches Pilgern in Sachsen	Output 8 German
Ergebnisbericht zum sozialpädagogischen Pilgern mit Menschen in schwierigen Lebenslagen	Output 9 German
Report on the results of walking with NEET's and offenders	Output 9 English
Requirements for the route - Handbook for socio-pedagogical walking tours with delinquent and disadvantaged youths	Output 10 English
Voraussetzungen für den Weg - Handbuch zum sozialpädagogischen Pilgern mit straffälligen und benachteiligten Jugendlichen	Output 10 German
In die Zukunft gehen – ein Projekt für Straffällige und Menschen in schwierigen Lebenslagen (Videodokumentation)	Output 11 (Film) Dutch/French/German/ Italian/English
Strategy for re-engagement of young offenders and NEET	Output 12 English
Sozialpädagogisches Pilgern als ein neues Instrument für die Arbeit bin benachteiligten und straffälligen jungen Menschen Anregungen für Politik und Gesellschaft	Output 13 German
White paper to force walking as an instrument to work with NEET's and Offenders in Europe	Output 13 English

Selected texts are also available in French, Dutch and Italian

Project aim is the development of alternative methods and measures to imprisonment of young offenders and increase the chances of NEETs for social inclusion. *Between ages* evolves strategies towards juvenile crime prevention via the implementation of a platform for policies and practices. The network combats social exclusion, prevents recurrence and early school leaving, promotes social security in community and contains crimes related to petty crime, promotes commitment and empowerment of young people and positive initiatives into adulthood, and enforces last but not least public spending with regard to health issues, welfare and judicial affairs. The overall objective is hence to promote the Europe2020 strategy in the field of youth and the creation of a European association for coordinating pilgrimage activities for young offenders and NEET.

Seit 2011 wird in Sachsen das Pilgern als moderne Methode der sozialpädagogischen Arbeit erprobt und entwickelt. Als spezielle Form des „Sozialen Trainingskurses“ werden Maßnahmen erarbeitet, bei denen Jugendliche und junge Erwachsene in schwierigen Lebenssituationen die übliche Beratungs- und Trainingsumgebung verlassen und sich auf einen längeren Fußmarsch begeben. Diese begleiteten Wege dienen der Reflexion und Selbstwirksamkeitserfahrung und werden mit Arbeitseinsätzen und methodengeleiteten Reflexionen flankiert. So wird den Jugendlichen und jungen Erwachsenen außerhalb ihres gewohnten Lebensumfeldes die Chance zu einer Neuorientierung und einem Neuanfang gegeben. Allgemeines Ziel des Vorhabens ist die (Weiter-) Entwicklung, der Transfer und die Umsetzung von innovativen und bewährten Verfahren im Bereich Jugend bzw. Jugendstrafrecht und NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). Im Rahmen des Projektes „BA-Network“ wurde die Forschung zum sozialpädagogischen Pilgern auf europäische Dimension ausgedehnt und Daten aus der langjährigen Erfahrung von Oikoten (Belgien) und Alba (Frankreich) einbezogen. Seit mehr als 20 Jahren führen diese zwei Partner Pilgerprojekte mit straffälligen Jugendlichen durch, die bis zu drei Monate unterwegs sind und mehr als 2000 Kilometer zurücklegen. Aus Italien sind zwei Partner dem Projekt beigetreten: zum einen unterstützt das Justizministerium Italiens bzw. die Abteilung für Jugendjustiz (DGM) die Partner dabei, die anvisierten Ziele zu erreichen und insbesondere den Zugang zu den europäischen Institutionen zu öffnen. Zum anderen wirkt die non-profit Organisation „L'Oasi Società Cooperativa Sociale“ und „Associazione Lunghi Cammini“ mit, um das Pilgern für junge Menschen zu testen und in Italien einzuführen.

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Between Ages: Network for young offenders and NEET

