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The Chinese Continuum of Self-cultivation: A Confucian-Deweyan Learning Model

Christine A. Hale
University of Sydney

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Faculty of Education and Social Work
University of Sydney
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Note to Readers:

- Chinese transliteration of pinyin has been used throughout this work except where authors quoted have used the Wade-Giles system of romanization (pre-1990s).
- Both simplified and traditional characters have been cited as appropriate to quoted author's usage and the conventions of current Chinese philosophic writings.
- In referencing, due to the current trend of Chinese intellectuals to interchange the position of their family and given names, both names are cited where known.
- The Oxford system of referencing has been used throughout this work without the usage of Latin abbreviations: *ibid.*, *op.cit.*, etc in consideration of scholars unfamiliar with the traditional Oxford system.

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Dedicated to:

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*My mentor, who over the many years encouraged 'natural, well-motivated miracles' to come
to pass*

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Abstract

This thesis explores a transcultural philosophy of education based on the Neo-Confucian concepts of the universal nature of self (*ren xing* 人性), as positioned with self-in-the-world (*ren* 人) and humanity (*ren* 仁) in the co-creative process of self-cultivation (*xiushen* 修身). This approach to knowledge synthesis and consolidation informs and enhances the educational theories of John Dewey (1859-1952). It presents a philosophy of education which has a dynamic self interacting with and *becoming* in the world as an evolving process of knowledge schematization and application. The Confucian-Deweyan educational model explored in this thesis is presented as, not only a transcultural educational approach in the changing face of globality, but also a means to encourage and foster humanitarian and communitarian values to be applied in life-long learning. That is, a wholistic approach to education whereby the individual considers the other – human and natural – tantamount to the self in an increasingly shifting world. This concept is in direct opposition to the anthropocentric approach of egoistic individualism currently prevalent in post-modern societies. The educational model for 21st century globality developed herein fosters cooperation, rather than competition; an anthropocosmic, rather than an anthropocentric, disposition towards life and living enabling non-European indigenous values to co-exist in a global arena.

This thesis provides a framework to embed these concepts as a pragmatic response to 21st century globality. China's historical, cultural, and philosophical continuum – contextualizing the present with the past as the basis of their future educational goals – is considered. The specific elements addressed for this contextual background is the history and influence of Deweyan thought in China (Dewey lectured in China for two years – 1919-1921), the turmoil of China's 20th century education systems (tightly intertwined with its volatile politics), and the PRC's current education reform initiatives. China has a continuous and, effectively, unbroken 5,000 year old civilization with a tradition of formal education of almost 2,000 years. China remains, in the 21st century, a country of diverse demographics comprising 20% of the world's population; a developing nation with an ever-increasing geo-political and economic presence on the world stage.

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Accordingly, the combination of these unique elements offers the ideal platform to demonstrate the model's practical possibilities in a non-European culture. China, with a community-based culture and growing global presence, offers a real-world context for exploring the viability of such a Confucian-Deweyan model of education as a confluence of Western and Eastern approaches to learning, self, community, creativity and knowledge. Furthermore, it is suggested this humanitarian model of education – which considers the universality of self and knowledge acquisition – provides a template for cross-cultural application. That is, an infrastructural philosophy of education whereby indigenous communities may determine their own curricula relative to their respective cultural contexts enabling them to participate in a globalized world whilst empowering their unique community. The model of education developed herein enables the phenomenon of glocalization to be pragmatically addressed in cross-cultural contexts.

1.0 Introduction

In the past 20 years or more there has been an emphasis within the field of education towards empirically based data research *in situ* and a de-emphasis on philosophy of education. Given the challenges of 21st century globalization, and the exponential growth of technology and knowledge generally, it would seem studies on the concept of knowledge acquisition – the why, what, and how of learning – is crucial in understanding, directing and enhancing the processes needed to develop critical and creative thinking for a sustainable world. Conversely, philosophers give little attention to education as a field of study, possibly leaving such ideas to educational psychologists – a field dominated by neuroscience – leaving an impression for the teaching community that the student is, effectively, a brain disassociated from life at large; the self as solely an agent of self-interest existing in existential isolation.

Subsequently, philosophy of education tends to be an overlooked area of study for both educationalists and philosophers. This project is an attempt to redress the balance and reopen a narrative on the machinations of learning, how knowledge – as opposed to information – is acquired, returning to the basic idea of a wholistic interconnected self as learner, not ‘brain as learner’. The study is an exploration into the individual as an entity interrelating within the world and beyond in the context of self being *in connection with other in a co-creative dynamic*; a subjective, yet real and pragmatic *experience*, as opposed to an intellectual concept. Connection, rather than existential disconnection, is pivotal to social, cultural, economic and ecological sustainability and needs to be the primary goal in any classroom methodology and education as a whole.

Existential disconnection is endemic in post-modern society. Disconnection is a major, if not core, contributor to social and psychological fragmentation; lack of empathy for the other, violence, and xenophobia, to name but a few of the many dysfunctions when sense of self is one of isolation.¹ How one views one’s self in the context of the other – one’s sense of community, connection, and belonging – is an embedded social and cultural phenomenon. If one’s self is perceived as *tantamount* in importance to the other, whether or not the other is of differing personal, social, cultural, and/or ecological worlds, then social and natural harmony

¹ Hale, 2013; Laszlo, 2008

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is achievable. It is the formative process of education which can facilitate such a cultural shift; creating a future of socially, culturally, and ecologically aware citizens. Perception of the equality of self and other is crucial for a collective move towards a harmonious and sustainable world. Sustainable change in the external world can only be instigated by the collective movement of individuals' shifting inner attitudes as a result of *experience*, rather than externally imposed notions appealing to the intellect alone. It is on this idea that the philosophy of education explored herein is based.

Clearly, the success of any educational system rests on how the learner learns and, consequently, how knowledge acquired is eventually applied into the (now globalized) world by the individual when s/he exits the said system. The key to this concept is that of the self: how the self is defined and understood within the processes of knowledge development, consolidation and, eventually, complex problem solving – a self which is beyond neuropsychological models of mere information cognition. That is, this thesis explores a cultural and metaphysical – as opposed to a homogenous neuropsychological – model of self based on Confucian-Deweyan transcultural philosophy emphasizing critical and creative cross-disciplinary thinking.

Self is at the core of all human experience. Self – regardless of the difficulties in defining the phenomenon – is, arguably, the experiencer, the processor, the learner, the agent, the motivator of being and becoming human. Self is the quintessential aspect of *being a knower*. It is on the basis of this premise that this thesis explores the self *in becoming* as a knowledge acquirer. That is, this is a study on the process of self-cultivation of the individual through both formal and informal education (school and within the wider community) providing a direction – an infrastructural comparative philosophic model – towards the development and enhancement of self and other in the context of glocalization.

As overviewed in Chapter 4, the concept of post-modern 'self' in Western thinking tends to be interchangeable with the word 'individual' and is considered predominantly in terms of the physical (a discrete organism), social and psychological contexts and their interplay within these areas of life and living. Self, in Western thought, has also certain theological and metaphysical interpretations; interpretations that are subject to individual scholars' definitions and not commonly incorporated into wider societal thinking and life considerations. Confucian perspectives of self and the individual, on the other hand, have clear secularized

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and essentially widely and historically agreed upon interrelated definitions that seamlessly overlap and incorporate the physical, metaphysical, social and psychological realms. These ideas are embedded in the Chinese way of thinking from the mundane to the profound. Chinese philosophy, merged with the educational theory of the American pragmatic philosopher, John Dewey (1859 –1952), creates, what is termed here, a Confucian-Deweyan learning model of self-cultivation.

Merged, the highly complementary Deweyan and Confucian concepts of self transcend cultural boundaries and, moreover, describe *human universalities*, therefore expanding our concepts of self and individual into broader and deeper contexts. Such concepts as the Deweyan experiential self, *ren xing* (人性 true nature of humanness), *ren* (人 person in the world), *ren* (仁 humanity) and *dao xing* (道性 nature of the Way, or wisdom, whereby a merging with guides one's behavior) can be correlated – not only cross-culturally – but also address the *essence* of humanness in its various facets as is discussed in Chapter 5. Chinese definitions of self are multidimensional and mutually informing; all aspects of self are given equal emphases in balanced interaction between the tangible and intangible worlds; the inner world and outer existence; thought and action; perception, cognition, and application. Incorporating these multifaceted concepts of self into a learning theory fundamentally enables a fuller understanding of the potentiality of the self that is not easily undertaken solely through the normative Western lens of self and individual.

Self and individual is viewed traditionally in Western philosophy by varied approaches, which, more often than not, tend to be mutually exclusive. That is, self and individual can be viewed through the lenses of ethics, ontology, existentialism, metaphysics, or pragmatism, to name a few sub-fields of Western philosophy. The self and individual is a highly complex multidimensional entity, forming and informing both tangible (outer) and intangible (inner) worlds of self and the other. This we know through common sense experience. Nevertheless, in Western philosophy, the metaphysical and pragmatic aspects of self are viewed as two schools of thought – means of analyses –that are mutually exclusive and anathema to each other. The reader will find within this work, not only a seamless merging of the metaphysical and pragmatic aspects of self – as exemplified in Chinese thought – but, in conjunction with Deweyan thought, a further enhancement of these self-same concepts. Cross-cultural universalities of self are more accessible when viewed through a Confucian-Deweyan lens. This begs the question of whether Western philosophy *alone* is an adequate tool in

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understanding the human situation in providing some contribution to the current and future challenges of existence. That is, the esoteric abstractions that often plague Western philosophy – for example, the ‘hair-splitting’ of definitions and mutual exclusivity of sub-fields – need, not only to become accessible, but relevant. In a now globalized world we need to find correlations (albeit definitively tenuous in the initial explorations) with other cultures’ philosophy to mutually enhance and extend the respective traditions. In Chinese philosophy, metaphysics and pragmatism go hand in hand; there is no distinct demarcations of the interrelated aspects of self; all aspects form and inform self and other in a dynamism indicating personal and social evolution.

For the project undertaken herein, the comparative vehicle of Chinese philosophy, which historically, recognizes the interrelatedness all things, is the ideal candidate in conjunction with Deweyan thought. The wholistic approach to self, life, and living inherent in Chinese thinking enables greater depth of consideration in education of the individual and relevance cross-culturally due to certain universalities of the human condition being addressed in both philosophies. Accordingly, the Confucian-Deweyan self is a communitarian self; not without unique individualistic drives and motivations, but these drives and motivations are informed by communitarian values and connection with the greater whole. Accordingly, the greater whole is served by how the self processes information into knowledge that is then applied in the inner and outer worlds of the individual.

1.1 The Self as Learner

Information is not knowledge. Information is a disparate piece – for want of a more apt description – of raw material for the learner; raw material that *has not yet* become connected, schematized and consolidated into the learner’s established knowledge systems. Accordingly, when learning has *meaning* for the individual, it can be argued that information has become contextualized and consolidated within the self and transformed into schemas of knowledge that, as a result, interconnects, amends, and expands *former* knowledge systems. Knowledge being defined here as a set of integrated systems that are applied into the world as a pivotal expression of the self in intention, critical and creative thought, and pragmatic action relative to one’s community (localized and/or globalized). Knowledge, as such, also

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informs the complex inner worlds of the individual; enabling the self to reflect and subsequently evolve in the process of, not just being, but becoming.

This idea of a dynamic self in the process of information→knowledge transference is outlined in the following diagram:

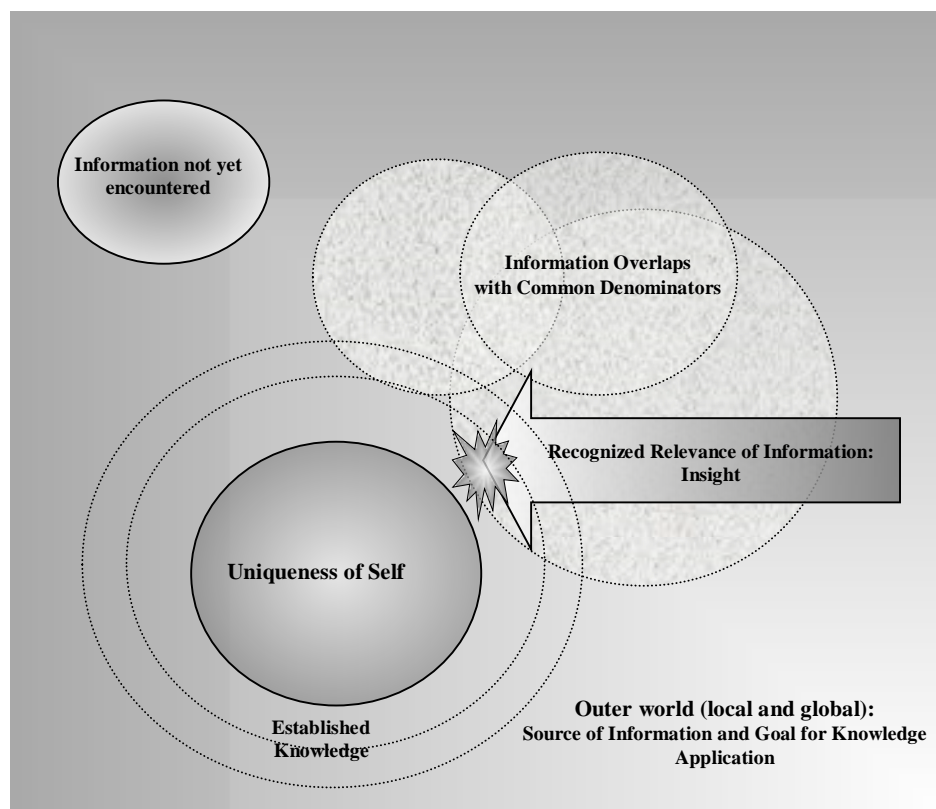


Figure 1.1 Self embedded in the world of information events

The events of information (denoted by the overlapping upper right hand circles) enter the concentric spheres of the individual's formerly established, consolidated, and integrated knowledge systems. The closer to the 'Uniqueness of Self' centre, the more integrated and consolidated the established knowledge systems and worldviews; that is, the individual's unique perspectives. These knowledge systems *vis a vis* the Uniqueness of Self, inform each other in a multi-faceted, constant dynamic – a dynamic particular to that individual – and, accordingly, are applied to the outside world. The depiction of dotted lines around each outer circle (self and information events, respectively) denote the permeability of self with the outside world and the transferability and interconnection of information. As indicated by overlapping, some information events have shared elements.

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It is argued herein that without a concept of a multi-faceted, non-neurological self, nor an understanding of how the machinations of information→knowledge transference are synthesized and incorporated with the outcome of interdisciplinary knowledge development incorporating complex problem solving skills, practical learning/teaching methodologies exist in a theoretical vacuum. In such a vacuum, the post-enlightenment neurological model of self becomes the dominant, default presumption in the pedagogic community. That is, the learner is perceived as a mere ‘cerebral sponge’ absorbing units of information. In arguing a position for the Confucian-Deweyan self as template for an educational model, naturally there is a departure from the commonly held modern Western idea of egoistic self-as-individual and yet, in a sense, a return to its original medieval meaning whereby ‘individual’ actually meant being inseparable from the group.

According to the social historian, John Greenwood, the individual “came to be divorced from its original connection with social community ... [when] the liberal political tradition that developed from this conception emphasized the “bare” individual as bearer of absolute personal rights, as the parallel tradition of laissez-faire economics emphasized the purely egoistical rational agent.”² This situation in the West whereby the individual is “divorced from its original connection with social community” certainly needs to be redressed and the self (as the intentional agent of the individual) reconnect in respect of the other³ as exemplified in Confucian-Deweyan thought. Hence, the educational model explored in this thesis – as an amalgam of Western and Chinese approaches – has transcultural relevance for both Asian⁴ and Western educational theory.

The humanistic universality of a Confucian-Deweyan self as the core of an educational philosophy, not only addresses the original idea of the (Western) individual, as cited above, but emphasizes the concept of ‘education for the betterment of community’, empathy, and internal evolvment of self, not education that emphasizes *solely* the future

² 2003, p 168

³ Berger, & Huntington, 2012; Hale, 2013; May, 2011; Mickey, S. 2007; Patomaki, 2010.

⁴ Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Burma and a large number of South East Asian cultures are considered essentially Confucian despite former colonization (where applicable) as well as Buddhist, Animist, or adherence to other local belief systems integrated within these societies. This is due to early Chinese commercial infiltration and/or military incursions. In the latter cases, the indigenous war lords/monarchs were mostly kept in ‘power’ (often with Chinese court advisors/officials) whose main obligation was regular tribute to the Chinese emperor. See Jacques, 2009, pp 77-78 & 274-276. Due to Confucian influences, Asian cultures essentially view the community as paramount in importance to the individual. See Chang, Won-Seok 2004; Geun, Jeong Se, 2005; Hahm, Cahai Bong, 2000; Hwang, Kwang-Kuo, 2001; Morton & Lewis, 2004.

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socio-economic mobility of the individual. That is, a philosophy of education whereby there is self in connection to the other for societal evolution as a whole. Such an educational theory would also address the growing phenomenon of glocalization: "... a complex interaction of the global and local characterized by cultural borrowing."⁵

It is this "cultural borrowing", the absorption of elements from other cultures to enhance localized culture and society – as opposed to one culture subsuming another – which is appearing to be a strong counter-trend to global homogeneity as developing countries gain economic confidence and cultural pride.⁶ If this is the case, there will be a need for an educational philosophy flexible enough to be adapted to specific cultural perspectives and community values whilst enabling the acquisition of 21st century technical, cross-disciplinary and critical thinking skills. That is, an educational philosophy that enables the self (learner) and the complexity of the self's worldview as embedded in community to approach and be a pivotal part of the learning process and the various cultural ways in which the world is known.⁷

A Confucian-Deweyan self – with its humanistic metaphysical universality – provides a flexible platform to encompass and address the complexity of diverse cultural elements that are often ignored (if not completely unknown) when transposing Western educational models into non-Western contexts. A Confucian-Deweyan self developed into an educational philosophy would enable the learner – within her particular cultural perspectives – to be the centre of the educational process. That is, the learner constructs on-going knowledge schemas (from information received) to be applied into her world and determine future goals from her own unique perspectives in concert with the other. This is a creative process whereby the self forms and informs the world, rather than being subsumed (or victimized) by external forces; self-determination as empowerment in balance with the other. Such a model encourages a bottom-up, as opposed to a top-down, democratic educational process. These ideas are developed in Chapter 9.

1.2 Background to the Confucian Element

⁵ Steger, 2009, p 77.

⁶ See Berking, 2003; Bhawuk, 2008; Lauderdale, 2008.

⁷ Nisbitt *et al*, 2001

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Confucianism⁸ is often viewed colloquially as a relic from former feudal China. In this simplistic view, Confucianism – on the positive side – emphasizes community bonds and self-cultivation for the greater good of society as a whole, and – on the negative side – misunderstanding of the notion of 'filial piety' (孝 *xiao*), unquestioning devotion of child to parent and, consequentially, individual deferment to the state.⁹ Confucianism, in fact, embodies a highly sophisticated metaphysics of self and a complex processual model of self-cultivation (*xiushen* 修身), the key being the concept 'intellectual intuition' or 'embodied knowing' (智的直覺 *chih te chih-chueh*),¹⁰ which the contemporary Confucian, Tu Weiming, describes as “a direct knowledge of reality without logical reasoning or inference. But, unlike what is commonly associated with mysticism, it has very little to do with revelation.”¹¹

This concept of intellectual intuition, in its machinations, can be adequately correlated to the term 'insight' – in a sense, 'eureka moments' of greater or lesser degrees that can, in fact, be sets of insights in a series of moments – a *knowing*.¹² That is, one can have a major insight in a problem solving process, or a series of minor and almost imperceptible insights as information is being absorbed into former knowledge systems making connections that were formerly unknown. Tu Weiming interprets self-cultivation and intellectual intuition in a manner accessible to the Western mind and, hence, is best suited to this project. Tu Weiming's interpretation of these concepts and the full processual framework of knowledge schematization towards self-cultivation are discussed in Chapter 5 as is Confucian

⁸ Confucius (551–479 BCE) was a philosopher, teacher and political advisor who focused on social and ethical behavior. His attributed works are often anecdotal (in some cases, mythological) and unsystematic, yet over the millennia, offered a cornerstone to subsequent moral and, most notably in the Song/Ming dynasties (960–1279 CE/1368–1644 CE respectively), metaphysical systemization. Confucianism – as a generic school of philosophy – continues to evolve in depth and breadth into the 21st century. For an overview of Confucius' life, see <http://stanford.library.usyd.edu.au/entries/confucius/> [accessed 11th of March, 2015]

⁹ Filial piety is the expression of mutual love and respect, a two-way process. In regards to the state, traditionally the emperor was considered the father of the nation; the citizens his children. At the end of the imperial era (1911), after the Japanese invasion and the Kuomintang (KMT)/Communist civil war, Mao Zedong, on coming to power in 1949, culturally absorbed the role of new emperor – the historical father-figurehead of the state. This is why today, even on the modernized east coast of China, pictures of Mao Zedong proliferate, even to the extent his face remains on the currency – and this situation will remain, I believe, until a new father-figurehead emerges, which in my view, is unlikely. Many Chinese see that Mao Zedong's symbolism will remain in this cultural role until the idea of the emperor-figure dies – which may take another generation at least as this personalized idea of state is so ingrained in Chinese thinking. See Andrew & Rapp, 2000. Interestingly enough, on my visits to China, when questioning educated Chinese on their views of the Maoist period, they say in one way or another: “Oh, Mao? He was cruel and crazy ... *but* he kept the country unified and that is most important.” There is often an aside following: “He was also a very good poet and calligrapher” – talents still held in very high regard today.

¹⁰ Tu, Weiming, 1978, 1985a, and 1998. Personal communication, 5th of August, 2010.

¹¹ Tu, Weiming, 1985a, p 20

¹² The Jesuit theologian, Bernard Lonergan, developed a similar processual model describing the act of experiencing and judging information in creating knowledge schemas. See Lonergan, 1967; 1957, 1968. The departure here is Lonergan's approach is arrived at as an extension of Thomistic thinking and his heuristic attempts at defining self have no correlation with the ontological self of Confucianism.

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metaphysics. Chapter 6 discusses Deweyan philosophy and Chapter 7 Deweyan thought in 20th century China.

1.3 Background to the Deweyan Element

John Dewey (1859 – 1952), the American process philosopher and educationalist, arrived in China 1st of May 1919 and stayed for 22 months. His visit coincided with the May Fourth Movement of 1919¹³ – a protest against the signing of the post-WWI Versailles Treaty which handed over formerly occupied German territories in China to Japan.

The young Chinese republic--founded three years before the outbreak of war [WW I] --gained little from its status as an ally. The 1919 Treaty of Versailles handed over control of Germany's colonial possessions in China to Japan ... China's humbling at Versailles had dramatic effects back home, triggering student protests that morphed into a modernising movement which contributed to the growth of the Communist Party.¹⁴

Dewey arrived in the midst of one of the most tumultuous, yet intellectually active periods of modern Chinese history. Chinese nationalism had risen to fever pitch after the allied betrayal at Versailles and the intelligentsia was impatient to modernize and adopt Western ideas after the corruption, ineffectiveness, and subsequent collapse of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), ending some 5,000 years of dynastic rule. Dewey's ideas were quickly spread by his former students from Columbia University (who had initially invited Dewey to China) and associated influential opinion leaders – most notable of the group was Hu Shih (胡適 1891-1962), Liang Shuming (梁漱溟 1893-1988), and Jiang Menglin (蔣夢麟 1886-1964, aka Chiang Monlin) – who had already established themselves as leading educators and intellectuals in the reform movement.¹⁵ Dewey's former students “followed up with energetic

¹³ Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007; Dykhuizen, 1973.

¹⁴ ‘Strange meeting: China and the first world war’. In *The Economist* (Apr. 24, 2010), p 41 (US). “[On the Western Front, 140,000] Chinese laborers buried the dead, dug trenches, worked in munitions factories and cleaned up the shells, grenades and bullets after the November 11, 1918 armistice ... One hundred thousand served in the British Chinese Labor Corps between 1917 and 1919, and each received a medal for his service. About 40,000 others served with the French forces, and hundreds of Chinese students served as translators.” ‘China's WW I Effort Draws New Attention’ *Voice of America News* (Sep 23, 2010).

¹⁵ Alitto, 1979/1986; Greider, 1970; Tan, Sor-hoon, 2011a; Tan, Sor-hoon, 2004b; Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007; Zhang Huajun, 2009; Zhang Huajun & Milligan, 2010; Zheng Shiqu, 2011. The activities and contributions of Hu Shih and Liang Shuming are discussed in Chapter 7.

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action in the application of pragmatic philosophy to the concrete *sociopolitical* and educational concerns”.¹⁶

Although he lectured broadly across these areas¹⁷, Dewey’s impact was most notable in education.¹⁸ Yet, despite Deweyan education theory becoming policy at the National Educational Conference in 1922¹⁹, practical implementation became fragmented during the subsequent reform period as proponents of Dewey were becoming disengaged as cross-currents of both ideas and events took over the fledgling Nationalist government.²⁰ It is only now, in the more confident and stable post-Mao period, that Deweyan pragmatism and process philosophy has embedded itself in Confucian thinking.²¹ A fundamental reason for this is that Dewey defines the self predominately as socially constructed through *lived* experience: “Apart from the ties which bind him [the human being] to others, [s]he is nothing.”²² This is not a negative or nihilistic perspective of the self, but conversely, an affirmation of the uniqueness of the individual in contrast and definition to the other. Dewey’s humanistic idea of self embedded in the world and formed and informed by the other is highly compatible with Confucian thought.

For Dewey ... heart-and-mind [*xin* 心] is created in the process of realizing a world. Heart-and-mind, like world, is *becoming* rather than *being*, and the question is how productive and enjoyable are we able to make this creative process. The way in which heart-and-mind and world are changed is not simply in terms of human attitude, but in real growth and productivity, and in the efficiency and pleasure that attends this process. The alternative – for community to fail to communicate effectively – is for the community to wither, leaving it vulnerable to the “mindless” violence and “heartless” atrocities of creatures that have failed to become human.²³

For Dewey, human experience is radically embedded in the natural, social, and cultural environments that give each of us context. Dewey feels that traditional philosophy did not notice this kind of primary experience or living experience, which

¹⁶ Ching, Julia, 1985, p 261. Emphasis in text.

¹⁷ Dewey, 1973, *Lectures in China, 1919-1920* (Translated from the Chinese by Clopton, R.,W. And Tusuin-Chen Ou) Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii

¹⁸ Billings, 1981, p 358; Pepper, 1996, p 91; Tan, Sor-hoon, 2004b, 2011a, 2011b; Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007;

¹⁹ Billings, 1981; Pepper, 1996.

²⁰ Pepper, 1996, p 91

²¹ Ames; Grange; Hall; Rorty; Tan, Sor-hoon; Wen, Haiming; to name the key thinkers in this area.

²² Dewey *Later Works* 7:323

²³ Ames, 2003, p 408 Emphases in text.

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is characterized as an ongoing process.²⁴

Furthermore, within this agreement on the nature of self embedded in its sociological, cultural and experiential humanity, also explicit in Confucianism and Deweyan thought is the notion of *creatio in situ*.²⁵ That is, a state of “*becoming* rather than *being*” – as Ames states above – whereby becoming is an ongoing, creative, dynamic process: the self as co-creator in interconnection with the other. This idea refutes the notion of an isolated, existentially discrete entity in a state of passivity and places the individual as an active but equal element in concert with the other to imaginatively form the world. Accordingly, the self is empowered in tandem with the other in mutually informing syntheses. These ideas are discussed in Chapter 5, and applied to the said educational model in Chapters 8 and 9.

Despite these agreements between Confucianism and Deweyan thought on the dynamic social embedded-ness of our humanity, they depart when addressing the metaphysical definitions of self: the Confucian self involves an interconnection of cosmological implications²⁶ and the Deweyan self, in fact, has no *explicit* metaphysics.²⁷ Nevertheless, due to the fundamental agreement of self-in-the-world, the self of Confucianism strongly informs Deweyan thought, creating a sophisticated model of pragmatism: Confucian Pragmatism.²⁸ These combined notions – the Deweyan personhood and Confucian *xing* 性 (nature of self), positioned with *ren* 人 (person in the world) and 仁 (humanity) in *sheng* 生 (co-creativity) and *li* 禮 (propriety of self in its uniqueness)²⁹ – are developed herein after respective analyses of each school of thought. The following diagram outlines the merging of these two schools of thinking in an educational context – the core concept of this thesis:

²⁴ Wen, Haiming, 2009, p 45.

²⁵ Ames, 2005; Wen, Haiming, 2009

²⁶ Grange, 2004, pp 28-29; La Tour & La Tour, 2011; Tu Weiming, 1985a, p 125-126; 1985b, p 45; 1989b, p 39, 74; Wen Haiming, 2009. pp 145-148, 171, to name a few appropriate sources to the perspectives addressed here. The most notable aspect of the cosmological Confucian self is *tianrenheyi* (天人合一 non-personalized divinity/heaven *vis a vis* human realms in mutual influence, creating the ideal patterning of human society; Wen, Haiming, 2009, Tu Weiming, 2001b. This concept is addressed in Chapter 5

²⁷ A Deweyan *implicit* metaphysical self is explored in Chapter 6. Dewey wrote in essay format and did not articulate a systematic philosophy with a clearly defined ontology. Nevertheless, there are strong indicators that Dewey’s communitarian self in on-going becoming, creatively forming and informing the outer world, enables a strong correlation with Confucian metaphysics and, by extension, Confucian pragmatic thought and action as discussed herein.

²⁸ Term coined by Wen Haiming, 2009.

²⁹ These ideas are considered in a detailed comparative context by Wen Haiming, 2009. Tu Weiming’s Confucianism complements Wen’s perspectives on the pragmatic philosophers (Dewey, Whitehead, and James) as Tu offers the processual model of *xiushen* (修身 self-cultivation) in which to frame and complete the comparative model developed in this work.

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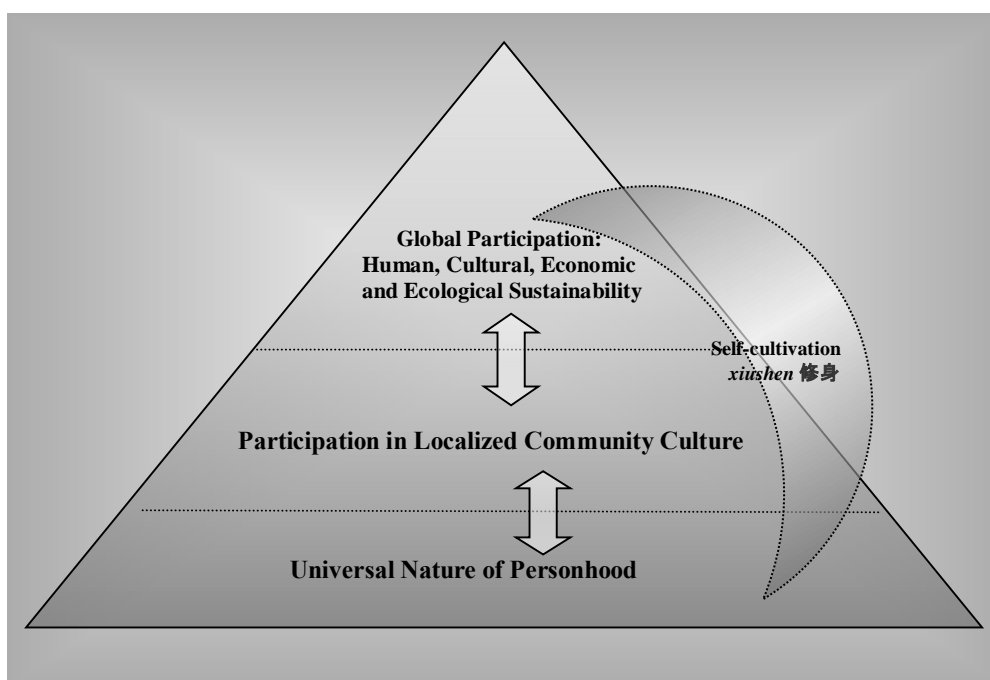


Figure 1.2 Mutually Informing Aspects of Evolving Personhood

A Confucian-Deweyan Model

Self-cultivation (*xiushen* 修身) overarches the key human activities of social participation; lived experience of the greater world informs the self in the process of becoming and, in turn, the self informs and forms the world; a two-way on-going inward-outward process. Self-cultivation – of the body, mind and spirit in balance – should be the goal of education on both a formal and informal level, curriculum and community. For an educational model embedded in such a philosophy to have any relevance in the 21st century there is a need to consider the global *vis a vis* local context within which it may be positioned.

1.4 Globalization, Glocalization, and Education

[Globalization is] a set of theories that provide researchers with conceptual tools for analyzing and understanding current economic, cultural, and technological changes, as well as “a process and a phenomenon” that is experienced in complex, uneven, and varied ways by people across different places or locales. As a process and a phenomenon, globalization has “to be actively implemented, reproduced, serviced

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and financed” and it “relies for its functioning on several overlapping structures and relations from the local, to the national, to the global.” In other words, globalization is not a predetermined force that pushes and molds local contexts into uniform shapes.³⁰

Globalization of education refers to the worldwide discussions, processes, and institutions affecting local educational practices and policies. The key in the previous statement is the word “worldwide”. This means that events are happening on a global scale that affect national school systems. This image is that of global educational policies and practices existing in a superstructure above national and local schools. Nothing is static in this image.³¹

Within the thesis, globalization and the issue of “events are happening on a global scale that affect national school systems” is approached from a cultural perspective. The stance of the eminent political scientist, Samuel P Huntington, is taken into consideration as a valid call to underscore the importance of cultural understanding – mainly due to possible conflict flashpoints if cultures cannot harmoniously co-exist. Arguably, there is an urgent need for tolerance: understanding the unique ways in which other cultures function, and a high degree of empathy with the other; all crucial factors for the future of world peace. In his now famous paper ‘The Clash of Civilizations?’ written in 1993, Huntington claims that the future cause of world conflict will not be political ideology, the clash of nation-states, or economic forces primarily, but that of potential conflict between civilizations.³²

Huntington outlines six compelling arguments for his thesis: (1) “differences among civilizations are not only real; they are basic”, (2) “the world is becoming a smaller place. The interactions between peoples of different civilizations are increasing”, (3) “the processes of economic modernization and social change throughout the world are separating people from longstanding local identities”, (4) “the growth of civilization-consciousness is enhanced by the dual role of the West. On the one hand, the West is at a peak of power. At the same time, however, and perhaps as a result, a return to the roots phenomenon is occurring among non-Western civilizations”, (5) “cultural characteristics and differences are less mutable and hence less easily compromised and resolved than political and economic ones, and (6)

³⁰ Singh, 2004, p 103. References to quotes within text can be found in original.

³¹ Spring, 2009, p 1

³² Huntington, 1993, p 22.

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“economic regionalism is increasing”³³

Huntington’s article is almost prescient given he wrote this in 1993: pre-9/11 (an event which, arguably, created deeper cultural schisms and instigated the ‘war on terror’); pre-GFC (post-GFC boosted developing countries such as China and India with the collapse of the West’s economic system and long, continuing recovery). Along with developing economic confidence, and a growing middle-class, cultural pride is emerging in differentiation to the West³⁴; and before the *en masse* common usage of internet and world wide web (diminishing the size of the world and “separating people from longstanding local identities” through inexpensive, real time, transnational communication, and access to information further from one’s locale, not to mention enabling a far more mobile workforce – both skilled and unskilled). Huntington’s article – despite its contention at time of publication – now reflects valuable insights into the cultural issues of the 21st century: the possible clash of civilization-states.³⁵

It is within this context of civilization and culture – as opposed to nation-states and the blurring of boundaries through economic and neo-liberal free-market globalism (although these elements are, naturally, highly relevant) – and localized culture/community (which interrelates to the broader civilization) that the educational model proposed herein is placed. The reason for this approach is that should indicators and trends prove correct, and we are faced with ‘civilization-clashes’ as flashpoints for escalating conflict, a model of education which fosters and encourages tolerance and empathy – whilst encouraging one’s own indigenous culture within a rich and balanced mix of others – in future generations would seem crucial to heal these developing rifts. As Tu Weiming points out:

Globalization enhances regional, national, and local identities. Even though thinkers under the influence of modernization theories are still attracted to the concept of convergence, the thesis of homogenization is increasingly difficult to defend ... Instead, on the international scene, as a result of globalization the world has become more fragmented and bewildering ... If we can

³³ Huntington, 1993, pp 28-29

³⁴ Berger and Huntington, 2012; Berking, 2003; Bhawuk, 2008; Bussolo *et. al.*, 2011; Gulmez, 2009; Hale, 2013; Jacques, 2009; Lauderdale, 2008; Wyplosz, 2010.

³⁵ Martin Jacques, 2009, addresses at length the contrast between the ideas of nation-states and civilization-states, the latter of which China has considered herself since the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE). The perspective of civilization-state/s is also the lens with which China views the world. An (unreferenced) anecdote has Mao Zedong referring to WWI and II as ‘Europe’s modern civil wars’.

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somehow envision our increasingly interconnected and interdependent world as an “imagined community,” we will discover that its defining characteristics are difference, differentiation, and outright discrimination, rather than integration.³⁶

If, as a collective, our “imagined community” – familial, local, national, and global – becomes one of “integration”, as Tu Weiming pointedly suggests, compassion and intercultural understanding can evolve towards being the dominant narrative of our planetary existence. This scenario involves a critical mass of individuals to ensure the majority of people are of this thinking; it is individuals *en masse* who create change – an internal shift to creatively manifest outward circumstances. Co-operative, empathetic coexistence as the ‘imagined community’ is the imperative; “difference, differentiation and outright discrimination”, as Tu Weiming observes, has created a situation of endemic internecine conflicts, individual disaffection, and human and environmental degradation. Education of our youth, the future generation, is the key to working towards a more equitable world whereby the marginalized not only have access to opportunity and choices, but also a voice. A philosophy of education – as the foundation of curricula and schooling systems – which enables the *co-creative lived experience of community* is necessary for the planet to survive and thrive for all its denizens.

³⁶ 2010, pp 331-332

2.0 Literature Review

The literature relating to this cross-disciplinary study is vast and there are many areas which need to be covered in order to establish a general solid grounding and identify the context in which the thesis is placed. Not only is the key material addressed in the given areas, but also considered is the extended literature which informs, influences, and initiates the specific ideas by which the model explored herein is built upon. Accordingly, to systematically cover the relevant areas, this review of the selected literature is divided into six sections:

1. Education in Confucian Society
2. Deweyan Thought in China
3. Confucian Metaphysics
4. China's Educational Reforms: the 21st Century and the Shanghai Project
5. Models of Globalized Education: Knowledge in Creative Application

2.1 Education in Confucian Society

Under the influence of Western learning, there was a revival in the study of “traditional Chinese learning.” It moved from the “center” to the “edge” after its ideological sanctity was eliminated in modern times. Traditional Chinese learning is still a vital force, however. Traditional Chinese culture emphasizes the productive and social “relationships” and the harmonious “whole,” as well as the Chinese efforts to control their own fate. Traditional Chinese learning revolves around the idea of “human beings,” a vivid manifestation of which is the idea of “benevolence” in Confucianism. *Zhang Shuguang*³⁷

Although Zhang does not clearly state the full historical and philosophic circumstances as to *how* “Chinese learning is still a vital force” in pragmatic application, the idea remains

³⁷2010, p 237

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powerful in Chinese thinking, predominantly by current educationalists on mainland China. The reason being:

The history of Chinese education is almost the history of China," J. Leighton Stuart, former President of Yenching University, once observed. "For perhaps in no other country has the educational process had such influence in shaping the national life. Tribal invasions, dynastic changes, floods and famines, have constantly disrupted the orderly course of events. But the controlling factor has been the state system of education which moulded the thinking of the scholar caste from among whom all government officials were drawn. Until the ferment caused by the impact of western forces upon this ancient culture, China was what it was chiefly because of its highly standardized educational tradition."³⁸

Lucas, the author citing this passage, believes J. Leighton Stuart's position here to be a slight exaggeration of the situation and, yet, qualifies:

Nevertheless it is plausible to argue that the extraordinary vitality displayed over the centuries by China's traditional intellectual-literary culture, its integrity and historical continuity, were owed in no small measure to the unique sociopolitical role assigned institutionalized schooling.³⁹

The key to China's history of education is the imperial examination system known as *kējǔ* (科舉) which became an institutionalized means of social and political promotion in the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE). "The T'ang examination system as a whole was innovative and can be traced back in part only to the preceding Sui dynasty [581-618 CE]".⁴⁰ Subsequently, this system became a core part of the civil service entrance in the Song dynasty (960-1279).⁴¹ To this day examinations – reestablished in a modern form in the post-Mao period – remain pivotal to China's education system and is in contention.

³⁸ Lucas, 1974, p 115. Reference for Stuart: Foreword to Howard S. Galt, *A History of Chinese Educational Institutions* (London: Arthur Probsthain, 1951), 1: ix.

³⁹ Lucas, 1974, p 115

⁴⁰ Herbert, 1992/1993, p 5

⁴¹ See Chaffee, 1995, for educational history in this latter era. NB: the Wade-Giles transliteration of this dynasty is the Sung; pinyin – which emerged post-1990s and remains the '*lingua franca*' of Chinese transliteration – names the period, Song. Accordingly, Chaffee's work is titled in the Wade-Giles transliteration which is employed throughout the book as are most China related works pre-2000.

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The key contemporary author on this issue of Chinese educational history is arguably Suzanne Pepper, a comparative educationalist and sinologist, and John Chaffee (addressing the Song dynasty only) and, of more relevance, Pepper's seminal work, *Radicalism and Education Reform in Twentieth-Century China. The Search for an Ideal Development Model* has led the field in developing perspectives on China's modern education system and has remained unsurpassed since its publication in 1996.

Pepper outlines the shift – or rather, shattering – of the imperial system of education and the move to a more modernized (Western) education system, which came at the end of China's long dynastic rule:

Acceptance of modern Western learning did not come in China until successive military defeats and encroachment by the Western powers forced change upon the self-confident Chinese empire. But change, when it finally came, was systemic in scope, reflecting the close relationship between traditional learning and the imperial bureaucratic state [end of the Qing dynasty 1644-1911]. The two collapsed almost simultaneously, suggesting that neither could survive without the other. Yet, under the old regime, the state's direct involvement with learning was limited primarily to administering the examinations used for selecting government officials. The content of the examinations was limited in turn to the classical Confucian canon. This ensured the latter's propagation, however, not only as the main repository of learning and values but more concretely as the sole course of study leading to the most prestigious occupation in the land.⁴²

As Pepper states above, “commoners [were allowed] to qualify for office via the examinations” which would have given an impression of meritocracy in the system. That is, commoners could study hard and achieve high office regardless of family connections.⁴³ “In practice, however ... only families with a certain amount of surplus wealth could support such a pursuit [studying for the series of examinations] by one or more of their male members. Literary achievement and official appointment were clearly dependent upon and facilitated by wealth.”⁴⁴ Aside from the inequalities evident in the imperial tradition, this historical perception of meritocracy through a standardized national examination system underpins the reasons a stringent examination system exists in China today (albeit of a different form, content and context) and has not been subject to fundamental policy reforms – although superficial official gestures to amend examinations have been suggested.⁴⁵

⁴² 2006, p 46

⁴³ See also De Weerd, 2006; Franke, 1960;

⁴⁴ Pepper, 1996, p 48. See Footnote 4 in text for extended references.

⁴⁵ CCP MoE, 2010. See also sections ‘China’s Educational Reforms: the 21st Century’ and ‘The Shanghai Project’ (Section 2.4) below.

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In addressing China's modern context, in 2011 Hannum *et.al.* wrote: "Despite the important role played by examinations in educational stratification and mobility in China, to our knowledge there is no literature in English that investigates the impact of exams on educational attainment with empirical data."⁴⁶ To date of writing, this situation remains.

Hannum *et.al.* continue:

China's educational examination systems are at once both a barrier to and a source of educational mobility for vulnerable populations. However, owing to a lack of data on testing outcomes, few scholars have paid attention to this key gatekeeper in the Chinese education system.⁴⁷

Accordingly, reform of the examination system⁴⁸ is yet to be addressed by the MoE (Ministry of Education) which, logically, should be in line with any philosophy of education and curricula reform eventually decided upon. Zhong Qi-quan, in the paper 'Curriculum reform in China: Challenges and Reflections' (2006), reflects the strong sentiments of many reformers *vis* the examination system:

"Examination-oriented education" made our classroom, school, and personality alienated. To put it simply, we have nothing left to show for the charisma and mission of education. The examination-oriented education system, which enslaves students and devastates talented students is outdated and should be abolished. On the one hand, education reform, especially curriculum reform, is imperative; on the other hand, a lot of confusion came out during the process of reform: the ideas, systems, and mechanism are all in conflict with the reform.⁴⁹

Taking into consideration the historical perspective, it is highly unlikely the examination system *per se* will be eradicated, as standardized examinations not only maintain national unity (a crucial aspect of Chinese sociopolitical thinking), but also due to a perceived sense of a meritocracy in operation. Nevertheless, other issues press for attention. Namely, what would a *distinctive* modern Chinese educational model on the ground look like? Philosophically, on what would one base such a system? What have the historical lessons –

⁴⁶ p 267

⁴⁷ Hannum *et.al.*, 2011, p 268. See also Wang Lu, 2008.

⁴⁸ The national matriculation exam is now known colloquially as the *gaokao* (高考).

⁴⁹ pp 370-1

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Chinese, Japanese,⁵⁰ Soviet, and Western – demonstrated to enable reforms to go forward into the future?

There are some compelling voices within this on-going discourse⁵¹ which, simply put, are comprised of two main themes: (1) the discussion of the diametrics – and possible common denominators – of Chinese and Western models of education and (2) the need for creative, student centered learning. Both lines of narrative have overlaps and, although this debate has grown in momentum since the 1990s, consensus has not yet been achieved.⁵² The two main lines of narrative by the leading commentators are outlined below.

The first theme has difficulties as no one is too clear as to what constitutes a ‘Chinese model of education’, let alone contemporizing such a model to be applicable to the demands – economic, cultural, and pluralistic – of the 21st century. In the post-Imperial era, foreign (Western and Soviet) models dominated educational theory.⁵³ This aspect of the debate is epitomized in a significant exchange of opinion by seven scholars⁵⁴ published in a 2011 issue of *Journal of Curriculum Studies* (Volume 43, Issue 5). This is quoted at length as the authors involved in this exchange also capture the essential elements of the overall narrative taking place as well as the specifics of theme (1). This particular discourse was instigated by Zongjie Wu of the School of International Studies, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou (PRC), who attempts to define a traditional model of Chinese education initially through the idea of language: “This study asks what kind of pedagogy is embraced by a language traditionally without abstract designations [in Chinese thinking] such as ‘liberty’, ‘madness’, ‘politics’,

⁵⁰ Japanese-Western style education was introduced into China in the 1910s, filling the vacuum left by the demise of the traditional imperial education/examination system which aimed only to employ scholar-officials. It was, for China, the beginnings of the notion of a modern intellectual. See Pepper, 1996, pp 57-58; Wu, Zongjie, 2011, p 581.

⁵¹ Bai Tongdon, 2011; Chen Naichen, 1986; Cheng Kai-Ming, 2011; Cheng Liang & Xu Nan, 2011; Fouts & Chan, 1997; From & Homgren, 2001; Gao Zhenyu 2012; Gu Mingyuan, 2010; Hayhoe, 2006; 2010b; Hua Zhang, 2006; Harris *et.al.*, 2009; Jin Shenghong & Jau-wei Dan, 2004; Jing Lin & Chen Quinghai, 1995; Kipnis, 2006; & Shanfeng Li, 2010; Lai & Lo, 2006; Latchem & Lu Xinzhen, 2006; Law Wing-Wah, 2007; 2012; Li Jin, 2003; 2006; 2007; Liu Haimin & Lin Dan, 2008; Liu Yongbing, 2011; & Fang Yanping, 2009; Lu Youquan & Chi Yanjie, 2007; Liu Chengfang *et.al.*, 2009; Lui Wanhai, 2008; Naftali, 2010; Ryan *et.al.*, 2009; Schmeichel, 2009; Tan, C., 2012; Tan Sor-hoon, 2005; 2011c; Woronov, 2002; 2008; 2009; Wu Gang, 2006; Wu Zongjie, 2011; Yang Xiaowei, 2007; Yu Shusheng, 2006; Yu Tianlong, 2008; Zhang Donghai, 2010; Zhang Huajun, 2009; 2010; & Milligan, 2010; Zhang Zhonghua, 2007; Zhao Guoping, 2010; Zhong Hua *et.al.*, 2011; Zhou Yong, 2011; Zhu Meihua, 2001; Zhu Xiaoman, 2006.

⁵² From observation and experience of the general *modus vivendi* of Asian countries, it is foreseeable that a dominant discourse will crystallize eventually and the others will shift towards it in tacit agreement. In what looks like a chaotic, long and unsystematic process, suddenly a way ahead materializes and this emergent direction is implemented with minimal opposition. See Chapter 5 for an understanding of this process through the concept of *li* (禮ritual propriety).

⁵³ Liu, Haimin & Lin, Dan, 2008; Pepper, 1996; Tan, Sor-hoon, 2011c; Wu Zongjie, 2011.

⁵⁴ Chen, Kai-Ming; Cheng, Liang & Xu, Nan; Deng, Zongyi; Liu, Yongbing; Tan, Sor-hoon; Wu Zongjie

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‘freedom’, and ‘feudalism’, ideas essential to the western tradition of pursuing truth.”⁵⁵ Wu continues from this point:

It may be envisaged that contemporary Chinese pedagogy, including the pedagogies of many eastern Asian countries, is the result of a cultural interaction embedding ‘modern’ Western epistemology into a ‘traditional’ Eastern framework. Such a process of cultural hybridization is usually seen as inevitable – as well as desirable to the progress of education. However, the crucial point underlining the discourse hybridization is the dissolution of cultural diversity, whereby the ancient vision of Confucian pedagogy becomes lost in the name of progress and integration, which poses a threat to cultural plurality.⁵⁶

Wu, throughout his 31 page article, argues that the cultural context of China’s pedagogy lies within a highly traditional framework: Confucian classics; specifically citing a dialogue between Confucius and one of his students excerpted from *Analects*. Kai-ming Cheng responds to Wu by addressing the imperial Civil Examinations (which Wu intimates is a lost golden age of Chinese education), the only example extant of a distinctively Chinese education system (surviving over 1,000 years) with curricula which wholly encompassed the classics:

Wu seems to assume that it was not until the establishment of modern schools in China that the Confucian tradition of pedagogy was disrupted ... However, the pluralism of philosophies that was cherished while Confucius was active (i.e. *chun-qiu* 春秋) came to a halt during the Han Dynasty [206 BCE – 220 CE] where ‘Confucianism’ (*ruxue* 儒学) became the dominating ideology ... [Relative to education] [t]he entire purpose of such endeavours [Civil Examinations] was, rather shamelessly, for credentials (功名), with the fortune and status that follows. There was little beyond the Civil Examination that could be counted as ‘education’, and there was little in education besides credentials. The Chinese tradition equates education with the preparation for the Civil Examination, but that is a misnomer. It is not education in the sense of cultivating *junzi* [君子 state of being a wise person], let alone learning in the authentic sense of the term. At least from the literature and from the folklore, studying in preparation for the Civil Examination contained little of the zest for knowledge, pursuit for wisdom, or perfection of personality.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ p 569

⁵⁶ p 571

⁵⁷ p 594

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Yongbing Liu adds to the discussion:

It is also appropriate to argue that the ‘modern’ pedagogical discourses dominant in contemporary Chinese classrooms are technocratic, reproduction-oriented, closed, and distant from students’ lives—and needing deconstructing in order to usher in a new and more open discourse in Chinese education. However, his [Wu’s] argument that the Confucian heritage of pedagogy (as distinct from the ‘authentic’ Confucian pedagogic vision he identifies) is totally influenced by the Western modern epistemology is problematic. The Confucian heritage of pedagogy, with its various interpretations throughout history, has been in a transformation long before China met with the West. Wu explicitly claims to use critical discourse analysis (CDA), but he fails to take the CDA position that (re)interpretation of historical artifacts often involves an interpreter’s epistemological, social, and political positions, and the choices made for particular purposes.⁵⁸

Of all the authors – and the most influential voice – involved in this discussion is Tan Sor-hoon who offers a broad, conciliatory, and sensible picture worth quoting at length:

Wu argues that an ‘authentic language’ is needed for a Chinese education ‘trapped in the battle between East and West’, and it can be found in ‘the authentic meanings of Chinese pedagogy in its indigenous tradition’. He implies that this is a critical task for China’s imminent rise as a leading nation-state in the global arena. My response will focus on Wu’s contextualization of his project within the ‘battle between East and West’. Wu’s views are characteristic of a strand of cultural nationalism popular in mainland China today that asserts the superiority of China’s cultural heritage by rejecting Western hegemony ... While Western hegemony should certainly be challenged, cultural nationalists can be naive in their views about cultures, and fail to recognize that a total rejection of Western influences does not mean victory in the ‘battle between East and West’, but merely ends up rejecting China’s recent past for a more distant past, often with little critical reflection on why one is more desirable than the other.⁵⁹

The narrative which Tan encapsulates is currently the dominant theme of philosophy of education in the PRC whereby it is generally viewed that a balanced merging of East-West

⁵⁸ p 601

⁵⁹ pp 623-4

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approaches to education is needed to meet the challenges of a globalized 21st century. The second theme of these discourses is more about classroom-based methodologies. T. E. Woronov is one of the major voices in this area reflecting the need for a creative, student-centered curriculum when China's formal education systems, for some 1,000 years, has been strongly teacher-centered. The following quote echoes a more pragmatic, on the ground, approach to reform than the predominantly philosophic or historical perspectives of the preceding theme:

Within China, calls for increased “creativity” are at the center of new calls to reform educational practice and ideology. Yet the ways that “creativity” is understood and inculcated is contested in daily practices inside and outside classrooms. Although some teachers, parents, administrators and bureaucrats are seeking ways to “liberate” children’s “individual initiative,” the problem of how to increase creativity in education is actually linked to a much larger social discourse, that of “population quality” (*renkou suzhi*). This discourse frames the question of what kind of subjects the state must produce for the nation’s future, and the kinds of children who will be able to generate and inherit the China of the future.⁶⁰

It is this idea of creativity – and its various facets and interpretations – which has captured the attention of most mainstream educational stakeholders: most notably parents, schools of education in the tertiary sector and, subsequently, the MoE. This theme, by far, has emerged as the dominant narrative for curricula directions in the past 10 years and is growing in momentum. Subsequently, with these two themes under discussion, international scholarly observers and domestic educational reformists have squarely put the focus on Deweyan education theory – if not in name, then essence – and its idea of creative, community-connected learning; contemporizing and sinologizing Deweyan ideas first introduced in the early 20th century. In the post-Mao period, a revitalized acceptance of Confucianism emerged and substantial commonalities are being found between the two philosophies. Now, the confluence of Deweyan and Confucian philosophy is an evolving school of thought, and the complementary pragmatism of both philosophies are informing educational dialogues.

⁶⁰ Woronov, 2008, p 401

2.2 Deweyan Thought in China

Deweyan education philosophy – which, of all Dewey’s theories, had the strongest impact in early republican China⁶¹ – is, essentially, the idea of evolving personhood within the community and is based on experiential learning. Succinctly, the basis of Dewey’s education theory is:

... that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race. This process begins unconsciously almost at birth, and is continually shaping the individual’s powers, saturating his consciousness, forming his habits, training his ideas, and arousing his feelings and emotions. Through this unconscious education the individual gradually comes to share in the intellectual and moral resources which humanity has succeeded in getting together. [S]he becomes an inheritor of the funded [human] capital of civilization.⁶²

Dewey was clearly a product of his time evidenced by his terminology, yet he was considered highly progressive in American educational circles and today his ideas still have residual influence.⁶³ Dewey sees the individual as being fully socially constructed as implied in the quote above. Although Deweyan philosophy has strong correlations with Confucianism, it is on the construct of self that there is a notable departure, as Dewey states:

The connection between imagination and the harmonizing of the self is closer than is usually thought. The idea of a whole, whether of the whole personal being or of the world, is an imaginative, not a literal, idea. The limited world of our observation and reflection becomes the Universe only through imaginative extension. *It cannot be apprehended in knowledge nor realized in reflection.* Neither observation, thought, nor practical activity can attain that complete unification of the self which is called a whole. The *whole* self is an ideal, an imaginative projection.⁶⁴

“The connection between imagination and the harmonizing of the self is closer than is usually thought” has certain correlations with Confucian concepts in the way Dewey

⁶¹ Alitto, 1979/1986; Billings, 1981; Grieder, 1970; Pepper 1996

⁶² Dewey, 1966, pp 44-45

⁶³ Dykhuizen, 1973. Deweyan education theory still has impact today in America. See Rury, 2002 and as counter-argument to Dewey’s educational legacy, see Edmondson, 2006

⁶⁴ Dewey, 1998, p 407, my emphases. Excerpted originally from *A Common Faith*, 1934.

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understands ‘imagination’.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, there is a significant departure from the Confucian idea of self in this passage. In Confucianism – as expressed by Neo-Confucianism and Tu Weiming’s interpretation of the same – the self is potentially able to wholly apprehend the *reality* of heaven (*tian*天 which is potentially a “complete unification of self” and an inherent reality of “the Universe”) as *tian* is an attribute of the self *and is realized in reflection*. This is due to *tian* conferring its attributes to the self as an innate metaphysical element within human nature (*xing*性).⁶⁶ That is, the quintessential self is also the mind of *tian* and it can only be accessed by the individual through experience with the other and realized through *subsequent reflection*. Dewey’s statement that “[n]either observation, thought, nor practical activity can attain that complete unification of the self which is called a whole” directly counters Confucianism. Yet, Dewey’s idea of experience of the other (as first quoted above) and imaginative extrapolation as the authentic vehicle for education of the individual – for evolvment of the self and society as a whole – would certainly be in agreement with Confucianism.⁶⁷

In Dewey's article 'Religion Versus the Religious' – of which the above second quote is excerpted – Dewey’s stretch into divinity (a cosmological reality) stops at the notion of faith, which he identifies as a rational choice of intellect, but emphasizes that *faith is not knowledge*.⁶⁸ Confucians would agree that faith in any form is not knowledge, but would strongly disagree on the non-existence of a cosmological reality. That is, ideally for a Confucian, the realization of cosmological reality (*tian*) is the paramount intention behind thought and action; following the will, or intent, of *tian* – which is for the greater good of all – is the object of life and living.⁶⁹

To clarify, Dewey gives his definition of religion as: “Any activity pursued on behalf [of] an ideal end against obstacles and in spite of threats of personal loss because of

⁶⁵ See Chapters 6 and 7 for Dewey’s idea of ‘imagination’ and Confucian comparisons of the same.

⁶⁶ See below in Confucian Metaphysics (section 2.3) for an overview of the literature for these Chinese concepts.

⁶⁷ These assessments are in consideration of the inherent difficulties of comparative philosophy and one can only use a hermeneutical method of analysis as is undertaken here. That is, viewing each concept within the historical and cultural contexts of the author/s and the continuums of the respective philosophies. See Methodology (Chapter 3) below

⁶⁸ Dewey, 1998, p 407

⁶⁹ The idea of “the will of heaven” indicates a conscious agent but it is not transcendent in the Christian sense – *tian* is within and *of* all things, and all things inform each other in a triad of heaven (cosmological), human, and the natural worlds. Tu Weiming, 1976a, 1979, 1988, 1985a, 1989b, 1994, 2001a. The concept of *tian* is explained somewhat further here in section 2.3 ‘Confucian Metaphysics’ and more fully in Chapter 5.

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conviction of its general and enduring value is religious in quality.”⁷⁰ This brings into focus the contention as to whether Confucianism is a religion or a lived philosophy.⁷¹ Dewey would consider Confucianism a religion, in the sense that one would sacrifice gain of the egoistic self over the greater good of the community or society at large.

Within the above philosophic considerations, this dissertation addresses primarily Dewey’s educational theory and his notion of the self (in contrasting and identified commonalities with Confucianism) and any wider treatment of Deweyan philosophy is not within the scope of this work. The focus herein is the evolvment of sinologized Deweyan thought as has taken place over the past 100 years and its relevance today in China. Dewey’s impact in China began in the early 20th century during the tumultuous times of the embryonic republican era when the Nationalist government of the Kuomintang (KMT) held tenuous power.⁷²

John Dewey arrived in China on the 1st of May 1919 and stayed until 21st of July, 1921. This visit was at the behest of a group of his former students who had studied under him at Columbia University: Jiang Menglin (蔣夢麟), Guo Bingwen (郭秉文), Tao Xingzhi (陶行知), and Hu Shih (胡適 or Hu Shi, who wrote, in his early essayist days, under the name Hu Hung-hsing 胡洪騷).⁷³ These reformers were already highly influential in the vibrant intellectual scene of the newly formed republic. Dewey arrived, ostensibly, to be “the centerpiece of the lobbying effort for the 1922 school reform decree”.⁷⁴ Effectively, Dewey’s presence – spearheaded by his lecture tour⁷⁵ – was a part of the former students’ plan to fast track China’s modernization with the input of Western ideas. Although Deweyan ideas at the time were a wholesale importation of Western constructs, this period nevertheless began the sinologization of Deweyan thought in China.⁷⁶ Barry Keenan’s seminal 1977 work, *The*

⁷⁰ Dewey, 1998, p 410

⁷¹ Hahm, 2004; Dallmayr, 2007; Fingarette, 1992; Sun, Anna Xiao Dong, 2008; Yao Xinzong, 2006

⁷² Fenby, 2003/2005; Jacques, 2009

⁷³ Dewey, 1973, Grieder, 1970; Pepper, 1996; Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007. In September, 1938, Chiang Kai-shek announced that Hu would be the new ambassador to the US – his first official position in the Nationalist government. An editorial in the *New York Times* commented: “Americans who know Dr. Hu Shih will rejoice ... Few of Dr. Shih’s [sic] countrymen are so thoroughly representative of the best of the new and the old China ... Few are so well qualified to explain China to the United States and the United States to China.” *New York Times*, September 20th 1938, p 22. Cited in Grieder, 1970, p 294

⁷⁴ Pepper, 1996, p 91. See also Billings, 1981

⁷⁵ Dewey, 1973, *Lectures in China, 1919-1920*

⁷⁶ Baily, 1990; Behuniak, 2011; Billings, 1981; Ching, Julia, 1985; Dockser, 1983; Fallace, 2012; Grange, 2004; Kirby,

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Dewey experiment: education reform and political power in the early Republic offers significant insight into the impact Dewey had on the Chinese intelligentsia during this period.

2.2.1 Dewey and the Early Reformers

Two key early reformists relevant to this dissertation are Hu Shih (1891-1962) mentioned above and, in contrast, Liang Shuming (梁漱溟 1893-1988). There are two respective biographies still considered the authority on these thinkers: Jerome B. Grieder (1970, for Hu Shih) and Guy S. Alitto (1969/1986, for Liang Shuming). Hu Shih had been a doctoral student of Dewey's and became an important opinion leader in the shifting intellectual scene of Peking (now Beijing) and Shanghai⁷⁷, regularly contributing articles to *The New Youth* magazine (新青年, also called *La Jeunesse*).⁷⁸ Hu Shih was an ardent reformer, advocating the implementation of Western ideas to bring China onto an equal footing with the modernized world; namely, the West and Japan.⁷⁹

Liang Shuming – although not a former student of Dewey's and who, in fact, never left China – was a major proponent of maintaining Confucian values in these changing times; opposing the strident calls of other reformers to completely throw out the old system and China's cultural heritage for new, modernizing Western ideas.⁸⁰ These were turbulent times – strongly punctuated by the May Fourth (1919) uprising in protest of China's treatment at Versailles – and exacerbated by the reformers' imperative sense of urgency for change. Liang Shuming was a modernizer who nevertheless felt that China should follow the core philosophic precepts of her cultural continuum. Liang was an enigmatic thinker who some scholars refer to as a Buddhist, although he is often attributed to being a founder of 20th century Neo-Confucianism.⁸¹

Confucianism was seen by the majority of the intelligentsia of the time as epitomizing

2008; Kuang Qizhang, 1994; Lu Youquang & Chi Yanjie, 2007; Ma Wen, 2009; Peng Hongmei, 2007; Sizer, 1996; Tan Sor-hoon, 2011c; Trohler, 2000; Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007; Wu Gang, 2006; Yu Shusheng, 2006; Zhang Huajun, 2009, 2010, & Milligan, 2010; Zhang Xhonghua, 2007; Zheng Shiqu, 2011; Zhou Hongyu, nd.

⁷⁷ These two cities were the epicentres of change and intellectual ferment. Alitto, 1979/1986; Grieder, 1970; Pepper, 1996

⁷⁸ Grieder, 1970, pp 75-76

⁷⁹ On the modernization of Japan (the Meiji Restoration period, 1868 to 1912) see Jacques, 2009, pp 51-5

⁸⁰ Alitto, 1979/1986. The philosophy of Liang Shuming is now being revisited and considered in a contemporary framework. See Gao & Lee, 1996; Zhang Huajun, 2009, 2010.

⁸¹ Hanafin, 2003. On literature regarding Neo-Confucianism, see sub-section 2.3, 'Confucian Metaphysics' below. For overview of the same see Chapter 4.

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the old regime; symbolic of China's feudal past and a major cause of the corruption and incompetence of dynastic rule.⁸² In their attempts for radical rejection of Confucianism, the reformers were not successful; Confucianism was far too ingrained in the Chinese psyche for it to fade away or be forcefully eradicated (as was unequivocally proven later by Mao Zedong and the post-Mao period). Martin Jacques, sinologist and influential international observer, captures Confucianism's fundamental resilience as an intrinsic aspect of China's civilization-state thinking:

Somehow, however, through the turbulence, carnage, chaos and rebirth, China remains recognizably and assuredly Chinese. As it moves more into the ascendant, its self-confidence inflated by its recent achievements, China's search for meaning is drawing not simply on modernity, but also, as always, on its civilizational past. Confucian ways of thinking, never extinguished, are being actively revived and scrutinized for any light they may throw on the present, and for their ability to offer a moral compass.⁸³

Confucianism is not only resilient and persistent in its underlying socio-cultural template, but also philosophically flexible, in that it lends itself to incorporation of other related ideas.⁸⁴ It is in this flexibility and the changing intellectual climate of the early republican era that the seeds of Deweyan thought germinated within China. Now, some 100 years later – having survived the intellectual hiatus and suppressions of the Maoist period – Deweyan philosophy has grown in the rich soil of the Confucian continuum and, again, offers a contribution to reform; no longer a 'stand alone' importation, but as a symbiotic, cross-cultural enhancement in concert with Confucian thinking. This is enabled by fundamental commonalities in the two philosophies.

2.2.2 Sinologized Deweyan Narrative in the 21st Century

China in our own historical moment is undergoing the greatest revolution in its long history. As China returns to prominence on the world stage with a growing self-

⁸² Alitto, 1979/1986; Grieder, 1970; Tan Sor-hoon, 2003a, pp 14-15

⁸³ 2009, pp 200-201

⁸⁴ This attribute of Confucianism is most notable in the Song/Ming dynasties (960-1279 and 1368-1644 CE respectively) when, within China, the growing popularity of Daoism and Buddhism created a strong confluence with Confucianism to vitalize the latter. The resulting intellectual movement is called Neo-Confucianism in English. See 'Confucian Metaphysics' (2.3) below.

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esteem and pride in its traditions, there is a set of complementary and interpenetrating conditions that makes both possible and desirable a conversation between a newly revised Deweyan pragmatism and Confucianism.” *Roger T. Ames*⁸⁵

Roger T. Ames, David L. Hall, Robert C. Neville and Joseph Grange⁸⁶ are major scholars who have spearheaded this growing field of Confucian-Deweyan philosophy. In his 2004 work, *John Dewey, Confucius, and Global Philosophy*, Grange states three pivotal points where Confucianism and Deweyism converge: 1) experience: the core of our humanness in the creative act of shaping our environs, 2) “felt intelligence”: “fills the breach between body and mind ... brings together thought and feeling”, “welds fact and value together ... [and] heals the split between feeling and thinking”⁸⁷ and, 3) culture: “the act of learning is the establishment of a vital field of action – a region is cleared within which both the sufferings and the accomplishments of humans bonded together in experience can be shared.”⁸⁸ These concepts are strongly emphasized by both schools of thought. Grange, accordingly, correlates the terms *dao* (道 the way) and experience, *li* (禮 ritual propriety) and inquiry and, *ren* (仁 humanity)⁸⁹ and communal culture.⁹⁰ It is, essentially, these common core concepts which both Confucian-Deweyan philosophy is based upon and expressed in extenuating facets. Wen Haiming (2009) has coined the term for this emerging philosophy: Confucian Pragmatism.

Confucian Pragmatism as a philosophy is gaining purchase as China looks outward towards a balance between globalization (meeting the West) and maintaining the core of its unique culture. Rather than an ‘either/or’ dilemma, Confucian pragmatism provides an ‘and/both’ position echoing Tan Sor-hoon’s words above on the counter-productivity of a “battle between East and West”. In the field of philosophy of education, Zhang Huajun actively seeks the complement of these two philosophies:

⁸⁵ 2003, p 403

⁸⁶ See Bibliography

⁸⁷ p 32

⁸⁸ p 62

⁸⁹ Grange does not insert the Chinese characters in the text here; the only ambiguity would be *ren*, denoted either by 人 (person) or 仁 (humanity/benevolence). I have opted for the latter as it captures Grange’s thinking and the Confucian concept illustrated here.

⁹⁰ Grange, 2004, Chapter Four

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Dewey's philosophical idea of genuine interest as core to the sense of "self" is important in this discussion [of educational practice]. Developing one's genuine interest happens through identifying problems in experience, opening one's self to uncertainties, building new connection with others and including others as part of the self. However, the 20th century Confucian scholar, Liang [Shuming], suggested that identifying problems in one's experience was not sufficient to develop one's self, especially in the context of radical social change. There is a further need to develop the inner power of self-enlightenment as something relatively stable that can sustain continuity in the various ruptures of human experience.⁹¹

It is predominantly in this realm of the self – the complexities of a cosmological self – where Confucian metaphysics deeply complements and enhances Deweyan pragmatism.

2.3 Confucian Metaphysics

In his detailed study, *Neo-Confucianism in History* (2008), Peter K. Bol outlines the historical context of the emergence of Neo-Confucianism in the eleventh century (Song Dynasty 960-1279 CE) as a response to the growing popularity of Buddhism and Daoism.⁹² By developing and articulating a sophisticated Confucian metaphysics, Neo-Confucian scholars felt that they had deemed these competing religions "unnecessary".⁹³ This was, in fact, not the case; Neo-Confucianism gave both Buddhism and Daoism accelerated impetus and a confluence was created between these three major forces within Chinese society. Nevertheless, in Bol's view: "I see Neo-Confucianism as a movement that from the twelfth century into the seventeenth profoundly influenced the way people understood the world around them and made choices about how to respond to that world, thus I see it as of the greatest historical consequence."⁹⁴ As he continues to observe: Neo-Confucianism's leap from previous Confucian thought was that the "view of politics shifted moral authority away from the political system and toward the individual, with a new conception of the self as

⁹¹ 2010, p 225. See also Zhou, Hongyu, n.d. – a dedicated Deweyan scholar and educational reformer within senior PRC governmental ranks.

⁹² In Chinese, New Confucianism is also frequently referred to as either Contemporary New Confucianism (*dangdai xin rujia* 当代新儒家) or as Modern New Confucianism (*xiandai xin rujia* 现代新儒家). Weber, 2007, (unpublished doctoral dissertation) Introduction, footnote 28. For the various Chinese names for the sub-schools of thought within Neo-Confucianism, see Bol, 2008, p 78

⁹³ Bol, 2008, p 1

⁹⁴ Bol, 2008, p 3

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grounds for morality in society and politics”.⁹⁵

Despite the various contentions among scholars – at the time and into the present⁹⁶ – Neo-Confucianism has since dominated Confucian thought.⁹⁷ In fact, in the mid-20th century, Neo-Confucianism was brought starkly into focus in comparative scholarly circles:

“A Manifesto for a Re-appraisal of Sinology and Reconstruction of Chinese Culture,” jointly signed and published by Carsun Chang (ZHANG Junmai 張君勱), TANG Chun-i (TANG Junyi 唐君毅), MOU Tsung-san (MOU Zongsan 牟宗三), and HSU Fo-kuan (XU Fuguan 徐復觀) in 1958, is considered a landmark in the rise of contemporary Neo-Confucianism or New Confucianism. In it, the signatories strongly assert the continued existence of Chinese culture as a living tradition and affirm the perennial value of the Confucian learning of mind-and-heart [*xin* 心].⁹⁸

The key to Neo-Confucianism’s success is in its unifying precepts and the idea that the true nature of self (*xing* 性) is a cosmologically embedded, dynamic, and co-creative phenomenon attuned to the unity of the cosmos and, consequentially, contributing to the evolvement of human society. Rather than being, the self is *becoming*.⁹⁹ Accordingly, the concept of ‘learning’ changed focus.

The founding thinkers of Neo-Confucianism ... [took] seriously the traditional idea that the cosmos was an organic unity, a unity that included humanity, and ... finding morally significant regularity and coherence in the spontaneous processes of creation. The question [then] was how to connect an organic worldview to a way of learning, to make it something more than a general notion that people should value the unity of all things. The first important attempt began with the long-established idea that everything was composed of *qi* [氣 life force]... Zhang Zai [張載 1020–1077] who developed a theory of learning based on a concept

⁹⁵ Bol, 2008, p 4

⁹⁶ Bol, 2008; Hanafin, 2003; Makeham, 2003.

⁹⁷ Bo Mou, 2003; Cheng Chung-ying 1991; Chen Naichen, 1986; de Bary, 1981, 1989, 1991, Makeham, 2003; Hahn Chaibong, 2000; Hanafin, 2003; Lin Chen-kuo, 2008. See also Neville, 2012, for an overview of recent publications of major thinkers in the field of Neo-Confucianism.

⁹⁸ Tsai, Yen-Zen, 2008, p 349. Other early and mid-20th century key Confucians: Theodore de Bary (1919-), Wing-tsit Chan (陈荣捷 1901-1994), and Chung-ying Cheng (成中英 1935-); see bibliography for relevant works. Mou Zongsan (1909-1995) is, arguably, considered the most influential in beginning the 20th century resurgence of Confucianism in the West; for the thought of Mou Zongsan, see Chan, N. Serina, 2011.

⁹⁹ Ames, 2003; Tian Shenshan, 2000; Wen Haiming, 2009

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of how *qi* operated, asked ... how responses to events would help realize in society the organic harmony inherent in the operation of the heaven-and-earth (the realm of nature).¹⁰⁰

Zhang Zai's thesis in this area of learning is that due to the self being a co-creative, kinetic element *with* heaven (*tian* 天)¹⁰¹ – heaven being a non-personalized, non-transcendent, innately cohered phenomenon – the goal of self is to learn to be with the harmony and way of *tian* (*tiandao* 天道); concepts in keeping with Neo-Confucians of the time to the present. This idea of self placed the individual into a powerful position: not that of egoistic determination, but one of simultaneously serving and enhancing the other to bring harmony into the world (*tianren heyi* 天人合一 heaven within human realms, the ideal patterning of human society).¹⁰² That is, the self needs to become attuned with the mind of *tian* (*tianxin* 天心)¹⁰³ which is innate within the human being. Zhang Zai “supposed that all people possess this undifferentiated *qi* [from which also *tian* has emerged], in which the patterns and forces leading to the development of an integrated and coherent organism are inherent. Put more simply, the individual is a microcosm of the universe: just as heaven-and-earth has at its core that which gives life, so does the human being.”¹⁰⁴

To explain further this interconnecting and perpetually dynamic principle of heaven-and-earth with ‘self in the process of becoming’ – or self-so-ing (*ziran* 自然)¹⁰⁵ – the contemporary philosopher, Tian Chenshan, focuses on the term *tongbian* (通變) and illustrates the concept by the analogy of a door, citing a quote from the Chinese classic, the *Yijing* (易經 aka *I Ching*):

“A door shut may be called ... *kun* [坤 symbolized as earth], and the opening of the door, to *qian* [乾 symbolized as heaven]. The opening succeeding the shutting may be comprehended

¹⁰⁰ Bol, 2008, pp 160-1

¹⁰¹ Note the departure here from the Christian view of a transcendent heaven/divinity. To quote Tian Chenshan (2009): “[the] worldview of *tongbian* [通變] is one of correlations and self-so-ing [*ziran* 自然](self-moving, self-going, or self-doing)... In *tongbian* there is no concept of God, but rather *dao* [道](ways), or inner relations in and between everything. Humans depend entirely on themselves for developing their intelligence [or embodied knowing] in comprehending *dao*” p 516. For a brief historical overview of the concept of *tian* (heaven) and – what is often translated in English – the ‘will of heaven’ (the latter term a result of Christian missionaries attempting to place Confucianism into some Judeo-Christian parallel), see Tu Weiming, 2007, p117. Neo-Confucian scholars now do not consider *tian* anthropomorphic in any sense.

¹⁰² Ames *et.al.*, 1994; Cheng Chung-ying, 1991; de Bary, 1981, 1989; Mencius, 1970/2003; Tu Weiming, 1976a, 1979.1988, 1985a, 1989b; Wen Haiming, 2009

¹⁰³ Wen Haiming, 2009, p 143, 266

¹⁰⁴ Bol, 2008, p 162

¹⁰⁵ Tian Chenshan, 2009; Wen Haiming, 2009

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as ... of *bian* (change); the passing from one of these states to the other endlessly may be called *tong*.” In this passage, both *bian* and *tong* have analogical relations with two events—a door’s opening and shutting—and both refer to the process of *becoming* from opening to shutting, or vice versa. Whereas *bian* suggests becoming in light of difference, *tong* expresses the kind of becoming in light of continuity—a “becoming” from one event to another. This suggests that there is a continuity in becoming, or if there is not continuity between one and the other, there would not be a becoming; and, in turn, if one does not vary from the other, then there can not be this “becoming.”¹⁰⁶

Over centuries, these compelling concepts not only found purchase throughout North and East Asia but, in the late 20th century, in the halls of Hawai’i, Harvard and Boston Universities. For the Confucianism which developed in the latter institutions, Robert C. Neville coined the term ‘Boston Confucianism’.¹⁰⁷

2.3.1 American Confucianism

Confucianism has become more and more a melting form of multiple thought systems. In terms of space, Confucianism does not only belong to China, but is a communal cultural heritage of the world. Besides Chinese Confucianism, there are now also Japanese, Korean, Singaporean, and even French and other Western “Confuciuses” and Confucianisms; all are products of cultural exchange.¹⁰⁸

As the eminent sinologist, John Berthrong, points out in more detail:

[P]hilosophic and religious ideas migrate from their original homes to new locations driven by the inevitable winds of war, trade, and constant human emigration. Moreover, although there has always been an exchange of new philosophic and religious ideas and other cultural forms long before humans started to write history, the pace of such intercultural transmissions accelerated in the 20th century and shows every tendency of increasing even more rapidly at the beginning of the 21st century.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ 2000, p 442, emphases in text; cited quote is extracted from *Yijing, Xici I*, Chapter 11, see endnote 4 in text.

¹⁰⁷ Cai Degui, 2005; Neville, 2000, 2003

¹⁰⁸ Cai, Degui, 2005. p 123

¹⁰⁹ Berthrong, 2008, p 433

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Berthrong states this as a preamble to his 2008 article ‘From Xunzi to Boston Confucianism’, where he outlines the particular circumstances in the migration of Confucianism to Harvard and Boston Universities. This region of New England is historically home to a concentrated nucleus of the cultural and intellectual elite of America. In the 19th century there were a group of intellectuals in Boston called the Boston Brahmins and, in the 1990s, Neville – in an ironic gesture – picked this up to coin the term Boston Confucians which has since gained purchase and is now used widely to denote a school of Confucian thought.¹¹⁰ Confucianism, as Berthrong outlines, was brought to these American universities through the emigration of elite intellectuals from China and, accordingly, loosely defined sub-schools of American Confucianism developed:

On the one hand, the Confucian learning in Boston is also called Dialogue Confucianism. Robert Neville and a number of others lead a school that emphasizes an engagement between Confucianism and Christianity. Tu Wei-ming leads another school that advocates a dialogue between Confucianism and Islamic and other Asian civilizations. On the other hand, the Confucian scholarship in Hawaii can be identified as Interpretative Confucianism. This school is represented by Cheng Chun-ying and may also include David L. Hall, Roger T. Ames, and Chenshan Tian. Of course, it does not mean that Tu does not interpret Confucianism and that Cheng does not pursue a dialogue. I am only suggesting the main lines of their respective researches.¹¹¹

Roger Ames and David Hall of the Hawai’i school began developing correlations between Confucianism and the American pragmatists and process philosophers with a particular emphasis on John Dewey.¹¹² Ames’ former doctoral student, Wen Haiming, now Professor of Philosophy at Renmin University, Beijing (who coined the term Confucian Pragmatism as cited above) is a second generation Deweyan Confucian scholar. By all these historical indicators, Confucian Pragmatism has arguably become an established school of philosophic thought and a fertile bed for establishing applied fields – as is now evidenced in the areas of environmentalism,¹¹³ political philosophy,¹¹⁴ and education.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ Berthrong, 2008; Neville, 2000

¹¹¹ Berthrong, 2008, p 433

¹¹² See Bibliography for individual and joint works of these authors

¹¹³ Mickey, 2007; Tu Weiming, 2001a, 2002, 2007, & Tucker, 2002; Tucker *et.al.*, 1998

¹¹⁴ Tan Sor-hoon, 2003a, 2003b, 2011b; Tu Weiming, 2001b, 2010; Weber, 2007

¹¹⁵ Tan Sor-hoon, 2011c; Zhang Huajun, 2009, 2010; Zhou Hongyu, n.d

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This thesis is a further exploration into how the concepts of Confucianism and Confucian Pragmatism could be applied to the field of education in a global context and may contribute further to this growing body of knowledge. For this purpose I have taken the Hawai’ian treatment of Dewey in the framework of Confucianism – as elucidated by Ames, Hall, and Wen – yet focused directly on transcultural Confucian metaphysics as interpreted by Tu Weiming. The complement here is that Tu Weiming gives a clear interpretation of self-cultivation (*xiushen* 修身) as a processual learning structure of evolving self in ever-expanding knowledge systems; the core of which is the idea of ‘intellectual intuition’ (智的直覺 *chih te chih-chueh*) – or “embodied knowing”, the term Tu prefers now¹¹⁶ – as developed by the Song-Ming Confucians.¹¹⁷ This model of self-as-ever-evolving-learner, as Tu interprets, provides a solid framework for developing a contemporary philosophy of education; a framework on which other educationalists may see fit to build transcultural curricula.

Tu Weiming not only presents these metaphysical constructs in an approach accessible to the Western mind, but intertwines them with such universal ideas as ‘anthropocosmic’ perspectives as originated by the Romanian thinker, Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) and subsequently taken up by the French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005).¹¹⁸ Accordingly, Tu Weiming’s interpretation of Confucianism – intertwined with these related ideas – provides an appropriate tool in developing this thesis as an extension of the current Confucian-Deweyan narratives.

2.3.2 Tu Weiming’s Transcultural Confucianism

Tu Weiming (杜维明 Du Weiming, b. 1940) is the Harvard-Yenching Professor of Chinese History and Philosophy and, since 2010, has been based in Beijing as Director of the Advanced Institute of Humanistic Studies, Peking University.¹¹⁹ Tu’s project since the 1980s has been to bring the universality of Confucian humanistic ideas to the West and the world at

¹¹⁶ Personal communication 5th of August, 2010

¹¹⁷ Tu, Weiming, 1978, 1985a, and 1998

¹¹⁸ Eliade, Mircea. 1949. *Trait’e d’histoire des religions*. Paris: Payot; Ricoeur, Paul. 1960. *La symbolique du mal*. Paris: Aubier. See also Hale, 2013a; Mickey, 2007; Tu Weiming, 2001a., 2007. & Tucker, 2002

¹¹⁹ See <http://tuweiming.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/bibliography-of-Tu-Weimings-works.pdf> and <http://tuweiming.net/about-tu/biography/> [accessed 8th of April, 2013] Bibliography for website excerpted from Weber, 2007, pp. 282-344

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large, predominantly in response to post- Enlightenment secularism and the existential alienation that currently prevails in human-to-human and human-to-nature relations.

Tu's writings – in Mandarin and English – are prolific, yet he states: “I am still committed to my ideas developed in my small monograph on Centrality and Commonality [1989b]. Of course critically aware that an essay written in the 1970s requires revision.”¹²⁰ Nevertheless, Tu's seminal work, *Confucian Thought. Selfhood as Creative Transformation* (1985a) is the main focus of this study due to his detailed treatment of the self in process of becoming. In Chapter 1 of this volume, ‘The “Moral Universe” from the Perspective of East Asian Thought’, Tu addresses the “Three Teachings” of Mencius (representative of Confucianism), the Chuang Tzu tradition of Daoism, and the Ch'an (Zen) interpretation of Buddhism. “[T]he conception of a Creator as the ultimate source of morality or spirituality is not even a rejected possibility, there is no appeal to the “wholly other” as the real basis of human perfectibility. Rather, the emphasis is on learning to be human, a learning that is characterized by a ceaseless process of inner illumination and self-transformation.”¹²¹

Hence, we can look on Tu's definition of 'morality' as one that is more akin to 'spirituality' as opposed to the notion of acts of external behaviour in keeping with a given society's mores, rules and laws. In gaining a perspective on the implicit concept of transcendence as “self-transformation”, the Confucian scholar Yao Xinzhong, describes it in contrast to Western ideas:

In dialogue with Christian [and Western] scholars, some contemporary “new Confucians” also find it necessary to distinguish Confucian immanent or internal transcendence (*neizai chaoyue* 內在超越) from theistically external transcendence (*waizai chaoyue* 外在超越): “This is a traditional ‘immanent transcendence’ (*nei-tsai-chao-yueh*) in contrast to the Western tradition of ‘external transcendence’ (*wei-tsai-chao-yueh*)”. The dichotomy of the internal and the external does not, however, sit well with the typical presentation of Confucian spirituality, nor does it agree with the actual teachings of all major Confucian thinkers. A distinctive feature of Confucian religiosity is that transcendence is sought in the

¹²⁰ Personal communication, 5th of August, 2010. Edition referenced herein is subtitled *A Revised and Enlarged Edition of Centrality and Commonality: An Essay on Chung-yung*.

¹²¹ p 19

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attempt to integrate the internal and the external, or in other words the immanent and the transcendent.¹²²

To attain this ideal inner↔outer non-diametric thinking, Tu describes a state of “ceaseless” inner reflection with the aim of realizing one's “original mind”¹²³ as conferred by *tian* as innately posited within the individual. Tu emphasizes the internal machinations of the individual's thought processes – evolving precursors to intention and action – as opposed to the idea that mere behaviour in acting out morals is sufficient. Tu states:

Knowledge so conceived is not a cognitive grasp of a given structure of objective truths; nor is it an acquisition of internalized skills. It is basically an understanding of one's mental state and an appreciation of one's inner feelings ... To know oneself is simultaneously to perfect oneself.¹²⁴

This brings Tu to the term “intellectual intuition” or “embodied knowing”:

In a deeper sense, self-knowledge is neither “knowing that” nor “knowing how”; it is, in essence, an objectless awareness, a realization of the human possibility of “intellectual intuition”. Self-knowledge is nothing other than the manifestation of one's real nature (inner sageliness in Confucianism and buddhahood in Ch'an), and that our real nature is not only a being to be known but also a self creating and self-directing activity.¹²⁵

In Chapter 3 of *Confucian Thought* (1985a), ‘A Confucian Perspective on Learning to be Human’, Tu clarifies the Confucian notion of morality in evolvment: “Learning, for the Confucian, is to learn to be human ... Learning to be human ... means becoming aesthetically refined, morally excellent and religiously [spiritually] profound ... [T]he primary concern of Confucian learning is character formation defined in ethical terms.”¹²⁶ This, in turn, brings us to the concept of self-cultivation (*xiushen*修身). Tu again:

Self cultivation may mean different things to different people at different stages of moral development, and its realization may also assume many different forms. Yet, self cultivation

¹²² 2008, p 397, quote cited referenced in original.

¹²³ Tu, 2010, Chapter 12

¹²⁴ 1985a, pp 19-20

¹²⁵ Tu, 1985a, p 20

¹²⁶ Tu, 1985a, p 52

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remains the locus of Confucian learning. Learning to be human, as a result, centers on the self, not the self as an abstract idea but the self as the person living here and now.”¹²⁷

Tu relates what he calls an “intriguing” aspect of self cultivation: “[T]he self so conceived is not the generic self but *I myself* as an experiencing and reflecting person here and now. To turn the mode of questioning from the impersonal self to the personal I requires intellectual sophistication as well as *existential commitment*.”¹²⁸ Again, there is the view that the self cannot be objectified or intellectually qualified as a ‘thing’ to negotiate and study – it is an inner↔outer phenomenon; an organic, highly personalized gestalt on its unique path towards self realization.

Tu takes these ideas into applied fields; namely that of ecology and socio-political theory.¹²⁹ As a key to these a-culture universalities, Tu has adopted the idea of ‘anthropocosmic’ perspectives; the antithesis to anthropocentricity.

Anthropocosmic perception, or experience, is the shift of the discrete egocentricity of the individual to a state of connective empathy and compassion toward the other—an interrelatedness of self and the other—whether the other is of the human, natural, or cosmological worlds. This connective empathy, by definition, enables one to *feel* a member of a whole, as opposed to merely intellectualizing the concept.¹³⁰

In understanding Tu’s connection with anthropocosmism and Confucian metaphysics, Yao Xinzong observes:

For [Tu] ... the religiosity of Confucianism lies in none other than its attempt to manifest the sacredness of the secular world, to transform its conditionality and to enable the qualities of a limited being to be the resources for individual or communal transcendence.”¹³¹

The basis of Tu’s ambitious project is *xiushen* – self-cultivation – the foundation for personal, humanistic, and material growth; facilitating the constant interchange between the

¹²⁷ Tu, 1985a, pp 56-7

¹²⁸ p 57, my emphases

¹²⁹ Tu Weiming, 1994, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2007, & Tucker, 2002. See also Tian, Chenshan, 2009, for an understanding of socio-political philosophy in a Confucian framework. Tian also agrees with Tu in the use of the term ‘Confucian’ rather than “the confusing” demarcation of Confucianism/Neo-Confucianism.

¹³⁰ Hale, 2013, p 46; emphasis in original text

¹³¹ Yao, Xinzong, 2008, p 396, see original text for references to quotes herein.

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inner and the outer in a seamless balance. Barry Keenan's work, *Neo-Confucian Self-Cultivation* (2011) traces the history of this concept from the Song Dynasty (960-1279 CE) into the 20th century. Tu's approach to the co-creative whole-self-as-learner as self-cultivation, and the *applicability* of his Confucian interpretations to philosophy of education, provide an ideal lens through which to view Confucian-Deweyan philosophy of education. A philosophy of education which, ideally, incorporates the universal humanistic precepts of Confucianism and therefore reflecting a unique cultural approach to accommodating the demands of technological acceleration and economic growth into the 21st century whilst maintaining and expanding our humanity and diverse cultural perceptions simultaneously.

2.4 China's Educational Reforms: the 21st Century

The annotated bibliography *Education in the People's Republic of China, Past and Present*¹³² provides the most comprehensive study of the literature up to 1985 when the post-Mao modernizing period was poised to accelerate. This leads into the reform aspect predominantly focused upon in this dissertation: the 21st century. Accordingly, this section of current PRC reform policy completes the overview of the historical continuum – both educational and epistemological. An overview of the current situation of PRC reforms is addressed to enable a current contextual perspective for the reader.¹³³

Considering the selected literature for this section, Janette Ryan's edited volume, *Education Reform in China: Changing concepts, contexts, and practices* (2011) is one of the most up-to-date and comprehensive of English language commentaries on this subject. The work is in five parts: 1) 'Curriculum policy and practice', 2) 'Educational quality and access', 3) 'Educational Values and Beliefs', 4) 'Reform and internationalisation in the disciplines', and 5) 'Mutual learning and adaption'. The most succinct and statistically qualified overview of education reform in the post-Mao period is found in the article by Sun Miantao (2010) 'Education system reform in China after 1978: some practical implications'. Sun claims in his abstract that "[t]his is the first time the researcher has studied education system reform and its characteristics since 1978 ... [the purpose of which is] to understand education system reform in China systematically". His claim is true only insofar as he applies his well researched data

¹³² Parker & Parker, 1986

¹³³ For further background into the history of China's post-Mao economic transformation see Brandt & Rawski, 2008.

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– official and scholarly – into an overview of practical implications which interlock and, accordingly, impact across various levels of education, as opposed to focusing on a single reform issue as does most of the literature. Sun breaks his findings up into five categories: 1) Reform of school education at compulsory and advanced levels, 2) Reform of vocational and technical education systems, 3) Reform of private school education, 4) Reform of education administration systems, and 5) Reform of intra-school management systems.

Unfortunately, the one crucial area Sun overlooks is pre- and in-service teacher education. This is addressed in detail by Shi Xiaoguang and Peter Englert (2008) who state in their abstract:

Embedded in the discussion are issues such as the merger and amalgamation of institutions, teachers' professional development under the auspices of market and knowledge economy, educational information, internationalisation and others, and their effects on Chinese teacher education both in the short and the long term.¹³⁴

The assessment from these authors is that there has been “significant development” in teacher education up to 2008 – the year the paper was written – yet there is little evidence to qualify this statement. According to the authors, these teacher education reforms were instigated by three factors: 1) “[T]he Fourth National Conference on Teacher Education convened in 1980 ... [whereby] the government placed the development and reform of teacher education at the top of its agenda, and defined the targets and tasks of teacher education in the new era for the first time.” 2) The “*Decision on the reform of the education system*, published in 1985 by the Ministry of Education (MOE), which indicated that the development of teacher education should be regarded as a key strategic measure in developing education”, and 3) “[T]he National Meeting on Secondary and Primary School Teachers held in the same year, where targets, policies and procedures for building a contingent of teachers for basic education were further emphasised. In 1993, another important document, the *Outline for reform and development of education in China*, was officially issued. It declared that governments at all levels would increase their financial input to improve teacher education.”¹³⁵ Effectively, what has happened is:

¹³⁴ p 347

¹³⁵ p 348; for supportive material on these reform issues see Liu Yongbing & Fang Yanping, 2009, and Liu Fengshu, 2004

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In the past two decades, the Chinese government has increased spending on higher education faster than for primary and secondary education, according to the Annual Chinese Statistical of Educational Expenditure (Statistical Yearbook 2001). From 1996 to 2001 the total investment in higher education has increased by a factor of three, while that in compulsory education has increased only by a factor of 0.6.¹³⁶

With the focus still on higher education infrastructural reform, the authors cite statistics for institutions providing teacher education on figures available in 2008:

“... 475 institutions involved in teacher education, among them, 183 so-called normal (teacher) colleges and universities, 34 independent educational (training) institutes, and 258 general comprehensive colleges and universities. Based on Ministry of Education statistics, about 1083 institutions had been merged by a series of different processes into 431 new entities by the end of May 2006. Among them, 293 different types of teacher education institutions at different tiers were involved in the wave of amalgamations.¹³⁷

Yet, all this infrastructural reform¹³⁸ does not indicate the quality of course content; namely, methodological approach to teaching within the classroom, or whether or not reflective teaching practice is encouraged. For example:

The Suggestions on reform and development of teacher education during the 11th Five-Year Plan made by the MOE in 2002 proposed new goals and efforts to be realised in large and medium-sized cities and economically developed regions in the following two years: new teachers with associate and bachelor degrees will make up over 80% of teaching staff at primary schools and middle schools, respectively.¹³⁹

This quote from the same authors tells us that tertiary educated teachers “will make up over 80% of teaching staff at primary schools and middle schools, respectively” – a basic

¹³⁶ Shi Xiaoguang & Englert, p 351, see article for full statistical references

¹³⁷ Shi Xiaoguang & Englert, p 349. It is worth noting here, that although ‘normal universities’ are considered teacher colleges, they mainly teach field-specific courses and are seen as inferior in contrast to the more elite ‘comprehensive’ universities.

¹³⁸ For a comprehensive study of tertiary sector infrastructural changes, see Hayhoe *et.al.*, 2011, and Gong Fang & Li Jun, 2010. Infrastructural reform has had a high priority in China since the 1990s. Project 211 was launched in 1995 to establish 100 new universities, this was followed by Project 985 in 1998 whereby funding was focused on creating a small group of elite universities (numbering 40 in 2010) which incorporated amalgamations. There is now a slow shift from developing quantitative to qualitative education in the tertiary sector as infrastructural reform continues. Nevertheless, corruption and political agendas continue to stymie standards. *The Australian, Higher Education Supplement* 12th of October, 2010, p 13

¹³⁹ Shi Xiaoguang & Englert, p 352

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expectation for a developing country of BRICS standard¹⁴⁰ – or, in old parlance, a second world country. The authors concur on lag of policy to reality:

An MOE officer in charge of teacher education noted that in the near future a bachelor degree would become the universal requirement for most of those intending to enter a teaching career. This goal will likely be achieved between about 2015 and 2020.¹⁴¹

Shi and Englert do not state the percentages of teachers who *hold a post-graduate diploma or degree in teaching*. That is, what is needed is not *only* an associate or bachelor degree in a particular subject area, but also post-graduate teaching qualifications. If holders of such qualifications – post-graduate degree/diploma with a high standard of course content – were statistically large in the teaching community, then it can be expected that classroom methodologies would be improving as newer methodologies by greater numbers of teachers are being practiced. That is, such post-graduate teaching qualifications could be instrumental in breaking the educational intergenerational cycle of rote learning, teacher-centered approaches, and non-critical thinking indicated mainly by closed-questioning¹⁴² – either in exams or day to day classroom interactions.¹⁴³

This intergenerational cycle – as strongly reinforced by the colloquial Confucian misapprehension of teacher-as-all-knowing-authority-who-cannot-be-questioned – will remain standard classroom ‘practice’ until there are concerted efforts to implement post-graduate teacher training based on, at least, student-centered learning and a wholistic self.¹⁴⁴ Student-centered learning is, arguably, *the* key to creative critical thinking of future generations – the goal of education reform, as indicated by commentators and the MoE alike.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa; see OECD commentary <http://oecdinsights.org/2012/07/19/building-a-new-power-balance-bric-by-bric/> [accessed 17th April 2013]

¹⁴¹ Shi Xiaoguang & Englert, p 352

¹⁴² Perennial problems observed across the literature. For a succinct and pertinent study of how the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ classroom methodologies are perceived by a cross-section of teachers, see Dai *et.al.*, 2011 whose study of “585 valid responses ... collected representing middle and high schools in different geographic locations”, (p 139) demonstrate broad responses to the reforms in the classroom environment.

¹⁴³ Naturally, for this to happen effectively, the content and question structures of the national standardized examinations must also change. On the whole, teachers teach towards students successfully passing exams, regardless of any effective alternative teaching method known, despite any theoretical appreciation of student-centered learning.

¹⁴⁴ See Zhang Huajun’s doctoral dissertation, 2009, for an in-depth study of the nature of identity and perception of self in Chinese learners and Watkins & Biggs, 2001, for a non-simplistic overview of Chinese culture-specific learning approaches.

¹⁴⁵ See above for overview of dominant narratives of reform

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To reinforce this contrast of good intentions versus reality, the educationalist, Yang Tian-Ping, states:

In May 2001, the State Council issued “The Decision on Basic Educational Reforms and Developments”, which for the first time used the term of “Teacher Education”. The decision set forth the goal to perfect the open system of teacher education with normal institutions [teachers’ colleges] as the mainstay and other institutions as co-operators, which featured the integration of pre-service cultivation and in-service training.”¹⁴⁶

Unfortunately, there seems no substantial evidence that this program has been – to any perceivable degree – successful to date, some 12 years later. This could be either through the lack of required numbers/availability of courses and/or poor quality course content. The Yale graduate and China based educationalist, Jiang Xueqin, had this to say about the issue in the *Far East Asian Economic Review*:

[Education] reform may be necessary for economic development, but no one has the slightest clue as to where to start and how to prevent the inevitable pressures and vested interests from corrupting reform and destroying the entire Chinese public education sector.¹⁴⁷

By “inevitable pressures and vested interests” Jiang indicates inclusively parents (who wish their children to be successful in the set, unreformed examinations), teachers (who teach didactically towards the same),¹⁴⁸ senior management of schools, and the various levels of state officialdom. Nevertheless, the Chinese have historically demonstrated tenacity and endurance, despite overwhelming challenges, when needed – and education reforms *are needed* as Jiang Xueqin clearly states: for “economic development” and, as follows on, an equal footing with the rest of the world; a position in complete agreement with PRC/MoE policy.

It becomes evident that when the Chinese authorities and the populace alike see *unequivocally* that the current state of education is clearly crippling consolidated economic growth in the future, then change will be swift. At time of writing, China’s growth is

¹⁴⁶ 2012, p 89.

¹⁴⁷ December, 2009, p 51

¹⁴⁸ See Dai *et.al.*, 2011

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relatively solid and becoming sustainable in keeping with World Bank benchmarks.¹⁴⁹ Accordingly, it appears that when change is seen as unavoidable, China will prevail in the end. The results they have theoretically (policy-wise) set themselves despite the current appearances of merely paying lip-service¹⁵⁰ seem likely to be met, it is simply a matter of when. Although the ‘when’ is unknown, significantly enough, the how and where of the beginnings of pragmatic 21st century education reform may be emerging now: the much vetted Project Based Learning (PBL) pilot project in Shanghai.

2.4.1 The Shanghai Project

Shanghai, a city of 23.5 million,¹⁵¹ is the most cosmopolitan, affluent city in China and considered its financial capital. According to official data, the city’s GDP is “over two trillion RMB, an increase of 7.5% on the previous year. Yearly [2012] GDP per capita was reported to be 85,033 RMB [US \$13,737].”¹⁵² This is compared to the overall PRC per capita GDP of US \$5,445 for the year 2011.¹⁵³ It is fair to say that Shanghai’s acceptance of a progressive state education system can be contributed to the factors of both relative affluence and cosmopolitanism, given also Shanghai is home to the largest expatriate population in China¹⁵⁴ and, accordingly, some 30 international schools;¹⁵⁵ schools teaching, respectively, US, UK, and European curricula. On the whole, these schools are beyond the financial reach of most Shanghai citizens.

In the light of this, it is not surprising that Shanghai has taken the initiative on education reform and – once consolidated with fundamental problems solved – is seen nationally as a pilot project to eventually be implemented nation-wide as respective

¹⁴⁹ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/china/overview> [accessed 17th April 2013] and World Bank (2012) *China 2030: Building a Modern, Harmonious, and Creative High Income Society*.
<http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/China-2030-complete.pdf> [accessed 18th of February, 2013]. Current growth at time of writing: 7.7% (April 2013).

¹⁵⁰ Jiang Xueqin, 2009. Jiang highlights the fact that in 2002, the “new curriculum” was launched without any change to the *gaokao* (national matriculation examination), and sees this as lack of intent for change; in fact he calls it “sloganeering”, p 51

¹⁵¹ <http://www.globaltimes.cn/NEWS/tabid/99/ID/707874/Shanghai-population-surges-to-2347-million.aspx> [accessed 23rd April, 2013]

¹⁵² <http://www.echinacities.com/news/Shanghai-Annual-GDP-Per-Capita-Tops-85000-RMB> [accessed 19th April, 2013 – same date as RMB/USD conversion cited]

¹⁵³ OECD figures for 2011. See comparisons with participating countries:
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD> [accessed 19th April, 2013]

¹⁵⁴ The *Shanghai Daily* (9th of January, 2013) claimed that the expatriate numbers in Shanghai “exceeded 173,000 by the end of last year [2012], a 6.7 percent increase compared to 2011”

http://www.china.org.cn/china/2013-01/09/content_27630934.htm [accessed 19th April, 2013]

¹⁵⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_international_schools_in_Shanghai Sourced from <http://www.chalksmart.com/>

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stakeholders in given administrative regions deem appropriate. The Centre on International Education Benchmarking (CIEB), an independent international body, gives a background on the reforms which enabled the progressive Shanghai curriculum to be implemented. First, briefly on syllabi reform:

China has a national curriculum. Until 1988, China also used standardized syllabi and centrally-issued textbooks. In the late 1980s, however, the Chinese Ministry of Education began to approve the use of multiple texts and resources. Schools can now choose their materials from a ministry-approved list.¹⁵⁶

Shanghai's response to this:

Shanghai has been working hard on curriculum reform, often piloting new curriculum before it is rolled out to the rest of the country ... In 1988, Shanghai established a three-block curriculum, which enabled students to participate in required and elective courses as well as extracurricular activities as part of their schooling, which was a major change from the previous curriculum focused solely on core [examination] subjects. Textbooks were redesigned to align with the new curriculum. Ten years later, new reforms produced a curriculum that integrated many subjects and was centered on student engagement ... The curriculum is organized around eight "learning domains," which are meant to encourage active inquiry and interdisciplinary understanding. These domains are language and literature, mathematics, natural science, social sciences, technology, arts, physical education and a practicum.¹⁵⁷

In implementing such reforms, Shanghai educationalists have employed a Project Based Learning (PBL – also designated as Problem Based Learning)¹⁵⁸ approach to their curriculum. The history of PBL in China is succinctly outlined by one of the facilitators of the Shanghai project, Gao Zhenyu, an educationalist from Hangzhou Normal University. The following quote outlines the history of PBL in China:

Despite its popularity among global educational reformers, PBL in China has undergone a flexuous developmental course in the past century. In the early 1920s with the discovery of childhood in most social sections and the frequent visits of John Dewy and William H. Kilpatrick, PBL was first introduced and then incorporated into primary and secondary

¹⁵⁶ <http://www.ncee.org/programs-affiliates/center-on-international-education-benchmarking/top-performing-countries/shanghai-china/shanghai-china-instructional-systems/> [accessed April 20th 2013]

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.* For detail on the "eight learning domains", see Charlene Tan, 2012. For overview of Shanghai educational history by the OECD see <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/46581016.pdf> [accessed 23rd April, 2013].

¹⁵⁸ Savery, 2006; Scarbrough, *et.al.*, 2004

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educational systems. But after the 1950s when Dewey's philosophy was severely repudiated by "new" educationalists in reference to the theory of class struggle ... PBL was deliberately erased from the curriculum of compulsory education. It was not until the beginning of the 21st century that the Ministry of Education in China decided to include PBL into a brand new curriculum referred to as "integrated practical activity" resulting from the eighth nationwide educational reform.¹⁵⁹

In this article, 'An Arduous but Hopeful Journey: Implementing Project-Based Learning in a Middle School of China' (2012), Gao Zhenyu "... investigate[d] the lived experience of teachers from one middle school in East China who implemented project-based learning (PBL) in their classes. A sample of 22 grade 6 and 7 teachers participated in this research between September 2008 and June 2010."¹⁶⁰ His findings were mixed:

[The study] reveals that teachers were struggling with the roles they should play and in particular with how to effectively facilitate students' project work. However, they also creatively reconceptualized the new curriculum from their own perspectives and brought their students unique and diverse learning experiences. These struggles and reconceptualizations are believed to be the result of teachers' evaluative, identifying and pedagogical culture-cognitions.¹⁶¹

Charlene Tan, in her 2012 article, 'The culture of education policy making: curriculum reform in Shanghai', addresses the wider perspectives (and complexities) of Shanghai's project:

The complex and unpredictable process of implementing curriculum reform in Shanghai illustrates the culture of education policy making against a backdrop of globalisation as a problem space ... a situation where local forms and values of individual and collective existence are problematised by being subjected to political, technical and ethical reflection and intervention¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ 2012, p 609

¹⁶⁰ p 608

¹⁶¹ p 608; for a detailed case study on Shanghai's approach to teacher education, see Wong, Jocelyn L.N., 2012.

¹⁶² pp 153-4

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Relative to implementation processes, Luo Xiaoming (2011) outlines further potential obstacles; namely, the complex bureaucracy involved in such regional reforms, reiterating Tan's identification of the latent problem of political intervention:

An important feature of the development and implementation of the curriculum reform is a three-tier state, regional and school management model. As stipulated in The Basic Education Curriculum Reform Outline ... At the state level, the Ministry of Education is responsible for the 'overall planning of the basic education curriculum, establishing the management policy, stipulating the categories of curriculum and learning hours, and setting curriculum standards and evaluation process'. Regional education authorities are 'responsible for the implementation of the plans devised by the state, development of regional curriculums, reporting to the Ministry of Education, and the organization and implementation of the reform' ... [and] individual schools may also develop or select appropriate curricula that suit the specific needs of the local society, economic development, school tradition and interests of their students'.¹⁶³

This "three-tiered" approach is fraught with potential problems: not only possibilities of interference, but also overlaps of perceived responsibilities, lack of consensus and conflicting perceptions on what is needed by the various representatives and/or stakeholders at these levels of administration and the opinions of their respective constituents. To illustrate this, in 2010 the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission convened a conference for school principals to address "the apparent failure of the New Curriculum Reform to take root in schools. One of the conclusions presented at the conference was that school principals were responsible for the gap between the intent and effect of the curriculum reform."¹⁶⁴ Conversely, the subsequent conclusion voiced by the principals at the conference was:

Principals involved ... suggest[ed] the contradictory messages they receive from government officials about how principals' work should be formally and informally assessed [and] do little to promote meaningful reform implementation. Therefore, it is suggested that one of the main reasons why curriculum reform has so far not been able to bring about deep change at secondary school level is the enduring cultural norms which continue to underpin societal expectations and accountability, rather than a lack of curriculum leadership on the part of school principals.

¹⁶³ p 44

¹⁶⁴ Walker *et.al.*, p 388

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A key paper on this issue is by Zhang Minxuan (2012), deputy director of the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission and chief architect of the *National Medium- and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development Guideline 2010-2020* (2008),¹⁶⁵ who relates the consensual process by which the current guidelines were formulated:

Reality has proved that the multiple-approach method that brought “thematic research, leadership investigations, international comparisons, parallel drafting, and discussion in society” within a single framework was a scientific method that was well-received by the government, experts, and the common people – it was a democratic formulation process that manifested the spirit of “asking the people about governance, asking the people about their needs, and asking the people for advice.”¹⁶⁶

This paper maps the processes of drafting the *Guidelines* and, significantly, verbatim responses in meetings with the then Premier, Wen Jiabao. In his conclusion, Zhang states:

The *Shanghai Guideline* will serve as a policy road map and a blue-print for education work in Shanghai. However, we have not posited any legislative requirements to the government, schools, and teachers in terms of implementing the *Guideline* ... This potential defect may be unfavorable for the long-term exercise of all functions of the *Shanghai Guideline*, especially since the Shanghai Municipality will be experiencing three terms of government between now and 2020.¹⁶⁷

Nevertheless, despite these endemic problems, the PBL reforms in Shanghai have borne fruit. In 2009 and 2012 Shanghai students – in a diverse cross-section of government schools – were assessed as first in the world in the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) ratings in the areas of literacy, numeracy, and science.

PISA is an international study that was launched by the OECD in 1997. It aims to evaluate education systems worldwide every three years by assessing 15-year-olds' competencies in

¹⁶⁵ Zhang Minxuan is also a professor at Shanghai Normal University. In his paper, Zhang refers to this document as the *Shanghai Guidelines*.

¹⁶⁶ p 99

¹⁶⁷ p 99

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the key subjects: reading, mathematics and science. To date over 70 countries and economies have participated in PISA.¹⁶⁸

An Oxford report on PISA results by Baird *et.al.*, (2011) states in reference to Shanghai:

Shanghai is not representative of China as a whole, because it is probably better resourced than other regions. However, its significant achievement, in topping the league table in PISA 2009, can have far-reaching effects nationwide on China's educational policies with regard to curriculum reform and educational equality. As a 'first' timer and 'first' performer in PISA assessments, Shanghai has taken a cautious learning approach towards its participation in PISA and its significant achievement in 2009. The confirmation of lower school-level variance is particularly welcomed as evidence of educational equality that the city and the country are striving to achieve and demonstrate to the citizens and to the world.¹⁶⁹

This "cautious learning approach" is not only towards PISA participation, but is also demonstrated in the methodical lead up to the next stage of reform implementation: the Second Wave of Shanghai reforms.

2.4.2 First, now Second, Wave of Reform

Luo Xiaoming (2011) quotes excerpts from the guiding document of 'Phase II Curriculum Reform' (aka Second Wave of reform) which stipulates that:

... 'the development of each student' relies on the education environment developed through the cyber metropolitan Shanghai city, to develop a curriculum with character education and the development of creativity and ability to learn and to apply as core, featured with continuous perfection of learning methodology, application of modern information technology and attention to the student's learning experience so as to enhance the development of the student.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/> See <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/46643496.pdf> for 2009 rankings [accessed 22nd April, 2013]; for PISA results 2012 see <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results.htm> [accessed 10th July, 2014].

¹⁶⁹ p 26. See Luo, Xiaoming, 2011, for approaches to implementing Shanghai reforms into other regions. For the perceived reasons for Shanghai's success in PISA from the perspective of the designers of the *Shanghai Guidelines*, see Zhang Minxuan & Kong Linshuai, 2012

¹⁷⁰ pp 43-4. Document cited per endnote 4 in text: *Shanghai City Primary and Secondary Curriculum Plan* (trial implementation paper), Shanghai, Shanghai Education Press, 2004, p. 1. NB: this document has not yet officially been translated into English; author does not cite translator on quotes.

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Through PISA, Shanghai has been successful in demonstrating that regional reform can excel at determined international benchmarks. Effectively, they are doing something right. In her 2007 paper, W. W. Law takes a meta-analytic approach in connecting these domestic reforms into a wider, global perspective:

With reference to Shanghai ... explore[d are] the perceptions of students and teachers about the dynamics and complexities in the juggling of global, national, local, and personal–social dimensions of multiple identity in a multileveled polity ... students and teachers considered these four dimensions important, and that complex relationships between these dimensions exist ... [I]n an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world these dimensions intersect with, and are complementary to, one another.¹⁷¹

Charlene Tan supports this perspective and identifies the problems of transposing successful educational models from one locale to another:

Our Shanghai case study illustrates that global education policy cannot be borrowed and transferred from one context to another without considering its interplay with local factors, logics and circumstances in the global assemblage. It follows that policymakers need to be cognisant of situated elements in the space of the assemblage that may aid or hinder the smooth implementation of the education initiatives ... Given the trend towards linking international testing and national assessment to efforts to reform educational systems ... the example of Shanghai cautions us against a simplistic policy transfer and borrowing without considering and incorporating indigenous sociocultural (counter-)factors.¹⁷²

This brings us to the need to develop a position in which a progressive educational construct considers the “interplay with local factors, logics and circumstances in the global assemblage” in all its facets, including the self. The self being the *pivotal processor* of and agent responding to these ever-changing, interlocking external factors in an on-going dynamic of mutually informing inner↔outer influences, albeit in various degrees.

¹⁷¹ W.W. Law, 2007, p 18

¹⁷² 2012, pp 164-5

2.5 Globalization and Education: Self and Knowledge in Creative Application

In seeking a basic definition of globalization in which to position a transcultural model of self at the centre of creative application of knowledge, Lechner and Boli's (eds) seminal classic, *The Globalization Reader* (2000),¹⁷³ Steger's succinct Oxford volume *Globalization* (2009), and and Joel Spring's much cited 2009 work, *Globalization of Education. An Introduction*, have been considered for this section. Lesser known works have also been considered, among them: Parlo Singh's 'Globalization and Education' (2004), Stephen Ball *et.al.*'s 'Globalization and Education: Introduction' (2010), and Benjamin Sovacool's (2010) article on the 'Discursive Structure of Globalization'.

Yet, it is Deane Neubauer's 2007 article, 'Globalization, interdependence and education', presents an adequate précis of various strands of understanding of globalization *vis a vis* education. It also provides a succinct definition for the purposes of this thesis through the educationalist, Jill Blackmore. Blackmore's quoted definition of globalization is that of:

...increased economic, cultural, environmental, and social interdependencies and new transnational financial and political formations arising out of the mobility of capital, labor and information, with both homogenizing and differentiating tendencies¹⁷⁴

Balancing these "homogenizing and differentiating tendencies" – particularly regarding respective indigenous cultures and locales – is, arguably, one of the most problematic aspects of education in the 21st century and therefore the main consideration here.

The catchphrase – explicit or implicit – of many educationalists dealing with the issue of globalization is 'learning how to learn'. Although now clichéd, nevertheless the need to develop educational models to facilitate problem solving and adaptability to accelerated global change – economic, ecological, social, and technological – is of utmost necessity as, in all probability, there will be occupations in the coming decades which are beyond our

¹⁷³ In 2012 the 4th edition was released. Herein the 2000 1st edition is referenced.

¹⁷⁴ Blackmore, 2000, as cited in Neubauer, 2007, p 310

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imaginations now. Students *must* learn how to learn and make interconnective cross-disciplinary knowledge systems as technology pushes boundaries of information acquisition and application in every field and vocation year by year, long after the formal education process is completed.

Roger Dale, in his opening editorial to a special issue of *Comparative Education* (May 2005)¹⁷⁵ on this very issue, addresses the idea of a ‘knowledge economy’ (KE) within the phenomenon of globalization as pertains to methodological and institutional processes:

The changes seen to be required by the KE would entail the transformation of education systems as we know them; even radical reform of them would be insufficient to bring about the shift from 'education in institutions' to 'learning anywhere, any time and just for me'.¹⁷⁶

In a Confucian-Deweyan context, this would read: ‘learning anywhere, any time for me *and the other*’ – not “*just for me*”. Accordingly, the consistent element – albeit a shifting and flexible one – in all this accelerated change is *the self*. The self is where knowledge constructs are inter- and intra-connected and built upon for pragmatic real-world relevance and subsequent advancement; not only for technological and economic advancement, but for a higher quality of life for all. The zero sum game mentality – of winner takes all regardless of the other – is not only anathematic to this idea of knowledge construction and application, but is also a highly counter-productive stance as has been proven time and again in various historical and contemporary scenarios (for example, most wars). The self, as the core element of human society in its collective force, is the processor of information to transform, construct, expand and enhance knowledge systems for the given individual to apply into the world as a true contributor to society, not only for advancement of the egoistic self.

As the psychologists, Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama point out in their comparative study of the cultural self relative to emotions, cognition and motivation:

Many Asian cultures have distinct conceptions of individuality that insist on the fundamental relatedness of individuals to each other. The emphasis is on attending to others, fitting in, and harmonious interdependence with them. American culture neither assumes nor values such an

¹⁷⁵ Vol. 41, No. 2, pp 117-149

¹⁷⁶ Dale, 2005, p 118

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overt connectedness among individuals. In contrast, individuals seek to maintain their independence from others by attending to the self and by discovering and expressing their unique inner attributes ... these construals are even more powerful than previously imagined.¹⁷⁷

David Yau-fai Ho, *et.al.*, in their paper, ‘The Dialogical Self: Converging East-West Constructions’ (2001), seek to find commonalities in East/West understandings of self:

The East and the West appear to resonate in current conceptions of the self. In the East, conceptions grounded in a worldview that stresses the relational character of human existence have always been dominant. Methodological individualism is alien to Eastern intellectual traditions, and thus relational constructions of selfhood come naturally. In the West, there is growing awareness of the tension between two conceptions: The first, rooted in individualism, is that of the autonomous self; the second, more relationally and socially concerned, is that of the self conceived in terms of engagement with others.¹⁷⁸

To these authors, the dialogical self is “capable of taking an active part in the interaction between inner and outer dialectics, and hence of participating in its own creation and transformation”;¹⁷⁹ an idea very much in keeping with Deweyan and Confucian philosophies. Sedikides *et.al.*, (2003), social psychologists, view what they call the “pan-cultural” self as:

A conceptual cornerstone of the cultural-self perspective is the notion that the cultural system encompasses norms, ideals, and values that, through societal institutions and socialization practices, shape the psychological system. In particular, culture influences self-construal through the transmission of knowledge packages termed *selfways* (Markus et al., 1997). Selfways represent cultural mandates (reflected in foundational texts, narratives, proverbs, and symbols or icons) of what it means to be an appropriate, good, moral, and accepted member of the culture.¹⁸⁰

It appears the field of social psychology is attempting to find certain universalities in this notion of a pan-cultural self. As Nandita Chaudhary and Sujata Sriram note:

¹⁷⁷ 1991, p 224

¹⁷⁸ p 393

¹⁷⁹ David Yau-fai Ho, *et.al.*, 2001, p 393

¹⁸⁰ p 61

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The investigation of selfhood and the various ramifications thereof have acquired a special 'position' in recent writings. Early writing on the 'self' in social psychology was rooted in the conceptions of old paradigms of a mechanistic, individualistic and experimental psychology. Efforts of more recent social constructivist theorists, such as Hermans and Kempen (1993) and Sampson (1993), have attempted to draw up profiles of the self that result from dialogue and relationships. 'Individual functioning is held to be inseparable from relationship. The vast share of human action grows out of interchange, and is directed into further interchange'.¹⁸¹

Cecilia Cheng, *et.al.*, in their 2011 study:

[T]ested four cultural models—independence, interdependence, conflict, and integration models—that explicate the relationships between dimensions of self-construal and components of subjective well-being among countries with distinct sociocultural characteristics. Findings provided some support for the applicability of the independence model to individuals from several Western countries and the applicability of the integration model to individuals from some East Asian countries.¹⁸²

The well-cited comparative work by philosophers, *The Moral Circle and the Self: Chinese and Western Approaches* (2003), is a key text on the issue of the relational self of Confucianism in contrast with autonomous individualism of the West. Although the concepts of the interrelated, interdependent self are pivotal in Chinese philosophy and its comparative treatment¹⁸³, the idea/s of self, identity, and individualism has found engagement across the humanities. Anthropologist, Michael Sökefeld, in arguing against the anthropological notion of identity and self being considered separate notions in his field, undertakes

... an analysis of how a particular individual acts in situations involving contradictory identities requires a concept of a self as it emerges from the actions of individuals that is capable of managing the respectively shared identities. Besides any culture-specific attributes, this self is endowed with reflexivity and agency. This concept of self is a necessary supplement to the concept of culture in anthropology and should be regarded as a human universal.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ 2001, p 379; reference to quote in original text.

¹⁸² p 851

¹⁸³ For the leading Confucian thinkers in this area, see section above. Essays relative to comparative educational philosophy on this notion of self can be found in Eppert & Wang's (Eds) 2008 work, *Cross-Cultural Studies in Curriculum: Eastern Thought, Educational Insights*.

¹⁸⁴ 1999, p 417

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The notions of self, individualism, and consequently, identity, have a historical narrative.

Geoff Baldwin, a Renaissance scholar and historian of ideas, states:

Twentieth-century scholarship of the early modern, or Renaissance, period has been dominated by a notion of *individualism*. After Max Weber posited a link between Protestantism and capitalism at the beginning of the twentieth century, individualism became the focus of much attention from those who wanted to explain what was distinctive about the modern social and political world. The emergence of an individualist society was, for many social historians, the process by which the modern, as opposed to the medieval, came into being. Individualism was linked to capitalism, liberalism, and an incipient industrial revolution, these three together breaking out of a medieval and religious consensus.¹⁸⁵

A shifting of this thought of individualism *vis a vis* self, is not only subject to philosophical, historical, anthropological and sociological inquiry, but also psychology. Noted thinkers in this area, Hermans and Kempen (as referred to above by Chaudhary and Sriram) and their collaborators in the 1988 *American Psychologist* article, ‘The Dialogical Self: Beyond Individualism and Rationalism’, take a meta-analytic view of this then emerging movement:

There is growing awareness among psychologists that the individualistic and rationalistic character of contemporary psychological theories of the self reflect an ethnocentric Western view of personhood. In opposition to this view, it is argued from a constructionist perspective that the self can be conceived of as dialogical, a view that transcends both individualism and rationalism. A comparison of three constructionist forerunners (Vico, Vaihinger, and Kelly) suggests that to transcend individualism and rationalism, the embodied nature of the self must be taken into consideration. Moving through space and time, the self can imaginatively occupy a number of positions that permit mutual dialogical relations.¹⁸⁶

Subsequently, this “embodied nature of the self¹⁸⁷ ... [m]oving through space and time ... [to] imaginatively occupy a number of positions that permit mutual dialogical relations” learns, evolves, and contributes to the knowledge economy of the community –

¹⁸⁵ 2001, p 341, emphasis in text.

¹⁸⁶ p 23

¹⁸⁷ Here there are very strong correlations with the Confucian concept of *xing*性 (the nature of self); see Chapter 5.

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whether the community is local, national, and/or transnational. This begs the questions: How does information – received through space and time (tangible) to be perceived by the self (intangible) – *become knowledge*? How does information become *meaningful* to the self; that is, by definition, be transformed into knowledge? What are the kinetic processual machinations of knowledge construction by and within the self? Processual machinations which are happening simultaneously and seamlessly in a non-discrete manner as one contemplates a problem?

Psychologists, again, Nakamori *et.al.*, propose “a theory of knowledge construction systems, which consists of three fundamental parts: a knowledge construction system, a structure-agency-action paradigm, and evolutionary-constructive objectivism.”¹⁸⁸ Although from empirical fields, behavioral and cognitive science, their view of knowledge acquisition and application – they claim – *must* involve “the rational use of tacit knowledge which includes emotions and intuition.”¹⁸⁹ Intuitional knowledge is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to quantify and understand in Western paradigms and Nakamori *et.al.*, struggle with it. Hence, Confucianism offers an ideal, secularized notion of the whole self in the processual act of learning which incorporates this intuitional state of knowing. Accordingly, Tu Weiming’s interpretation of the concept of “intellectual intuition” – or “embodied knowing” – outlined above is the ideal foundation to place such a learning model which involves a cross-cultural (or, more to the point, an a-cultural and universal) self contributing to the knowledge economy, as Dale calls it above.¹⁹⁰ This intuitional state of knowing could also be called ‘insight’.

It could be argued that the Jesuit theologian, Bernard Lonergan (1904 – 1984)¹⁹¹ has already developed an adequate cognitional construct for knowing through insight within a Western context. His seminal and rather dense work by the title *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* is described by a proponent of Lonergan, Renata-Maria Marroum, as:

[A]n invitation for the reader to ‘discover oneself’ in oneself by discovering how one comes to know. Lonergan challenges the reader to thoroughly understanding what it means to

¹⁸⁸ Nakamori, *et.al.*, 2011, p 15

¹⁸⁹ p 16

¹⁹⁰ This idea, I claim, goes some way to balancing the “homogenizing and differentiating tendencies” of globalization as identified by Blackmore above. See Chapter 9.

¹⁹¹ 1967; 1957/1968

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understand, thus forming the basis of an invariant cognitional structure for further developments of understanding. He then invites the reader to seek ‘insight into insight’ to unfold the unity in the field of inquiry and human opinion. Lonergan used ‘insights of cognitive psychology but only to go beyond psychology to an invariant cognitional structure, a cognitional theory and an epistemology’¹⁹²

Morroum – who has applied Lonergan to education theory – elucidates further, encapsulating the essence of his cognitional structure:

Lonergan formulated a cognitional theory, based upon the self-assembling dynamic invariant structure of human knowing, that unfolds the complex relation among knowing, objective knowledge, and intending subjects (knowers). His heuristic method integrates some of the tools necessary to facilitate the learning and teaching process because it provides a key that can link the intending subject (student), the intended object (knowledge), and the mediating subject (the teacher). His differentiated structure of knowledge can be employed to investigate pedagogical questions and models that address how students can be encouraged to engage actively in their own authentic learning process.¹⁹³

Lonergan’s prolific writings have spawned a whole field of scholars and commentators – both theological and secular – but, essentially, it is his heuristic method and his separation of subjects/objects of knowledge, self, and teacher as mentioned here, which makes his basic idea of a cognitional structure of knowledge problematic for this project. Added to which, Lonergan’s notion of self – in which he has great difficulty in defining, if at all – is implicated as being merely a cognitive gestalt. Also, as a Thomist theologian, one would expect Lonergan’s self (if defined somewhat more clearly) to be transcendent in the Judeo-Christian sense. That is, a quintessential self (soul) that is *not of the world* but could eventually and potentially meet its transcendent factor/creator (god) *outside* the here and now of the other. This is an educated assumption as Lonergan never explicitly states the defining nature of his ¹⁹⁴self which is operational in the cognitional structure – a problem in itself.

Nevertheless, Lonergan genuinely attempts to overcome post-Enlightenment dualities, but by working in a heuristic *and* Thomistic framework his project falls short of solid

¹⁹² 2004, p 519

¹⁹³ Marroum, 2004, p 519

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epistemological infrastructure (despite Morroum's assertion) relative to a metaphysics which would unify the inner to the outer phenomenologically. Confucianism does this task elegantly. Furthermore, Confucian-Deweyan philosophy informing the concept of self-cultivation enables this multidimensionality of mutually informing inner-outer into a viable philosophy of education to create a pragmatic, humanistic, real-world educational framework for the future.

3.0 Methodology

In this predominantly theoretical thesis – which combines social anthropology with comparative philosophy – this chapter, accordingly, overviews the methodology employed in developing the philosophy of education discussed herein. Namely, a hermeneutical approach is taken to the material for both the theoretical and cultural analyses. In the words of educational philosopher, Peter Kemp:

Philosophy of education is regarded as an art of hermeneutics that integrates a theory of mimesis in its understanding of the educational transmission ... Philosophy of education is accordingly the art of understanding, developing and formulating the art of education in relation to its own times [place, and culture].¹⁹⁵

The term “mimesis” is used here in the Aristotelian sense as interpreted by Paul Ricoeur: “a play, the actor's enactment of a certain character.”¹⁹⁶ That is, hermeneutics is a form of empathy; the researcher – as best as s/he is able – attempts to perceive the theoretical material and/or data collected from the perspective of the original author and/or source relative to the time, place, and culture in which material is written or obtained. This “art of hermeneutics” – as Kemp expresses it – incorporates considering historical and cultural contexts, the normative social constructs in which the material originally was written/obtained, and the unique aims of the community (in the case of education), as opposed to approaching analyses from the context of the researcher’s own cultural and social history. As an ‘art’ hermeneutics is subjective – a qualitative, rather than quantitative project – which, nevertheless, provides a more accurate picture than empirical, statistical studies whereby, in the latter, important nuances are often lost or unable to be distinguished. Hence, a hermeneutical approach is taken in addressing the problem.

The aim of this study is to identify humanitarian universalities of the self to develop a cross-cultural philosophy of education for a globalized world. That is, identifying aspects of the self – in a pragmatic, sophisticated philosophic context – by which knowledge acquisition, as opposed to mere information collection, enhances and encourages social tolerance, empathetic behavior, and creative problem solving in consideration of the other, in

¹⁹⁵ 2006, pp 173-174.

¹⁹⁶ Kemp, 2006, p 175

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the short and long term, immediate and distant. Given the basis of the study is on both Chinese and Deweyan philosophy of self and self cultivation *vis a vis* community – two cultural approaches – hermeneutics is the method of choice in respectively considering the Chinese cultural and historical continuum and Deweyan educational theory. In so doing, a complementary and seamless connection between Eastern philosophy (namely, Chinese) and Western educational approaches (Deweyan) is obtained with minimal compromise, enabling a cross-cultural infrastructural philosophy to embed curriculum as determined by a given community.

Accordingly, this study is exploring an educational philosophy whereby extended communities – familial, local and global – are informing the given schooling community in directions and creative problem solving without loss of cultural identity. Creative problem solving, critical thinking, and human and environmental sensitivity are, arguably, the universal goals of education in the 21st century regardless of culture or locale. Confucian-Deweyan philosophy strongly underscores these a-cultural universalities of the self *vis a vis* the other in mutually informing dynamic with the world, human and natural environs within the cultural context of a given community. Once an a-cultural (read: universal) core of the self is identified, a model for directions in knowledge acquisition can be cross-culturally applied. The *flexibility* of the infrastructural model explored herein enables multiple cultural applications relative to a given community's determination.

Chinese philosophy was identified as the strongest candidate for this project coupled with Deweyan education theory due to these universalities of self and education of the self in context with the other. Further study found that Confucian-based societies attempt to *live* the philosophy as self cultivation in empathetic context with the other and is the *ideal* goal of life. Accordingly, it became an imperative to observe first hand and embed oneself – as much as one can as an outsider – in 21st century Chinese culture. This study involved two visits to China (one month in 2011 and six months in 2012) which provided invaluable depth to the theoretical work by participating in a modern Confucian society; a civilization with an unbroken continuum¹⁹⁷ of, arguably, some 8,000 years. It is this strong sense of civilization, coupled with Confucianism, which gives the Chinese their identity and, effectively, an

¹⁹⁷ The Maoist era (1949-1976) was more a cultural reflection of the paternalistic personality cult of imperial autocracy than Soviet-style communism; see Jacques, 2009

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University of Sydney

unbreakable historical bond of unity whereby community is tantamount to the self.

The experience in China provided this researcher (with a strong social anthropology background) an opportunity to observe Confucianism in a socially aspiring, modernized and secularized society as now exists in the major coastal cities of China.¹⁹⁸ This experience confirmed the viability of the theoretical model being developed herein. Accordingly, this chapter on methodology is in two parts; the first addresses the hermeneutical processes of developing the theoretical component of the study, and the second, the researcher's intercultural position whilst in China.

The invaluable experience of being in China was in observing the living of Confucian concepts and ethics *en masse* and the degree of cultural clash between the meeting of traditional precepts and growing Western aspirations, both economic and social. Although not overtly discussed within the work, this immersion in Chinese society was an important aspect of the thesis. That is, observing the pragmatic potentiality of (adapted) traditional Chinese thought and the underlying Confucian *modus vivendi* in a modern cosmopolitan world. This confirmed the adaptability, flexibility, and potential effectiveness of the theoretical model explored herein into other cultural contexts, albeit on a far more limited scale; namely, a schooling community.

In short, Confucianism – including its metaphysics – is not an archaic obscure philosophy relevant to China alone, but a highly relevant tool for social cohesion and self-cultivation in the modern world. When Chinese philosophy is conjoined with Deweyan educational theory, the emerging model provides an a-cultural educational philosophy for the challenges of the future on a glocalized scale; that is, enabling participation in a globalized world, yet maintaining unique indigenous identities. In embarking on this project, firstly the theoretical – philosophical and historical – component of Chinese thought and society was studied through the lens of hermeneutics.

¹⁹⁸ Although the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) holds power in this one-party system, laws allowing private property were passed in the 1990s allowing a mixed economy; see Victor Nee's 1992 article, 'Organizational Dynamics of Market Transition: Hybrid Forms, Property Rights, and Mixed Economy in China' in *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (March) 1-27. Some of China's non-modernized impoverished rural societies were also visited. In these areas, familial, community and national ties remain equally strong – if not stronger – in these agrarian regions as with the more affluent urban areas.

3.1 The Theory

Hermeneutics, in regards to Chinese thought, is outlined by the sinologist and philosopher, Huang Junjie:

For several thousand years, intellectual histories of China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and Taiwan have been closely related to Chinese classics as interpreted by thinkers in these areas, even though their interpretations carried their own local characteristics. Indeed, Confucian hermeneutics may be regarded as the common denominator of all intellectual histories of these East Asian countries. The interaction between the universal values in Confucian classics and the unique features of these countries prompted thinkers to produce new interpretations from old texts.”¹⁹⁹

“[T]o produce new interpretations from old texts” is precisely the reason for adopting hermeneutical methodology in the execution of this project. Although only North and South East Asian countries are cited in the excerpt – as historically Confucian-based societies – Huang’s observations are relevant to understanding Chinese thought in broader contexts; in this case, Western comparative application. It can be said that the art of hermeneutics is epitomized in comparative philosophy whereby commonalities, complements, and disparities are contextually distinguished between two distinct approaches to the same subject matter with minimal loss of original meanings and then, in conjunction, taken to ‘new interpretations’. In this study, the subject matter is that of self, self-cultivation, and knowledge acquisition and implementation and is an attempt to give renewed dimensions to these concepts as navigational tools into the future; the vehicle being formal and informal education of the individual.

The hermeneutical method applied herein follows a three stage systematic process advocated by the philosopher and sinologist, Bo Mou:²⁰⁰

1. Analyzing ideas in the way intended by the philosopher in question (in Bo Mou's terms: “methodological perspective”). Relative to the thesis, this means Confucian ideas of self, self relative to the other, and the metaphysical position of humans in the

¹⁹⁹ 2005, p 353

²⁰⁰ Bo Mou, 2001

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University of Sydney

world will be analyzed from the Chinese perspective, as opposed to a comparative model based solely on Western philosophic method.

2. Analysis then takes place within the context of Confucianism's approach to the ideas which are to be considered – in this case, metaphysical, social and educational – then correlated to Deweyan perspectives (arrived at by a similar method; see below).
3. A consideration and incorporation of the historical processes is included within this method. That is, the formation of modern Confucian ideas as a historical continuation of Neo-Confucian thought²⁰¹, specifically as they relate to social construction and education of the individual in the present.

The advantage of this methodology for the dissertation is to avoid ethnocentricity in interpreting the material, to gain an accurate perception of Neo-Confucian ideas within their historical and contemporary intention, especially for the Western reader, and to ensure a clear basis is established to develop the educational model suggested as the core thesis. This hermeneutical method is also employed in the analysis of the works of John Dewey. Dewey was less a systematic philosopher and more a humanist and prolific essayist. Hence, a hermeneutical approach is considered appropriate; his era and the contexts in which his ideas were formed are considered.

John Dewey (1859 – 1952) was of the American school of pragmatic philosophy, also known as process philosophy. Significantly, Dewey lectured in China from 1919 to 1921 during the transition from the imperial to the republican era. Subsequently, China strongly impacted on Dewey and his philosophy.²⁰² In turn, Deweyan thought had entered China and has since informed sectors of the Chinese intelligentsia, both in philosophy and education. Accordingly, Deweyan thought became a strong candidate in developing the philosophic basis of this thesis in complement with Chinese philosophy; a balance between Eastern and Western ideas of self and self-cultivation. With the theory of the thesis developing, observing and participating in a meeting of Confucian and Western cultures – as is currently the case in the major coastal cities of China – became imperative.

²⁰¹ See Chapter 5 for an outline of Neo-Confucian thought as developed in the Song-Ming dynasties and is considered the dominant school of Confucian thought to the present.

²⁰² Keenan, 1977; Wang, Jessical Ching-Sze, 2011

3.2 The Researcher's Intercultural Position

From an anthropological perspective, in greater or lesser degree, the researcher brings his or her distinct social and cultural background to the culture being researched which has both advantages and disadvantages. Advantages, in that the researcher approaches the culture entered with a certain distance, an objectivity, and is in a position to note nuances and elements of the culture of which the indigenes are unaware due to the subjectivity of their immersion from birth. The disadvantages are that the researcher, inevitably, brings his/her own cultural perspective to the field and, accordingly, may misinterpret behaviors, intentions, and/or cultural motivations of the indigenous people. Clearly, a balanced position is needed; more precisely, an ethnorelative position of cultural integration.

The comparative educationist, Nigel Bagnall, states: "Potentially the most difficult part of undertaking comparative research is to position *your self* within a cultural context."²⁰³ To do this, he cites four key points for the researcher:

- Know your own culture
- Know as much as you can about the culture that you are studying. (language, customs, history, politics, sports!)
- Assumptions need to be constantly challenged. (French people are arrogant, Germans are highly organised, Australians are easy going, Laos people are gentle)
- Assess your strengths and weaknesses and play to your strengths²⁰⁴

The key, as Bagnall and others²⁰⁵ iterate, is 'intercultural sensitivity'. Intercultural sensitivity is a progressive achievement of the individual through, what the authors call, a Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)²⁰⁶ in a four stage process:

1. Denial, Defense and Minimization
2. Acceptance, Adaption, and Integration

²⁰³ 2011, p 204, my emphasis

²⁰⁴ 2011, p 204

²⁰⁵ Landis et al., 2004

²⁰⁶ Bagnall, 2011, pp 208-210; Bennett & Bennett (in Landis et al., 2004) as cited in Bagnall, 2011

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3. Ethnocentric Stages

4. Ethnorelative Stages

It is the fourth stage which is of interest here; that of ethnorelative integration. Effectively, the individual who spends time immersing themselves in cultures other than their own develop a certain cultural flexibility which enables them to participate and empathize from the *other culture's* perspective – even cultures not previously experienced.

People dealing with integration issues are generally already bicultural or multicultural in their worldviews. At some point, their sense of cultural identity may have been loosed from any particular cultural mooring, and they need to re-establish identity in a way that encompasses their broadened experience.²⁰⁷

The key phrase here for accuracy of comparative study is the researcher's "sense of cultural identity ... [being] loosed from any particular cultural mooring." In the case of this particular study, not only has the researcher a background in social anthropology – a field impossible to study successfully without cultural empathy – but also she has travelled from a young age and lived for extended periods in other countries, namely Germany and Indonesia (four and two years, respectively). This 'loosened' connection to her own society enables a flexibility to absorb other cultures and ways of being, therefore circumventing the first three states of the DIMS above; or, as Landis describes it:

The inherent cultural relativity of the acceptance configuration marks the major issue that emerges at this [final] stage [of the DIMS]: how to exercise power in terms of one's own values without imposing on the equally valid viewpoints of others²⁰⁸

This non-imposition of "one's own values ... on the equally valid viewpoints of others" is epitomized in the Chinese notion of *li* (禮 propriety; not to be confused with *li* 裡 principle) which is discussed in Chapter 5 and strongly informed the approach to understanding Confucian philosophy as it is lived in tandem with globalizing influences, namely inside 21st century China. Essentially, *li* is a creative process whereby disparate values and opinions are listened to, absorbed, and mutually reconstructed by all parties

²⁰⁷ Landis et al., p157 as cited in Bagnall, 2011, p 208

²⁰⁸ Landis et al., p155 as cited in Bagnall, 2011, p 209

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concerned for harmonious outcomes without offense to others' positions or values. DIMS encapsulates *li* and is the ideal methodological approach to comparative studies due to an empathetic position being taken; hence DIMS functions as a background approach for the study in hand.

Li is the pivotal point on which China's strong familial, social, and community constructs are maintained; these connections and networks underpin Chinese cultural dynamics and is often referred to *guanxi* (关系 social connections). A one dimensional notion of *guanxi* (关系) is that it is a source of corruption and nepotism.²⁰⁹ *Guanxi* is, in fact, a historical and social phenomenon and a key aspect in understanding China and, subsequently, being a part of a particular network of trust. *Guanxi* is instrumental in the gaining of insight into Chinese dynamics. Accordingly, in Chinese fieldwork, the understanding of and participation in *guanxi* is crucial.

3.2.1 Notes on *guanxi* (关系 social connections): The subtlety of humanness

In their article on *guanxi*, Kriz et.al. focus

... on the ways in which researchers can utilise the sociocultural phenomenon of relational and *guanxi*-orientation as a tool for more effective Chinese-related data collection ... [the idea] arose as an unanticipated methodological outcome of a preceding qualitative study of Chinese perceptions of interpersonal trust ... One of the key aspects [in this approach] ... is the construction and illustration of a researcher-developed *guan-xishu* or tree of connections.²¹⁰

Key to the development of a network of *guan-xishu* is trust. As stated succinctly by Kriz et al:

Essentially, links and ties in China are primarily based on interpersonal rather than institutional bonds ... Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936) conceptualised such a distinction a generation ago with his description of *Gesellschaft* (formal institutional

²⁰⁹ See Gold et. al., 2002, *Social connections in China: Institutions, culture, and the changing nature of guanxi* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

²¹⁰ 2014, p 27

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structures and operations) and *Gemeinschaft* (relational identity based on belonging to a group and community).²¹¹

It is the latter concept of *gemeinschaft* which describes the notion of *guan-xishu*. This ‘relational identity’ within the group is based on interpersonal trust rather than institutional status as the term *gesellschaft* suggests and, accordingly, once trust is established, one is then introduced to other ‘branches’ of the “tree of connections”; one becomes an interrelated part of a functioning whole.

It must also be emphasized that in China direct questioning achieves little in the process of data collection. A direct question elicits a response which, in Western perceptions, would seem evasive or simply unclear. Conversely, if one listens carefully for verbal cues and then, in turn, intimates certain possibilities in an open-ended manner the subject invariably clarifies, confirms, or negates the suggestions. It’s important to keep in mind that the subject wishes to ensure that their stance is not seen as an overt gesture against their colleagues’ positions or the status quo, and ‘face’ is kept by everyone concerned. This is an extension of *li* as discussed above.

Within this process of trust and connection there is an integral element which cannot be overlooked: communal dining. In a country which has historically suffered famines and *en masse* hardship, food becomes a pivotal factor in human relations, both within families and professional contexts. Professionally, rarely is one invited to meet someone at an office, but rather a restaurant; and rarely is the meal a one-on-one affair. One’s host will invite anyone who may be interested in attending; there can be any number of people present without any prior notification. One arrives and is introduced to the other guests. In this researcher’s experience, there was often up to a dozen invitees at any given banquet – from members of various university departments, educationalists and/or students – in attendance.

The mood of these banquets is social and congenial so all parties feel comfortable and relaxed²¹²; nevertheless, one is being subtly scrutinized and trust is (ideally) incrementally

²¹¹ Kriz et al., 2014, p 28

²¹² Banquet tables are invariably round – rather than square or rectangular – so no one is actually ‘head of the table’. Nevertheless, there is a seating protocol for the host or guest of honor with seating of other guests relative to this

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built. The importance and subtlety of this initial interaction is often lost on Westerners, yet, is the key to understanding Chinese dynamics and what is happening under the surface of any given situation by stakeholders. Conversely, if trust is not established, the researcher (or observer) is given ‘red herrings’ or is simply told what he or she wants to hear in a deflective manner. This is the most difficult aspect of researching in China; nevertheless, if the researcher is trusted consensually within the group, data collection in China poses few problems. The researcher is confident of information received and observations made when new introductions continue to build (by referral of established contacts) in relatively short periods of time (a few days).

In conclusion, it needs to be noted that this study did not require a quantitative or empirical approach towards data collection, rather an anthropological approach of cultural immersion in exploring the viability of an East-West philosophy of education. That is, by observing and participating in a cross-cultural 21st century East-West environs, one is able to understand the possibility of adaption to globalization whilst maintaining cultural and sociological uniqueness. Effectively, this latter part of the study is an anthropological observation of an ancient culture (Confucianism) meeting the post-modernism of globalism – the clashes and complements, adaptations and non-adaptions – and how this could inform a philosophy of education for the 21st century.

Hermeneutics, as described earlier in this chapter, laid the foundation for development of the core Confucian-Deweyan philosophy. The cultural immersion was observation on a socially macroscopic scale exploring the possibility of pragmatically implementing such a philosophy within the *microcosm* of an educational community. That is exploring the practicality and viability of an East-West philosophy of education model – in its universal humanism – which could be adapted to other cultural contexts.

position.

4.0 Self *vis a vis* the Individual

This chapter explores the notions of ‘self’ and ‘individual’ in both Western and Confucian thought. In exploring these concepts, not only philosophy, but psychology, sociology, and neuroscience (consciousness studies) are considered. The chapter concludes with a comparative, a-cultural overview of how, and how not, these two cultural perceptions of the human being – in both a metaphysical and pragmatic sense – disagree, correlate and/or complement each other. The comparative philosopher, Jiyuan Yu, asks the question: “Can the familiar Western concepts of the soul and self (and associated terms such as person, individual, mind, human being, etc.) be used in understanding Chinese philosophy about human selfhood?”²¹³ This chapter briefly considers this very question in all its difficulties.

Western philosophy commonly uses the term ‘person’ to encompass the experiencing self, both sensory and cognitive, the behavioral self and the physical self. The notions of ‘person’, ‘individual’ and ‘self’ impact on a vast spectrum of areas, both theoretical and applied: psychology, education, political science, theology, sociology, anthropology, law, and even physics.²¹⁴ In these broad contexts, the self as a ‘perceiver’, ‘concept-builder’, and/or ‘agent’ and ‘actor’ becomes much more difficult to define in universal terms. In approaching comparative studies – fields such as social anthropology and comparative philosophy – non-Western notions of self enter the discourse. This creates another set of difficulties. The social anthropologist, Grace Harris, observes that “concepts of person, self, and, also, individual are often conflated. *The consequences are serious, for the issues are theoretically important and not merely terminological.*”²¹⁵ These issues are highly important because with a clearer understanding of what the self *is* in a given context means models or extenuating concepts – precursors for application in any form – can make a solid foundation for implementation.

Harris identifies the self as not merely a discrete entity functioning within its own universe, but that the self perceives, feels, and acts within a much larger perspective in a mutually informing dynamic. She identifies three key areas of the self to be considered: “(1)

²¹³ 2008, p 604

²¹⁴ Quantum mechanics has had to address the notion of self relative to the observer-participator theory and non-local communication in attempting to unravel the conundrum of ‘quantum entanglement’. That is, the act of observation appears to effect probability outcomes in quantum experiments. See Greene, 2004; Gao, Shan, 2004; Grandpierre, 2001. For a philosophy of science assessment of this evidence of an interconnected universe and the role of self in observation, see Bohm, 1980

²¹⁵ 1989, p 559; my emphasis

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University of Sydney

living entities among many such entities in the universe, (2) human beings who are centers of being or experience, and (3) human beings who are members of society”.²¹⁶ These considerations form the beginnings of an approach to the self which is a-cultural – and therefore can universally be applied and adapted cross-culturally – and, in the case of the cross-cultural model developed in this work, are the precepts by which we can begin to understand knowledge acquisition. That is, learning through experience (in all its variations and nuances, sensory and non-sensory), cognitive processes, and interacting with the other which impacts beyond the self in the world; the other being different people, societies and cultures to our own and the environment within which we and they exist.

It is these three considerations that this chapter primarily addresses as the basis for the development of a wholistic, communitarian learning model which considers the universal dimensions of being human in a world of accelerated change. In this now globalized world of ever-increasing influxes of information (to the point of inundation) and shifting cultural and social paradigms, the need of the individual to develop flexibility in the balancing of individual pragmatism with consideration of the other in intentions, actions and interactions – personally, socially, and ecologically – becomes a matter of some urgency. As Harris identifies above, “concepts of person, self, and, also, individual are often conflated. The consequences are serious ...” Hence, the aim of this chapter is to clarify these terms as pertains to cross-cultural perceptions as the fundamental basis of the learning model described herein. Firstly, for comparative purposes, self *vis a vis* the individual in Western history of ideas is discussed.

4.1 The Notion of Self *vis a vis* the Individual in Western Thought

The implicit and explicit understanding of ‘person’ within Western thought can be traced back through the continuum of history of ideas beginning in early Greek thought. This section gives a brief overview of the vast field of self and individual as it shifted and changed, was informed and counter-informed, by the movements of social and economic structures, the Enlightenment period (Europe and Britain, 17th and 18th century), the Industrial Revolution and subsequent technological innovations²¹⁷ of the 19th century

²¹⁶ 1989, p 559

²¹⁷ The Industrial Revolution and other technological, social and economic effects impacting on perceptions of self are discussed below.

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impacting into the 20th and 21st centuries. In growing momentum from the early 20th century to the present, the fields of psychology and neuroscience (the latter due, predominantly, to technological innovations such as scans and electronic sensors) have become the most influential fields in informing – implicitly and explicitly, academically and colloquially – the current perspectives on self *vis a vis* the individual. It has come to the point whereby these two concepts of self and individual are, in most cases, interchangeable and indistinguishable from each other. Jiyuan Yu, a comparative philosopher, gives a précis of these beginnings of self *vis a vis* the individual from early Greek thinking to the Enlightenment era:

The Greek term for soul, *psyche*, has two main meanings in the fifth century Greek. (1) The ‘life-force’. Having soul is simply being alive, and all living things (including plants and animals) are said to be ensouled (*empsychos*). (2) The subject of cognitive and affective activities, and the bearer of moral qualities. According to Aristotle, the soul is a set of capacities or powers (*dunamis*) with which living things live their lives ... It is the second sense of *psyche* that becomes one of the central concerns of Greek philosophy. It is the sense used when Socrates claims to take care of the soul. For Aristotle, to understand the nature of the soul, one must investigate the workings of all the capacities that define life. Yet he also makes it clear that the soul that is related to life-function is irrelevant to the ethical concerns (*Nicomachean Ethics* ... 1.13, 1102b11–12). In both Stoicism and Epicureanism, the focus of interest is on the mental functions of cognition, emotion and desire, rather than on the relation between soul and life. To some extent, this paves the way for Descartes to switch the term ‘soul’ to ‘mind’.²¹⁸

Yu succinctly outlines here the position of Greek thinkers to the notion of *psyche* – or soul or mind – evidencing indicators of how the concepts of self, individual, mind, soul and personhood have been subsequently considered in the West. Yu’s statement above: “For Aristotle, to understand the nature of the soul, one must investigate the workings of all the capacities that define life” indicates that the existential foci of soul and life, and therefore interconnection with the universe were once a dominant aspect of Western thinking. This has been lost as indicated by an important association Yu subsequently makes: “To some extent, [the Stoic and Epicurean focus on mental functions of cognition, emotion and desire] paves the way for Descartes to switch the term ‘soul’ to ‘mind.’” This is a crucial statement in that this “switch” – which Yu fairly claims Descartes was influenced by as demonstrated in the

²¹⁸ 2008, p 605

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Cartesian quote *cogito ergo sum*, ‘I think therefore I am’ – is a shifting of focus away from existential issues of “soul and life” to more cognitive attributes forming and informing self. That is, with the de-emphasis on larger existential issues (of self interconnected to the universe), and growing emphases on issues of cognition, emotion and desire (of self being a discrete entity operating in isolation), the latter eventually subsumed the former leading to a more materialistic position; a position which remains dominant to the present.

Historically, there are a plethora of concepts regarding ‘person’ – often (philosophically) radically different interpretations – which vary, not only from era to era, but from philosopher to philosopher in contrast to the Chinese interpretations of the same which maintain a certain continuity throughout the ages as is addressed later in this chapter. As the philosopher, Henry Johnstone states in his work on Western philosophers’ treatment of the self, *The Problem of the Self*:

Throughout the history of [Western] philosophy, there have been many views in which the self figures as a fundamental concept, but there have been few views, if any, in which the self and the person have both been regarded as fundamental. For the views in which the self figures as a fundamental concept have usually treated the person as derivative (for example, as a mere composite of self and body), and the views in which the person figures as a fundamental concept have usually treated the self as derivative (for example, as a mere aspect of the behavior of the person) or else as altogether unnecessary. Yet there is no reason why self and person should not both be fundamental concepts. For they are entirely different in function. ²¹⁹

This viewpoint of Johnstone’s – albeit, to some extent, valid – remains unsatisfactory; what *exactly* is ‘self and body’ or ‘person’? His concluding statement that “there is no reason why self and person should not both be fundamental concepts” (with which this author agrees) is nonetheless confusing as Johnstone seems certain of their demarcation yet, as his work unfolds, these concepts become less and less clear. The unsatisfactory component in this excerpt is predominantly the lack of systematic metaphysics in the gamut of Western philosophers he addresses, as suggested by the statements: for some philosophers, person is posited “for example, as a mere composite of self and body” and, conversely, self is posited “for example, as a mere aspect of the behavior of the person”. In this summation of Western

²¹⁹ 1970, p 15

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philosophy it is implied that not only is there a weak dialectic between the physiological existence of a human and the behavioral existence of a human, but also demonstrates that a *cohering, agreed* metaphysics of the human being is lacking.

Also, Johnstone concludes here that self and person “are entirely different in function.” Yet these two concepts *cannot* be ‘entirely different’; they simply *must* be relational, otherwise the human being is a fragmented entity – an entity whereby the sum ‘components’, tangible and intangible, are disparate. Unfortunately, this notion appears to be the trend, not only in the Western tradition of philosophy, but also mainstream psychology.²²⁰ The growing field of consciousness studies – an uneasy mix of psychology and neuroscience²²¹ and, to a much lesser extent, philosophy – attempts (somewhat unsuccessfully) to unravel this near impossible conundrum of brain-mind and self when applying the overriding tool of research in this field; namely, empirical methodology. The eminent neurobiologist and noted researcher in consciousness studies, Antonio Damasio, states this of self:

In most circumstances, rather than concentrating resources on our inner states, it is perhaps more advantageous to concentrate one’s resources on the images that describe problems out in the world or on the premises of those problems or on the options for their solution and possible outcomes. Yet this skewing of perspective relative to what is available in our minds has a cost. It tends to prevent us from *sensing* the possible origin and nature of what we call self. When the veil is lifted, however, at the scale of understanding permitted to the human mind, I believe we can sense the origin of the construct we call self in the representation of individual life.²²²

This decidedly materialistic position lacks a systematic metaphysical hypothesis. In *sensing* “the origin of the construct we call self in the representation of individual life” is Damasio speaking in purely behavioral terms, or that of a deeper existential beingness and becomingness? He leaves it open to conjecture. He concludes that “the organism, as represented inside its own brain, is a likely biological forerunner for what eventually becomes

²²⁰ Psychology, now a ‘stand-alone’ field for some 100 years, has not yet provided an agreed categorical definition of ‘mind’; a difficult position when the concept of mind is the fundamental premise of this vast field of study. Often ‘the mind’ becomes an interchangeable term – explicitly and implicitly – with ‘the brain’ as simply the source of cognition (as a closed, independent system) and an agent of behavior.

²²¹ Damasio, 1999

²²² 1999, p 29, my emphasis

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the elusive sense of self”,²²³ reflecting the general position of researchers in the field of consciousness studies. Nevertheless, Damasio concedes that “the most revealing fact is that consciousness and emotion are *not* separable”²²⁴ and has this to say about the “mysterious” wholistic human:

For some non-specialists [non-neuropsychologists], consciousness and mind are virtually indistinguishable, and so are consciousness and conscience, and consciousness and soul, or consciousness and spirit. For them, and maybe for you, mind, consciousness, conscience, soul, and spirit form one big region of strangeness that sets humans apart, that separates the mysterious from the explainable and the sacred from the profane.²²⁵

The problem lies here in the main emphasis being placed on empirical method in ascertaining these nebulous concepts of mind, self, individual and consciousness. Empiricism, as it presents as an applied philosophy, has an implicit subtext that there exists an immutable, constant ‘truth’; accordingly, a notion continues to prevail of ‘that which cannot be measured is not real’ or subject to serious doubt.²²⁶ Empirical methodology is strongly supported by innovative technologies, as demonstrated in the case of neuropsychology, whereby advanced technologies enable the prospect of finding physiological (or material) answers to the mystery of mind appear promising. Empirical methodology, which Rene Descartes (1596-1650) enshrined in his philosophic treatise *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting One’s Reason and Seeking the Truth in the Sciences* (1637), remains a predominant legacy within the continuum of the West’s history of ideas and a cornerstone of the Enlightenment era.

In the *Discourse* [as the above treatise is abbreviated], Descartes describes how he discovered the inconclusiveness of earlier philosophy. He then proposes to himself to begin science and philosophy again, but to begin it like a man walking in the dark, so slowly and carefully that he will at least not fall. The method he finds (quite like that of Francis Bacon, whom he does not mention) is comprised of four rules: Not to accept anything that is not so clear and distinct

²²³ 1999, p 22

²²⁴ 1999, p 16, emphasis in original; as is discussed below, it is worth noting here that Confucian philosophy is definitive in rendering heart-and-mind (including consciousness and all affective states) as one inseparable phenomenon and is expressed in the character *xin* 心 – an ideogram of the heart with its aorta and veins entering and leaving the organ as opposed to brain *nao* 腦 which is understood as a processor of information rather than a generator of thoughts.

²²⁵ 1999, pp 26-7

²²⁶ A position which has been substantially undermined by quantum mechanics; see Greene, 2004

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University of Sydney

that he cannot doubt it; to divide difficulties into as many parts as possible and as required to resolve them better; to proceed in an orderly way from the simplest and most easily known to the complex; and to make repeated reviews to make sure that nothing is left out.²²⁷

This material, mechanistic approach described in *Discourse* is exemplified in Descartes' theories on the workings of the human body whereby "the body's muscles and tendons are like devices and springs that set the machine in motion, the "animal spirits" of the body are like the "water that drives the machines"²²⁸ And in a similar vein as Damasio above, Descartes concludes:

And finally, when a *rational soul* is present in this machine it will have its principal seat in the brain, and reside there like the fountain keeper who must be stationed at the tanks [brain; heart, according to Descartes, is the source of the 'water' pumping through the 'pipes'] to which the fountain's pipes return if he wants to produce, or prevent, or change their movements in some way.²²⁹

Due to such Enlightenment thinking, the body remains a mechanistic phenomenon and the brain – as an organ in itself – the seat of self; bringing into juxtaposition physiology and the notion of being a human as a collection of discrete parts which work together as in an engine. The consequences of – or, possibly, one factor which led to – this mechanistic perspective of the human is reflected in the history of sociology. Self *vis a vis* the individual has been on shifting ground for centuries, changing emphases and definitions informed by technological and economic changes in society. As the historian of social and psychological science, John Greenwood, succinctly outlines:

The traditional characterization of Western moral and social systems as individualistic also tends to ignore the variety and complexity of that tradition ... In medieval thought, for example, the term "individual" meant "inseparable", and was generally employed to individuate "a member of some group, kind, or species." Persons were defined *as* individuals by reference to the groups of which they were members ... Partly as a result of the Renaissance and Reformation, and the rise of capitalism, the concept of the individual came to be divorced from its original connection with social community ... The liberal political

²²⁷ Scharfstein, 1998, p 345

²²⁸ Scharfstein, 1998, p 344

²²⁹ Excerpted from *Treatise on Man* in *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, Volume 1 as translated by Cottingham, Stoothoff, and Murdoch, 1984, p 101; cited in Scharfstein, 1998, p 344, emphasis in text

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University of Sydney

tradition that developed from this conception emphasized the “bare” individual as bearer of absolute personal rights, as the parallel tradition of laissez-faire economics emphasized the purely egoistical rational agent.²³⁰

In the 21st century it is difficult to conceive that, as Greenwood states above, in “medieval thought, the term individual meant inseparable”, and was generally employed “to individuate a member of some group, kind, or species.” Shifting economic and social factors impacting on perceptions of self are clearly demonstrated in the Industrial Revolution as a result of capitalism’s rise. The steam engine and mass, centralized manufacturing instigated social, cultural and political upheaval as agrarian lives were left and cottage industries became almost redundant; clocks – as opposed to seasons and need – now determined the work day. A disconnection with nature inevitably ensued whereby community activities and festivals – which often revolved around the seasons – diminished or disappeared. Families and communities became fragmented due to populations shifting to large manufacturing centres, hence a massive cultural shift; and with that shift, the idea of self and the other changed yet again, moving swiftly towards the liberal political tradition which brings in its wake the perception that self is an agent devoid of interconnection or (inner) interdependence with the other.

The post-modern view of the person – whereby self and individual have now become interchangeable terms – is certainly as Greenwood states above: the “bearer of absolute personal rights ... [and an] egoistical rational agent” which is devoid, by definition, from conceptual connection with the other except in abstract terms. The individual is now an isolated, closed entity whose inner life is merely a gestalt of emotion, desires, and egoism. Nevertheless, some philosophers, notably Heidegger (1889–1976) among others, are poignantly interested in the relationality of self – or more precisely, in Heidegger’s case – existential beingness with the other. The Heideggerian, Michael Miller, states:

Martin Heidegger certainly had a great interest in Being. Heidegger’s concern in Being, however, was not centered upon the study of individual entities or certain types of being in the world. Heidegger believed that the great majority of philosophers who examined being in such a manner failed to produce meaningful answers, for their investigations did not properly consider the contexts in which beings lie. So, rather than center upon particular examples of

²³⁰ 2003, p 168; emphasis in text, quotes referenced in text

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Christine A. Hale
University of Sydney

being or certain characteristics of particular types of being, Heidegger instead paid close attention to being in relation ... Heidegger's search ultimately brought him to seek a transcendental unity with beings.²³¹

Heidegger, arguably, sought to overcome the constraint of dualism²³² – subject/object, mind/matter, observed/observer, body/mind – which underpins Western thinking, most notably enforced from the Enlightenment era onward as depicted in the Cartesian ideas discussed above. As the philosopher, Wen Haiming, observes:

Heidegger claims that the history of metaphysics is caught in the search for Being as the final ground of beings, which means it is really a theological search – for the uncaused caused or “*causa sui*.” For Heidegger, the question of Being (*Seinsfrage*) does not search for some objective principle outside of the human existence (*Dasein*). “Metaphysical inquiry must be posed as a whole and from the essential position of the existence [*Dasein*] that questions. We are questioning, here and now, for ourselves”.²³³

This is the *relational* interconnection – whereby there is not only interdependence of phenomena, but a sense of non-discreteness in this interdependence – a contextual placement as opposed to viewing components first in isolation from other components as in the Cartesian method. Relational contextualization is also the basis of American process philosophy and pragmatism established by William James (1842–1910), Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947), and John Dewey (1859–1952).²³⁴ As Heidegger believed “that the great majority of philosophers who examined being [as individual entities] failed to produce meaningful answers, for their investigations did not properly consider the contexts in which beings lie” as Miller outlines above, Dewey also addresses the problem of philosophers not considering context in their treatment of self in his essay *Experience and Nature*.

The arbitrary character of the “reality” that emerges is seen in the fact that very different objects are selected by different philosophers. These may be mathematical entities, states of consciousness, or sense data. That is, whatever strikes a philosopher from the angle of the particular problem that presses on him/[her] as being self-evident and hence completely

²³¹ 2005, p 379

²³² Seidel, 1964

²³³ 2009, p 25; Heidegger references cited in text, square brackets in text

²³⁴ Chapter 6 addresses Deweyan thought.

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University of Sydney

assured, is selected by him[/her] to constitute reality.”²³⁵

Process philosophy – as spear-headed by James, Whitehead, and Dewey – has relational interconnection within the experiential realm as its cornerstone in understanding the self. That is, self – through its on-going dynamic interactions with and within the wider universe – is a kinetic, ever-developing phenomenon. In turn, this forming and reforming self then informs the other in *their* experiential realms and, accordingly, the other’s self is formed and reformed in a simultaneous, cyclic and perpetual process.²³⁶ Hence, the picture process philosophy paints is a kinetically interconnected, interdependent universe of the inner-outer in flux and motion, evolving and devolving, mutually informing and reforming, with *experience of and with the other* (tangible and intangible) as its moving force. Whitehead emphasizes this moving force as the key factor in processual pragmatic terms; that is, *real* interconnection: “*the process of actual entities* is not something ideal or abstract, rather it is a *relationality* that keeps changing with the world.”²³⁷ Relationality, in this sense, is operational in thought, intention, and action as “*the process of actual entities*”.

In agreement with Whitehead, Dewey’s perspective on self and individual is a mutually informing shifting of inner-outer landscapes devoid of dualism and the separateness of phenomena, both tangible and intangible. The self is a constant work in progress in being and becoming. “For Dewey, selves are emerging together with the relational creativity of experience. Selves are as concrete as actualized objects, not in the sense of isolated beings, but in the sense of *relational becomings*.”²³⁸ This position of the process philosophers – and Dewey in particular – lends itself strongly to the Confucian perception of self and individual.

4.2 The Notion of Self *vis a vis* the Individual in Chinese Thought

Unlike in the history of Western philosophy, there is actually no *problematic* of the self in the early Confucian tradition. Of course, there are a number of terms involving self-reference in the ancient Chinese language. They distinguish between self and others contextually: what is “other” in one context would be “self” in another. *Wo* (我), still commonly used today, and *wu*

²³⁵ As cited in Wen Haiming, 2009, p 42; Dewey reference in text.

²³⁶ Dewey, 1981; Wen Haiming, 2009; Whitehead, 1944/1961/[1967]

²³⁷ Wen Haiming, 2009, p 39; my emphases, see Whitehead, 1944/1961/[1967], p 143

²³⁸ Wen Haiming, 2009, p 47; my emphasis

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University of Sydney

(吾) would be “self” in another. The characters *zi* (自) and *ji* (己), both reflective, are the terms most frequently rendered into “self” in English. Another term, *shen* (身), with the basic reference of “body,” is sometimes also translated as “self.” As Herbert Fingarette [the noted Chinese philosopher] suggests, it is important not to reify these grammatical equivalents of “self” into some kind of inner ego by giving them the independent noun form in English; they are more accurately translated as “oneself” rather than “one’s self”.²³⁹

From this succinct overview, the difference in perspectives between Western and Confucian concepts of self can be discerned. Self, for Confucians, is inextricably connected to the other, and, as Fingarette is noted above as stating, self is not indicative of “some kind of [discrete] inner ego”. In the subtle change of emphasis from ‘one’s self’ to ‘oneself’, what is implied is the lack of distinctness between the self and other. As Tan points out, Chinese is a contextual language; not only grammatically, but perceptually in the intermixing of subject and object. As she states: “what is “other” in one context would be “self” in another”. This phenomenon of linguistic interconnection, naturally, is reflected in the Chinese continuum of philosophy to the present and *visa versa*. Philosophy, equally – as in all cultures – is influenced by language and language shifts and, therefore, history of ideas are inextricably intertwined as being mutually reflective in cultural terms.

Accordingly, the Chinese view of self and other being highly interconnective is not a case of pure semantics – it is expressing the day to day perceptual state of Chinese thinking. That is, throughout the full spectrum of life and living: from mundane life to sophisticated metaphysical thinking. Due to this, the ‘inner life’ of the individual is far less problematic in Confucian thinking than it is in Western thinking. The ‘inner’ and the ‘outer’ – the physical, psychological and metaphysical states – are perceived as highly mutually informing and inextricably conjoined. This is denoted most clearly in the character *xin* (心), heart-and-mind. To quote Tan again:

Notions involved in describing the “inner life” have the radical *xin* (心), the heart-mind in which the psychological and the physical are united. This is the same character used to refer to “the core,” “the centre.” What begins in the *xin*, as the “inner” centre of personal

²³⁹ Tan, Sor-hoon, 2004, pp 29-30; emphasis in text, Fingarette reference in original. As Tan notes in the subsequent sentence after this passage: “Had the question arisen, Confucius, like Dewey, would not have believed in any “self” that is an original separate entity set over and against objects and the world.” (p 30)

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University of Sydney

experience, is almost invariably connected to “outer” expressions and actions accessible to others; what begins as an “outer” experience, must reach the “inner” centre to have any significance.²⁴⁰

This constant dynamic of the inner↔outer mutually informing each other is represented in Figure 4.1.

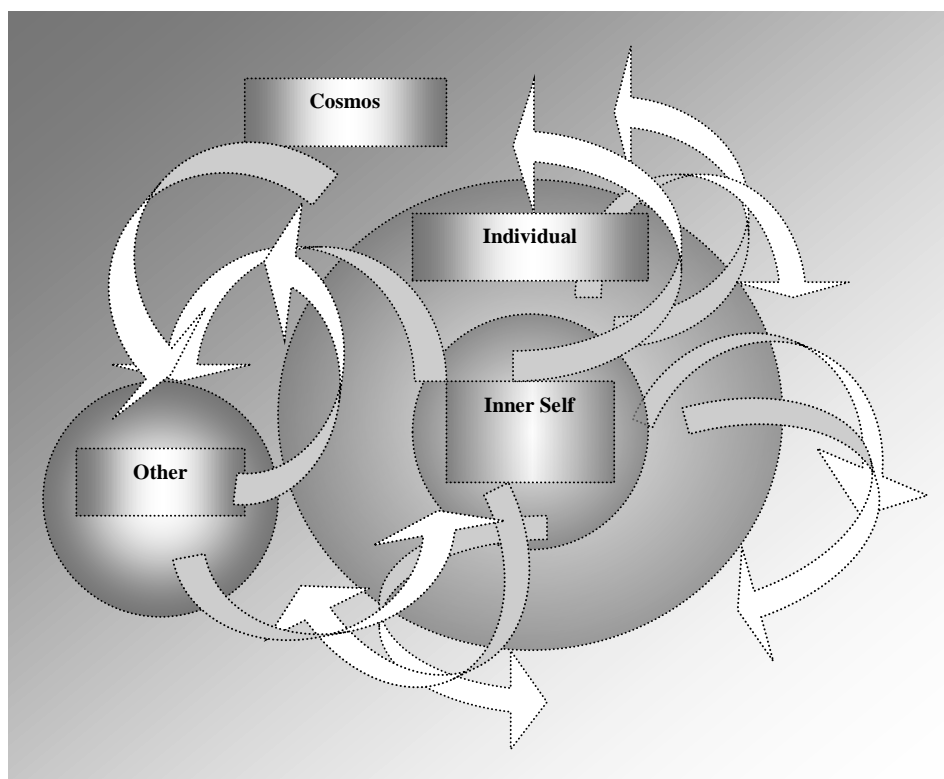


Figure 4.1 The Interchange of Mutually Informing Inner↔Outer

Figure 4.1 describes the dynamic flux and motion in the two-way informing process between the inner and the outer; between self and other – other being not only another individual, but also all entities in the universe. As the social anthropologist Grace Harris states on introduction to this chapter, and forming the basis of this exploration of self and individual, the first consideration in addressing this issue is that humans are “living entities

²⁴⁰ Tan, Sor-hoon, 2004, p 30

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University of Sydney

among many such entities in the universe”. The Confucian notion of the inner-outer, as illustrated here, encapsulates this idea as does Deweyan thought. Humans are informed and counter-informed by being embedded in their environs – whether their environs are their immediate locale or the larger universe in its underlying patterning and cyclic movements; that is, a cosmos. Hence, the interrelated elements of the triad of human, nature (of earth), and unseen cosmological forces (as in an intangibly ordered, as opposed to a chaotic universe) is the fundamental concept upon which Chinese thinking is based. No phenomenon – seen or unseen – exists which is not ultimately interconnected to another phenomenon, whether human, of nature, or of the greater cosmos. The understanding of self – in all its various aspects – has been relatively consistent since Neo-Confucianism first developed in the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE).²⁴¹ The above diagram describes the basic concept of self in and of the world. Self has many aspects; Confucian thought has developed an agreed philosophic framework for describing these aspects and how they interrelate within the context of the inner-outer.

Self, as a complex multidimensional gestalt, is further refined in the terms *ren xin* (人心) *ren xing* (人性), and *tian xin* (天心) or *dao xin* (道心), human heart-and-mind, true nature of self, and cosmological heart-and-mind or heart-and-mind of the Way, respectively. The confluence of these concepts is described below in Figure 4.2.

²⁴¹ Neo-Confucianism remains the dominant school of Confucian thought to the present.

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University of Sydney

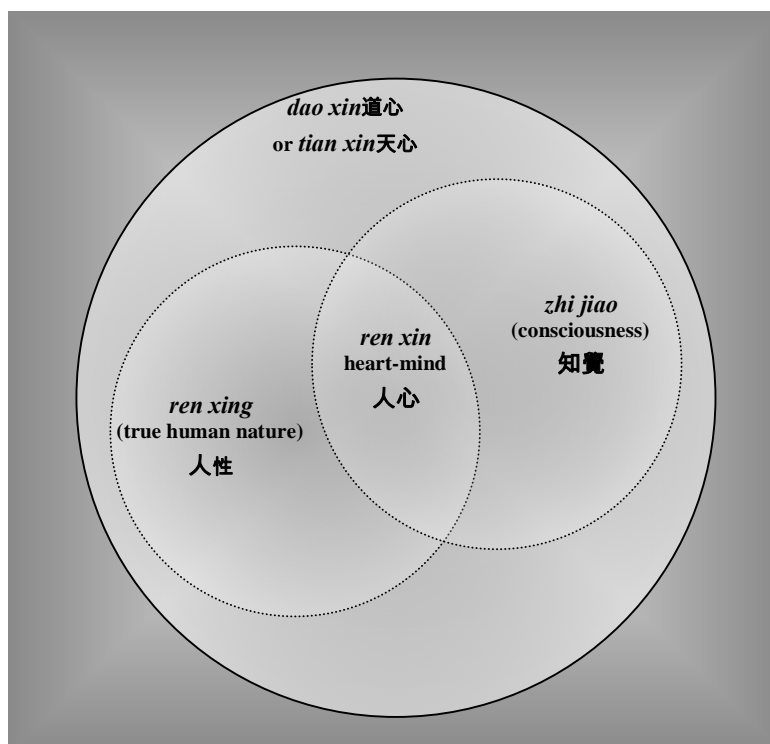


Figure 4.2 Confluence of the Interrelationship between Confucian Notions of Heart-and-Mind, Consciousness and True Nature

This placement of consciousness, *zhi jiao* (知覺), in the Confucian model was first developed by Zhang Zai (張載1020–1077) as is discussed in Chapter 5 in further detail. Consciousness can be effectively translated as ‘awareness’, incorporating sensory stimuli, awareness of processes taking place in *xin* (心) and *ren xing* (人性) as both *xin* and *ren xing* are mutually informed by *tian xin* (天心) or *dao xin* (道心). As a two-way dynamic, *tian xin* (the cosmological mind) is *not* immutable or transcendent as in the Judeo-Christian model of divinity; rather the phenomenon evolves and/or devolves with the cyclic nature of the collective human condition. The core concept of the term *dao xin* – as an alternative term to *tian xin* – is that once *ren xin* has been cultivated to a certain extent, consciousness is enabled to access the wisdom (the Way) of the cosmological mind (of which *ren xing* and *ren xin* are latently and innately in connection). Once consciousness is enabled to inform intentions and actions, the wider community within which the individual is posited is enhanced.²⁴² This is

²⁴² Relative to this perspective, one term for ‘humanity’ is *ren dao* (人道) – people following the Way. It is worth noting here that *ren* 人 – in contrast to *ren xin* 人心 which refers more to the inner life of the self – can refer both to ‘person’ (individual) and ‘people’ in general terms. The compound character 仁 (also enunciated as *ren*), which means ‘benevolence’, has the

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the primary life-project of every Confucian: to know the Way, the *dao*, and it is through accessing *tian xin* that this is achieved as an on-going process.

In Confucianism, there is no formal intermediary – or priest-caste – to guide the individual to this state; it is the individual's experience within inner-outer connections – and subsequent reflective mindfulness – which enables and enhances this on-going process. Ideally, one eventually attains sagehood (*shen* 神 realization of *tian xin* in thought and action); an exemplary human being whom others can learn from by example. In turn, the conduct of the sage assists others in realizing *their* connection to the cosmological mind and their true nature in developing heart-and-mind on the path towards sagehood; that is, following the Way or *dao*. Accordingly, this multi-dimensional and kinetic process continues in perpetuity; there is constant and seamless interactivity between the inner↔outer; cosmological mind↔human heart-and-mind, and individual↔community. This dynamic, wholistic, and non-dualistic self, in which the various elements of self and individual exist in concert with each other, is converse to the Cartesian – empirical or materialistic – approach used in Western thinking to address ‘the problem of the self’. That is, in the empirical approach, solutions are sought by isolating the various elements, defining each separately (therefore allotting each ‘component’ its discrete function), and then organizing a functional schema mechanistically.

The consequences of the Confucian approach to the concept of self *vis a vis* the individual manifests itself on, not only a theoretical or metaphysical level, but also in pragmatic intention and action. As the comparative philosopher, Sor-hoon Tan, succinctly identifies: “The central question for Confucianism is “What is to be done?” rather than “Who am I?” The latter could of course be part of the former, and vice versa, but the unfolding of the philosophical quest becomes very different, depending on which is considered the primary issue.”²⁴³ The question “Who am I?” – effectively, “What is my identity?” – does not pose itself to a Confucian to nearly the same degree it does to the Western mind.

The Confucian is contextualized within his/her community – immediate and wider, current and historical²⁴⁴ – and therefore intuitively discerns his/her identity within that

character 人 compressed on the left hand side and the character 二 (numeral two) on the right hand side, creating an ideogram of people together in compassion. Again, linguistic constructs reflect Confucian concepts.

²⁴³ 2004, p 30

²⁴⁴ This is the key to the Chinese sense of ‘civilization’. The Chinese feel connected and embedded in their millennial long rich civilization; it is a very strong aspect of their identity.

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context. Hence, the question “What is to be done?” becomes the primary concern. In ‘doing’, a sense of identity naturally arises, more in the sense of Western medieval perceptions of the individual (referring back to the John Greenwood quote above). A Confucian is not an isolated individual with pressing existential concerns, as is often the case with post-modern (wo)man. The eminent philosopher, Herbert Fingarette, encapsulates the issue in his essay ‘The Problem of Self in the *Analects*’:

The “problem of the self” may also be taken to amount to the quest to identify some specially central element of personhood – the soul, or (beneath the façade) the “true” or “real” self. The “problem of the self” may refer not to an intellectual question but to a task for the person: the task of actualizing one’s “true self” and so achieving fulfillment.²⁴⁵

‘Fulfillment’ as “actualizing one’s true self” means one has become complete, a whole human being in continual becoming. That is, there is no overwhelming dissatisfaction with one’s circumstances or existential questioning or expectations imposed upon another for one to achieve happiness and contentment. One can then give to the other in the context of their authentic self, or ‘true self’. Fulfillment, in this sense, is arguably the intention and goal of every human, no matter ‘who’ they believe they ‘are’ (as in moving beyond existential questioning). This can also apply to the individual who pursues solely material wealth and/or power; effectively believing these goals will bring fulfillment and contentment eventually. The intention to attain and maintain fulfillment is an intrinsic aspect of being human. The quest for fulfillment is, arguably, the paramount, albeit mostly underlying, intention in the act of living and being. Fingarette, in his quote above, claims that in doing “the task of actualizing one’s “true self”” one attains this goal. How can this actualization practically be achieved? Where does one start?

As quoted earlier, Sor-hoon Tan states: “the central question for Confucianism is “What is to be done?” rather than “Who am I?”” – this is the key in eventually achieving the “actualization of true self” as Fingarette describes the state of human becoming. In questioning “What is to be done?” a wider perspective is needed. Namely, “Do I ‘do’ for myself?” to consider personal enhancement and advancement, or “Do I ‘do’ for another?” as another may have a greater need in the given moment. An assessment needs to be made; this questioning allows for a non-egoistic approach to life and living in that the wider human landscape is considered, as opposed to solely considering one’s own advancement or gain.

²⁴⁵ 2003, p 283

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University of Sydney

One may decide to help oneself, but with this perspective of “What is to be done?” the end goal is assisting – eventually – others when needed and, therefore, attaining fulfillment by the means of being a contributing human being, not an isolated entity. That is, improving one’s self to eventually assist the other. This is self-cultivation (*xiushen*修身). Such is the potential universality of self *vis a vis* the individual, albeit originating in Chinese thought. When self is perceived in connection with the other – and other is considered *tantamount* to the self – a balanced, harmonious society is possible.

4.3 The Universal Metaphysical and the Pragmatic Self

The Confucian concept of self, conjoined with Deweyan perspectives on self (as discussed earlier in this chapter) – in a unique combination of metaphysics and pragmatism – offers a solid philosophic infrastructure to build a flexible model of learning which can be adopted by and adapted to diverse cultural communities. Such a model allows respective communities to determine their own cultural, social, and educational needs and meld them to a cross-cultural philosophy of education as the model explored herein presents. Hence, the Confucian-Deweyan understanding of self provides the philosophical basis for a universal, a-cultural model of self-cultivation (of both formal and informal learning) on which distinct and particular cultural and educational needs can be established.

The self – as considered here for this model – is viewed in greater depth and breadth than a combination of a discrete body ‘housing’ a certain psychological or egoistic world of the individual. A model of knowledge acquisition and synthesis which not only serves and develops the individual for future economic and social mobility, but also serves and develops *all* aspects of being and becoming human. That is, the self’s cultivation is of equal importance to cultivation of the other – familial, societal, cultural, and environmental as evidenced in both Confucian and Deweyan thought. A person cultivated as such – and therefore sensitized to broader and deeper needs – would be enabled to balance their personal aspirations with their indigenous culture and, simultaneously, participate in a globalized world. Such an individual would bring tolerance, empathy, and negotiating skills to their future professional and personal roles in society. That is, the individual is equipped to create and maintain social harmony, their specific cultural identity, and become empathetic to cross-cultural mores whilst simultaneously participating in – and, accordingly, harnessing –

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University of Sydney

technological and economic globality. Arguably, this is the aim of self-cultivation in the 21st century.

When such a balance is attained, both individual and community alike are empowered by globality, as opposed to being subsumed by overwhelming outside forces. The millennial-long continuum of Chinese philosophy is a substantial tool to begin developing a universal model of education by which the self and his/her community can posit harmoniously within the growing complexities of the post-modern world. Confucian philosophy is highly relevant to finding personal, spiritual, and community empowerment and fulfillment in contemporary global conditions.

5.0 Confucianism: The Metaphysics

This chapter seeks to encapsulate Neo-Confucian metaphysical thought as it developed in the 11th century and traces how it became the dominant school of Confucian thought to the present.²⁴⁶ The particular area of focus is that of the nature of heart-and-mind (*xin* 心),²⁴⁷ the innate nature of self (*xing* 性), and the individual-as-self-in-the-world (*ren* 人). These elements mutually and seamlessly inform each other in the intention and act of self-cultivation (*xiushen* 修身). This perception of internal↔external phenomena (non-sensual and sensual information, respectively), in turn, become schematized into growing knowledge systems – both practical and abstract. This enhancement of knowledge becomes intertwined with wisdom²⁴⁸ as these processes of evolvment unfold between self and other and become manifest in the world. Once this flow-through dynamic is achieved, the self – as an individual agent – connects with and enhances humanity (*ren* 仁) as a multivalent, multi-dimensional interchange within the comprehensive whole. The interrelationship of these concepts is illustrated in the following diagram:

²⁴⁶ Bol, 2008; de Bary & Bloom, 1979; Neville, 2000, 2012

²⁴⁷ It is to be noted here that in Chinese thought, the mind is *of* the heart, not of the brain in both a biological and psychological sense.

²⁴⁸ Wisdom is defined here as: “Informed by ... the fundamental pragmatics of life. These include knowledge and judgment about the meaning and conduct of life and the orchestration of human development toward excellence while attending jointly to personal and collective well-being.” Baltes & Staudinger, 2000, p 122

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Christine A. Hale
University of Sydney

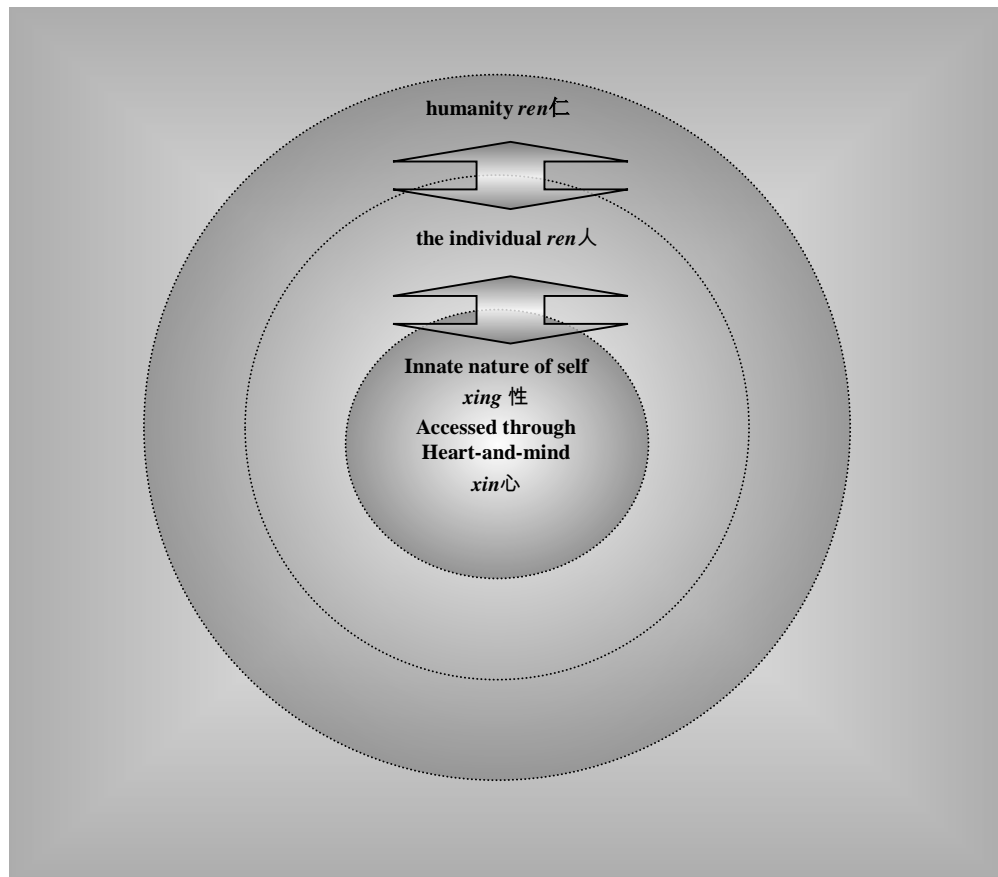


Figure 5.1 Interrelationship of Innate Self (*xing* 性), the Individual (*ren* 人), and Humanity (*ren* 仁)

The arrows indicate the dynamic process of self-cultivation between the mutually informing aspects of beingness. As the individual (should s/he intend) becomes conscious of these more intangible aspects of innate beingness – (*xing* 性) through the machinations of heart-and-mind (*xin* 心) – the process of self becoming within the world takes place.

To illustrate the full spectrum of interconnective elements which informs the individual and will be subsequently explained in this chapter, the following diagram – as an extension of Figure 5.1 – incorporates the elements of *tian* (天 heaven,²⁴⁹ the collective cosmological mind) embedded in the field of *qi* (气 life force, the potentiality of creation):

²⁴⁹ ‘Heaven’ became the translated term for *tian* when early missionaries in China sought to make Judeo-Christian parallels with Confucianism. Modern Confucian scholars view this translation as being highly limiting to the concept of *tian*; hence, my coining of the term ‘collective cosmological mind’ to capture a closer meaning. See Tu Weiming, 2007, p 117

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Christine A. Hale
University of Sydney

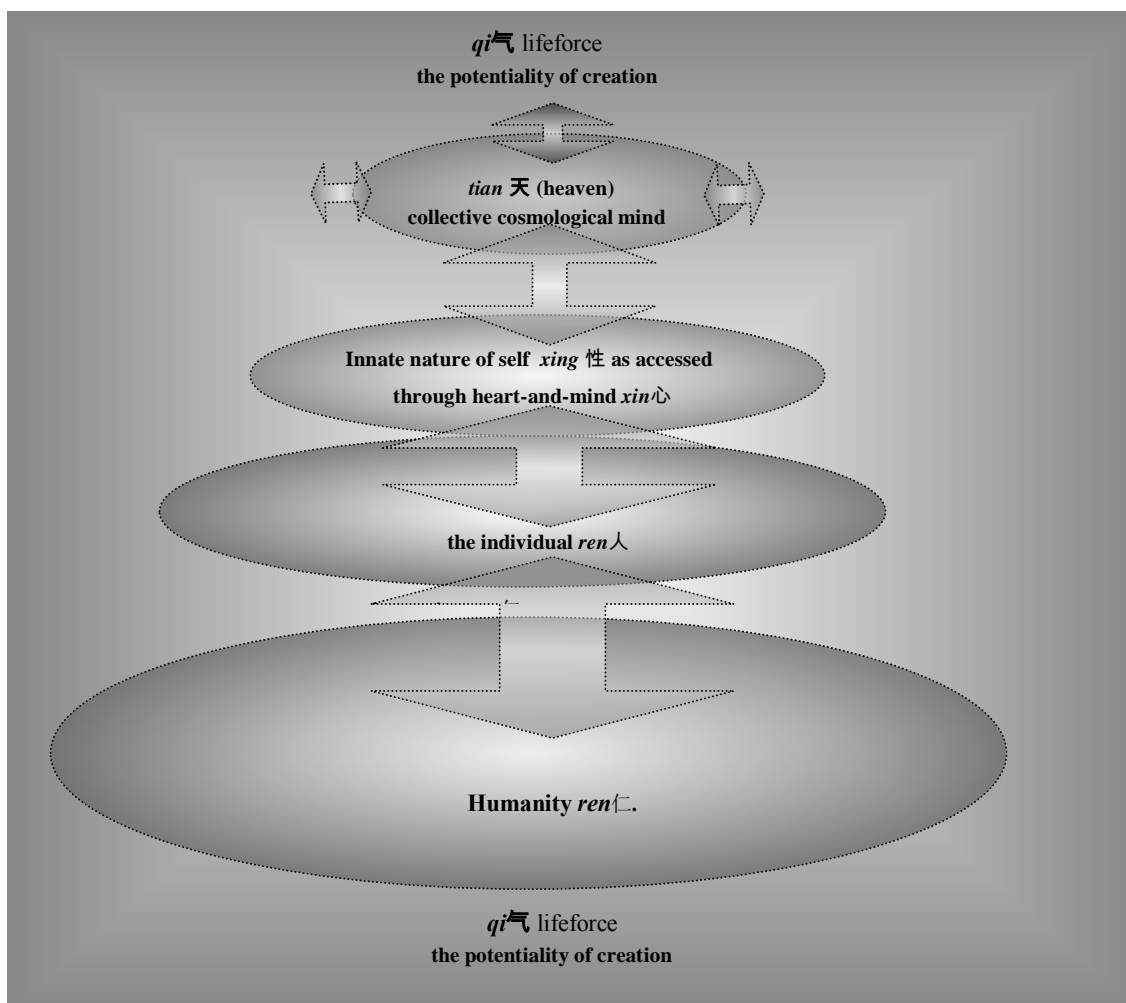


Figure 5.2 Confluent Elements in Particularity and Totality

An extension of Fig 5.1 – in a vertical format – this diagram depicts the placement of the concepts of *tian* (天 collective cosmological mind) embedded within and permeated by *qi* (lifecycle) as contextualized with aspects of the self (*xing* 性 and *ren* 人) and, subsequently, affected within humanity (*ren* 仁). These cosmological elements inform the self which pragmatically functions in the world as a positive flow-through effect to humanity; that is, pragmatic application is informed by access to the cosmological mind and the lifecycle in seamless interactions. The arrows, as in Fig 5.1, depict the dynamic process of self-cultivation (*xiushen*).

It is these kinetic elements in concert which comprise and contextualize the Confucian concept of self as an earthly and cosmological gestalt without contradiction or duality. In this construct, the self strives (intends) towards balance with the natural, human, and cosmological worlds, connecting the inner↔outer of existence and, as a result, acts wisely for the betterment of the non-egoistic self and the other. Accordingly, this self is enabled to

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University of Sydney

participate pragmatically in the world yet empathizes with the other as tangible and intangible interconnections are perceived and consolidated instigating evolution of self and, subsequently, the other. This evolutionary process also incorporates the growth and evolvement of *tian* (collective cosmological mind) through the confluences described above. In other words, the self is interconnected with the universe in all its manifestations and there is a ‘two-way’ process of evolvement.

The early Neo-Confucian, Zhang Zai (張載1020–1077), saw the results of this understanding and realization of self as the development of cosmological empathy:

Heaven [*tian*天] is my father and earth is my mother, and even such a small creature as I finds an intimate place in their midst. Therefore that which extends throughout the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I consider as my nature. All people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions.²⁵⁰

As pointed out by the noted sinologist, Irene Bloom, “[t]he object of Chang Tsai’s [Zhang Zai’s] ethical cultivation had been to “enlarge” the mind so that it could “embody” or sympathetically unite with all things in the universe, the necessary condition being the end of egoism.”²⁵¹ In a contemporary context, Tu Weiming views this cosmological empathy as a strong counter to the alienation of the post-Enlightenment mentality which separates and objectifies the world from the self:

A human being so conceived [in Zhang Zai’s words above] is not merely a creature who, by definition, has no knowledge of his/[her] ontological ground of existence ... [H]umanity is the embodiment of that which is most refined in the creative process of the universe ... that human nature is what Heaven imparts to [wo]man ... In this wholistic vision of [wo]man, an ontological gap between Creator and creature would seem to be almost inconceivable. It appears that there is no post-lapsarian state to encounter and that alienation as a deep-rooted feeling of estrangement from one’s primordial origin is nonexistent. Furthermore, the idea of [wo]man as a manipulator and conqueror of nature would also seem to be ruled out.²⁵²

²⁵⁰ As cited in Kaibara Ekken, (trans. M. E. Tucker), 2007, p 63

²⁵¹ 1979, p 104

²⁵² 1985a, p 157-8

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University of Sydney

In stating “that human nature is what Heaven imparts to [wo]man”, Tu is describing the innate nature of the cosmological collective self (*tian*天) embedded in each individual; mutually informing elements in co-creative kineticism whereby the universal greater good of all interrelated worlds (human, natural, and cosmological) is achieved. The non-egoistic self – interacting within this informing dynamic – is the pivotal core of Confucian philosophy and gives the individual metaphysical autonomy without the dictates of the literati, as was the case in the pre-Song period.²⁵³ This metaphysical autonomy of the individual expresses itself directly in the pursuit of wisdom as pragmatic art.

In a Confucian context, wisdom is valued as a cognitive achievement. However, Confucian wisdom is not characterized by the division of knowledge, or separation of intellectual knowledge from practical virtues; rather, it focuses on the integrity of the natural and the human worlds, and is intended to integrate the objective and outward prospect and the subjective and inward retrospect. Wisdom in the Confucian tradition is related both to ancient culture and to contemporary personal growth. As the transmitted way it signifies the continuity of human civilization, while as personal experience it indicates the diversity and dynamics of moral individuality.²⁵⁴

As the quote outlines, the Confucian means to wisdom through self-cultivation (*xiushen*修身) is a continuum; a continuum which “integrate[s] the objective and outward prospect and the subjective and inward retrospect”. That is, a continuum which transcends time and the notion of internal↔external discreteness and “signifies the continuity of human civilization, while as personal experience it indicates the diversity and dynamics of moral individuality”. The self is *of* the world and, *simultaneously*, of infinite cosmological potential. The self is neither a mere cognitive construct nor, completely, a sociological construct. The comprehensive self incorporates these elements and yet is more than the sum of the whole. It is this potentiality – beyond cognitive, sociological, and psycho-neurological categorization – that the universality of the a-cultural self posits itself in the learning processes of life and living. This evolving self pivots upon heart-and-mind (*xin*心) in constant transformation.

²⁵³ Bol, 2008, pp 100-8 and 123-33. Also, worth noting, is that Confucianism does not have a priest-caste as a mediating role between cosmological elements and the individual – the self is the autonomous agent for accessing *tian*.

²⁵⁴ Yao Xinxiong, 2006, p 290

5.1 The Evolving Self: Mind in Transformation

Mind (*xin* 心) in Chinese thought is based in the organ of the heart, not the brain. The cognitive and emotional perceptions which can, arguably, be called ‘the mind’ are, again, understood as a comprehensive whole – *xin* is our humanness in its totality – worldly and cosmological.²⁵⁵ In Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism there were two schools of thought on the mind. One school felt there were two forms of mind: the human mind *ren xin* (人心) and the mind of the spirit *dao xin* (道心, also referred to as *tian xin* 天心²⁵⁶) – *dao xin* was pure; *ren xin* was unstable, conditioned by the social world from birth, and needed to intentionally strive to merge with the purer mind of *dao xin*.²⁵⁷ The second school of thought was that there was only one mind:

According to this group of thinkers, mind (*xin*) is that which is capable of knowing, thinking, and reflecting, and through it [wo]man knows the truth or *Dao* [道]. Further, they believed that beyond individual minds there exists one universal mind identified with the one universal Principle [*li* 裡]²⁵⁸

Li (裡 principle), the cosmic law which underlies all things, is an important concept within both schools of thought; knowing *li* means realizing the *dao* 道 or the way of *dao xin*. That is, apprehending *li* – in its tangible and intangible expressions – is a fundamental aspect of attaining wisdom as one acts within complement to *dao xin*.

That the universe is real can be proved by the fact that there is a universal Principle prevailing throughout the entire universe and underlying every individual thing. That is, nothing can be as it is or even exist without the Principle or *li* ... Although the Principle is metaphysical, incorporeal, and physically invisible, it is nevertheless apprehensible and is found particularized in every single thing.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁵ See Arjo 2011; Wei Hongguo & Li Shaobing, 2011. The character *xin* 心 is an ideogram of the heart with the surrounding strokes depicting the blood entering and leaving the ventricles.

²⁵⁶ Wen Haiming, 2009, p 143 & 266

²⁵⁷ Huang Siu-chi, 1999; Wen Haiming, 2009

²⁵⁸ Huang Siu-chi, 1999, p 9; for the purposes of this thesis, it is the latter perspective of one mind (in its various sub-categories) which will be considered herein.

²⁵⁹ Huang Siu-chi, 1999, p 7; this concept is not to be confused with Platonic Forms.

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University of Sydney

Li coupled with *qi* (气 creative potentiality, life force) creates the universe in all its manifestations. *Li* provides the template by which *qi* moves from a state of kinetic potential to one of manifestation. This kinetic potential is ever-changing through the binary system of *yin* and *yang*. That is, “the Neo-Confucianists asserted that the universe ... is perpetually new, because the *qi* is forever in the process of changing ... But all forms of change ... follow a definite pattern of activity of the two forces, *yin* and *yang*. The *yin* and *yang* represent two totally different aspects ... weak and strong, dark and light ... passing away and coming into being.”²⁶⁰ It is *li* as the universal Principle inherent in the cosmos which manifests perceived reality from this constantly moving potentiality. These concepts are the key to understanding the mind as consciousness.

Zhang Zai, who ascribes to the idea of one universal mind (as described in the second school of thought above), defining it as being “derived from the union of the nature (*xing*) and consciousness (*zhi jiao*)[知覺]”²⁶¹

Knowing, for Zhang Zai, is a process of interaction between the conscious and external things [not inherent in the self]; the latter, however, are objects for the former. That is, the mind is essentially a consciousness of objects [which includes intangible phenomena]. When mind (i.e., the knower) becomes conscious of something, [s]he reflects on, manipulates, and expresses his attitude toward a thing, in accordance with the *qi* that is in him and with what the thing means to him.²⁶²

Here Zhang Zai is emphasizing the idea that to know means to apprehend and find *meaning* in an event or thing which the self contextualizes within the flow of *qi*. Effectively, there is a self↔*qi* dynamic which meaningful phenomena brings into focus and embeds in the interrelatedness of all other formerly acquired knowledge. It can be considered here that Zhang Zai agrees with Mencius’ 孟子 (ca. 372-289 BCE) understanding of mind: “the Mencian conception of the heart-mind is diametrically opposed to the claim that the external environment through socialization determines the shape of human conscious and

²⁶⁰ Huang Siu-chi, 1999, p 7. NB: the *yin*↔*yang* concept is not a duality *per se*, but mutually informing tensions whereby the heightened tension of one aspect of the dichotomy will ensure a shift to the other.

²⁶¹ *Zhang-zi quan-shu* (*Complete Works of Master Zhang*) 1935, Shanghai: Commercial Press: 2.24, as cited in Huang Siu-chi, 1999, p 76

²⁶² Huang Siu-chi, 1999, p 76

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consciousness.”²⁶³ That is, *xing* (nature of the self), *zhi jiao* (consciousness), and *xin* (heart-and-mind) are not formed by social constructs or influences, yet these concepts – in unison – apprehend and find meaning in human events.

Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), who was strongly influenced by Zhang Zai, claimed “*xin* or mind is like the seed-corn; *li* or Principle of life contained in it is *xing* or nature; and putting forth of life on the part of *qi* or vital force is *qing* [情] or feelings ... [Accordingly] *xing* or nature is the seat of consciousness; *xin* or mind is that which has consciousness.”²⁶⁴ The contemporary Confucian, Meng Peiyuan, synthesizes Zhu Xi’s thoughts as such:

Mind was the oneness of form and function. ... Mind, nature, and perception could be interpreted as a whole, and these three could be separated too. Viewed in general, mind, nature, and principles were oneness; observed separately, nature differed with principles: nature meant principles, but perception was the quintessence of *qi*. The unfolding of perception, however, had its independence, and could be easily influenced by *qi*; thus, it was necessary to transform and cultivate *qi*-related temperament. Realistically, a [wo]man needs to face up to [her/]himself and to transform [her/]himself, and this sentiment is inspiring for today.²⁶⁵

The idea that perception “could be easily influenced by *qi*” and therefore there is a need “to transform and cultivate *qi*-related sentiment” means one needs to maintain balance and harmony in one’s consciousness. That is, to be aware of the hidden nuances of the *yin* and *yang* fluctuations of *qi* and how *qi* interacts with and effects phenomena accordingly (especially one’s own mind as a subjective↔objective dynamic in the act of apprehension). The following diagram overviews how these aspects of mind interrelate:

²⁶³ Tu Weiming, 1993, p 103

²⁶⁴ As cited in Huang Siu-chi, 1999, p 137

²⁶⁵ 2010, p 377

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University of Sydney

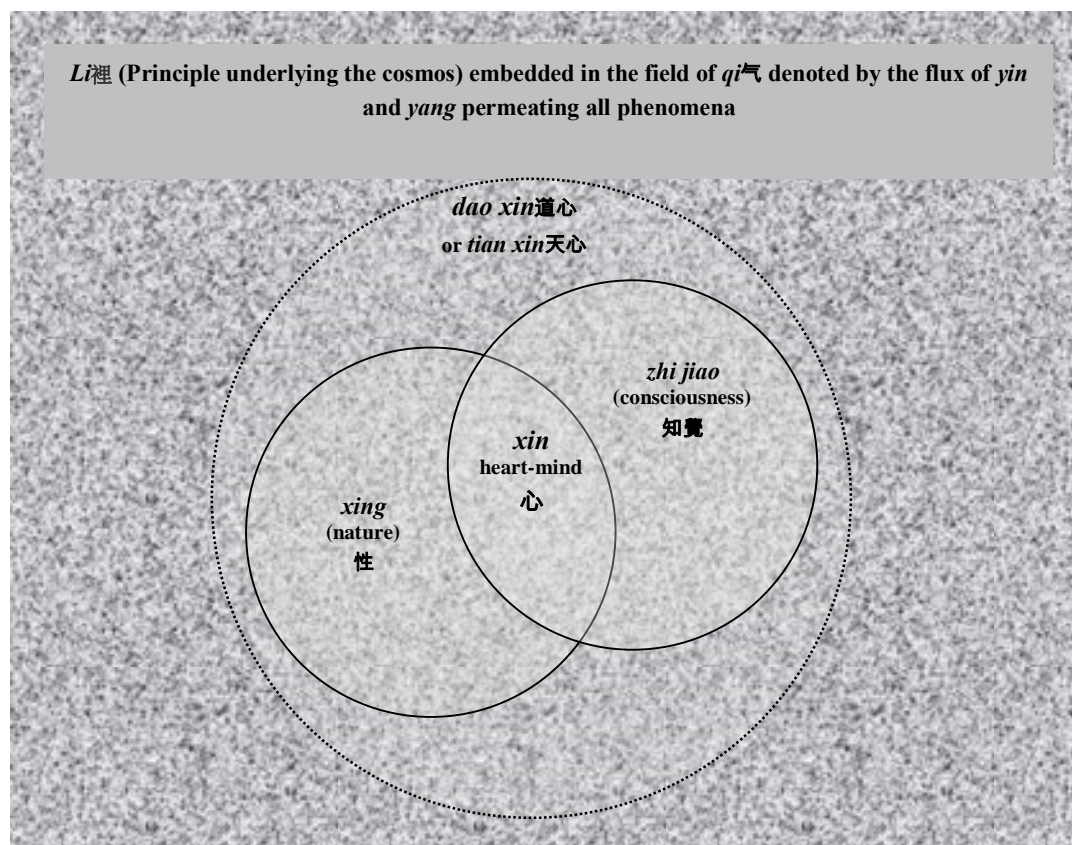


Figure 5.3 Zhang Zai’s definition of mind (*xin*) “... derived from the union of the nature (*xing*) and consciousness (*zhi jiao*) [知覺].”

This diagram describes the constant flux and motion of *qi* as it permeates the human mind and events as an invisible force. In the act of apprehension of the event, consciousness through *xin*, observes the shifting interplays of *qi* in the reflection of repercussions and outcomes. Learning and incorporating the complexity of these patternings is the getting of wisdom; the self is following the way of *dao xin*.

By observing the cycles of the natural world, the human correlations with natural symbolisms, and the inevitable shifts of fortune to misfortune and back again of human life – that is, the flux and motion of existence – *qi* becomes known to consciousness. For millennia the Chinese observed these patterns and correlations and, accordingly, tempered their behavior as Meng above states: “to transform and cultivate *qi*-related sentiment”. *Qi*, although invisible directly to human senses, can nevertheless be seen *in reflection* of phenomenal events to the careful observer.²⁶⁶ Hence, the cultivation of wisdom and self – to do this, one must still one’s nature.

²⁶⁶ The Chinese classic, *Book of Changes* or *Yijing* (易經 also known as the *I Ching*), has been a tool for assisting in understanding the fluctuating patternings of *yin* and *yang* in the human world in any given situation for millennia. Not necessarily a tool for divination, but rather a means to identify the complexity and effects of *qi* at the moment of consultation

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“*ding xing* 定性 (stilling the nature)” was an important Neo-Confucian topic during the Song period. The doctrine of “stilling the nature” involves much central Neo-Confucian discourse such as the definition of *xing* 性 (human nature), the interior and exterior aspects of human nature, nature and *qing* 情 (feelings, sentiments), nature and *xin* 心 (mind, heart), nature and *ren* 仁 (benevolence, humanity, humaneness) and *yi* 义 (righteousness), nature and *shi* 事 (affair) or *wu* 物 (thing, object), the practice of preservation and cultivation, etc.²⁶⁷

These latter concepts of “*yi* 义 (righteousness), nature and *shi* 事 (affair) or *wu* 物 (thing, object), the practice of preservation and cultivation” are encompassed in the idea of *li* 禮 (propriety or ritual propriety). *Li* is considered a key aspect in facilitating a harmonious human society and the processes of enculturation, and is an idea which has been extant in Confucian thought since Confucius himself.²⁶⁸ The idea of *li* has remained a pivotal concept through the intellectual reforms of the Song-Ming periods to the present.

5.2 The Confucian Self (*xing* 性) as it Relates to *ren* 人 (self-in-the-world), *ren* 仁 (humanity) and *li* 禮 (ritual propriety)

Li 禮 is often translated as “ritual,” but it means much more than this. *Li* is a Confucian strategy for refining *qing* [feelings], and is thus a form of education ... ritual propriety is, on the one hand, systemized and rationalized feelings; on the other, it is a changing process that can be compared to the characteristics of *tian* 天 and *dao* 道, with their heavily loaded cosmological senses. This indicates that *li* 禮 shares the creative dimension of the “spontaneous emergence of novelty in a continuing present.”²⁶⁹

relative to the question posed. “[D]ivination [of the *Yijing*] is not just a way of trying to know the future regarding what should be done or not to be done [attaining wisdom in action] , but a way of knowing the possibilities of transformation so that a human person may learn from nature and may learn from himself.” Cheng Chung-ying, 2011, p 333. Further reading: Cheng Chung-ying, 2008; Gu Ming Dong, 2004; Smith, 2012.

²⁶⁷ Zhu Renqiu, 2009, p 322

²⁶⁸ Confucius claimed he did not fully comprehend the importance of *li* until 70 years of age: “... from seventy I could give my heart-and-mind free rein without overstepping the boundaries.” *Analects* 2.4

²⁶⁹ Wen Haiming, 2009, p 103 & 104; quote referenced in original

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University of Sydney

The Chinese notion of self cannot be considered in full without addressing the idea of *li* as it is, effectively, the art of social propriety; a considered framework for human society to function within, yet, this framework allows – as Wen Haiming emphasizes – a “spontaneous emergence of novelty in a continuing present”. Situational *li*²⁷⁰ – understood in all its nuances – is a flexible, heart-felt means of creating positive interactivity between members of a given community.

Ritual [*li*禮] as an extensional function of feelings serves as a continuing medium between experience and world, so ritual is a systematic confluence of different feelings that people shape and render sequential ... when mind meets the world, feelings start to flow out, and in the process of peoples’ interactions, ritual is established in a functioning way that keeps human affairs moving smoothly. Therefore, ritual is communal and functions in the context of an [sic] empirical foci and its contextual field, as the regulation of diverse feelings.²⁷¹

Li is the underlying *modus vivendi* of Confucian based societies; self is viewed in strong context with the other in all interactions. As stated by Confucius in the *Analects*: “Don’t worry about not being acknowledged by others; worry about failing to acknowledge them.”²⁷² This is the key to the notion of *li*: to ensure everyone’s particular position or opinion is heard; opinions, which eventually – through the process (ritual) of *li* – do not *conflict* with another’s in the real and eventual outcomes of a situation. Compromise with genuine agreement of all involved is the ideal. That is, in Chinese thinking, confrontation is seen as counter-productive as a forced conflict would mean one wins and one loses, a situation not conducive to balanced and harmonious social relations. Effectively, the ‘losing’ party would be marginalized from the decision-making process and therefore neither party would be participants in the growth of the community, nor humanity at large. This zero sum game scenario would diminish the self; the self of the winner and the loser simultaneously. This is due to the fundamental interconnection between self and other.²⁷³

Accordingly, confrontation is avoided by – sometimes slow and almost imperceptible

²⁷⁰ Wen Haiming, 2009, pp 103-6

²⁷¹ Wen Haiming, 2009, pp 105

²⁷² 1.16

²⁷³ In Confucian thinking, humans are discrete only physically; the aspects of self (nature, consciousness, and heart-and-mind) are highly interconnected in the dynamic of self and the other. Nevertheless, it is considered that each individual is unique.

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University of Sydney

– negotiation: polite and attentive listening, counter-suggestions given with respect, silences in allowing the other to absorb and consider the differing opinion, and eventual accommodation whereby all parties feel genuinely satisfied with the outcome. Eventually, when all voices have been listened to and considered carefully, the best compromise is achieved as a consensus. Subsequent to the final decision, ideally, those involved comply without complaint.

Li, as the term propriety suggests, is the invisible template underlying human relations, enabling all members of a given community or group to feel their opinions are respected as individuals equally participating in and determining society. Compromise should not be uncomfortable or involuntary; by learning of the other's position, genuine understanding and incorporation of their perspectives takes place and facilitates growth of community, self, and therefore humanity as a whole. As the Confucian scholar, Tan Sor-hoon, states:

Ritual practices, which are designed to achieve harmony in recurrent occasions of daily living, create the nurturing environment for achieving harmony in other more problematic arenas of life. In conflict situations, the predisposition toward a harmonious resolution and the avoidance of an adversarial stance can have a significant impact on the outcome. Polite and non-confrontational postures, facilitated by ritual acts understood by all, even in situations of a serious conflict of interests, are not always simply hypocrisy; they are, in fact, powerful means of increasing the chances of an outcome acceptable to all.²⁷⁴

In keeping with the seamlessness of Confucian structures – metaphysical and worldly – there is inherent within the idea of *li*, as Wen Haiming iterates above, “a changing process that can be compared to the characteristics of *tian* 天 and *dao* 道, with their heavily loaded cosmological senses”.²⁷⁵ *Li* provides the framework for *dao* (the Way) to operate in human society. Again, there is a two-way kineticism whereby human and cosmological forces mutually inform each other for the evolution of the universe. Accordingly, the confluences of humanity *vis a vis* self as expressed as *ren* 人 through mind *xin* 心 (the union of *zhi jiao* 知覺

²⁷⁴ 2003a, p 84

²⁷⁵ 2009, p 104

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University of Sydney

consciousness and *xing* 性 (true nature of self) remain in concert through the processes of *li*.

These continuing correlations are described in Figure 5.4:

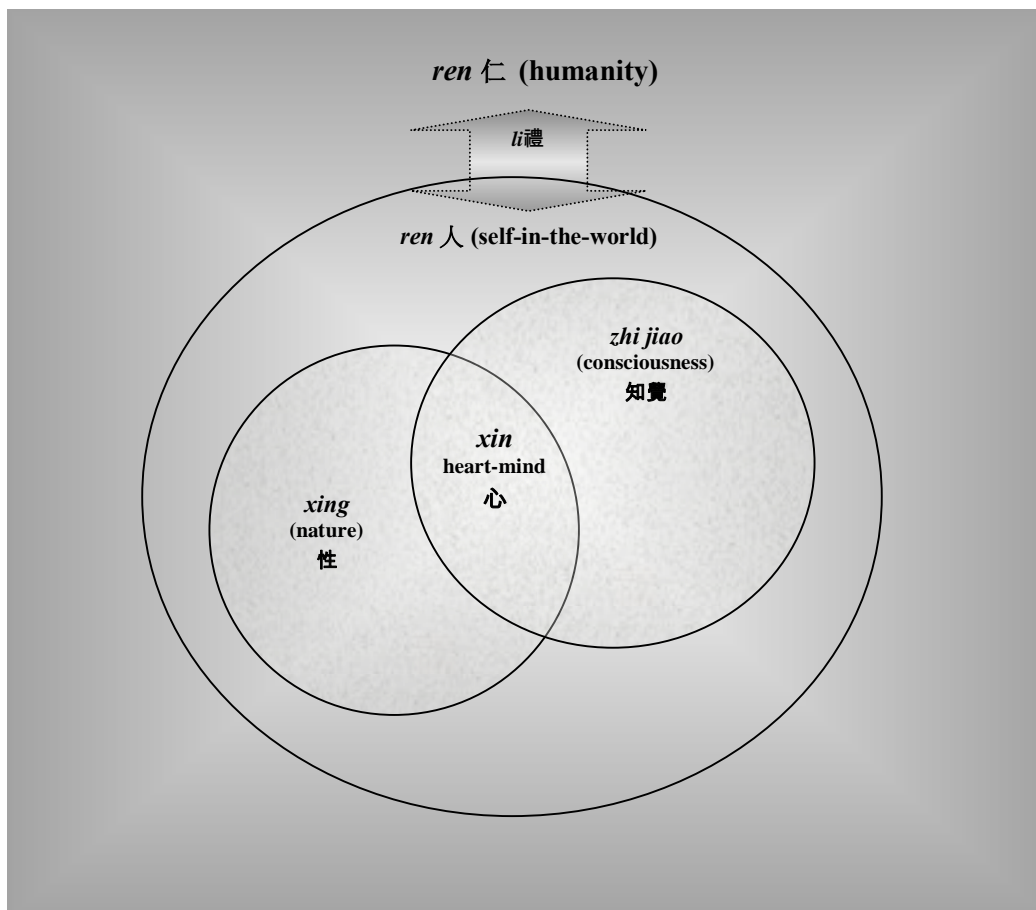


Figure 5.4 *Li* 禮 Facilitating the Seamless Interaction between Self-in-the-world 人 and Humanity 仁

The structure of mind *xin* (the union of *xing* nature and *zhi jiao* consciousness) – as illustrated in Figure 5.3 – is contextualized here into the human realms (人 and 仁). The concept of *li* 禮 (propriety) is represented as a double arrow of on-going mutually informing interactions between self and the other – *ren* 人 self-in-the-world and *ren* 仁 humanity, respectively. The larger interrelationship with *dao*, *tian*, and *qi* in this construct is diagrammatically described in Figure 5.2 above.

These concepts, when understood in their essence, are inspirational: minimization of conflict, a de-emphasis on the egoistic self, *en masse* anathema to the notion of zero sum games (in the full spectrum of society – from personal to an international scale), and an

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University of Sydney

underlying intention in each community to hear and consider all involved voices. Cross-cultural realization of these Confucian ideas would, undoubtedly, be the foundations of a far more peaceful, empathetic world. The contemporary Confucian and humanist, Tu Weiming, emphasizes the need for a transcultural understanding of these ancient ideas as the key to overcoming the state of human alienation from the self and other currently endemic in the modern world. As Tu states: “New Confucian humanism ... is a local knowledge that is strategically well-positioned to become nationally, regionally, and globally significant.”²⁷⁶

5.3 Tu Weiming’s Confucianism: Transcultural Applications

[O]n the international scene, as a result of globalization the world has become more fragmented and bewildering. Even the idea of the new world order evokes a sense of chaotic disorganization. If we can somehow envision our increasingly interconnected and interdependent world as an “imagined community,” we will discover that its defining characteristics are difference, differentiation, and outright discrimination, rather than integration. *Tu Weiming*²⁷⁷

Few can deny that the ‘global village’ has *not* brought to bear the intimated promise of an interconnected and harmonious world – arguably, the only interconnections are in the areas of finance and technology; the former more often than not creating, as Tu states, “outright discrimination”. There is little evidence of *en masse* empathetic understanding of self and other (personal, cultural, natural or cosmological) in the current global situation. Tu continues:

In the light of grave dangers, such as the threat of terrorism, social disintegration, the depletion of natural resources, and environmental degradation, the dilemma of self-realization and social service or between the multi or imitational self seems secondary and less compelling. What we actually face is the viability of the human species, let alone human flourishing in any shape or form. An elemental reformation of the human condition is in order. We are desperately in need of an all-embracing humanistic vision to enable us to situate in the cosmos and to empower us to cultivate a sense of direction so as to lead a meaningful life.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁶ 2010, p 331

²⁷⁷ 2010, p 332

²⁷⁸ 2010, p 332

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University of Sydney

Tu's response to this is a transcultural, contemporized application of Confucianism whereby self, other, nature, and the greater cosmos are seen as a unified whole enriching all participants. These Confucian concepts lend themselves well to transcultural application due to their humanistic universality:

Since Confucians take the concrete living human being here and now as their point of departure in the development of their philosophical anthropology, they recognize the embeddedness and rootedness of the human condition. Therefore, the profound significance of what we call primordial ties – ethnicity, gender, language, land, class, and basic spiritual orientation – which are intrinsic to the Confucian project, is a celebration of cultural diversity (this is not to be confused with any form of pernicious relativism).²⁷⁹

The pragmatism of Confucianism in its “embeddedness and rootedness of the human condition” is not only a sociological construct. As described above, self-in-the-world through *xin* (heart-and-mind) is in ceaseless dynamic with *tian* (collective cosmological self or, as traditionally translated, heaven) and *qi* (creative potentiality); these latter cosmological elements equally inform the development of the individual as does interaction within community. It is a two-way process of evolvment. The cosmological elements which are embedded in humans to apprehend – by the careful observation of *qi* through conscious reflection of the resultant *yin*↔*yang* tensions and connection with *tian* – have a distinctly *a-religious* connotation.²⁸⁰ One can understand these concepts in the cycles of nature and human events and attain wisdom *without* adhering to a doctrine (of which Confucianism has none). Through observation and reflection, we can all know that the universe is greater than the sum of us.

Whether we came into being by the mysterious design of a transcendent reality, the “wholly other,” or through a persistent evolutionary process, we find an intimate niche in the cosmos as our ultimate source and meaning of life. We are here not as mere creatures passively submitting to an absolutely incomprehensible and radically transcendent divinity, but as co-creators endowed with the intelligence and wisdom of apprehending creativity in itself.²⁸¹

²⁷⁹ Tu Weiming, 2010, p 122

²⁸⁰ Tu Weiming views Confucianism as a religion in that it is an embodied spirituality (personal conversation, Peking University, Beijing, 26th of August, 2012); he refers to Confucianism as a “religiophilosophy” (Tu, 1978, p 84, 89, 99n). I define religion as a formal body with a mediating priest-*caste* – that is, a priest-*caste* which mediates between doctrinal cosmological beliefs and the said religion’s constituents. By this definition, Confucianism is not a religion; the self independently learns to mediate directly with cosmological phenomena and there is no priest-*caste*.

²⁸¹ Tu Weiming, 2010, p 333

The identified processes of realizing ourselves “as co-creators endowed with the intelligence and wisdom of apprehending creativity in itself” is that of ‘embodied knowing’ or ‘intellectual intuition’ 智的直覺 (*zhi de zhi jue*): the machinations of mind in the act of self-cultivation 修身 (*xiushen*).

5.4 Embodied Knowing (智的直覺 *zhi de zhi jue*²⁸²) in the Processual Model of Self-Cultivation (修身 *xiushen*)

The Confucian way is a way of learning, learning to be human. Learning to be human in the Confucian spirit is to engage oneself in a ceaseless, unending process of creative self-transformation, both as a communal act and as a dialogical response to Heaven [*tian*天]. This involves four inseparable dimensions – self, community, nature, and the transcendent. The purpose of learning is always understood as being for the sake of the self, but the self is never an isolated individual (an island); rather, it is a center of relationships (a flowing stream). The self as a center of relationships is a dynamic open system rather than a closed static structure.
*Tu Weiming*²⁸³

Tu Weiming emphasizes that this idea of “creative self-transformation” – the outcome of self-cultivation *xiushen* (修身) – is the essence of Confucianism. The notion of selfhood is of pivotal importance in the evolution of self-in-the-world and the universe as a whole as a mutually informing integrated system.²⁸⁴ That is, the individual's intention, and subsequent praxis, of gaining self knowledge through the experiential realm of human beingness with the goal of following *dao* within one's community is, essentially, the core purpose of existence. Confucianism claims that one can *only* become fully realized (that is, realization of one's full potential of humanness) within one's community in dynamic with the other. This is one of the strongest departures of Confucianism from both Daoism and Buddhism where, in these latter practices, isolation of the individual from their community and retreat from the other is *a* path to reach eventual enlightenment.²⁸⁵ As Confucius states in the *Analects*: “Excellent persons [the sages] do not dwell alone; they are sure to have neighbors” (4.25). This underscores how

²⁸² Tu Weiming cites the Wade-Giles transliteration for this term: *chih te chih-chueh*

²⁸³ 2010, p 122

²⁸⁴ As described in Fig 5.2

²⁸⁵ Bol, 2008; Tu, 1993.

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Christine A. Hale
University of Sydney

Confucianism developed and systemized the dynamic of self and other as *the* means to enlightenment; that is, the realization of *tian* (天) and the *dao* (道). In Confucianism, the true self (*xing* 性) – as conferred by *tian* 天 (heaven or cosmological mind) as innate – is realizable for the individual by following the *dao* (道 the way, human beingness in concert with *tian*) as one *interrelates* within one's community.

This act of learning is best expressed in Tu Weiming's processual dynamic of evolving selfhood and pivots on the notion of embodied knowing or "intellectual intuition" (智的直覺 *zhi de zhi jue*).²⁸⁶ Tu describes intellectual intuition as:

[S]elf-knowledge is neither "knowing that" nor "knowing how"; it is, in essence, an objectless awareness, a realization of the human possibility of "intellectual intuition" ... [which is] significantly different from either irrationalism or esoterics. ... it does claim a direct knowledge of reality without logical reasoning or inference. But, unlike what is commonly associated with mysticism, it has very little to do with revelation.²⁸⁷

Chi Chienchih, a Tu scholar, interprets the meaning of these terms:

Tu suggests, "self-knowledge is neither *knowing-that* nor *knowing-how*; it is, in essence, an objectless awareness, a realization of the human possibility of *intellectual intuition*" ... In order to understand the process of gaining self-knowledge, we must connect the concept *intellectual intuition* to the concept of *self-knowledge*. In doing so, we need another concept, *inner experience*. Tu says, "self-knowledge is a form of inner experience."²⁸⁸ Self-knowledge is thus knowledge about a sort of inner experience, which can be known through intellectual intuition that is developed through practice.²⁸⁹

As implied, mindfulness interweaves through the idea of self knowledge as it is applied to the outer world in observing the movements – and intentions – of mind as the inner and outer meet. In the developments of Confucianism during the Song period the idea of mindfulness took form in the concept of 'stilling one's nature' (*ding xing* 定性) as discussed

²⁸⁶ Tu Weiming, 1979/1998 & 1985a

²⁸⁷ Tu Weiming, 1985a, p 20

²⁸⁸ Tu Weiming, 1985a, p 23

²⁸⁹ Chi Chienchih, 2005, p 269. Emphases in text

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University of Sydney

earlier in this chapter – an absorption of the confluences with Buddhism and Daoism.²⁹⁰ Tu Weiming underscores, that in practice, Confucian mindfulness departs from the Buddhist idea of mindfulness (*smṛiti*, in Sanskrit or *sati* in Pali²⁹¹). In the Buddhist understanding of this state of mind – a state of mind whereby a poignant and all absorbing focus of awareness is maintained as the individual performs daily activities, observing the movements of their mind – is that it is a means to enlightenment and self realization *predominantly in isolation from a sense of the other*. In Confucian practice, *awareness of the other* in mindfulness is fundamental to enlightenment.²⁹²

Nevertheless, the common ground between the Confucian and Buddhist notions of mindfulness is in the goal to realize the purity of the original self: the true self (性 *xing*) and the Buddha nature (Sanskrit: *buddhata*), respectively. The commonality of Tu's thought with Buddhism exists in this process:

... Tu believes that the intellectual intuition he emphasizes is similar to the Buddhist idea of *intuitive wisdom* or *nondual knowledge*, which refers to an inalienable quality of the mind that manifests itself as the true Buddha nature in each person. In addition, Tu also believes that this intellectual intuition makes us believe not only that the inner experience is our hidden or true self, but also that our hidden or true selves are our human nature that is imparted from Heaven [*tian*]²⁹³

For Tu, and Confucianism as a movement of thought, realizing (acquiring the knowledge of) *tian* inherent in self and other is the purpose of being human. A concept of knowledge which departs from the post-enlightenment perception of the term:

Knowledge, so conceived is not a cognitive grasp of a given structure of objective truths; nor is it an acquisition of some internalized skills. It is basically an understanding of one's mental states and an appreciation of one's inner feelings. Since presumably a genuine knowledge of the self entails a transforming act upon the self to know; in this sense it is not only to reflect and comprehend, but also to shape and create. To know oneself is simultaneously to perfect

²⁹⁰ Bol, 2008

²⁹¹ Fischer-Schreiber, I. et al. (Eds), 1986, 1989, *The Rider Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion* London: Rider, p 228

²⁹² Tu Weiming, 1985c

²⁹³ Chi Chienchih, 2005, p 276. Emphases in text.

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University of Sydney

oneself.²⁹⁴

Tu, in stating that knowledge “is basically an understanding of one's mental states and an appreciation of one's inner feelings”, as opposed to a “given structure of objective truths”, is emphasizing that knowledge is *not information or facts*. Knowledge is the inner apprehension of *meaning* relative to self and the other. Yet, when information finds relevance in the self – through intellectual intuition and embodied knowing – this would be considered knowledge. That is, when an outside event (perceived fact or objective truth) informs feelings and “mental states” – such as information of a tragedy instills compassion and motivates one to assist – then that full process of ‘fact to feeling to intention to action’ is embodied knowing (knowledge by the above definition). Essentially, knowledge *must* be embedded in one’s inner feelings to be called knowledge – otherwise it is mere information and devoid of meaningful connection to self. Here, a direct correlation with Tu and John Dewey (1859–1952), is notable; namely the continuum of self-cultivation is an on-going, incremental process of growth of the individual through experience on both an inner and outer level. As Dewey outlines:

[W]e have no ground for discrimination among experiences. For the principle is of universal application. It is when we note the different forms in which continuity of experience operates that we get the basis of discriminating among experiences ... namely, that the educative process [both formal and informal] can be identified with [experiential] growth when that is understood in terms of the active participle, *growing*. Growth, or growing as developing, not only physically but intellectually and morally, is one exemplification of the principle of continuity.²⁹⁵

This continuity of “intellectually and morally” growing is systemized by Tu Weiming as he develops a Confucian metaphysics contextualized by pragmatism. That is, the subtle transformative event when information takes on meaning within the self to become knowledge is due to intellectual intuition as an *attribute of our humanness*. Intellectual intuition is the catalytic element in synthesizing experiential and informative input into systematic knowing; that is, embodied knowing. Embodied knowing is the integration and consolidation of this newly revealed knowledge in the act of intellectual intuition. “*Intellectual intuition and embodied knowing, as merged events of mind, are considered*

²⁹⁴ Tu Weiming, 1985a, pp 19-20

²⁹⁵ From *Experience is Pedagogical* in McDermott (Ed.), 1981, pp 513-4, emphasis in text

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one.²⁹⁶ Figure 5.5 illustrates this dynamic process:

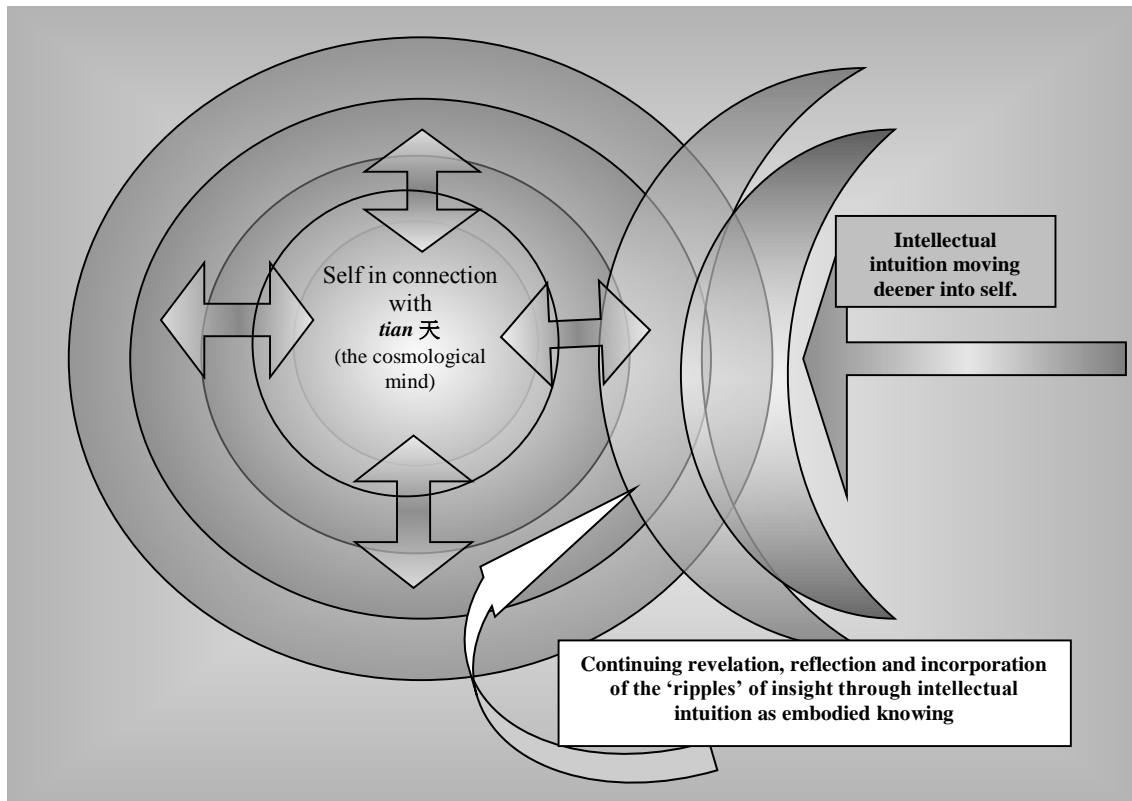


Figure 5.5 Process of Embodied Knowing through Intellectual Intuition

Figure 5.5 describes the process in which insights seep deeper into self, making relevant connections with former knowledge constructs in an on-going process as renewed perspectives (arrows) find purchase within the self as apprehended meaning. This is the process of intellectual intuition. In turn, intellectual intuition leads to incorporation and consolidation into growing knowledge systems of the self as a comprehensive whole in connection with *tian*. Once consolidated, the renewed perspectives are embodied knowing. Intellectual intuition and embodied knowing, as merged events of mind, are one. The concentric circles within the sphere of self denote the various layers of consciousness from the apprehension of the mundane or material world (outer circle), to the deeper levels of consciousness apprehending intangible and cosmological phenomena (inner circles). All

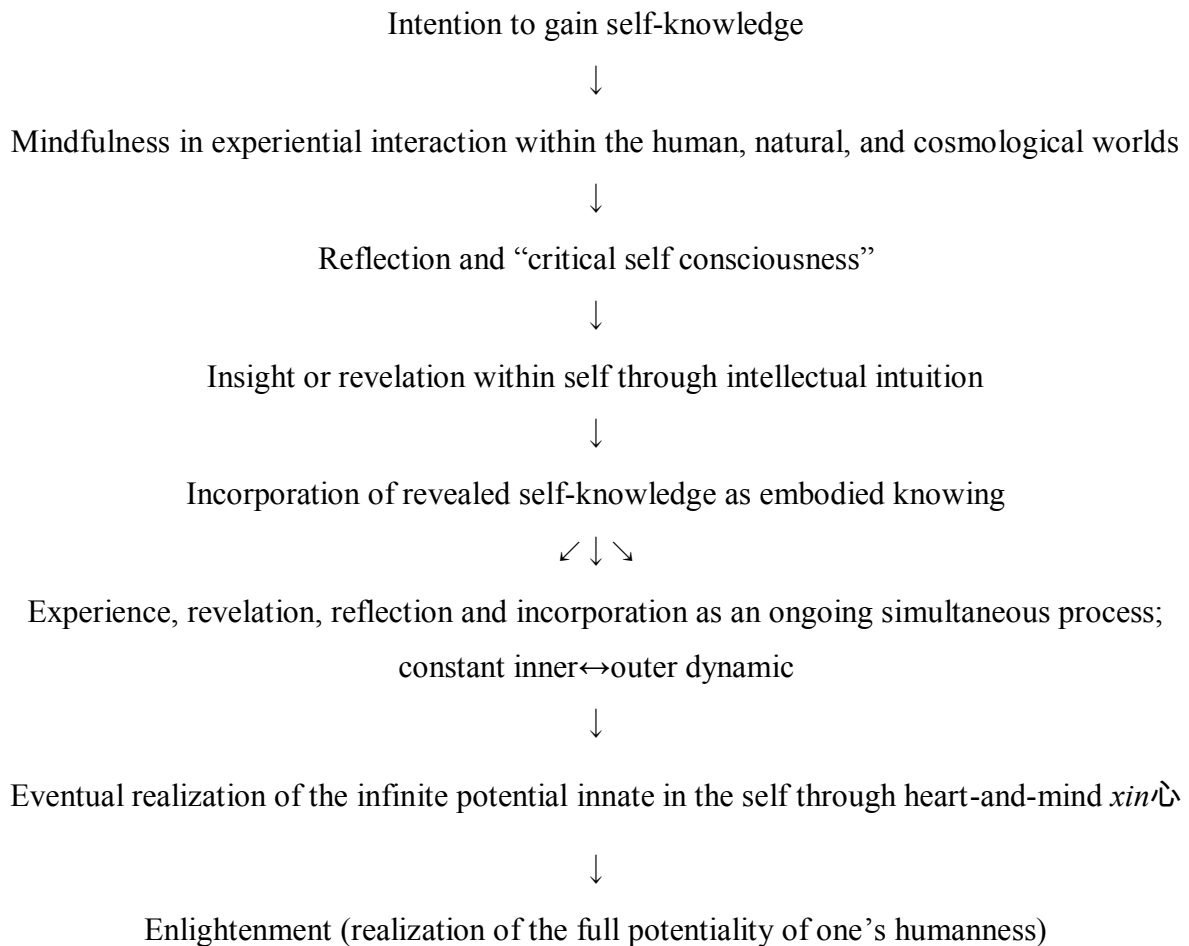
²⁹⁶ Personal communication (email) from Tu Weiming, 5th of August, 2010, my emphasis

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University of Sydney

aspects of self are in a two-way informing dynamic with the outer worlds and the inner worlds.

Tu's description of this incremental continual and dynamic process of self-cultivation, undertaken in concert with the other, can be outlined as such:



Tu emphasizes in this process both mindfulness and “critical self-awareness” or critical self-consciousness:

[C]ritical self-awareness, informed by one's openness to an ever-expanding circle of human-relatedness, is the authentic access to one's proper destiny. The reality of the human is such that an eagerness to learn in order to give full realization to one's heart, to know one's own nature and to appreciate the meaning of humanity is the surest way to apprehend Heaven [*tian*

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innate in oneself].²⁹⁷

Critical self-awareness is a function of heart-and-mind (*xin* 心) in the apprehension of meaning as “informed by one’s openness to an ever-expanding circle of human-relatedness”. In the seamless whole of this process, what takes place is the realization of one’s context in the cosmos: humanity, *tian*, *xing* (one’s true nature), and *qi* (creative potentiality) – in co-creative actualization of the self which, in turn, instigates co-creative actualization of the other. Accordingly, the internal machinations of knowledge acquisition in self-cultivation are simultaneous, continual, and ever-expanding.

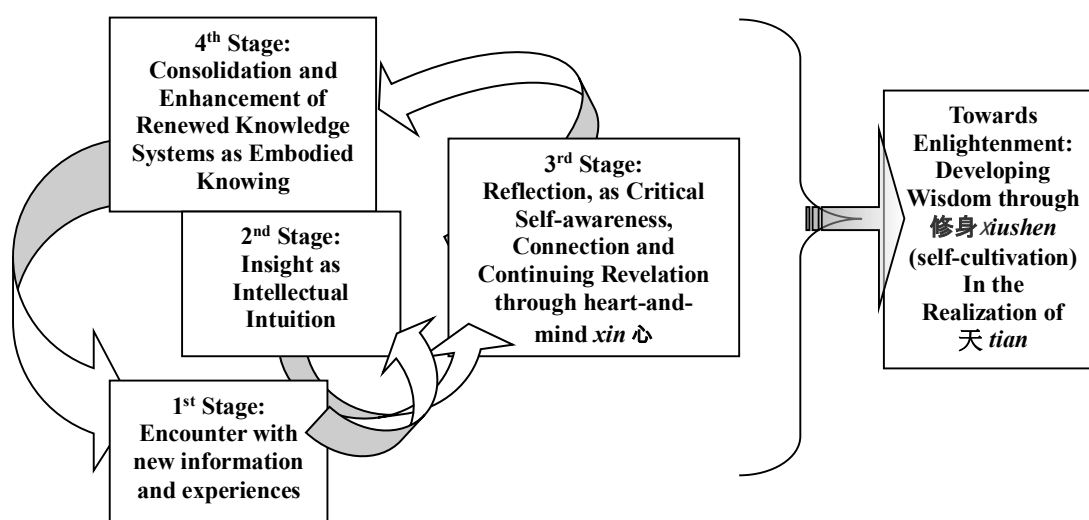


Figure 5.6 Overview of Cyclic Process in the on-going Development of Self-cultivation.

This process is perpetual and multi-dimensional as the machination of mind.

In this cyclic process, information has become contextualized and consolidated within the self and, accordingly, transformed into schemas of knowledge. Knowledge being a set of integrated systems which are not only applied into the world as a pivotal expression of the self in pragmatic and wise action, but also furthering the continuing understanding and penetration of *xing* (true nature of self), *tian*, and *qi* (creative potentiality of the universe). This is the comprehensive phenomenon of mind in Confucian thought.

²⁹⁷ Tu Weiming, 1985a, p 63

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University of Sydney

Unlike the body, the mind is formless and spaceless ... The mind can be filled with external impressions, but it never loses its capacity for receiving new information from outside. The mind can be attracted to a variety of subjects at the same time, but temporal fragmentation does not injure its internal coherence. And even though the mind can be easily perturbed by stimulus from the immediate environment, there is always an underlying quiescence.²⁹⁸

Maintaining “an underlying quiescence” is the ideal human state of being enabling self-cultivation. Such an integrated, balanced self can integrate and balance the world within which s/he lives: reflection of the inner into the outer. As Dewey states:

The self is always directed toward something beyond itself and so its own unification of the self throughout the ceaseless flux of what it does, suffers, and achieves, cannot be attained in terms of itself. The self is always directed toward something beyond itself and so its own unification depends upon the idea of the integration of the shifting scenes of the world into that imaginative totality we call the Universe.²⁹⁹

Accordingly, Confucianism – specifically Tu Weiming’s post-Enlightenment interpretation of Confucianism – and Deweyan philosophy are not only compatible, but equally conjoin the metaphysical and pragmatic, creating a philosophy for the 21st century as a tool for sustainability.

5.5 Environmental and Human Sustainability: Self of the World

The great [wo]man regards Heaven and the Earth and the myriad things as one body. [S]he regards the world as one family and the country as one person. As to those who make a cleavage between objects and distinguish between self and others, they are small [wo]men. That the great [wo]man can regard Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things as one body is not because [s]he deliberately wants to do so, but because it is natural to the human nature of his/[her] mind that [s]he do so. *Wang Yangming* (王阳明1472-1529)³⁰⁰

²⁹⁸ Tu Weiming, 1993, p 102

²⁹⁹ Hickman & Alexander (Eds.), p 407

³⁰⁰ *Inquiry on the Great Learning* as cited in Tu Weiming, 2001a, p 246

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University of Sydney

This idea has great import in the current global situation of environmental degradation and human impoverishment. To see the world and the other as an extension of our own bodies is a powerful concept; that what we inflict on the outside is, in fact, an infliction on ourselves and, conversely, what we care for and nurture in the outside world is a nurturing of our self. Egoism and anthropocentricity, so prevalent in the world, is arguably the root cause of current sociological and environmental problems. As Tu Weiming observes:

[I]t is now clear that the modernization process, used simply for utilitarian processes of development, is insufficient for the full range of human flourishing. Instead, there is a broader understanding emerging that development must include not only economic indicators but consider human well-being, environmental protection, and human spirituality as well. To this end, there is a growing awareness in the world community of the need to develop a more comprehensive global ethic for sustainable development.³⁰¹

Tu's answer to this "more comprehensive global ethic" is the idea of "anthropocosmic vision"³⁰²; a term first coined by the Romanian thinker, Mircea Eliade (1907–1986), and subsequently adopted by the French philosopher, Paul Ricœur (1913–2005).³⁰³ The anthropocosmic perspective is the antithesis of anthropocentricity. Anthropocosmic vision is a perspective whereby the universe is seen as wholistic and interconnected, where humans are not "isolated entities existing in a vacuum of competing self interest",³⁰⁴ nor are they unquestioning conquerors of nature. There is a comprehensive vision of unity as Tu elucidates:

The [anthropocosmic] vision presupposes a unity between anthropological and cosmological perceptions on the human condition. In the social context, unity so conceived, is not uniformity. If this were the case, it could not transcend the idea of "universal brotherhood," a romantic affirmation of human-relatedness hardly relevant in our age of exclusive individuality. However, "great unity" presupposes the harmonization of differences ... In this sense, the unity, or rather the "greater unity," celebrates differences and works toward overlapping consensuses as a point of departure ... While harmony recognizes conflict and contradiction, it seeks to transform destructive tension into creative tension so that a stressful

³⁰¹ Tu Weiming, 2001a, p 251

³⁰² Tu Weiming, 1989b; 2010

³⁰³ Eliade, 1949; Ricœur, 1960

³⁰⁴ Hale, 2013, p 46; for anthropocosmic perspectives in the context of environmental issues, see Mickey, 2007

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relation can be energized to reach a higher synthesis.³⁰⁵

This view echoes the concept of *li* (ritual propriety) discussed earlier, whereby conflict and dissention are avoided and consensus and harmony is sought; whereby all perspectives involved are considered and incorporated for an end result which, in Tu's words, "reach a higher synthesis". The contemporizing of these ancient ideas is a much needed solution in an increasingly complex and socially fragmented world. The comprehensive metaphysics of Confucianism and, by extension, Tu Weiming's transcultural understandings of these ideas present interrelated concepts oscillating around the idea of the universality of self and empathy for the other. Knowledge – as defined herein – needs to be applied, not only for the advancement of the individual, but also equally for the advancement of the other; that is, the community as a whole (familial, national, and international). Human and environmental sustainability needs to be the priority over profit to ensure a higher quality of life for all. Regardless of one's culture, arguably the idea of self-cultivation is integral to the definition and practice of education – both formally and informally – in creating a world where wisdom is tantamount to material security.

As China's influence grows globally, and the need for intercultural understanding becomes urgent, philosophic bridges need to be built between China and the West. John Dewey, the American educationalist and philosopher, provides a template for such a bridge – not only as a pragmatic philosophy compatible with Confucian metaphysics, but also a humanistic philosophy of education based on co-creativity within community. As Roger T. Ames observes:

For Dewey ... heart-and-mind [*xin* 心] is created in the process of realizing a world. Heart-and-mind, like world, is *becoming* rather than *being*, and the question is how productive and enjoyable are we able to make this creative process. The way in which heart-and-mind and world are changed is not simply in terms of human attitude, but in real growth and productivity, and in the efficiency and pleasure that attends this process. The alternative—for a community to fail to communicate effectively—is for the community to wither, leaving it vulnerable to the "mindless" violence and "heartless" atrocities of creatures that have failed to become human.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁵ 2010, pp 332-3

³⁰⁶ Ames, 2003, p 408, emphases in text

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Ames has succinctly captured the core of both Confucian and Deweyan thought; the quintessential humanity inherent in these compatible philosophies. Dewey recognizes the need for self to be embedded and informed by community in strong agreement with Confucian values Deweyan thought entered China as a Western importation in the early 20th century; it has since been acculturated by modern scholars of philosophy and education. Confucian-Deweyan philosophy is ideally placed to enable the development a cross-cultural educational philosophy which encourages co-creative self-cultivation in the Confucian sense, yet enables its citizens to participate equally in a globalized 21st century as innovators and field-leaders within the Western concept of individual agency.³⁰⁷ A merging of Deweyan and Confucian philosophies is an ideal infrastructural template for such a project.

China in our own historical moment is undergoing the greatest revolution in its long history. As China returns to prominence on the world stage with a growing self-esteem and pride in its traditions, there is a set of complementary and interpenetrating conditions that makes both possible and desirable a conversation between a newly revised Deweyan pragmatism and Confucianism.³⁰⁸

It is this “conversation between a newly revised Deweyan pragmatism and Confucianism” which is explored in this thesis. This chapter addressed the relevant key Confucian ideas; the following chapter discusses the philosophy of John Dewey, his impact on early 20th century Chinese intellectuals and reformers, and the commonalities and contrasts of Deweyan thinking with Confucianism.

³⁰⁷ See Chapter 4

³⁰⁸ Ames, 2003, p 403

6.0 Deweyan Thought

This chapter firstly explores the aspects of John Dewey's philosophy which inform and contextualize his learning theories. Dewey's concepts of experience, self, imagination, community, culture and belonging are discussed. The chapter concludes with an overview of Deweyan philosophy of education. The underlying template to Dewey's philosophy is pragmatic humanism.

Our [Western] culture is characterized by a startling number of disconnects between our lives and our experience. There is no flow between what we do, what we experience, and what we say. Other ages called it alienation, but Dewey's philosophy lets us name it more directly and precisely. We are plagued by a series of separations that run from our through our mind and spirit and then through our social order. Each split prevents our experience from becoming whole and continuous.³⁰⁹

As Dewey states the problem in *Individualism Old and New* (1930), still relevant today: "Individuals vibrate between a past that is intellectually too empty to give stability and a present that is too diversely crowded and chaotic to afford balance or direction to ideas and emotion."³¹⁰ Dewey's solution is a journey to re-find values, albeit values which are discerned from within rather than without. That is, Dewey identifies the breakdown of social institutions, which provided value systems external to the individual, are proving inadequate in creating social harmony.³¹¹ Accordingly, Dewey's philosophy is embedded in the idea of "felt experience"³¹² – discernable experiences relative to self (internal) and community,³¹³ sensory, qualitative, and cognitive – and is the fundamental means by which these schisms within the individual are overcome. Accordingly, *becoming* as a whole human is facilitated. In turn, the evolving individual informs the society in which s/he lives, co-creating and contributing to community, enhancing the greater whole. Essentially, a conglomerate of disconnected individuals *does not* comprise a community. Rather, a *community* – by definition – communes (relates) as each individual interacts cohesively, creating an integrated collective entity. Felt experience is instrumental within this idea and is highly emphasized in

³⁰⁹ Grange, 2004, p xvii

³¹⁰ Reprinted, McDermott (Ed.), p 598

³¹¹ *The Lost Individual* (1930); reprinted McDermott (Ed.), pp 598-608

³¹² Grange, 2004, pp 31-50

³¹³ Dewey, 1973/1981, p 555

Deweyan thought.

6.1 Experience as Felt

Experience is primarily a process of undergoing: a process of standing something; of suffering and passion, of affection, in the literal sense of these words. The organism has to endure, to undergo, the consequences of its own actions. Experience is no slipping along in a path fixed by inner consciousness. ... Undergoing, however, is never mere passivity. ... Sheer endurance, side-stepping evasions are, after all, ways of treating the environment with a view to what such treatment will accomplish ... Experience, in other words, is a matter of *simultaneous* doings and sufferings.³¹⁴

As the individual is informed by this continuum of “simultaneous doings and sufferings”, s/he evolves. The events of compassion and passion of self and other enmesh and create the bond which holds together a vibrant, creative, and humane society. According to Dewey, the constant kineticism of interactive feeling – within self and toward the other, overt and covert – *is* community, *is* connection.

Experience occurs continuously, because the interaction of live creature and enviring conditions is involved in the very process of living. Under conditions of resistance and conflict, aspects and elements of the self and the world that are implicated in this interaction qualify experience with emotions and ideas so that conscious intent emerges.³¹⁵

This “conscious intent” emerging through cumulative experience is the increasingly aware individual acting as agent in determining their life and contribution to society. As the comparative Deweyan scholar, Joseph Grange, interprets:

Experience is thoroughly normative since its coming to be is really the arrival of a form of value. As Dewey is at pains to assert, *something happens*. It is not *any* thing that happens. Rather *some* thing happens. There is the emergence of something unique, irreducible, fresh and novel. Now what happens is a matter of importance for it makes a difference by reason of its place in the stream of events that constitutes the field of experience. It faces a past and to

³¹⁴ Dewey, 1998, p 49; emphasis in text. One is reminded here of Buddhism’s Four Noble Truths. The first truth: to exist *is* to suffer.

³¹⁵ Dewey, 1973/1981, p 555

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University of Sydney

some degree transforms it. It faces a future and to some degree anticipates it. It does all this within the boundaries of the present.³¹⁶

For Dewey, experience as “the arrival of a form of value” also connotes a type of knowledge acquisition. Not objective, empirical knowledge – nor necessarily moral knowledge³¹⁷ – but a form of processual knowledge in a wholistic, integrated sense. This creation of value through felt experience is not dissimilar to the Confucian definition of knowledge as discussed previously (the comparison will be addressed in Chapter 7.2). Accordingly, Dewey states that developing values from experience involves thinking, and that in itself is an experience. When Dewey speaks of the experience of thinking, he defines it in the framework of a certain “esthetic” inherent in the seamless process which subsequently ends with a “conclusion”,³¹⁸ the conclusion completing the cognitive experience. That is, a set of disparate elements, “separate propositions that are premisses [sic]”³¹⁹, come together and the conclusion arises.

A conclusion is no separate and independent thing; it is the consummation of a movement. Hence, *an* experience of thinking has its own esthetic quality. It differs from those experiences that are acknowledged to be esthetic, but only in its materials ... [E]xperience having intellectual conclusion are signs or symbols having no intrinsic quality of their own, but standing for things that may in an other experience be qualitatively experienced ... Nevertheless, the [intellectual] experience itself has a satisfying emotional quality because it possesses internal integration and fulfillment reached through ordered and organized movement.³²⁰

When Dewey speaks of “intellectual conclusion [being] signs or symbols having no intrinsic quality of their own”, he is referring to the subsequent resolution of the disconnection between the original “separate propositions” by the conclusion; the conclusion alone has “no intrinsic quality”. That is, the conclusion *unifies* formerly disparate propositions and thereby gives *meaning*.³²¹ Moreover, this unification, in turn, is applied to

³¹⁶ 2004, p 38; emphases in text

³¹⁷ Dewey’s view on the notion of morality: “One great defect in what passes as morality is its anesthetic [sic] quality. Instead of exemplifying wholehearted action, it takes the form of grudging piecemeal concessions to the demands of duty.” Dewey, 1973/1981, p 558

³¹⁸ Dewey, 1973/1981, p557

³¹⁹ Dewey, 1973/1981

³²⁰ Dewey, 1973/1981, emphasis in text

³²¹ This idea of seamless cognitive processes which impact on the subjectivity of self through feelings – the conclusion being

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the memory of the experience – contextualizing the experience within the self – and expands the value system of the individual concerned. There is a certain sense of satisfaction, fulfillment, in reaching the conclusion of an experience, and this is the “esthetics” of which Dewey constantly reiterates:

I have spoken of the esthetic quality that rounds out an experience into completeness and unity as emotional ... Experience is emotional but there are no separate things called emotions in it ... Emotion belongs of a certainty to the self. But it belongs to the self that is concerned in the movement of events toward an issue that is desired or disliked ... Emotion is the moving and cementing force. It selects what is congruous and dyes what is selected with its color, thereby giving qualitative unity to materials externally disparate and dissimilar.³²²

Essentially, Dewey is attempting to describe the movement of the experiential event through thought (thinking about the experience) through to conclusion which then becomes, as Grange states, “a form of value”. Grange is particular in using the term ‘a *form* of value’, as what is alluded to is not a moral value, nor a value which can necessarily be compared to another value, as arisen value stands on its own with its own intrinsic meaning for the given individual. Values, for Dewey, are something *of* themselves, not subject to criticism or analysis, as they are the subjective understanding of the individual.

Values are values, things immediately having certain intrinsic qualities. Of them as values there is nothing to be said; they are what they are. All that can be said of them concerns their generative conditions and the consequences to which they give rise.³²³

Accordingly, the cohesive element of emotion is inherent in these qualitative values; emotion is not discrete from the experience or the value that arises from the experience in conclusion. Hence, experience for Dewey is ‘felt experience’ which, accumulatively or in a single event, has a potentially transformative impact on the individual: the self evolves. This brings us to the question: What is the Deweyan definition of self within this processual model?

a form of unifying insight – has certain parallels with the Confucian idea of ‘embodied knowing’. This is discussed in Chapter 5.

³²² 1973/1981, pp 560-1

³²³ Dewey, 1998, p 85

6.2 Dewey's Personhood: A Metaphysical Self?

Within his prolific writings, Dewey does not clearly define his concept of self. It can be argued that Dewey was more an essayist than a systematic philosopher; a pragmatist – more interested in concrete outcomes – rather than a metaphysical thinker. Nevertheless, his concepts of self, personhood, and the individual can be identified – and to some extent, systematized – in contextual reflection of his writings. The self, for Dewey, is certainly socially constructed; yet, it has metaphysical intonations which are embedded within the self as a result of ‘felt experience’. This is an emotive self, as quoted above: “Emotion belongs of *a certainty to the self*. But it belongs to *the self that is concerned in the movement of events* toward an issue that is desired or disliked.”³²⁴ Arguably, these are desires – motivating forces – which intend to attract or repel specific events, wanted and unwanted, respectively. However, as Dewey emphasizes:

[I]t is pertinent to note that the unification of the self throughout the ceaseless flux of what it does, suffers, and achieves, cannot be attained in terms of itself. The self is always directed toward something beyond itself and so its own unification depends upon the idea of the integration of the shifting scenes of the world into that imaginative totality we call the Universe.³²⁵

This self is seeking something greater than itself in a cosmological sense. That is, a perceptually ordered universe is constantly being sought within the chaotic “ceaseless flux” of existence for the self to *become of* the universe. Dewey infers that this is an innate underlying force – a compelling inclination – within the self to attain interconnection and contextualization within the universe in which the self is embedded. As Dewey states, “the unification of the self ... cannot be attained in terms of itself”; in other words, for the self to be unified, it must be interconnected with the other empathetically – the other being of the human, natural, and/or cosmological worlds – an anthropocosmic perspective. That is, to be unified, the self cannot perceive itself to be emotionally discrete from the other. Hence, unification of the self ‘cannot be attained in terms of itself’. For Dewey, this is essential to the ultimate completion of the experiential process: self apprehends the “imaginative totality we call the Universe”.

³²⁴ Dewey, 1973/1981, p 561; my emphases

³²⁵ Dewey, 1998, p 407

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University of Sydney

The *whole* self is an ideal, an imaginative project. Hence the idea of a thoroughgoing and deep-seated harmonizing of the self with the Universe (as a name for the totality of conditions with which the self is connected) operates only through imagination – which is one reason why this composing of the self is not voluntary in the sense of an act of special volition or resolution. An “adjustment” processes the will rather than is its express product.³²⁶

Unfortunately, Dewey does not explain what this “adjustment” is exactly; how it operates, whether it is solely cognitive, or which aspect of self it emerges from to process “the will” as some form of catalytic agent. We are left with educated guesses, the most predominant being that this “adjustment” is innate in our humanness. That is, there is a *compelling, underlying, and unconscious inclination* to contextualize experiences – their produced feelings, and subsequent ‘values’ as derived from the conclusion process – to find our place in the world and the universe at large. This is a defining element of our humanness. And inherent in our humanness to do this is our capability to achieve “imaginative totality”. Imagination, as the above quotes indicate, is a key concept in the Deweyan notion of self.

6.2 Imagination, Community and Culture

The connection between imagination and the harmonizing of the self is closer than is usually thought. The idea of a whole, whether to the whole personal being or of the world, is an imaginative, not literal, idea. The limited world of our observation and reflection becomes the Universe only through imaginative extension. It cannot be apprehended in knowledge nor realized in reflection.³²⁷

Here, Dewey is emphasizing that “the Universe” is not apprehended through objective or empirical knowledge reflected upon, but by construction of a given individual’s consciousness; s/he creates and orders meaning by dint of contextualized experience between self and other through imagination as an immediate experience. The correlations to Confucian thought – the metaphysical notions of individual access and connection to the universe as a whole – are significant. The self is informed in contextualization of that which is beyond him or herself, tangible and intangible. When Dewey states the Universe “cannot be apprehended

³²⁶ Dewey, 1998, p 407; emphasis in text

³²⁷ Dewey, 1998, p 407

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in knowledge [information] nor realized in reflection”, there is a direct parallel to Tu Weiming’s “embodied knowing” (智的直覺 *zhi de zhi jue* see Chapter 5); Tu calls this ‘apprehension’ a form of intuitional insight, Dewey calls it ‘imagination’. As Grange clarifies:

Imagination is not idle fantasy. It is essential for growth of wholeness as a real factor in experience. When imagination effectively plays over a situation, there looms forth a focus area that appears to sum up and express in a very intense manner what the situation is all about. This focus is the place from which the varying meanings of the situation will assert themselves as the situation moves toward a successful resolution ... The conclusion to a successfully resolved situation is always the same: the experience of new meaning.³²⁸

This constant dynamic of recreated “new meaning[s]” not only facilitates growing wholeness within the individual, it also informs the greater community within which the individual interacts as identified in Confucian thinking.³²⁹ This strongly reflects Tu Weiming’s processual cyclic model of knowledge acquisition whereby new meanings through experience are consolidated into former knowledge systems in *perpetua*.³³⁰ Such interactions create mutual enhancement and further meaningful experiences for both self and other. When meanings and values are genuinely shared, this is *wholehearted* participation within the community and society flourishes.

It lies in the nature of meaning that it be shared. Meanings that cannot be shared are meaningless. The connection between meaning and sharing is as tight as that between meaning and difference. Better put, meaning must not only be shared, it must also be participated in. We must inhabit meaning if its full significance is to illuminate regions of experience.³³¹

The processual model continues with ever-widening enhancements, informing and enriching further experiences. This is a constant, simultaneous, and seamless dynamic; the individual always returning to experience anew with freshly created meanings, attracting renewed and different interactions and, in turn, expressing those values and meanings with

³²⁸ 2004, pp 57-8

³²⁹ See Figure 5.1 in previous chapter.

³³⁰ See Figure 5.6

³³¹ Grange, 2004, p 66

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the other in shared experience. This model is, for Dewey, our humanness defined. The following diagram describes this perpetual process:

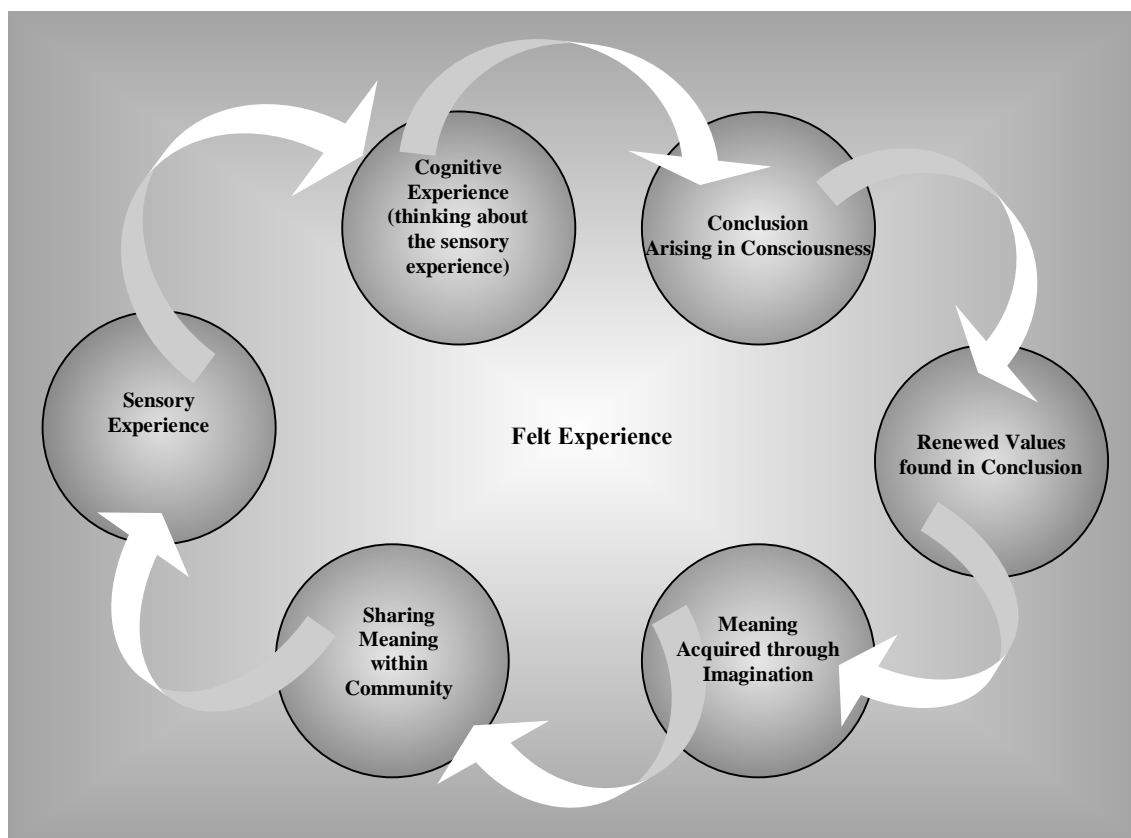


Figure 6.1 Cyclic Processual Model of Deweyan Felt Experience

This perpetual loop is operating simultaneously and seamlessly as the myriad of life's experiences is perceived by our senses to be processed moment by moment. This process is embedded in the field of felt experience.

Aesthetic experience is woven within this whole process; a sense of satisfaction threads through each stage, motivating us to richer, more fulfilling experiences. This is the true art of pleasure, the productive joy of co-creativity towards wholeness. The satisfaction of reaching conclusions, new meanings and sharing those new meanings in joint experiences – within community and without the intent of self-interest – provides the incentive to have more diverse and different experiences, growing towards greater wholeness for self and other.

As Grange points out, "To be whole is to let difference find its place within the identity of the whole. Wholes that have no difference in their parts are not really wholes.

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They are mere simples expressing unalterable sameness.”³³² This is the basis, not just of community, but also culture. Individuals constantly striving for more varied interactions, and deeper satisfactions in those interactions in the act of becoming whole, collectively contribute and expand the normative thinking of the society in which they live. It is the flexible parameters of normative thinking within any given society which ensures that cohesion, as opposed to chaos, prevails.

A community that lacks the loving pursuit of wisdom also lacks defining standards for its cultural acts of communication. Without a practiced art of normative thinking the community is bereft of meaning, for there is no way to measure out the difference made by authentic experience. The meaning of value is directly related to the difference that it makes. If such differences go unremarked because of a lack of normative measures, then the community has descended into the dark waters of nihilism.³³³

One can take risks – as risks produce new conclusions and meanings – but those risks must be taken on or near the normative boundaries of the society. Courageous individuals, in breaking down restrictive and redundant cultural boundaries, re-create new ones through sharing their experiences. Occasionally one may have to slightly step over a boundary in brave action to achieve this result, but the overstepping should never be too far as common meaning will be lost within the community; cultural context will be lost. Courageous, paradigm-changing individuals provide the leadership towards enhanced community thinking and action. By positively experimenting with new experiences within or near the normative parameters of a given community, and therefore exploring renewed meanings, the boundaries of accepted thinking are questioned, shift, and the culture becomes more open, tolerant and vibrant through consensual acceptance of the new meanings. This is the evolution of culture towards civilization and can only take place when the individuals comprising the community have a sense of emotional investment in the collective. That is, a sense of belonging.

[Belonging] is a template that measures successful action within the structures of experience ... Belonging becomes such a crucial concept because to belong is to take part in, to share, and to contribute. Each of these three dimensions of lived human experience – participating,

³³² 2004, p 69

³³³ Grange, 2004, p 68

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sharing, and belonging – provides a rich perspective summing up Dewey’s major ideas on the meaning of human life.³³⁴

Belonging is what enables and creates the aesthetic, the satisfaction, within this process of experience, meaning, values, and sharing of the same. If we have no sense of belonging to a group, community, or culture, there is no incentive to contribute – there is no wholeheartedness and self-interest would come to dominate, creating a fractured society. A sense of belonging means heartfelt *participation* in the experiential joy of being and becoming with others, caring for others, and attempting to alleviate their suffering whenever able. True belonging means interconnection and full participation in a contextualized universe – a cosmos, a crafted tapestry of meaning.

As discussed, these interconnected concepts – experience, cognitive conclusions, values, meaning, imagination, community, culture and belonging – as real, *lived* co-creative aesthetic experiences and the pleasure of productivity which accompanies this state of being, form the basis of Deweyan educational theory. For Dewey, the foundations and future of a balanced, whole, and evolving society is primarily realized in the education of the child.

5.4 Deweyan Philosophy of Learning

This section predominantly focuses on four key essays Dewey wrote on philosophy of education; *My Pedagogic Creed* (1897), *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902), *Education in Relation to Form* (1933),³³⁵ and *The School and Society* (1899, re-edited, 1915).³³⁶ It can be argued that the modern concept of child-centered – as opposed to teacher-centered – education in the West originated with Dewey. From his 1902 article:

The child is the starting point, the centre, and the end. His[/her] development, his[/her] growth, is the ideal. It alone furnishes the standard. To the growth of the child all studies are subservient; they are instruments valued as they serve the needs of growth. Personality, character, is more than subject-matter. Not knowledge or information, but self-realization, is the goal ... Moreover, subject-matter never can be got into the child from without. Learning is

³³⁴ Grange, 2004, p 67

³³⁵ These three essays are reprinted in Dewey, 1998, (Eds., Hickman & Alexander) and referenced from this volume

³³⁶ The fourth, the 1915 version, is reprinted in Dewey, 1966, (Ed., Garforth) and accordingly referenced herein.

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active. It involves reaching out of the mind. It involves organic assimilation starting from within ... It is [s]he and not the subject-matter which determines both quality and quantity of learning.³³⁷

This primary emphasis given to the personality and character of the child is an extension of Dewey's ideas of values, meanings, and wholeness of self, indicated by the statement that learning is an "organic assimilation starting from within". The self is the starting point; objective knowledge and information ("subject-matter") is secondary and only useful when given *meaning within the self*, as "instruments valued as they serve the needs of growth". Only then can subject-matter be adequately applied into the individual's world. As Dewey states, "education ... is a process of living and not a preparation for future living."³³⁸ The purpose of education is not solely or primarily to make the individual economically viable in adulthood, but to foster and develop the self. The aim is for the young person to become whole, to become a socially developed participating member of the community within which s/he lives – both now and in the future.

The things that occupy [the child] are held together by the unity of the personal and social interests which his[/her] life carries along. Whatever is uppermost in his[/her] mind constitutes to him[/her], for the time being, the whole universe. That universe is fluid and fluent; its contents dissolve and re-form with amazing rapidity. But, after all, it is the child's own world. It has the unity and completeness of his[/her] own life.³³⁹

It is from this perspective that curricula and teaching methodologies are developed; subject matter and methodologies 'grow out' from this point, as opposed to the subject matter being uniformly and one-dimensionally imposed upon and negating the child's imaginative world. Dewey constantly reiterates that the subject-matter to be learnt by – schematized within – the individual must be molded to the individual's "universe".³⁴⁰ In keeping with his idea of growing wholeness of self, Dewey sees this dynamic of the child's own universe and the schematizing of subject matter within that universe, as a mutually informing process.

³³⁷ Dewey, 1998, p 238

³³⁸ Dewey, 1998, p 230

³³⁹ Dewey, 1998, p 237

³⁴⁰ This idea is quite common now in the 21st century, but in the late 19th/early 20th centuries – when, in the USA, the specter of legal child labor still existed (until repealed in 1938) and the socially constructed concept of 'childhood' was in its infancy – this was a radical approach to education.

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As the young person's imaginative world grows, it is constantly informed by outside knowledge – facts, personal interactions, experimental experience – and, in turn, that shifting world continues to inform the 'what' and 'how' further subject matter is taught. That is, curricula and teaching methodologies must shift as the individual's particular and personal world shifts and changes.³⁴¹ Again, this is a seamless process in constant dynamic. A dynamic which is immediate, living, and relevant to the individual's current existence – the operative word in this process is *meaning*. Subject matter must be meaningful; that is *full* of meaning to the individual's interests and imagination.

And it is here, in Deweyan pedagogic theory, that the term 'imagination' is extended in a more literal sense to the model of meaningful experience discussed above. Arguably, fantasy and the playing out of imaginary (adult) roles is a crucial part of a young child's learning experiences, both creatively and socially. Yet, imagination – as defined in the adult experiential process – is still in operation, although not completely formed. That is, the normative thinking, values and meanings, held by adult members in the given community or culture are still incomplete in the young person. Values and meanings are not as yet cohered or understood fully, continual social development is needed. "The real child, it hardly needs to be said, lives in the world of imaginative values and ideas which find only imperfect outward embodiment."³⁴² Honing and allowing the evolution of the "imperfect outward embodiment" of values and ideas towards realized wholeness is socially constructed and is the Deweyan art of education.

I believe that the individual who is to be educated is a social individual and that society is an organic union of individuals. If we eliminate the social factor from the child we are left only with an abstraction; if we eliminate the individual factor from society, we are left only with an inert lifeless mass.³⁴³

Self, meaning, and society are inextricably enmeshed. Should one of these three phenomena not cohere – find balance within the other two – there is a breakdown of the

³⁴¹ There has been much criticism and perceived failure of Deweyan educational approaches, especially in the USA where his ideas had a great deal of influence on education and policy generally in the 20th century. But, I suggest, it takes an exceptional teacher – and an extraordinarily flexible education system – to implement these ideas successfully. It is highly demanding pedagogy, particularly in a class of some 30 children. Dewey's theories did not fail; it was the ability to implement them that failed. See Edmondson, 2006

³⁴² Dewey, 1966, p 119

³⁴³ Dewey, 1998, p 230

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entire entwined structure, and all members of the community suffer. Should even *one* of their own become disaffected, it impacts on others in ever-widening circles. Accordingly, this finely balanced interconnected structure – self↔meaning↔society – is at the core of Dewey’s adamant focus on education. Formal and informal learning is pivotal to Deweyan philosophy as a whole. Formal education, in particular, is seen by Dewey as the first and foremost civic responsibility for any community:

I believe that the community’s duty to education is ... its paramount moral duty. By law and punishment, by social agitation and discussion, society can regulate and form itself in a more or less haphazard and chance way. But through education society can formulate its own purposes, can organize its own means and resources, and thus shape itself with definiteness and economy in the direction in which it wishes to move.³⁴⁴

That is, education creates normative values. It fosters, supports, and creates meanings in future generations; it is the continued health of a society – in the present and the future. It is where a young individual learns about their immediate and wider world, and how their society understands the world in all its presentations – whether it be science, art, humanities, and/or social interaction with peers. There is agreement of values in approach and outcomes; there is also the opportunity to question and discuss normative and individual values in a community forum (school environs) with the assistance of mature, experienced, and responsible adults (teachers). The school, effectively, becomes a formative and formal arena for the experiential process discussed above.

Deweyan education, defined by the concepts of self-development, meaningful knowledge – as opposed to purely objective information with little relevance to the individual’s life and values – and embeddedness in the community, to enhance and evolve the same, correlate strongly with Confucian philosophy and social values. Deweyan philosophy, particularly philosophy of education, entered China in the early 20th century and found a home.

³⁴⁴ Dewey, 1998, p 234

7.0 Deweyan Thought in China

This chapter firstly overviews Dewey's visit to China in the early 20th century (1919-1920) and the impact he had on the intelligentsia and subsequently education reform in the early republican era. Two intellectuals, Hu Shih (胡適 1891-1962) and Liang Shuming (梁漱溟 1893-1988), who were major – yet, diverse – influences in the modernization movement of the time are presented. Hu Shih was a radical reformer – a writer and Deweyan philosopher – who wished to embrace Western ideas for wholesale reform; Liang Shuming argued for reform from the culturally-based position of Confucianism and whose ideas, in part, were influenced by Dewey among other Western writers. Their differing approaches to Deweyan thought, and Western ideas generally, are briefly discussed and contrasted.

The chapter concludes by addressing the Chinese acculturation of Dewey's ideas – both philosophic and educational – in the 21st century. Specifically discussed is the emergence of a Confucian-Deweyan school of thought which – seeded during Dewey's visit and subsequently lying dormant during the Maoist period – returned, growing stronger, when China again needed radical reform. Now, in the post-Mao era, Deweyan thought is not a wholesale importation from the West, but a school of thought sinologized by the parallels and correlations being made with revitalized Confucian thinking. Deweyan thought, in this context, has become a part of China's intellectual and cultural continuum – a mere one hundred years since originally being introduced – and continues to evolve. Evidence, not only for the strong compatibility of these two philosophies, but also indicating the culturally ingrained template of Confucian thinking which could not be eradicated by the relentless purges, propaganda, and persecutions that took place against Confucianism under Mao's rule. In pre-Communist 20th century, not only did China embrace Dewey and his ideas, Dewey also embraced China; her aspirations and her people.

In early 1919, John Dewey had been delivering a series of lectures at the Imperial University of Japan, Tokyo, when the invitation to lecture in China arrived from three of his former students: Hu Shih, a professor at National Peking University; Kuo Ping-Wen (郭秉文 aka Guo Bingwen), president of the National Nanking Teachers College; and Chiang Monlin,

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(蒋梦麟 or Jiang Menglin) editor of *New Education* magazine.³⁴⁵ John Dewey arrived in China with his wife, Alice Chipman Dewey, on the 1st of May, 1919. The date is highly significant and, quite possibly, instrumental in his prolonged stay of some two years.³⁴⁶ China was unstable, in the throes of change, and there were urgent calls for (Westernized) reform from the intelligentsia. Within days of Dewey's arrival, the reaction to China's treatment at the Versailles Peace Conference triggered an uprising, becoming the flashpoint for what is known as the May 4th Movement. A brief background:

The Manchu [Qing] dynasty had been overthrown in 1911, but the republic which replaced it was far from stable, and political unrest was the order of the day. Japan's twenty-one demands in 1915, and the Shantung resolution³⁴⁷ of the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919, incited students and new intellectual leaders to promote an anti-Japanese campaign and a vast modernization movement to build a new China through intellectual and social reforms, stressing primarily Western ideas of science and democracy.³⁴⁸

At the core of this chaotic situation was an emerging and vibrant intellectual climate. Finally freed from the corruption, restrictions and isolationism of the recently fallen Qing dynasty, and with many Western educated intellectuals returning to China, there was a hunger to implement practical reforms along the lines of the 'progressive' West and embrace the intellectual freedoms known and taken for granted there. "Books by Western authors were translated and published in Chinese by the score. The works of Herbert Spencer, Thomas Huxley, and Charles Darwin enjoyed great popularity among intellectuals."³⁴⁹ There was a great deal of intellectual excitement and hope for the future in this volatile period. For most of the intelligentsia, Confucianism was defunct – reflecting the 'old' way – and the West provided the key for China to modernize and enter the world.

In the midst of this upheaval, Dewey found a place for his ideas and a willing

³⁴⁵ Dewey, 1973, (Eds., Clopton & Tsuin-chen Ou), p 3

³⁴⁶ Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007, p 1; Dewey departed from China on the 11th of July, 1921.

³⁴⁷ "In 1898, when the Western imperialist powers were rushing to extract concessions from the weakened Qing dynasty, Germany obtained the use of Jiaozhou Bay, on the southern coast of the Shandong Peninsula, and the right to construct a naval base at Qingdao there. After World War I began, Japan joined the Allies and took over German interests in the peninsula. At the same time (1915), it presented China with its list of Twenty-one Demands including Chinese recognition of Japan's special position in Shandong. Since its Western friends were preoccupied with Germany, China had no choice but to accept the Japanese demands, but it expected the Versailles Peace Conference to restore Shandong [to China]." *Encyclopedia Britannica* <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/538629/Shandong-question> [accessed 29th of August, 2013]

³⁴⁸ Dewey, 1973, p 4

³⁴⁹ Dewey, 1973, p 5

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audience eager to embrace them. As the Deweyan scholar, Thomas Berry, observes “[Dewey’s arrival was] the supreme moment of intellectual communication between China and America ... Emotionally and intellectually the Chinese were keyed to hear and give serious consideration to the thoughts he would present to them.”³⁵⁰ In turn, Dewey was deeply affected by the events surrounding him during this period.

Dewey was captivated by the power of public opinion manifested in the strikes of students and the boycotts of merchants. The image of a powerful public – independent of the state but in the end capable of controlling it – was deeply impressed on Dewey’s mind ... Dewey said, “Even if nothing more were to come of the movement, it would be worth observation and record as an exhibition of the way in which China is really governed – when it is governed at all.”³⁵¹

With this engagement, Dewey presented his ideas in several series of lectures ranging broadly from social and political theory to – most influentially – philosophy of education.³⁵² Although Dewey did not speak Mandarin, in his second year in China he taught regular courses at National Peking University (now Peking University), National Peking Teachers College, and National Nanking Teachers College. In 1920, National Peking University awarded Dewey a doctorate *honoris causa*.³⁵³ The intelligentsia – as the main opinion leaders of the times – embraced his ideas enthusiastically and Deweyan thought entered contemporary intellectual discourse and, subsequently, the narrative of republican reform.

7.1 Deweyan Influence within the Nationalist Movement

The fervor of the May 4th uprising subsided after some six months and morphed into what became known as the New Culture movement.³⁵⁴ This movement was a consolidation of purpose for needed reforms which began well before May 4th took centre stage. After the failure of the uprising, the call for an overhaul of cultural and political *values* now took on renewed momentum and urgency. New Culture was a movement of ideas; a vying for dominant narratives in the eradication of old redundant thinking to make way for the new. As Jessica Ching-Sze Wang notes about this period: “The students believed that the new method

³⁵⁰ As cited by Copton and Ou in Introduction of Dewey, 1973, p 5

³⁵¹ Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007, p 97

³⁵² Dewey’s lectures in China translated back to English by Clopton and Ou (as Dewey’s lecture notes are not extant) can be found in Dewey, 1973.

³⁵³ Dewey, 1973, pp 3-13

³⁵⁴ Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007, p 67; Dewey, 1973, pp 13-16

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of thinking should be imported from the West, as they began to realize that the power of the West resided not in its battleships but in its ideas.”³⁵⁵ Essentially, the New Culture movement was a platform for the intelligentsia rather than an outright armed (or boycotting) revolt; it was a rebellion of ideas. In 1930, Arthur Hummel, an American political scientist, observed:

Before the so-called "New-Culture Movement" (*hsin wen-hua yin-tung*) [新文化运动] could create a new culture it had first to make a settlement with the old; it had to understand the past – the true past – in order to be emancipated from it. This explains why, much to the amazement of Westerners, the outstanding Chinese intellectuals of our day have not been concerned primarily with the creation of constitutions and parliaments and new codes of laws, but with the reorganization and the re-evaluation of their culture from the modern point of view.³⁵⁶

This was no clear cut process as evidenced in the continual (and often bloody) upheavals which plagued China for the next seventy years – civil war, Japanese invasion³⁵⁷, the Communists’ rise to power in 1949, the subsequent tragedies of the Maoist years and, not to forget, the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident. Nevertheless, Dewey arrived at a pivotal historic point in the very painful birth of post-imperial China.

[I]t was the nature of the May Fourth Movement, its despair, its rejection of past models, its hope, its belief in the power of Chinese intellectuals to analyze and reform China correctly, and the importance it attached to education, which explains the considerable interest in John Dewey's philosophy in China.³⁵⁸

There is contention about exactly how much influence Dewey had on actual reforms and policy developments in this era, even from the perspective of some hundred years.³⁵⁹ The forces – intellectual and political – of the time were highly complex. Clopton and Ou, in their introduction to Dewey’s *Lectures in China 1919-1920* (1973), state “[a]n accurate assessment

³⁵⁵ 2007, p 68

³⁵⁶ Hummel, 1930, p 58; Martin Jacques’ (2009) book, on the rise of modern China as a global power, is invaluable reading on this point. China – historically and culturally – considers itself a ‘civilization-state’, not a nation-state. This is a crucial issue in understanding China and its main departure from Western political thinking, as Hummel clearly illustrates in this quote.

³⁵⁷ There was much vacillation between the Kuomintang (KMT) Nationalist Party and Communists during the civil war as to whether to join forces against the common enemy or not; see Terrill, 1980, pp 144-5; Fenby, 2003/2005.

³⁵⁸ Sizer, 1966, p 391

³⁵⁹ Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007, pp 5-7

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of Dewey's influence is impossible."³⁶⁰ Nonetheless, they claim:

Dewey's influence on education was far more pronounced and lasting than it was on other aspects of the Chinese scene. That Dewey exercised tremendous influence on China is universally admitted, and is especially attested by the virulence of the diatribes in which Chinese Communist writers attack his philosophy.³⁶¹

Suzanne Pepper who is considered the foremost authority on 20th century education reform in China, states:

Dewey's visit was the centrepiece of the lobbying effort for the 1922 school reform decree. American influence on Chinese education also culminated in that 1922 decree and the subsequent changes at the local level ... But these reforms represented a kind of symbolic high-water mark pointing to ideals and commitments which were already being eroded even as the mark itself was being drawn. Currents were running so swiftly that by the time the 1922-1923 reforms materialized, their sponsors were already beginning to disengage. Dewey, himself, sensitized to the changing climate, cautioned against uniform prescriptions and detailed foreign borrowing before he left China.³⁶²

Dewey's own thoughts on influencing the events in China during his stay are outlined by Wang:

In "Transforming the Mind of China," written late in 1919, Dewey clearly stated that China's development toward democracy "must be a transforming growth from within, rather than either an external superimposition or a borrowing from foreign sources." ... In a letter he wrote to a colleague at Columbia University, Dewey perceived his "influence" as nothing more than "a sort of outside reinforcement ... to the young or liberal element ... in spite of its vagueness."³⁶³

Over the two year period Dewey was in China, most of his lectures were centred on philosophy of education.³⁶⁴ Despite the efforts of his advocates to implement Deweyan

³⁶⁰ p 10

³⁶¹ p 10

³⁶² 1996, p 91

³⁶³ Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007, p 6

³⁶⁴ Dewey, 1973; Keenan, 1977, p 55

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education reform practically, little was achieved due to the chaotic political conditions of the times. As Barry Keenan, in his work *The Dewey Experiment in China* (1977), points out:

The new education movement [as an extension of the New Culture movement] promoted Dewey's ideas after 1919, and its supporters had hoped for an effect on society well beyond the halls of academe. To separate education from political control had been a principle shared by the reformers. But the repression of militarist cabinets was joined by May Fourth activism to close the gap between education and politics from both sides. The reformers hoped education could begin social and political change, but, under undemocratic political conditions, insistence upon reform by cultural subversion had created an insoluble dilemma.³⁶⁵

The 'insoluble dilemma' was that reformers could no longer be a-political, insisting on cultural reform only, they had to take a political stance – align either with the KMT, the Communists, or even the militarists – to achieve anything and many refused to do this.³⁶⁶ Nevertheless, there remained great hope among supporters of Dewey from the New Culture movement generally, and the New Education movement specifically. In a farewell article to Dewey, Hu Shih, Dewey's former doctoral student at Columbia University and most devoted advocate, claimed: "In the future, as "experimental schools" gradually arise, Dewey's educational theory will have the opportunity for experimentation; and that will be when Dewey's philosophy blooms and bears fruit!"³⁶⁷ Hu Shih was highly influential in the New Culture movement and, subsequently in the New Education reform movement. Hu's promotion of Deweyan ideas, especially educational theory, is well documented.

7.1.1 Hu Shih (胡適 1891-1962)

More significant than the revolution of 1911 [overthrow of the Qing dynasty], and perhaps more fundamental than the one now in progress, is the cultural renaissance that has been stirring China for the past ten years. On January 1, 1917, Dr. Hu Shih laid before his countrymen the well-known eight principles that may be said to have started the nation-wide movement for abandoning the ancient classical style and giving literary standing to the

³⁶⁵ p 79

³⁶⁶ Keenan, 1977, Chapters IV & V

³⁶⁷ As cited in Keenan, 1977, p 55

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vernacular.³⁶⁸

By the time of Dewey's arrival in 1919, Hu Shih's involvement and influence in cultural and intellectual reform had become well established.³⁶⁹ By this time, Hu – at twenty-eight years old and now established within the Peking University intellectual community (he had been a professor of philosophy at Peking University since his return to China in 1917) – was predominantly focused on education reform, known as the New Education movement, an off-shoot of the New Culture movement. The other prominent leaders behind this educational reform push were Jiang Menglin (蒋梦麟 1886-1964, aka Chiang Monlin), Guo Bingwen (郭秉文 1880–1969, aka Ping-Wen Kuo), and Tao Xingzhi (陶行知 1891-1946).³⁷⁰

The leading New Culture journal, *New Youth* (*Xin qingnian*), was founded in 1915, but its educational equivalent, *New Education* (*xin jiaoyu*), did not begin publication until February 1919. Aims for a “new education” proclaimed at that time paralleled those for a new culture. A Society for the Promotion of New Education (*xin jiaoyu gongjin she*) was formed in early 1919. Its leaders intended to concentrate on education reform alone, albeit guided by the spirit of democracy and individualism. Their specific goal was to reorganize the country's school system in accordance with then prevailing ideals.³⁷¹

As the Hu biographer, Jerome Grieder, observes of this period:

The Chinese were little interested in an attempt to “marry old opinion to new fact.” Their aim, rather, was to use new fact to discredit old opinion, and any appeal to “[Deweyan] experience” was necessarily an appeal to a past largely repudiated. Even Hu Shih's demand for a “trans-valuation of all values” was designed not “to effect a working connection” with the past, but to serve as the justification for a new beginning.³⁷²

A clear misinterpretation, however subtle, of Dewey's philosophy; but, as Grieder

³⁶⁸ Hummel, 1930, p 55

³⁶⁹ Grieder, 1970, pp 75-89; Hu was writing articles for the leading radical periodical of the time, *La Jeunesse* (or *New Youth*), whilst still in America. He returned to China in 1917 with an established reputation as a reforming intellectual. Grieder, 1970, pp 75-6

³⁷⁰ Pepper, 1996, p 91

³⁷¹ Pepper, 1996, pp 90-1

³⁷² 1970, p 120

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further states: “Hu Shih was, as Dewey was not, at war with his own past”³⁷³ as was all of China – especially the intelligentsia. Given the times and disparate cultural premises, it is understandable that a marriage between Dewey’s ideas – as he intended – and a young, impatient intellectual would be a difficult one.

Another point of (mis)interpretation Hu makes of Deweyan thought is outlined, again, by Grieder:

What Dewey called the individual’s “sense of whole” [see previous chapter] was for Hu the “greater self.” But with a striking difference in temper. In Hu’s description of it the continuing communal existence is less a source of final spiritual consolation, as it appears to Dewey, than a tribunal privileged to sit in ultimate judgment on the “true worth” of the individual’s life and work.³⁷⁴

Here are not unrelated echoes of the future – the ‘denunciations’ and persecutions endemic of Mao’s Cultural Revolution – of a situation whereby an ideological (and often changing) elite pass judgment on another. This view of Hu’s – embedded in Chinese thinking or not – is an indicator to the eventual failure of the New Culture movement of the 1920s; its inability to create practical, consolidated, *consensual* and lasting reforms that would truly assist a country in transition. New Culture was a movement of the intellectual elite – Westernized and situated in eastern China, Peking (Beijing), Nanking (Nanjing), and Shanghai – out of touch with the majority of the country. China, predominantly an agrarian and illiterate society, was desperately in need of modernization and infrastructure. Only political stability and clear consensus policies could achieve this much needed goal.³⁷⁵ As Dewey, always the pragmatist, said of the situation, “it was not theories and free thought ... China needed, it was teaching the people how to improve agriculture and cotton and silk and more especially their own lives.”³⁷⁶ Despite these points of departure (and other misinterpretations of Deweyan thinking), in his collected essays, Hu said “[Dewey] became a guide in his life and thought and the foundation of his own philosophy.”³⁷⁷ Tan Sor-hoon elaborates:

³⁷³ 1970, p 120

³⁷⁴ 1970, p 116

³⁷⁵ Pepper, 1996, pp 88-9 & 102; Grieder, 1970, pp 123-4; Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007, pp 69-70

³⁷⁶ Letter from John Dewey to Walter S. Drysdale, Beijing, 1st of December, 1920 as cited in Wang, Jessica Ching-Sze, 2007, p 69

³⁷⁷ Tan Sor-hoon, 2004b, p 46

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Hu was impressed by the pragmatist assertion that “there is no absolute truth, only particular truths” meaningful in specific judgments and always subject to reevaluation in the light of fresh experience; “thought is but the means of solving various problems . . . the means of staying in an environment and it changes with the environment; in thinking, instead of clinging to any pre-given universal theory, one must seek the practical and useful”³⁷⁸

Despite Hu’s presentation as a reformer embracing Western ideals wholeheartedly as the only means for China to progress,³⁷⁹ privately he was a traditionalist. In 1917, on his return to China, Hu followed through on the marriage his mother arranged for him with an illiterate village girl when he was twelve years old. In keeping with tradition and respect for his mother – and the sacrifices she had suffered to give him a high quality education – Hu saw this as the only right thing to do.³⁸⁰ In speaking with a student colleague on this issue whilst in America, he said:

If we are to lead we must obey the old conventions . . . Ours is an intermediate generation which must be sacrificed both to our parents and to our children. Unless we would lose all influence, we must marry as our parents wish, girls selected by them for us, whom we may not see before our wedding days – and we must make society happier and healthier for our children to live in. Let that be our reward and consolation.³⁸¹

From accounts in his unpublished personal diaries, Hu and his wife, Tung-hsiu, had an enduring and affectionate marriage.³⁸² This traditionalist view of family and marriage is further supported by a lecture, ‘American Women’, given by Hu in 1918 at the Peking Women’s Normal School:

[R]eturned students of recent days who, having breathed a bit of the air of enlightenment, get divorced first thing upon returning home – not stopping to think that their own civilized manner was bestowed upon them by good fortune, and paid for with a good deal of money; and that if their wives had enjoyed similar opportunities they too could have breathed the air

³⁷⁸ 2004b, p 46

³⁷⁹ Grieder, 1970, p 131

³⁸⁰ Hu’s father died when he was four years old and his mother was left as head of the household – also looking after the children of the father’s earlier marriages – and often in dire financial circumstances.

³⁸¹ Lewis Garnett, ‘Hu Shih: Young Prophet of Young China’ in *The New York Times Magazine* (March 27, 1927) as cited in Grieder, 1970, p 12

³⁸² Grieder, 1970, Appendix A

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of civilization, rather than suffering such derision!³⁸³

There was one reformer, however, who advocated maintaining the continuum of tradition – both privately and publically – albeit with amendments relevant to the new evolving era of modernization: Liang Shuming. Liang Shuming was a strong adherent of the New Culture movement, a writer, lecturer in Indian philosophy (Peking University), and a devout Buddhist and Confucian. Liang – as a proponent of Confucianism and addressing the grass-roots problems of the population rather than proffering idealisms – was often a lonely voice in the 1920's reform narrative.

7.1.2 Liang Shuming (梁漱溟 1893-1988)

The young Liang Shuming stood out among his New Culture colleagues at Peking University; not only was he not university educated (he was a lay Buddhist scholar), but also he had never been outside China. His public claim of conversion to Confucianism from Buddhism took place in 1921 and observers often attribute this to his father's suicide in 1919.³⁸⁴ Liang did not believe in violence or transgression of established laws,³⁸⁵ and argued strongly for an adherence to the Eastern cultural continuum in the process of reform. Hence he often found himself at odds with the more radical elements of the New Culture milieu. Nevertheless, he was a powerful figure within the reform movement.

In an otherwise unremarkable academic career, Liang Shuming shot to national prominence and international recognition (particularly within Japan) with the publication of his lectures as a book in early 1922, *Eastern and Western Cultures*.³⁸⁶ The only one to review it from the New Culture movement was his friend and Peking University colleague, Hu Shih. Generally, the New Culture adherents were disdainful of Liang and his ideas, suggesting he was something of a “harmless eccentric, much like that old champion of foot-binding and illiteracy, Ku Hung-ming.”³⁸⁷ The book went into eight reprints in four years. The question

³⁸³ Grieder, 1970, p 354

³⁸⁴ Alitto, 1979/1986, Chapter 3. In interviews in his old age, Liang claimed he had always remained a Buddhist; Confucianism, he claimed, was more suitable for the times in which he had lived. This is not unusual, as many Neo-Confucians of the Song-Ming periods often studied Buddhism in conjunction with Confucianism. In Chinese thinking this is not a paradox. Alitto, 1979/1986, pp 337-8

³⁸⁵ Alitto, 1979/1986, pp 71-2

³⁸⁶ Grieder, 1970, p 145; NB: Liang's biographer, Guy Alitto (1979/1986) places the publication date as late 1921 (p 78)

³⁸⁷ Alitto, 1979/1986, p 79. Ku Hung-ming (or Gu Hongming 辜鴻銘 1857-1928) was a reactionary; an apologist for a return

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exists as to why the book (and Liang with it) could be effectively rejected by the New Culture movement, yet received such publishing success? The highly plausible answer, as observed by the Liang biographer, Guy Alitto:

This apparent contradiction suggests that perhaps the New Culture intellectuals' impact was really extremely limited among the larger, less articulate, middle-brow sections of society outside the large coastal cities. Liang's book seems to have resonated with the structure of sentiments in this literate silent majority of marginal and middling intellectuals. One hostile critic, for instance, accused Liang of using the book to "marshal the masses of musty high school teachers" into a legion of opposition to the New Culture Movement.³⁸⁸

Liang travelled much within the provinces, related to the people and their problems, and saw the need for far more practical reform than that of rarified ideas; ideas which meant little or nothing to the average educated person, let alone the subsistent farmer and his family. Nevertheless, Liang was a thinker. The question he addresses in *Eastern and Western Cultures* touched the core issue of the *zeitgeist* of the time and is still being asked today in 21st century China: Is it possible to modernize, be a part of the family of nations, and still maintain our unique culture?

The question was being debated hotly in the New Culture movement and came to be known as the "cultures controversy" or the question of "cultural blending".³⁸⁹ What Liang's book, *Eastern and Western Cultures*, effectively achieved was to bring the question to the forefront of national consciousness; beyond the insularity of the New Culture movement of the east coast. Liang's biographer, Guy Alitto, claims:

Liang's contribution to the cultures controversy made an extraordinarily deep and lasting impression in China. It was Liang's book that actually created the "cultures controversy" ... Liang's book became a kind of classic treatment of the question, provoking public discussion and criticism through the following three decades. And it has maintained its currency outside mainland China for nearly another thirty years.³⁹⁰

to imperial China and all it represented. See Ku Hung-ming's work *Spirit of the Chinese People*, 1915 (written originally in English).

³⁸⁸ Alitto, 1979/1986, pp 80-1

³⁸⁹ Alitto, 1979/1986, p 79; Grieder, 1970, pp 85-8

³⁹⁰ Alitto, 1979/1986, pp 79-80

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Nevertheless, Liang's approach to the controversy was basically misunderstood in China. As one Japanese commentator on the work wrote, "The Chinese intellectual world is bewildered by the book and does not know how to respond to it."³⁹¹ Liang, essentially, developed his thesis from a much more esoteric position than his New Culture colleagues would ever appreciate; his approach to the issue was based in Buddhism.

[Liang] viewed life as a continuous sequence of causes and consequences, or, in another dimension, as a continuous sequence of questions and responses, a constant dialogue between the individual and his/[her] surroundings, a never-ending flow of "ideas" thus stimulated. In this interrogative process the individual makes use of his/[her] senses, his/[her] feelings, and his/[her] intellect. The process itself is entirely spontaneous, spurred by the unconscious demands of the "unfulfilled will".³⁹²

Liang introduced a term for this "unfulfilled will": "the spirit". It is this spirit which drives the human to form his/her environment and eventual societal destiny.

The spirit, he maintained, is the source of demands that [wo]men make of their environment, and thus it is responsible for the creation of the "objective" factors [in materialist logic] that contribute directly to cultural development. In defining these objective factors Liang adhered closely to an economic interpretation of history.³⁹³

Liang rejected outright the Marxist materialist view that humans are determined solely by objective forces, yet – as noted above – concedes on the point that environments can control humans; but it is humans who originally instigate those factors which play out in the future. For Liang, this is the basis of culture: "Culture, the way of life of a people, reflects the ends toward which the "unfulfilled will" is directed. It is thus bound up with the relationship between [wo]man and [her/]his environment."³⁹⁴

Liang took his thesis one step further and outlined "three stages" of human development based on archetypes of established cultures.

Western culture was obviously the prototype of the first stage: aggressive, forward-looking,

³⁹¹ Alitto, 1979/1986, p 79

³⁹² Grieder, 1970, p 137-8

³⁹³ Grieder, 1970, p 137

³⁹⁴ Grieder, 1970, p 137

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absorbed in the task of asserting [wo]man's dominion over nature. To China Liang ascribed the attitude of the second stage, essentially passive and accommodating in its view of the relationship between [wo]man and [her/]his environment. In the culture of India he perceived the final stage of introspective quietism.³⁹⁵

These culturally archetypical approaches to life and living would, claimed Liang, be indicative of societal evolution. How this would practically unfold, Liang does not state in detail; *Eastern and Western Cultures* is a theoretical treatise with no view of practical implementation. Rather, as Liang describes it, an evolvment of human thinking through circumstantial need.³⁹⁶ Effectively, Liang's answer to the 'cultures controversy' is that cultures do coexist, but would always remain separate and intrinsically unable to meld. That is, there could be no 'cultural blending' as presented by the New Culture debate. Unlike Hu Shih and other intellectuals, Liang felt emphatically that there could be no syntheses of cultures, and a future "world culture" is impossible due to this fundamental difference in 'ways of life' with the respective dynamics within environments.³⁹⁷ As Liang views the state of play in his era:

Western superiority at the present time ... is the natural consequence of the fact that the West, and only the West, had developed in ways appropriate to the conditions in which [wo]man had lived until now, struggling singlemindedly to bend nature to human purposes.³⁹⁸

The West, he claims, has two dominant intellectual commitments: "reason and utility".³⁹⁹ Liang was relatively well read in Western philosophy⁴⁰⁰ and was certainly exposed to the two great Western thinkers-in-residence at Peking University – John Dewey and Bertrand Russell.⁴⁰¹ Although Liang could empathize with Deweyan thought⁴⁰² – as illustrated in his cultural thesis of experiential determination of society – he nevertheless distanced himself from the pragmatists, and Western philosophy generally, feeling that a

³⁹⁵ Grieder, 1970, p 139

³⁹⁶ Liang, in fact, "identified pragmatism as the final "completion" and "rounding out" of the Western attitude" before moving into the second stage of his model – to the Chinese cultural archetype. See Allito, 1979/1986, p 111

³⁹⁷ Grieder, 1970, p 136

³⁹⁸ Grieder, 1970, pp 139-40

³⁹⁹ Grieder, 1970, p 141

⁴⁰⁰ Bergson, Eucken, Kropotkin, Russell, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and the American pragmatists; Allito, 1979/1986, p 56 & pp 107-13

⁴⁰¹ Russell gave lectures at Peking University in the academic year of 1920-21; Allito, 1979/1986, p 109

⁴⁰² Liang thought the American pragmatists presented correlations with the Ming dynasty Neo-Confucian, Wang Yang-ming (王陽明, 1472–1529) in relation to virtue and knowledge acquisition; Allito, 1979/1986, p 111

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melding of Eastern and Western ideas was impossible. This view comes from his position that Western thought looks to the outer world for answers, and Eastern thought looks to the inner world and, therefore, cannot fundamentally meet.⁴⁰³

Throughout his life Liang Shuming remained a staunch traditionalist, promoting the Confucian “way of life” and values. Yet, in his final lectures of 1922, as he watched the warlords and militarists filling the vacuum of inadequate and fragile political structures, he called for an urgent embracement of Western ideas and the implementation of systems for “domestic tranquility and the establishment of the individual’s rights to life [and] property.”⁴⁰⁴ He urged the adoption of “an attitude of ‘complete acceptance’ of Western culture ... The two spirits [of science and democracy] are completely correct. We must accept them unconditionally. The urgent task facing us today is [to know] just how to introduce [them effectively].”⁴⁰⁵ And in a more emotive plea: “Take a look at the lower classes of people – they would virtually be better off in hell. Natural disasters often strike, and when they do, the people are utterly defenseless and just must endure them.”⁴⁰⁶ Liang Shuming was certainly also a pragmatic humanist.

Liang Shuming remained a humanist throughout his life – holding firm to his Buddhist and Confucian convictions – even refusing to ‘denounce’ Confucius during the Cultural Revolution.⁴⁰⁷ He survived Mao as did Confucianism.

7.2 The 21st Century: the Emergence of Confucian↔Deweyan Thought

On the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, and with it the urgency for modernization and reform again gripping China, the intelligentsia re-emerged to rethink China’s cultural and international identity. Confucianism, strongly repressed during the Maoist period, quickly resurfaced and dominated the cultural narrative. This debate gained momentum by the end of the 20th century and continues to evolve into the 21st. The key question: Can China’s unique cultural identity be maintained in the face of accelerated modernization and the enormous

⁴⁰³ Alitto, 1979/1986, pp 111-2

⁴⁰⁴ Alitto, 1979/1986, p 120

⁴⁰⁵ Alitto, 1979/1986, p 120; Alitto’s insertions

⁴⁰⁶ Alitto, 1979/1986, p 120

⁴⁰⁷ Alitto, 1979/1986, pp 340-1

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pressures to adopt globally dominant Western models?

Essentially, at the core of the philosophic debate lies the conflict between individualism (Western) versus community-centered ideals (Confucian) or, as Liang Shuming may have expressed it: the seeking of solutions in the outer world (the rational and utilitarian approach, indicative of Western thinking) versus problem solving from the perspectives of the inner world (approaching solutions through the seamless interconnection between self and other, indicative of Eastern thinking). That is, in Confucian thinking, the other is tantamount to the self; in Western thinking, the individual is paramount to the other – whether the other is of the human or natural worlds. In the early 20th century, Liang Shuming may have had a point that the two cultural positions were incompatible. We are, though, living in different times and Liang, nevertheless, may have made a significant observation in his apparently eccentric thesis of the shifting of cultural archetypes as discussed above.

[Eventually] the West must turn away, said Liang, from its aggressive past and its preoccupation with material accomplishments and must begin instead to “deal with the inner workings of the minds of others.” As it does so, it will find itself moving from the first to the second stage in cultural development. So Liang proclaimed that “the moment has at last arrived when the Chinese attitude, formerly unsuited to the times, has become essential.”⁴⁰⁸

He may be correct (even though his estimation of this coming to pass was one hundred years too early) as there is now, arguably, a growing momentum of interest – both popular and scholarly – in Eastern thinking since the late 20th century. Liang also claimed that the American pragmatists, and Dewey in particular, would be the final “completion” and “rounding out” of this final stage of the West realizing they had become too materialistic.⁴⁰⁹ A bridge, so to speak, whereby the continuum of Western ideas is not refuted outright, but refined to accommodate the felt experience of knowing from inner worlds (Deweyan thought) and, accordingly, meeting the long and developed history of the same in Chinese thought; namely, non-dualistic ‘embodied knowing’ (as discussed in Chapter 4). Conversely, in this construct, Chinese thought can find refinement in melding with the utilitarianism and scientism of Western history of ideas to, possibly, bring a balanced modernization process into its society with minimal cultural conflict. Not a situation of ‘either/or’, but of ‘and/both’.

⁴⁰⁸ Grieder, 1970, pp 142-3

⁴⁰⁹ Alitto, 1979/1986, pp 111-2

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As the eminent contemporary Confucian-Deweyan scholar, Roger T. Ames, states:

China in our own historical moment is undergoing the greatest revolution in its long history. As China returns to prominence on the world stage with a growing self-esteem and pride in its traditions, there is a set of complementary and interpenetrating conditions that makes both possible and desirable a conversation between a newly revised Deweyan pragmatism and Confucianism.⁴¹⁰

The term ‘Confucian Pragmatism’ was recently coined by Wen Haiming⁴¹¹ for this “newly revised conversation.” In his introduction of the book by the same title (2009), Wen states:

American pragmatism opens a path in stimulating new ways to interpret Chinese philosophy, and vice versa. By correlating American pragmatism with Chinese philosophy, we have a new way forward in thinking about issues in process philosophy. In fact, Confucianism resonates strongly with the internal critique of Western philosophy that has been undertaken by American pragmatists on the issue of creativity ... [In turn] American pragmatism can serve as a new direction for the interpretation of Confucianism.⁴¹²

In Wen’s interpretation of Confucian pragmatism, he focuses on the idea of *creatio in situ* (creation out of situational context) that “begins by the assumption that people are dynamic nexuses of relationships that locate and constitute them as unique human beings”⁴¹³ in a co-creative, emergent, on-going process with the other. He notes that a “distinctive characteristic of Confucian pragmatism is the idea that we adjust our intentions with the changing world through the realization of person-in-context whose self-construal is always related to events as concretized processes of intention.”⁴¹⁴ Subject and object – self and other – are non-dualistic; intricately entwined and mutually informing, directing outside events with intentional consensus. Such an approach ensures a harmonious, cohesive and co-creative society.

Accordingly, the term *creatio in situ* – creation out of situational context – is describing consensual action arising out of given situations between human beings (within

⁴¹⁰ 2003, p 403

⁴¹¹ 2009

⁴¹² p 2

⁴¹³ 2009, p 13

⁴¹⁴ 2009, p 304

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and possibly shifting the culture's normative boundaries), as opposed to a static set of rules or mores imposed from the outside, remaining in a vacuum devoid of any creative input from the individuals on whom these static 'rules' would impact. Within this idea is the strong sense of continuum; the thread of the past informs the present which, in turn, informs the future.

Both Confucius and Dewey advocate living in the present and facing the future based on the accumulation of past experiences. Philosophers in both Confucian and pragmatic traditions have devoted themselves to finding different ways of reaching a harmonious state of self and other, as well as how to sustain this equilibrium in their everyday societies.⁴¹⁵

At the basis of this notion of 'everyday societies' – the way any community or culture operates at the mundane level – is the idea of sensibility. 'Sensibility' is at the core of both Confucian and Deweyan thinking; it is found within felt experience, embodied knowing, empathetic understanding of the other, an individual's understanding of the normative values of their given culture, and intention and action towards enhancement of the community as a whole. Roger Ames clarifies this distinctive point:

The term "sensibility" is best understood dispositionally as a nuanced manner of anticipating, responding to, and shaping the world about us. Sensibilities are complexes of *habits* that both create and are created by *habitats* and that promote specific, personal manners of *in-habiting* a world. Cultural sensibilities are not easily expressed through the analysis of social, economic, or even political institutions. Such sensibilities reside in the prominent feelings, ideas, and beliefs defining the culture.⁴¹⁶

Sensibility is a living, immediate, spontaneous response within daily interactions; it resides within the self and is always consciously operating, not only in times of quietude, but also, and most importantly, fully functioning when participating with the other. It is *of the 'now'*; informed by past experience and, in turn, informing future action. Sensibility is the point of creativity in developing enhanced growth of a community on *every* level – from a passing conversation to enacting the larger issues of normative values of the culture – by dint of the intrinsic interconnection within the whole living organism of society. Sensibility, when operating within each interacting individual, denotes co-creative dynamism, not only for the

⁴¹⁵ Wen, 2009, p 306

⁴¹⁶ 2003, p 404; emphases in text

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individuals concerned, but also through the wider community and culture as a ripple effect; the shifting intentions – and, therefore, future actions – flow onto others in ever-widening circles. And it is here, in this understanding of the individual (as a non-dualistic phenomenon with other) that the fundamental correlation between Confucianism and Deweyan thinking is found and, accordingly, the source of all other correlations.

[Deweyan] individuality is not a ready-made given, but rather arises qualitatively out of ordinary human experience. By this I mean that “individuality” like “character” is an accomplishment, and since it emerges relationally out of associated living, far from being discrete, has implicated within it a “field of selves.”⁴¹⁷

The individual being within the ‘field of selves’ is the pivotal point of this Deweyan concept and the idea which underscores the non-dualistic nature of self-and-other. The field of selves is accordingly embedded in the field of ‘felt experience’ (as discussed above) and, hence, threaded throughout this dynamic is sensibility; informing individuals within the spontaneous present to enact their future. This Deweyan concept of the individual strongly agrees with the Confucian idea of personhood. Haiming Wen identifies this pivotal notion of the American process philosophers with Tu Weiming’s understanding of creativity: “[C]reativity involves a dynamic partnership between the living human world and its natural, social, and cultural contexts, achieving consummation through effective communication in family and community”⁴¹⁸ Equally, Ames identifies these correlations quite clearly and at length:

[The Confucian person represents] our understanding of notions such as the symbiotic relationship that obtains among the radial spheres of personal, communal, political, and cosmic cultivation, the process of self-cultivation through ritualized living [as in culturally normative transactions of *li* 禮] ... the inseparability of the cognitive and affective dimensions of experience, an understanding of the heart-and-mind (*xin*)[心] (or “thinking and feeling”) as a disposition to act rather than a framework of ideas and beliefs, the construal of knowing as an epistemology of caring—of trust rather than truth, the prevalence of correlative (rather than dualistic) thinking ... the centrality of family ... the high value of inclusive harmony ... the didactic function of sage as virtuoso communicator, the expression of sagacity as focusing

⁴¹⁷ Ames, 2003, p 406

⁴¹⁸ 2009, p149; reference to Tu’s quote in text

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and enchanting the familiar affairs of the day, a recognition of the continuity between humanity and the numinous, and so on.⁴¹⁹

The sage (*junzi* 君子), as the most developed form of Confucian personhood, participates with the fullness of *xin* (心 heart-and-mind) in mundane affairs, everyday society, presenting him/herself as an exemplary and modest example of *becoming* with the other. The sage does not hold him/herself aloof from others, but participates in community affairs *wholeheartedly* – focused attention and action of *xin* (heart-and-mind) – as in Deweyan felt experience. As Ames states, “There is much in this model of human “becoming” as a communal “doing and undergoing” that sounds like Dewey.”⁴²⁰ Ames’ depiction of the sage, or *junzi*, as the “virtuoso communicator” aptly describes the role of a fully attained human *being* in the perpetual process of a human *becoming*. The sage is the epitome, the living result, of self-cultivation. S/he is not only adept in verbal communication but, more importantly, in right action as described above; an example to others on following the *dao* (道 the way). The Confucian-Deweyan scholar, Joseph Grange, captures this idea succinctly.

Creative communication and intellectual responsibility are major qualities necessary for success in such a role [as *junzi*]. The *junzi* embodies far more than individual insight into the problems of life and stands as the representative of an entire tradition including both its triumphs and failures. What is crucial is that the *junzi* have the creativity to experiment with various tools within the tradition. This demands knowing what the community can tolerate and what it cannot. Therefore the *junzi* must participate in the shared meanings of associated life that define the values of the members of the community. To participate is to take part in the social structures used to uphold the values of the community.⁴²¹

This embodiment of ‘individual insight’ (wisdom) embedded in the tradition from which the sage is borne out of – as opposed to born into – is a powerful idea. The words, gestures, and actions of the sage are a model for others to observe, reflect upon, and consolidate within *their* self, subsequently, expressing or emulating the sage-experience from and within their own unique individuality. In Deweyan terms, this processing of the sage-experience would be a ‘felt experience’ informing an individual’s values system within the

⁴¹⁹ Ames, 2003, p 406

⁴²⁰ Ames, 2003, p 406;

⁴²¹ Grange, 2004, p 102

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culture she, herself, is equally borne out of. For the individual, conclusions arise from this experience of the sage to find newly acquired values and meanings which, in turn, are shared with others in felt experience (see Figure 6.1). The sage, in this sense, is also a change-agent.

As Grange highlights:

Exemplary persons [sages] show the way to others. Their conduct is their speech and their choice of actions seizes the imagination of the community. In social life we learn more quickly by witnessing the behavior of others than by intellectualizing about the best way to achieve good results.⁴²²

The role of sage is a powerful vanguard of individual, societal, and cultural evolution. As Grange understates, “Human culture needs such an individual.”⁴²³ Also important in this idea is that change takes place as a bottom-up, as opposed to a top-down, process. The change instigated through this bottom-up process is a form of consensual shifting of values as individuals *become* in wisdom, maintaining the continuum of their culture and its evolving values, and “bridge the separation between the social order and the aims of the individual.”⁴²⁴ This ‘felt experience’ of living and learning can also be called “felt intelligence”, or “felt inquiry”,⁴²⁵ the “unification of feeling, thinking, and doing”,⁴²⁶ of obtaining and attaining meaning. That is, connecting the inner and outer worlds through felt inquiry. This is true knowledge acquisition.

Mere objective facts and formulae (information) collected by an individual does not make a whole functioning human being. Information is not knowledge acquisition but data accumulation, bytes of information floating in a disparate void of unconnected meanings. Only by information finding meaning within the self, schematized into existing knowledge systems which can then be applied into the outer world, can one say one is learning. This is creative education. This, arguably, is the primary goal of any education system, regardless of terminology or culture. This, ideally, is the education system China now wishes to implement to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Accordingly, Dewey’s educational theories – as a bridge between Chinese and Western thinking – is informing such a platform.

⁴²² 2004, p 83

⁴²³ 2004, p 84

⁴²⁴ Grange, 2004, p 84

⁴²⁵ Grange, 2004, Chapter Two

⁴²⁶ Grange, 2004, p 50

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University of Sydney

[Since the post-Mao period] a serious reevaluation of Dewey's influence on Chinese education has begun to emerge among Dewey scholars and concerned educators in China. Some critics suggest that the worthiness of certain elements in Dewey's educational philosophy and its status in the history of philosophy should be reevaluated. They recommend that instead of totally denying Dewey, the Chinese should critically borrow and make use of Dewey's ideas in Chinese educational practices.⁴²⁷

Su Zhixin's 1995 article 'A Critical Evaluation of John Dewey's Influence on Chinese Education' provides a detailed historical critique of Dewey's influence on Chinese education from his visit to the new republic (1919-1920) to the beginnings of the current economic and educational reform of the 1990s. The People's Republic of China wishes to continue to reform her education system so there is a balance between fostering innovative, creative, high quality research (adopting the utilitarian approach of the West) and the maintaining of her cultural and sociological continuum whereby self is tantamount to the other. There is a conscious awareness of the need to maintain the uniqueness of China's community-based culture in the rush towards modernization, with the negative by-products of consumerism, egoism, and ruthless competition – as opposed to cooperation – with the other. Will egocentric individualism subsume cultural interconnectivity as the forces of Westernization become overwhelming? The dilemma: How can Western educational models be amended for China to create a balance between the best of both cultural forces, if at all? Can the Confucian model of self-cultivation coexist with Western models of education? And so, along with this dilemma, the Confucian-Deweyan narrative continues into PRC's pragmatic educational reform initiatives.

⁴²⁷ Su Zhixin 1995, p 315

8.0 Education Reform in Modern China: A Historical and Cultural Continuum

This chapter begins by overviewing China's imperial educational history of over 1,000 years, and then addresses the beginnings of modern educational attempts from the early 20th century through to the end of the Maoist era. These are vast areas of study, yet, to understand China's present, one must understand her past. Accordingly, this brief section underscores the main thrusts of the cultural and historical legacy with which late 20th century/21st century educational reformers have to contend. The second section of the chapter addresses China's current and eighth curriculum reform since the founding of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. This massive reform initiative – the largest ever in the world by depth, breadth, geography and demography⁴²⁸ – began in 1996 and entails five stages; the fifth stage is currently underway and is an on-going, open-ended work in progress.

The challenges, sometimes seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and successes – incremental and extraordinary – at this stage of the reforms are identified and discussed. Given the enormous scope and scale of this project, what has so far been achieved is testament to the Chinese approach of patience, determination, and persistence in bringing their country – more or less still unified as it was in the Qin dynasty (221-206 BCE)⁴²⁹ – from a predominantly agrarian and now manufacturing nation towards one of world class innovators in and for the future. In the words of two of the major architects of the current reform – who assisted in its inception and subsequent implementation – Jian Liu and Changyun Kang:

If there were no dilemmas, frustrations, or hesitations that would mean that the reform has not yet set sail. If there were no questions or challenges that would mean that the reform is just superficial. If there were no disputes or even protests that would mean that the reform has not reached the core of the problems and issues. We know that real reform is accompanied by systematic restructure and that it will impact upon cultural traditions and will touch people's souls and beliefs.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁸ CCP, 2010; Liu, Jian & Kang, Changyun, 2011; Ryan, 2011; see also the Ministry of Education, PRC, official site (English language) http://www.moe.edu.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/moe_2807/200906/48868.html [accessed 21st September, 2013]

⁴²⁹ Jacques, 2011, pp 73-4

⁴³⁰ 2011, pp 39-40

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University of Sydney

It is in this vein that the chapter concludes with the ever-present question of cultural identity in the face of 21st century globality. Namely, a Confucian-Deweyan educational philosophy is discussed; the correlations between the two schools of thought relative to education are identified and their applicability to address the challenges of accelerated change is considered. For China, at the cultural core of all their educational reform issues, regardless of the mechanics of developing infrastructure, teacher training, and curricula, is the idea of *xiushen* (修身) – self-cultivation. What type of person will emerge from the journey of their education? What qualities will they embody apart from practical and professional skills? Will the goal of instilling critical thinking in a utilitarian, yet creative, context undermine our unity as a civilization-state, our cultural unity? These are perennial questions which sit deep in the Chinese psyche. This is indicative of the culturally ingrained goal of *xiushen* – the development of self with the other – which has threaded through millenia and currently binds together apparently conflicting educational narratives.

As discussed in Chapter Five (Confucianism: The Metaphysics), self-cultivation has been a constant in Chinese thinking since Confucius (孔子 *kǒng zǐ* ca. 551-479 BCE) and its subsequent offshoot has been a long history of formalizing education. The first form of structured education (predominantly, the learning of Confucian classics) was for the elite civil service examinations and had its beginnings in the Sui dynasty (581-681 CE). This system, in one form or another, continued throughout the subsequent dynastic periods until the very early 20th century.⁴³¹ This highly coveted career path of scholar-official was only open to males, generally from families with surplus income, and brought substantial financial, political and social gains to the individual and his extended family once examinations were successfully passed and an official position was gained.⁴³²

The civil service examinations ... were used to enhance its power by invoking the Confucian tradition of merit to legitimize imperial hegemony over administrative appointments. During the subsequent Tang and Song dynasties (618-906 and 960-1279, respectively), the examinations accordingly played a pivotal role in the development of an imperial bureaucratic state. They did so, first, by enforcing objective qualifications in addition to the ascriptive criterion of parentage; then by allowing commoners to qualify for office via the examinations;

⁴³¹ Caffee, 1995; Pepper, 1996; Zhang, Hua, 2011, p 335. As Caffee notes: “The Sui-Tang [examination] system had six different degrees. Three were specialized, concentrating on law (*ming-fa*), calligraphy (*ming-shu*) and mathematics (*ming-suan*), while the remainder ... tested a broader, more traditional corpus of [classical] knowledge.” (p 15)

⁴³² Pepper, 1996, pp 46-48

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University of Sydney

and ultimately by establishing the degrees earned individually but bestowed under imperial authority as the main route to official position.⁴³³

Nevertheless, during the Song dynasty, there were learning centers where education was not orientated towards career mobility, but rather, the values of Neo-Confucian self-cultivation. “Academies had developed during the Song times as centers of learning, intellectual discourse, and contemplation, preferably situated in secluded natural settings. The ideal of learning as an end in itself remained and continued to be pursued.”⁴³⁴ These academies – although worthy of mention due to their differing educational goals from the examination orientated continuum – did not dominate the formal educational landscape in later periods. John Caffee, in his seminal work on education in the Song period *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China* (1995), provides more detail:

In the course of the Southern Sung [Song], although informal academies remained common, many others took a form which was to become characteristic of Ming academies, with income producing endowments, salaried staffs ... lecture halls, dormitories and kitchens. In this they were much like government schools. Where they differed was in their educational program: rejecting in large part preparation for the examinations, they advocated instead Neo-Confucian self-cultivation.⁴³⁵

By the end of the twelfth century, these academies openly voiced their opposition to examination based schooling and became quite a political force. This was eventually neutralized in the thirteenth century by being co-opted by the government.⁴³⁶ As Caffee cites, “‘an unbending moral integrity and idealism’ which approached ‘orthodox intellectual dissent [against examinations] ... only became a habitual commitment during the Sung period’”⁴³⁷ Despite this relatively strong counter-force in educational philosophy, the system of examination-based learning expanded considerably during the Song, mainly due to greater economic affluence and the advent of printing and publishing. It is during this time that a ruling class of “literati-bureaucrats” was consolidated and became a

⁴³³ Pepper, 1996, p 46; There were times, in earlier centuries, when many were considered ineligible to enter the process due to their lowly status, among them merchants and artisans. Although commoners were eventually allowed to sit the examinations, it was only the wealthier families who could support one or more of their male members to go through the long process of study and the series of examinations for high office.(p 48)

⁴³⁴ Pepper, 1996, pp 50-1

⁴³⁵ p 89

⁴³⁶ Caffee, 1995, pp 89-94

⁴³⁷ 1995, p 93

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dominating political force in the subsequent dynasties.⁴³⁸ It was in the Ming dynasty that the role of scholar-official became fully institutionalized.

The hierarchical structure of the examinations achieved final form during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) and remained basically unchanged for some 500 years of Ming and Qing (or Manchu; 1644-1911) rule. The system was centralized under the authority of the Board of Rites, with the emperor himself presiding at the highest level. The examinations were empirewide in scope, with quotas drawn to ensure an adequate supply and distribution of educated men, albeit also in relation to the locality's existing cultural level, throughout the country.⁴³⁹

Accordingly, by the time this system was eventually abolished in 1905, some six years before the final collapse of the Qing dynasty and the beginnings of republican China, “[e]ducation beyond the elementary level was thus dominated by the subjects and skills necessary for examination success.”⁴⁴⁰ For the reformers of the new republic, the legacy of this imperial based education system as a body existing solely for the selection of bureaucrats was limited, if not crippling. As a result “teachers and teaching were regarded essentially as by-products of the bureaucratic enterprise rather than esteemed even as its essential building blocks, much less as alternative sources of intellectual inquiry, professional expertise, or social mobility.”⁴⁴¹ A key comparative understanding made by Suzanne Pepper (1996) is worth noting here:

In the U.S. and England ... education systems had developed during the 19th century from a mix of altruistic and utilitarian motives aimed at producing law-abiding citizens and a disciplined work force. The Chinese system, however, grew from the spur of national humiliation and weakness.⁴⁴²

Often the early reforms, unwittingly, were instigated through *reaction* from this point of departure, rather than *proaction*. Subsequently, throughout the 20th century – in parallel

⁴³⁸ Pepper, 1996, pp 46-7

⁴³⁹ Pepper, 1996, pp 47-8

⁴⁴⁰ Pepper, 1996, pp 51

⁴⁴¹ Pepper, 1996, p 54

⁴⁴² p 76; this “national humiliation and weakness” did not come about only through China’s treatment at the Versailles Peace Conference (see previous chapter) but more so through their ‘century of humiliation’. From the First Opium War (1839-1842) with Britain, the Qing dynasty was so weakened it began being carved up by Western powers – particularly their seaboard regions – with few rights given to the Chinese. See Jacques, 2011, pp 72, 93, 98, 306, 380 & 390

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with her politics – China’s education system followed a varied and tumultuous path. Historically, more evident than in any other country, China’s political and educational structures have been inextricably entwined, so much so, that it can be considered a cultural phenomenon. Arguably, this is due to the long continuum of the scholar-official role (with the military in support⁴⁴³) being the true directing power base of the country as *realpolitik* – from the emperor’s court to the outlying provinces.⁴⁴⁴

Accordingly, the link between education and power – whether personal, social or political power – remains upmost in the civilization-state consciousness of the Chinese; formal education is perceived as *the* key to advancement, not only for the individual, but for her family, and country as a unified whole. Despite education being such an important focus in every stratum of society – or maybe due to – China’s reform attempts since the collapse of the imperial system in 1905 has been fraught with disaster. “With the unified structure of power and learning broken, diverse sectoral interests emerged to pull the society in a multiplicity of directions.”⁴⁴⁵

Suzanne Pepper, in her authoritative work *Radicalism and Education Reform in Twentieth-Century China* (1996), identifies the mitigating factors, extant in the beginning, for the directional confusion of reform attempts during the 20th century:

In fact, key trends were already evident during the first decade of the century that would have a lasting impact on the development of China’s modern school system. Those trends were: the continuing undercurrent of conservative opposition; the assumption that Western learning would bring China wealth and power; the assumption that study abroad and foreign degrees

⁴⁴³ Jacques, 2011; as Jacques notes: “By the mid tenth century, the Chinese aristocratic elites had been destroyed, with the consequence that no elite enjoyed authority independent of the state. The opposite, in fact, was the case, with the bureaucratic elite enjoying unrivalled authority and numerous privileges, and all other elites dependent for their position on the patronage of the state . . . The imperial bureaucracy, under the aegis of the emperor, faced no challenge from a Church (after the seizure of Buddhist properties in the ninth century), a judiciary, a landed aristocracy, the military or an urban bourgeoisie. The most important exception was the tradition of the literati . . .” (p 83) Nevertheless, it was not uncommon for emperors to be deposed (often by the intrigues of his scholar-officials) or by a people’s uprising when he was perceived to not have the “mandate of heaven”, due to natural disaster or mismanagement of the state. By and large, the emperor was a predominantly symbolic figure, holding the country together as its ‘father’; it was the scholar-officials who administered the state. Jacques, 2011, p 85 & pp 207-8

⁴⁴⁴ Caffee, 1995; Jacques, 2011; Pepper, 1996; it is worth noting here that the governing of China, historically and in the present, is not as centralized as superficially appears; officials, from village level to counties and provinces, have a relative degree of autonomy (see Chapter 8). There is an ancient saying in China: ‘The emperor lives far away over the mountains [we can do what we want]. Also, in comparison to the West, the merchant class had little or no political base historically in China. “In the Confucian order [merchants] ranked last in the hierarchy and in practise have never sought to break ranks and organize collectively. That apolitical tradition remains true this day.” Jacques, 2011, p 208

⁴⁴⁵ Pepper, 1996, p 59

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University of Sydney

could be substituted for classical learning and the examination system; a consequent voluntary dependence on foreign education systems as models for development; and the paradox of the reform mentality, or constant change as one of the few constants in a society struggling to reconstruct itself but unable to agree on what course to take.⁴⁴⁶

Most of these dilemmas are still in operation in the early 21st century reform narratives to a greater or lesser extent. China now is hungry for stability with the upheavals and deprivations of the Maoist era still fresh in the intergenerational memory. To give a final, (extremely brief) contextual perspective to the current reforms, it is important to consider that in the mid-20th century, virtually a whole generation received minimal or no education; that is, the infamous periods of the Great Leap Forward and its aftermath (1956-1965) leading into the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).⁴⁴⁷ On the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, and the dust settling on the trail of destruction perpetrated on schools, universities, teachers, and the intelligentsia by the Red Guards,⁴⁴⁸ what was left of China's 'modern' education system was so fragmented to be *almost* beyond repair.

Radical education reform under CCP [Chinese Communist Party] rule was always associated with the conformity enforced by a rectification-style campaign. But the education establishment seemed to emerge stronger in its convictions after each assault, displaying the same resilience after 1949 as before. All the old defining documents and directives from the 1930s were thus reissued after 1976, including both the GMD [*Guomindang* or the KMT *Kuomintang* 国民党 The Nationalist Party] originals and the 1938-1942 Yan'an version.⁴⁴⁹ These served as authoritative precedents for the post-Mao course. And despite all that had happened in the interim, the restored system was also essentially the same in form and philosophy as that which professional educators had tried to develop [in Yan'an from 1938 to 1942].⁴⁵⁰

Nevertheless, the path to rebuild was a rocky one; in the 1980s, Maoists still had a substantial voice, reforms became a "stream of supplementary adjustments and reforms

⁴⁴⁶ p 59

⁴⁴⁷ Terrill, 1980; Pepper, 1996, Chapters 12 & 13; NB: Pepper's statistical tables on school attendance (1956-1965) at elementary, secondary, and tertiary levels (pp 284-6)

⁴⁴⁸ Pepper, 1996, pp 364-7 & 376-7; Terrill, 1980, pp 325-30

⁴⁴⁹ "[The] system created in Yan'an [a city in Shaanxi province] between 1938 and 1942 was distinguished by its preoccupation with "quality" and the pursuit of "regulation" ... Quality could only be guaranteed via fixed, uniform standards governed in turn by fixed "systems" of rules and regulations for all aspects of school life." Pepper, 1996, p 522

⁴⁵⁰ Pepper, 1996, p 531

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within reforms then continued through the 1980s addressing various “opinions” and “interests”.⁴⁵¹ Education reform was still blown about by political winds; shifts in bureaucratic administration, budgetary problems, lack of professional consultation and, again, confusion about goals and directions dominated any reform initiatives. As the distance of years grew from Mao’s death, and economic and infrastructural modernization took priority with growing momentum into the 1990s, the perception of the formerly tight relationship between political power and education diminished. Education became viewed as an economic, not political, pathway to success. And so the stage was ready in 1996 for the eighth curriculum reform since Mao’s rise to power.

8.1 The Role of Education in Accelerated Modernization: 1996 to the Present

The current [PRC] curriculum reform launched a decade ago, the eighth major reform of the modern period, is widely considered to be the most radical and ambitious educational reform initiative to date [incorporating primary, secondary, and tertiary levels]. Systemic transformation of school curriculum goals, structure and content, teaching and learning approaches, and assessment and administrative structures has occurred, and control has increasingly been devolved from the centre to provincial, district and school levels.⁴⁵²

This latter statement – noting the increasing devolvement of control from the centre to provincial, district and school levels – will be a key focus in this section. Considering the centralized nature of the fundamental reform design, national in scope, and funded predominantly by the nexus of power in Beijing, this decentralization, as will be shown, is pivotal in the reforms working in a cultural continuum. As the comparative educationalist, David Halpin, states of the British reforms of 1988 “England’s national curriculum reform (ENCR) has required schools chiefly to teach centrally prescribed subject-derived curricular content, the learning of which is periodically monitored through teacher-administered pre-specific standardized tests.”⁴⁵³ This aspect of England’s reform departs dramatically from otherwise *relatively* similar correlations with the PRC in advancing a radical and comprehensive national reform initiative.⁴⁵⁴ China, conversely, has “emphasized the importance of local implementation, inviting teachers in particular to play a crucial role in

⁴⁵¹ Pepper, 1996, p 533

⁴⁵² Ryan, 2011, p 1

⁴⁵³ 2010, pp 258-9

⁴⁵⁴ Halpin, 2010, p 259-261

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University of Sydney

interpreting on the ground a broad centrally determined curricular framework, including modes of formative student assessment.”⁴⁵⁵ Halpin makes the point:

The upshot is that CNCR [China National Curriculum Reform] entails far more teacher-discretion and school-based curriculum development than is allowed for in ENCR ... Given the contrasting ways in which the central state has historically operated in England and China – the latter entailing, in contrast to the former, a party-led sovereign rather than parliamentary-led representative form of democracy, it is thus fascinatingly ironic that strict government control appears to be a far greater feature of ENCR than CNCR.⁴⁵⁶

To a sinologist, this is not at all surprising; as described in Chapter Five, *li* (禮 ritual propriety) – equal interchange of opinions between stakeholders in a given situation – is not only the *modus vivendi* of human relations in Confucian society, but it is also the means by which conflict situations can most likely be resolved consensually. This is Confucian democracy.⁴⁵⁷ As Halpin contrasts the Chinese and English reforms, he states that the English reforms were implemented by “a public announcement by central government followed by a ministerial policy edict, including a piece of legislation, to which schools and teachers are then expected simply to subscribe with the minimum of delay.”⁴⁵⁸ This creates, as Halpin succinctly captures, “near universal negative unintended consequences.”⁴⁵⁹

In education reform, the immediate and obvious stakeholders are teachers, students, parents, and schools; the larger group of less obvious, but highly important, stakeholders is society as a whole – now and in the future. China is acutely aware of this; the CCP (2010) interim draft document, ‘China’s National Plan Outline for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020)’, states: “The destiny of our nation rests on education. The people across the land are duty-bound to rejuvenate education ... [with the aim to] make still greater contributions to the great rejuvenation of the nation and the progress of world civilization.”⁴⁶⁰ China has a large and highly incorporative vision with education as its vehicle. Although – as far as the modernization process goes – China

⁴⁵⁵ Halpin, 2010, p 258

⁴⁵⁶ Halpin, 2010, p 259

⁴⁵⁷ Ames, 1991; Grange, 2004; Hall & Ames, 2003; Tan Sor-hoon, 2004c

⁴⁵⁸ 2010, p 261

⁴⁵⁹ 2010, p 259

⁴⁶⁰ p 6; drafted by The Office of Working Group, February 23, 2010, Beijing, the translated version released to the author September, 2011.

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University of Sydney

functions as a nation-state, but culturally and in real terms, China sees itself as a civilization-state, hence the document's referral to "the progress of world civilization".

As Lucian Pye, a Chinese political philosopher, states: "China is a civilization pretending to be a nation-state."⁴⁶¹ And, as a civilization-state, China views itself as a collective whole with very deep and ancient roots binding it together. Hence, the idea of a thorough, extensive, and on-going consultation process with *all* stakeholders – where possible and manageable – has permeated China's current reform from the very beginning in 1996.

From June 1996 to 1997, with funding from the United Nations Children's Fund, the Basic Education Department in the Ministry of Education (MOE) organized curriculum experts from six key Chinese universities ... to carry out a survey of the national nine-year compulsory education curriculum. The survey involved nine provinces and municipal cities, 72 districts, over 160,000 K-12 students, 2,500 principals and teachers and more than 50 national government education consultants and government science, culture and health committee members. The survey covered aspects such as the implementation of curriculum goals, the appropriateness of teaching content, approaches to teaching and learning and examination and assessment issues.⁴⁶²

Significantly, to note here, is that "over 160,000 K-12 students" were consulted as a part of the survey. Halpin underscores this student-centered approach in China's reform process as a key contrast in his comparative study with England:

[I]n the CNCR [Chinese National Curriculum Reform] the role of the teacher is redefined away from that of a mere instructor of students towards being an enabler of their learning, a position set within a broad democratic context that promotes students' "rights" and "voice". These latter aspects are entirely absent from ENCR.⁴⁶³

⁴⁶¹ As cited in Jacques, 2011, p 201; Jacques explains further: "The term 'civilization' normally suggests a rather distant and indirect influence and an inert and passive presence. In China's case, however, it is not only history that lives but civilization itself: the notion of a living civilization provides the primary identity and context by which the Chinese think of their country and define themselves." (pp 201-3)

⁴⁶² Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, 2011, p 22

⁴⁶³ 2010, p 259; it needs to be noted here that since 1988 there have been some amendments to England's reform program (1996 and 2002), albeit superficial, to introduce these ideas. Yet, the core teacher-centred, rigidly standardized approach effectively has remained. (pp 262-5)

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University of Sydney

Another contrast made in construction of these two culturally distant reforms, clear from the beginning of each, is the approach to core subjects and the absence in the ENCR – unlike CNCR – of any emphasis on curriculum relevance to life, creative problem solving, ways of learning, or a focus on moral or citizenship education. Halpin again at length:

While CNCR, like ENCR, privileges the teaching of established subjects [mathematics, science, language, history, and geography] this is advocated very differently ... The presence and legitimacy of these subjects is mostly assumed in England ... with the result that a host of other important areas of knowledge hardly get a look in – subjects like philosophy, and most of the social sciences, for instance. In this connection, it may strike some observers as astonishing that students following England’s NC [National Curriculum], unlike China’s, get so little direct exposure during their school years to subjects crucial to an understanding of contemporary society and modern life generally – subjects like sociology, psychology and economics, for example ... Additionally, the sorts of areas of knowledge, which some bemoan the absence of in England’s NC, are headlined very strongly in China’s, as indicated by subject labels such as “ethics and life” and “ideology and morality,” all of which are designed to foster in students an appropriate patriotic spirit [read: civilization consciousness] and commitment to civil society.⁴⁶⁴

For China, this is the outcome of the long on-going consultation process coupled with the Confucian notion of wholistic education of the self (self-cultivation). Equally, in a cultural context, the mass survey over the 1996-1997 period, as described by Jian Liu & Changyun Kang above, was merely the beginning of listening to the voices of stakeholders in the enacting of *li*. A strong aspect of *li* is not only dialogue, but also observation of and learning from the other. During 1997 and 1998, a large number of researchers from China investigated education systems in England, America, Canada, Germany, Japan, Australia, Korea, Russia, Sweden, India, Brazil, Egypt, as well as closer to home in Taiwan and Hong Kong.⁴⁶⁵ This brought an invaluable amount of data to the table and instigated volumes of research which was widely circulated for discussion. This in turn generated more research and comment as, in an ever-widening circle, more educationalists became engaged in the debate and analyses of the published information.

⁴⁶⁴ 2010, p 260; for a comparison of Australian citizenship education initiatives in comparison with China’s, see Tudball, 2011

⁴⁶⁵ Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, 2011, p 23

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University of Sydney

By 1999, the design of the reforms were taking shape and Stage 1 of the overall reform initiative was almost complete. In January of that year a Basic Education Reform Expert Team was established “comprising over forty experts from higher education institutes, local administration bureaus, renowned scholars and researchers ... as well as principals’ and teachers’ representatives.”⁴⁶⁶ Accordingly, this team oversaw more rounds of seminars and discussion groups.

After exhaustive discussions and debates at hundreds of meetings, seminars and consultation events across China, the values, mission, map and timetable for the national basic education curriculum reform were outlined in a blueprint document which outlined the aims of the reform in six areas: curriculum goals, structure, content, implementation, assessment and administration.⁴⁶⁷

Stage 2 – between 1999 and 2001 – saw the initial design completed and disseminated and the experimental stage of the curriculum proposals began. This phase launched a decade of pilot projects, experimentation and assimilation of classroom texts. What emerged from this particular stage were not only the challenges in implementing the depth and breadth of the curriculum reform – discovering what works and what doesn’t – but also the systemic and structural overhauls needed to meet those challenges.⁴⁶⁸ In reflection on this period, two of the instigators of the initiative, Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, observe:

The processes required to minimise the difference between the transition from the stated ‘ideal’ curriculum to the actual, ‘enacted’ curriculum in the classroom [and the administrative arrangements required] was extremely important in order to avoid a simple ‘passive execution’ to more one of a ‘mutual adaption and accommodation’. The core theme that emerged from this phase of work was how to translate the shared vision of curriculum reform and also maximise motivation, initiative and creativity at the grass-roots level of schools and teachers. There was also a concern to ensure that the newly recruited curriculum design teams worked in ways that were scientific but also democratic.⁴⁶⁹

Subsequently, Stage 3 (2001-2004) saw the escalation of pilot projects, finalization of the

⁴⁶⁶ Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, 2011, p 24

⁴⁶⁷ Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, 2011, p 23

⁴⁶⁸ Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, 2011, pp 23-6

⁴⁶⁹ 2011, pp 26-7

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University of Sydney

secondary schooling curriculum program, and identification of needs and development of pre- and in-service teacher training.

By 2001, there were about 270,000 grade one students participating in the new curriculum pilot programme [1% of that year level nationwide] ... About 110,000 grade 7 students [0.5% nationwide] ... 3,300 elementary schools and over 400 secondary schools were involved in this phase. By 2002, each province had identified its own pilot programme according to its own local situation. Overall, about 20 percent of the Grade 1, 18 percent of Grade 7 and 570 pilot districts embarked on the new curriculum. By 2003, 1,072 more counties across the country had introduced the new curriculum with a total student number of 40 to 50 percent of the grade level. In addition to the pilot districts of 2001 and 2002, there were in total 1,642 experimental districts and 35 million students using the new curriculum.⁴⁷⁰

Again, it is worth noting – both here and in the preceding quote – the democratic principles inherent within each level of this process. This is indicated by the statements that not only the ‘experts’ had to be mindful of *everyone* involved in their processes and decisions, but also, as cited directly above, “each province had identified its *own pilot programme* according to its *own local situation*.” Clearly, the main methodological approach in forming, implementing, and gauging the results of these radical reforms is *inclusivity*. This is *li* in operation on a macroscopic scale. Liu and Kang comment on what was beginning to crystallize in this third phase of the reforms:

As the reform programme progressed over time, it was clear that even though the new curriculum had encountered strong criticism, questioning and even conflict and dispute over the years that followed, the concept of school-based curriculum inquiry has inspired the vast majority of educators to learn about and try the new curriculum and to pursue their own ideas and concerns. Most of all, it is this strong bottom-up ‘counterforce’ that has made the new curriculum programme irreversible.⁴⁷¹

Stage 4 (2004-2007) was the finalization of the nine year compulsory education curriculum, nationwide implementation, and the new secondary curriculum pilot programs. All students in primary and middle school entering the (northern) academic year of 2005 were being taught the new curriculum. This stage heralded the beginning of implementing the

⁴⁷⁰ Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, 2011, p 28

⁴⁷¹ 2011, p 30

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curriculum for senior high school and university entrance. Nevertheless, problems were naturally still extant:

These included how to strengthen the organization and leadership at various levels in education departments, how to guide the organization of school lessons and lesson options, how to establish school-based implementation models, how to improve the capabilities and standards of principals and teachers in terms of implementing the new curriculum and in turn promote reform of the higher education admissions system, and how to establish effective communication with parents and the society more generally in the context of a culture of high-stakes university admission.⁴⁷²

The process of dialogue and feedback continued during this stage, surveys were distributed to students, teachers, parents and the general community assessing responses to standards, levels of learning attained, and the issue of examinations, especially the university entrance exams. There was also public debate on these topics.⁴⁷³ Student choices and school autonomy also remained in the forefront of the reform efforts. For example, Shenzhen Secondary School developed a ‘real life’ program:

The students study six Arts subjects simultaneously with each subject having two classes and four consecutive sessions per week. Students can select classes beyond their grade level and outside of their home class. This means that in 2008, for example, the 800 Year 2 [sic] students at the school had 734 curriculum options, so the number of options for thousands of students at this school has changed dramatically.⁴⁷⁴

Aside from the staggering logistics – teacher resource and timetabling alone – needed to implement and sustain such a program in a school, this example demonstrates, not only the autonomy schools enjoyed under the new reforms, but the flexibility of the introduced nationwide system. With such a vast amount of subject choices available, one would expect students at Shenzhen Secondary to be highly engaged in their educational journey. Nevertheless, problems abound; now, well into Stage 5 – which began in August 2004 – it is the time for seeing longer term results, assessments, and implement amendments.

⁴⁷² Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, 2011, pp 31-2

⁴⁷³ Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, 2011, p 31

⁴⁷⁴ Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, 2011, p 32

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In terms of daily teaching and learning, what are still areas of concern are the amount of knowledge grasped, the speed of the acquisition of skills, the processes and methods used, and the attitudes and values that still linger. Curriculum activities and initiatives in the areas of physical education and the arts are threatened as the majority of students' time is spent on drill work in literacy, mathematics and foreign languages [for examinations]. Some teachers remain enthusiastic ... but the number of teachers who are comfortable with the basic requirement of the new curriculum standards are relatively low ... What is more, the question arises as to what extent have our schools and local authorities been equipped with the capacity for stronger curriculum construction and management? Has our nation set up a sustainable development mechanism for the curriculum?⁴⁷⁵

It is still early days and, given the extent of the initiative, it may take a generation yet to see the final outcomes of these initial reforms. This section has overviewed China's current reform movement to give a practical, on the ground perspective to transcultural philosophy of education. Many of the approaches to education presented here – that of consultation, on-going feedback, public debate, citizenship education, and making the new curriculum relevant to life and living – exemplify the combination of Confucian and Deweyan thought.

8.2 Confluence of Confucian-Deweyan Thought in Philosophy of Education

In the 21st century, any philosophy of education must address globality in all its narratives and counter-narratives. Globality can be likened to a tsunami; a force larger than the sum of us, with its own momentum dragging us all in its wake, often moving faster than we can adapt, or even understand what is happening to foresee the eventual consequences. Globality, and its consequences, is certainly a product of post-modernism, enabled by quantum leaps in technology and communications, and now impacts individuals and societies in every corner of the world, arguably, even in the most 'isolated' villages of Africa and Asia. Due to globality's impact (to a greater or lesser degree) on every stratum of human existence – individual, social, cultural, ecological and economic – as its effects ripple through our everyday life and environment, there is a need to ascertain its philosophic epicenter. And in so doing, we understand its essential substrate, and in understanding its substrate, we are able to shift and accommodate within its changing aspects through education; allowing a flexibility which makes positive navigation possible, as opposed to being tossed helplessly

⁴⁷⁵ Jian Liu & Changyun Kang, 2011, pp 38-9

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into a future determined solely by market forces.

Hall and Ames identifies globality's philosophic epicenter as the culmination of Western history of ideas in the form of post-modernism and outlines this, firstly, as globality's dominant narrative.

Western (Anglo-European) philosophy owes its present vigor ... to a transformation of conversational space within which viable intellectual engagements are taking place. That transformation is a consequence of *globalization* – a term that has taken on *two competing senses*. The dominant sense is that associated, at the ideological level, with the dissemination of a rational and moral consensus born of the European Enlightenment and, at the practical level, rights-based democratic institutions, free enterprise capitalism, and rational technologies. In this sense, globalization is a synonym for modernization – which is itself thought to be synonymous with Westernization. ... The dialectical response of so-called postmodern thinkers to their received tradition advertises postmodernity as a set of counter-discourses that depend altogether too heavily upon their controlling narratives to serve the interests of non-Europeans.⁴⁷⁶

Hall and Ames also see a counter-force now arising – as the second of the “two competing senses” – to balance what formerly appeared to be unhindered Westernization of the world.

As long as Western values monopolize the process of globalization, there will be a continuation of the expansionist, colonizing, missionizing impulses associated with the purveyance of liberal democracy, autonomous individuality, and rational technologies. But there are important signs that this modernist form of globalization is transmogrifying. ... Far beyond the provincial, decidedly Western, sense of globalization, there is a competing meaning that recognizes the potential contributions of non-Western cultures. In this second sense, globalization simply refers to *the mutual accessibility of cultural sensibilities*.⁴⁷⁷

As the authors admit, “Doubtless the Western processes of commodification and MacDonalization will continue, but present globalizing dynamics may be vital enough to stand against even these dark forces.”⁴⁷⁸ It is in this context of “mutual accessibility of

⁴⁷⁶ 2003, pp 126-7; first emphasis in text, second emphasis, this author

⁴⁷⁷ 2003, p 127; emphasis in text

⁴⁷⁸ 2003, p 127

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cultural sensibilities” that a role for Confucian-Deweyan thought can be found and applied in consensual determination of, not only the development of educational administrative models, but – equally important – in the actual curriculum. This approach, as a form of ‘civic or global education’, would be interwoven within the learning of all other subjects taught. That is, the relevance of subject material being applied to local, national, and global issues. This is instilling communitarian values in the student; values which depart from individualism as the core notion of self found in Western liberal thinking.

The Confucian-Deweyan scholar, Tan Sor-hoon, in her work *Confucian Democracy: A Deweyan Reconstruction* (2004), contrasts Western liberalism with communitarian values of democracy, extant not only in Confucian thinking specifically and Eastern thinking generally, but also currently by some commentators in the West who feel the state of liberal democracy now falls short of its promises.⁴⁷⁹

Linking the discussion of the possibility of Confucian democracy with the Western liberal-communitarian debate ... helps bridge cultural differences and bring the debate about the future of Asian societies closer to a public outside of Asia by establishing a connection with a discourse that is more familiar to the latter. It enables both Western publics and those in Asia to link their concerns with what might prove to be an emerging global communitarian trend, and it allows each to learn from the other in widening communitarian perspectives and refining theories and practices.⁴⁸⁰

Although Dewey did not witness globalization, his perspectives are highly relevant to this era. His communitarian approach to the idea of ‘the public’, democracy and, most importantly – for the purposes here – education, bring a wholistic approach to the issues at hand. Deweyan educational practice would prepare the student for the future by – not only being equipped with the flexibility to meet the constantly shifting landscape of globality (having professions which may not even be imagined at this point in time, for example) – but also within a humanitarian context of approaches to life and living. Deweyan thought is strongly embedded in communitarian values; coupling comfortably with the living ideas of Confucian self-cultivation and *li* (禮 ritual propriety, as discussed in Chapter 5), giving Deweyan theory, a product of Western history of ideas, added depth and richness. For Dewey,

⁴⁷⁹ pp 10-11

⁴⁸⁰ Tan Sor-Hoon, 2004c, p 12

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self is constructed by connection with the other:

There is, however, an intelligible question about human association:- Not the question how individuals or singular beings come to be connected, but how they come to be connected in just those ways which give human communities traits so different from those which mark assemblies of electrons, unions of trees in forests ... and constellations of stars. When we consider the difference we at once come upon the fact that the consequences of joint action take on a new value when they are observed. For notice of the effects of connected action forces [wo]men to reflect upon the connection itself; it makes it an object of attention and interest. Each acts, in so far as the connection is known, in view of the connection.⁴⁸¹

Dewey extends this connection with the other into organizational structures. When speaking of school structures, he is highly incorporative of every level of its operation in the seamlessness of interconnection.

[W]hen we speak of organization, we are not to think simply of the externals; of that which goes by the name “school system” – the school board, the superintendent, and the building, the engaging and promotion of teachers, etc. These things enter in, but the fundamental organization is that of the school itself as a community of individuals, in its relations to other forms of social life Organization is nothing but getting things into connection with one another, so that they work easily, flexibly, and fully.⁴⁸²

Dewey is not only a pragmatist when it comes to understanding and finding ways to facilitate education on all levels, he is also an aesthete on life, seeing the constant dynamic, poetry and interplay of elements – from mundane daily events to the larger metaphysical picture – in our lives. In the following quote, one sees the relevance for educating towards and fostering of the personal skills of a quiet, still perspective which is needed in a chaotic world; a world of ever-shifting, high momentum change – the world of globality.

All interactions that effect stability and order in the whirling flux of change are rhythms. There is ebb and flow, systole and diastole: ordered change. The latter moves within bounds. To overpass the limits that are set is destruction and death, out of which, however, new

⁴⁸¹ Dewey, 1998, p 288

⁴⁸² Dewey, 1990, p 64

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rhythms are built up.⁴⁸³

This quote, excerpted from his 1934 essay ‘The Live Creature’, intimates the Confucian concept of *qi* (气 lifeforce; the permeating, potentiality of creation) in the flux and motion of the *yin* and *yang* tensions as described in Chapter 5. For Dewey, not only is life art, but learning as the intrinsic ideal and fulfillment of living is also an art-form within the tensions and changes of existence. As Joseph Grange, a Confucian-Deweyan philosopher explains:

The art of learning is the art of finding one’s spot and keeping a balance throughout the pushes and pulls of experience as it tugs us now here, now there throughout the personal and public sphere ... Dewey’s insistence on the primacy of the aesthetic suggests that he, [like Confucius], knew the importance of this art. To inquire into the human world in order to make it better demands much more than statistical analysis. It needs more than the application of more funds. It requires something more than new institutions and power structures. That “something more” is achieved by the full participation of the human person in the arts of life.⁴⁸⁴

This “something more” in the aesthetics of human relations strongly correlates with *li* as Grange underscores, in “the full participation of the human person in the arts of life” and learning. In Dewey’s 1927 essay, ‘Search for the Great Community’, he not only expands this correlation, he also succinctly outlines *xiushen* (修身 self-cultivation) as in *learning how to be human* in the context of *li*⁴⁸⁵ and the constant becoming, not just of self, but the community as a whole.

To learn to be human is to develop through the give-and-take of communication an effective sense of being an individually distinctive member of the community; one who understands and appreciates its beliefs, desires and methods, and who contributes to a further conversion of organic powers into human resources and values. But this transition is never finished ... It shows itself wherever the method obtains of attaining results by use of force instead of by the method of communication and enlightenment.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸³ Dewey, 1998, p 398

⁴⁸⁴ 2004, p 92

⁴⁸⁵ Tu Weiming 1979/1998, 1985a, 1989c

⁴⁸⁶ Dewey, 1998, p 297

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This quote captures precisely the Confucian concept of *li*; it bespeaks of consensus, not a zero sum game approach; it speaks of maintaining the normative boundaries of the society by “one who understands and appreciates its beliefs, desires and methods”; it speaks of the contribution of values into the “organic” interrelated whole. It also speaks of the *uniqueness* of the individual in contributing “human resources and values” into this organic whole – that is, society. And in contributing to the society in this manner, a deeper layer is penetrated and enhanced – that of culture. Dewey views culture as the underlying foundation of education:

Unless culture be a superficial polish, a veneering of mahogany over common wood, it surely is this – the growth of the imagination in flexibility, in scope, and in sympathy, till the life which the individual lives is informed with the life of nature and of society. When nature and society can live in the schoolroom, when the forms and tools of learning are subordinated to the substance of experience, then shall there be an opportunity for this identification, and culture shall be the democratic password.⁴⁸⁷

Here Dewey clearly reflects the concept of Confucian democracy⁴⁸⁸ – a democracy which embodies the sensibilities as “a nuanced manner of anticipating, responding to, and shaping the world around us ... sensibilities [as habits] reside in the prominent feelings, ideas, and beliefs that define the culture”⁴⁸⁹ and encourages consensus. Also emphasized here is the anthropocosmic perspective that Tu Weiming assigns to Confucianism⁴⁹⁰ when Dewey speaks of “the life which the individual lives is informed with the life of nature and of society” – that of the interconnection of self with the human, natural and cosmological worlds. Again, the self is striving, seeking, learning to be – or rather *becoming* – an intrinsic, yet unique, participant *within* the organic whole; namely, the universe in all its interrelated attributes. As the Confucian pragmatist, Wen Haiming, observes: “Hu Shi [Shih] stressed that the fundamental spirit of Deweyan philosophy is to show not only the democratic spirit without social class, but also the continuity of mind and events, as well as the continuity of cosmology and physics.”⁴⁹¹ Deweyan thinking, as with Confucianism, is highly incorporative

⁴⁸⁷ Dewey, 1990, pp 61-2

⁴⁸⁸ Ames, 1991; Grange, 2004; Hall & Ames, 2003; Tan Sor-hoon, 2004c

⁴⁸⁹ Ames, 2003, p 404

⁴⁹⁰ See Chapter 4

⁴⁹¹ 2009, p 295

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and non-dualistic. Dewey's focus on human becoming through *real experience*⁴⁹² – as the “continuity of mind and events” intimates – is pivotal within all these concepts and the result is embodied learning. Dewey considers this idea in both a literal and metaphysical sense as Grange clarifies:

When the body is used as the real ground of social participation [as experience], a type of learning takes place that is both broadly based and deeply anchored in the emotional life of the community ... What happens when the habitual body takes up the act of learning is the establishment of a vital field of action – a region is cleared within which both the sufferings and the accomplishments of humans bonded together in experience can be shared. *Learning takes place on the widest and deepest available scale.*⁴⁹³

Although Grange states this in a cultural context, it is applicable to Dewey's quote above whereby culture – as informed by “nature and society” – must “live in the classroom” as a vehicle for embodied learning. This is a crucial aspect of Dewey's educational theory. The process of ‘subject-matter’ becoming embodied knowledge is implicit in his 1902 article, ‘The Child and the Curriculum’. Dewey states: “The only significant [educational] method is the method of the mind as it reaches out and assimilates. Subject-matter is but spiritual food, possible nutritive material. It cannot digest itself; it cannot of its own accord turn into bone and muscle and blood.”⁴⁹⁴ It must be processed; it must become embodied *as knowledge*. And this processing takes place in a not dissimilar way that Confucianism describes embodied knowing, or ‘intellectual intuition’ (智的直覺 *zhi de zhi jue*).⁴⁹⁵ Recapping briefly from Chapter Five, Tu Weiming describes this as: “significantly different from either irrationalism or esoterics. ... it *does* claim a direct knowledge of reality without logical reasoning or inference. But, unlike what is commonly associated with mysticism, it has very little to do with revelation.”⁴⁹⁶ In contrast, Dewey's idea of intuition:

The word “intuition” has many meanings. But in its popular, as distinct from refined philosophic, usage it is closely connected with the single qualitiveness underlying all the details of explicit reasoning ... Reflection and rational elaboration spring from and make

⁴⁹² See Chapter 6

⁴⁹³ Grange, 2004, pp 61-2; my emphasis

⁴⁹⁴ Dewey, 1998, p 238

⁴⁹⁵ Tu Weiming, 1979/1998 & 1985a; see Chapter 5

⁴⁹⁶ Tu Weiming, 1985a, p 20; my emphasis

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explicit a prior intuition. But there is nothing mystical about this fact, and it does not signify that there are two modes of knowledge, one of which is appropriate to one kind of subject-matter, and the other mode to the other kind. Thinking and theorizing about physical matters set out from an intuition, and reflection about affairs of life and mind consists in an ideational and conceptual transformation of what begins as an intuition. Intuition, in short, signifies the realization of a pervasive quality such that it regulates the determination of relevant distinctions or of whatever, whether in the way of terms or relations, *becomes the accepted object of thought* [that is, developing knowledge].⁴⁹⁷

The diagram below (Figure 8.1) is a correlation to the diagram describing Confucian embodied knowing in Chapter 5 (Figure 5.5) as it depicts how new information becomes connected – by insight, that is, intuition – to former knowledge systems within the self through the processing of what Dewey analogizes above as “subject- matter ... [being only] possible nutritive material. It cannot digest itself; it cannot of its own accord turn into bone and muscle and blood.”

⁴⁹⁷ 1998, pp 198-9; my emphasis

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University of Sydney

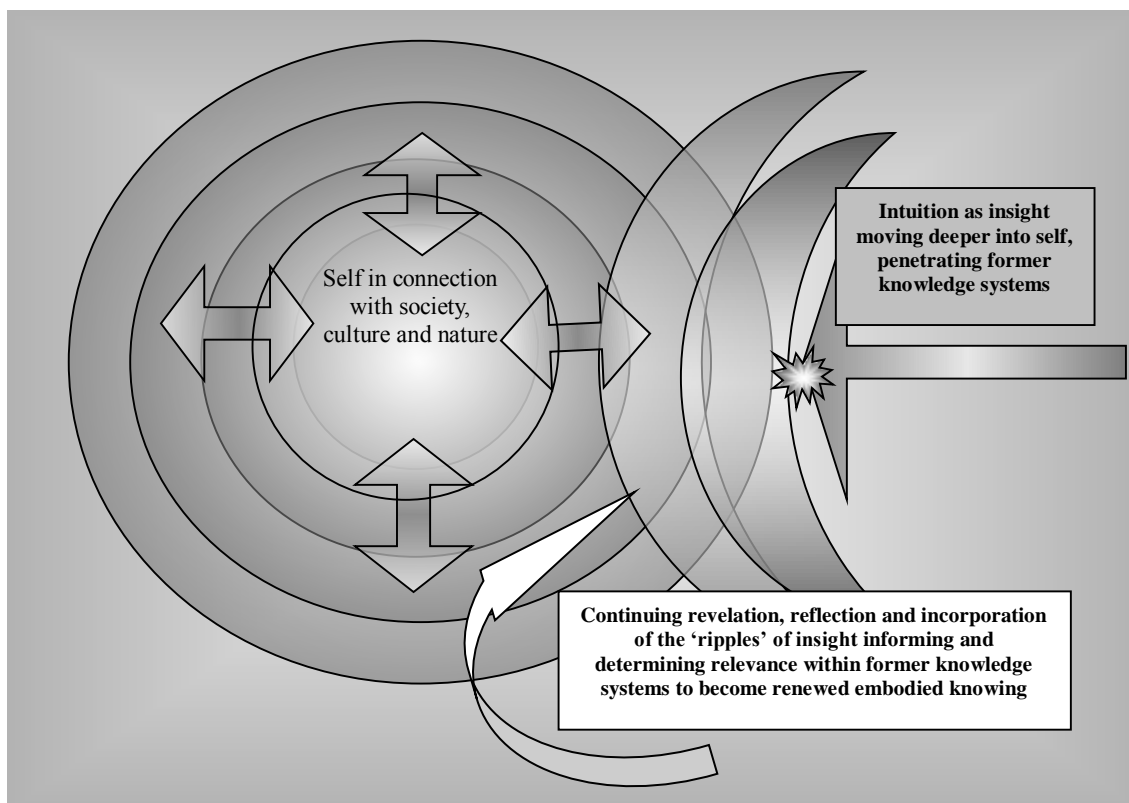


Figure 8.1: The Deweyan Process of Attaining Embodied Knowing

The intuitive insights seep deeper into self, making relevant connections with former knowledge constructs (inner concentric circles) in an on-going process as renewed perspectives (arrows) find purchase within the self as apprehended meaning. This is the process of Deweyan embodied learning. In turn, intuition leads to incorporation and consolidation into growing knowledge systems of the self as a comprehensive whole in connection with society, nature, and culture. Once consolidated, the renewed perspectives – achieved through this process of learning – becomes embodied knowledge to be applied into the individual’s universe as renewed experiential understandings.

Being exposed to “subject-matter” (as Dewey calls it) – or pieces of initially disparate information – as a sensory or cognitive experience in the learning process, is *only the raw material* for the mind to process, schematize, and consolidate into former knowledge systems. Accordingly, learning – as described here – is the expansion, amendment, and enhancement of knowledge formerly known, and now built upon, again consolidated within the self, in ever-widening constructs finding applicability into life, skills, and the community and culture. Such is the purpose of education.

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These Confucian-Deweyan educational theories, as a historical continuum tentatively begun in early 20th century China – and now far more sophisticated with the resurrection, embracement, and revitalization of Confucian thought in the post-Mao period – have edged their way into the education reform initiative. This is exemplified in the Shanghai pilot project of Project Based Learning – or Problem Based Learning – (PBL) first established in 2008.⁴⁹⁸ In 2009 and 2012, Shanghai’s educational standards were assessed, and in comparison with some sixty participating countries were found to have the highest rating (in mathematics, reading, and science) by the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).⁴⁹⁹ This high rating is contributed to by Shanghai’s educational foci having relevance to global issues, strong citizenship programs and engagement with the community, fostering of cross-disciplinary understanding, and – equally important – providing encouragement for *critical and creative* thinking through the project based curriculum.⁵⁰⁰ Shanghai students’ creativity and curiosity to explore their world – and clearly being engaged in the process – is an example of a Confucian-Deweyan approach to education, providing a pragmatic response to glocalization of the 21st century.

⁴⁹⁸ Zhang, Minxuan & Kong, Linshuai, 2012

⁴⁹⁹ PISA is conducted every three years. See 2009 and 2012 comparative results at <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/pisa2009keyfindings.htm> and <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results.htm> [accessed 29th of July, 2014] respectively.

⁵⁰⁰ Bearspeare, 2012; OECD, 2010; Charlene Tan, 2012; Zhang, Minxuan & Kong, Linshuai, 2012

9.0 Globalization, Glocalization, and Education

This concluding chapter addresses globality and locality in the context of cultural and educational impacts in the pursuit of participation in the global economy. The question which threads through the cultural narrative of globality is whether diversity will be enhanced, subsumed by the dominant (Western) culture creating a situation of homogeneity, or further ethnic divisions develop. Samuel P. Huntington's 1993 article of some notoriety, 'The clash of civilizations?'⁵⁰¹ argues there will remain certain pockets of tribal, ethnic, religious and/or cultural warfare – many a product of centuries old grievances and not wholly related to the advent of globality. Nevertheless, there is a developing consensus that there are strong indicators of a large movement of positive indigenous identities emerging within, and due to, the greater narrative of globality, especially in economically growing regions such as India and China.⁵⁰²

The first section of this chapter focuses on this trend of enhanced and positive cultural diversity as it pertains to these larger economies. India and China – with their growing affluence and expanding middle class – are becoming more culturally confident.⁵⁰³ No longer is there 'the West then the rest'; pluralism and cultural respect are entering the global narrative as these regions economically gained against the West in the post-GFC (Great Financial Collapse) climate after 2008.⁵⁰⁴ These developing regions are finding their own voice for future cultural self-determination.

The second and final section discusses a transcultural international model of education which is inclusive of these factors and can be adapted to communitarian values within a given culture. Values which encompass the development of the whole person and can contribute to global plurality. That is, an educational model which enables the individual to benefit from a balanced interaction between local and global spheres. It is argued that the Confucian-Deweyan model presented herein potentially can achieve such an outcome. This model addresses the *universality* of the whole integrated person and has the flexibility to cross-culturally adapt; an educational philosophy – an infrastructure – on which a given

⁵⁰¹ *Foreign Affairs*; Summer; 72, 3:22-49

⁵⁰² Ames 2004; Berger and Huntington 2012; Berking 2003; Berry 2008; Bhawuk 2008; Bussolo et al. 2011; Gulmez 2009; Hale 2013; Jacques 2009; Lauderdale 2008

⁵⁰³ Bhawuk 2008; Bussolo et.al. 2011

⁵⁰⁴ Das 2010; Jacques 2009

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University of Sydney

community can create their own superstructure in relation to their own needs and desired directions which empathetically encompasses the other. Accordingly, such an educational model would be a unique reflection of a given culture enabling the future generation to participate in and contribute to the global community without loss of indigenous identity.

9.1 Hegemony or Cultural Diversity?

We can easily conceive of a time when there will be only one culture and one civilisation on the entire surface of the entire earth. . . I don't believe that this will happen, because there are contradictory tendencies always at work – on the one hand towards homogenisation and on the other towards new distinctions. *Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009)*⁵⁰⁵

These words, written by the eminent anthropologist Lévi-Strauss in 1978, are timely. Now in the early 21st century, there are currently two main schools of thought that *generally* underpin theories on the cultural directions in which globalism will take the world⁵⁰⁶: hyperglobalization – that of cultural homogeneity or ‘McDonaldization’ as a form of American cultural imperialism – and those that adhere to the idea of ‘glocalization’.⁵⁰⁷ The latter school of thought “contends that global cultural flows often reinvigorate local cultural niches”⁵⁰⁸ which is not a new phenomenon; confluence of cultures and civilizations has been happening for millennia.⁵⁰⁹ For example, the early exchange of ideas, religions, art, merchandise, and manufacturing technologies from East to Middle East and the West and *visa versa* via the Silk Road; the movement of Buddhism from India to China (Ch’an Buddhism) and then Japan (Zen Buddhism); and – some thousands of years ago – the movement of Indo-European languages through migration from Central Asia to Iran and Northern India.⁵¹⁰

Needless to say, some mass migrations were tantamount to cultural genocide – if not outright semi-systematic racial genocide and mass murder – as in the examples of European

⁵⁰⁵ 1978, *Myth and Meaning*. London, UK: Routledge & Kegan Paul, p 20; as cited in Berry, 2008, p 328.

⁵⁰⁶ There are many schools of thought relative to globalization as well as future extrapolations on where globalization will take the world. Here, in speaking specifically about cultural aspects of globalization, on the whole there are currently varying degrees of the combination of these two schools of thought which underlie more detailed extrapolations of directions. See Steger, 2009; Lechner and Boli, 2000

⁵⁰⁷ Steger, 2009, Chapter 5

⁵⁰⁸ Steger, 2009, p 75

⁵⁰⁹ Inglis 2010; Manning 2013

⁵¹⁰ Manning, 2013

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settlement in North America and Australia beginning in the 16th and 18th centuries respectively. This form of cultural imperialism created intergenerational social and cultural disaster still evident in the remains of those indigenous cultures to this day. Nevertheless, cultural migration and confluence is far from a modern idea – much of it a positive phenomenon on those impacted cultures – expanding commercial and intellectual boundaries, and enhancing both cultures concerned in the given situation. As the political scientist and public policy expert, Benjamin Sovocool, states: “Instead of treating globalization as homogeneous and all-encompassing, ... it should be treated as a concept perennially in motion, a discourse continually under reconstruction.”⁵¹¹

In the 21st century, economically, the Great Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2008 aided the stronger emergence of developing countries, especially India and China.⁵¹² In the case of China – arguably the most dominant of the emerging countries – the reasons for this development are identified by the sinologist and international policy scholar, Martin Jacques:

On the face of it, China is much better equipped to deal with this crisis [the GFC] than the West. Its financial sector is in a much superior condition to that of the West, having avoided the hubristic risk-taking that hobbled the Western banks; nor is China confronted with the kind of de-leveraging which threatens deflation and a major shrinkage of demand in the West and Japan. While the developed world faces the prospect of shrinking economies for perhaps two or more years, China is still looking forward to considerate growth, albeit of uncertain magnitude.⁵¹³

Also, not to be forgotten, unlike the USA – which has a neo-liberal, relatively deregulated, market driven financial agenda – China has state controlled banks which are highly regulated and take their directives from the Ministry of Finance (MOF), coupled with domestic and international financial policies which consider the long term view.⁵¹⁴ China and India alone comprise almost 40% of the world’s population, so it is significant that between 1980 and 2010, China and India combined increased their global GDP contribution from 2% to 12%.⁵¹⁵ In considering India’s growing IT industries, together both countries effectively

⁵¹¹ 2010, p 15

⁵¹² Bussolo et al. 2011; Jacques 2009; http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/economic-outlook-for-southeast-asia-china-and-india_23101113 [accessed 20 March, 2014]

⁵¹³ 2009, p 433

⁵¹⁴ See <http://en.xinhua08.com/a/20131227/1289200.shtml> [accessed March 13th, 2014]

⁵¹⁵ Busselo et al., 2011, p 3; also worth noting in same reference, that in this period of 1980 to 2010, the developing world as

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dominate world markets in labor, manufacturing, and out-sourcing with affluence coming in its wake due to these areas being in high demand globally. As noted by Maurizio Bussolo et.al.:

By 2030 about a billion people in developing countries will belong to the global middle class, up from just 250 million in 2000. And not only the size of the middle class will change, but also its composition: in particular, China and India will increase their joint share from about 13 percent in 2000 to 44 percent in 2030.⁵¹⁶

Should these extrapolations prove correct, this means that – even in consideration of some minimal growth of the middle classes in the less certain economies of South America, Russia, and Africa – by 2030 the West will only have approximately 50% of the world’s middle class; redressing a centuries old imbalance of affluence between East and West, developing and developed. Arguably, a burgeoning middle class – with its social aspirations, desire for upward mobility, increasing levels of education and therefore with more opportunities available to them and their children – provide for any developing society a voice which its numerous poor and small coterie of extreme wealthy are unable to provide. The former being politically, economically, and educationally marginalized, and the wealthy – on the whole – lack the numbers, if not the intention, for empowering their indigenous cultural values. When economic opportunities grow, more of the poor are enabled to improve their status and position, and – with some entrepreneurial skills – enter the lower rungs of the middle class.⁵¹⁷

A large middle class invariably leads to a stronger, more stable, and vibrant society on every level. A natural consequence of this stability and vibrancy includes a growth in cultural pride and confidence as assertion of social identity is sought. This is reflected in the arts (greater patronage), sense of self-determinism (economic independence) and, eventually and most importantly, education; education which reflects the given community’s values and

a whole almost doubled their global output from 18% to 32%.

⁵¹⁶ 2011, p 3

⁵¹⁷ As an example, India’s lowest social caste, the Dalit (translated as ‘oppressed’ and formerly known as ‘untouchables’) – who formerly were unable to own property and only allowed occupations dealing with death (abattoir, funeral work, leatherwork) or dirt (cleaners, rubbish and sewerage collectors) – have begun to enter, not only the middle class, but many have become millionaires and industry leaders. Initially this was due to them being able to do IT work which is not designated on the ancient list of occupations for castes. The Dalit now have their own Chamber of Commerce and have successfully lobbied for Dalit affirmative action quotas for university entrance. See <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2103056,00.html> and <http://www.economist.com/node/9905554> [accessed 13th March 2014]

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cultural sense of self within the climate of globality. That is, rather than be subsumed by imported cultural values in educational models – namely Western – there is a growing need for amended models whereby curricula reflects communitarian as well as individualistic values in balance.⁵¹⁸ And that balance, undoubtedly, will be difficult to achieve.

Nationalistic mentalities often reject any hybridized educational models. As the Chinese educationalist, Wu Zongjie, states “a process of cultural hybridization is usually seen as inevitable – as well as desirable to the progress of education ... [yet] the ancient vision of Confucian pedagogy becomes lost in the name of progress and integration, which poses a threat to cultural plurality”.⁵¹⁹ Yet, as outlined in Chapter 8, Confucian pedagogy was – essentially and historically – highly teacher-centered and based on rote learning for civil service examinations; it was *not* a creative learning process fostering problem solving. Far broader global issues – such as the environment, inequality, and energy and food sustainability – need to be addressed in the 21st century.

This issue of Western *vis a vis* Chinese educational models has been strongly debated for some 10 years (at time of writing) by educationalists within China and international observers.⁵²⁰ As Sovocool states above, globalization “should be treated as a concept perennially in motion, a discourse continually under reconstruction”. The same is true of educational systems particularly of nations and civilizations which have been colonized or dominated by outside forces. Historically, China’s educational system in the post-Imperial era⁵²¹ adopted Japanese,⁵²² Soviet, and Western models as India, in turn, adopted British models.⁵²³ In these nations, there often remains fear of further domination through

⁵¹⁸ Chen Kai-Ming, 2011; Cheng Liang & Xu Nan, 2011; Deng Zongyi, 2011; Liu Yongbing, 2011; Tan Sor-hoon, 2011; Woronov, 2002, 2008; Zhang Huajun, 2009, 2010; Zhang Huajun and Milligan, 2010

⁵¹⁹ 2011, p 571

⁵²⁰ Bai Tongdon, 2011; Chen Naichen, 1986; Cheng Kai-Ming, 2011; Cheng Liang & Xu Nan, 2011; Fouts & Chan, 1997; From & Homgren, 2001; Gao Zhenyu 2012; Gu Mingyuan, 2010; Hayhoe, 2006; 2010b; Hua Zhang, 2006; Harris *et al.*, 2009; Jin Shenghong & Jau-wei Dan, 2004; Jing Lin & Chen Qinghai, 1995; Kipnis, 2006; & Shanfeng Li, 2010; Lai & Lo, 2006; Latchem & Lu Xinzhen, 2006; Law Wing-Wah, 2007; 2012; Li Jin, 2003; 2006; 2007; Liu Haimin & Lin Dan, 2008; Liu Yongbing, 2011; & Fang Yanping, 2009; Lu Youquan & Chi Yanjie, 2007; Liu Chengfang *et al.*, 2009; Lui Wanhai, 2008; Naftali, 2010; Ryan *et al.*, 2009; Schmeichel, 2009; Tan, C., 2012; Tan Sor-hoon, 2005; 2011c; Woronov, 2002; 2008; 2009; Wu Gang, 2006; Wu Zongjie, 2011; Yang Xiaowei, 2007; Yu Shusheng, 2006; Yu Tianlong, 2008; Zhang Donghai, 2010; Zhang Huajun, 2009; 2010; & Milligan, 2010; Zhang Zhonghua, 2007; Zhao Guoping, 2010; Zhong Hua *et al.*, 2011; Zhou Yong, 2011; Zhu Meihua, 2001; Zhu Xiaoman, 2006. Discourse on Indian indigenous models of education are limited, no doubt due to the lack of a secularized, systematic education in the pre-Colonial era. Nevertheless, the narrative is beginning; see Bhawuk, 2008.

⁵²¹ For an overview of traditional Chinese education systems in the Imperial era, see Chapter 8

⁵²² Japanese-Western style education was introduced into China in the 1910s, filling the vacuum left by the demise of the traditional imperial education/examination system which aimed only to employ scholar-officials. It was, for China, the beginnings of the notion of a modern intellectual. See Pepper, 1996, pp 57-58; Wu, Zongjie, 2011, p 581.

⁵²³ It is worth noting here that the British adopted some aspects of learning back into their own system from the Indian

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hyperglobalization – post-colonialism – and maintain a strong nationalistic stance as reflected by Wu Zongjie above. The philosopher, Sor-hoon Tan, responds to the nationalist view of educational philosophy, underscoring the position of the majority of comparative educationalists concerned with reform: “While Western hegemony should certainly be challenged, cultural nationalists can be naive in their views about cultures, and fail to recognize that a total rejection of Western influences does not mean victory in the ‘battle between East and West’ ...”⁵²⁴

Tan’s use of the phrase “the battle between East and West” highlights the strong undercurrent of attitudes as the seismic shifts of global power become evident. Accordingly, in such momentous times, the pressure for identities to be maintained and/or asserted comes to the fore; emerging nations reappraise their own identities and nations of diminishing power suffer a form of collective ‘identity crisis’.⁵²⁵ The phrase, ‘the battle between East and West’ infers a notion of a zero sum game, as opposed to a win-win situation. This latter position is crucial in approaching this large shift of geo-political power in the 21st century and, subsequently, education reform becomes the focus of these underlying issues in the form of future identity. Namely, education pertains to, not only the future direction of the emerging country, but also embodies and communicates the values which will be passed on to the next and subsequent generations.

Education is an intergenerational tool of cultural power or powerlessness, either enhancing or diminishing the cultural values of the given community. It is highly important in this pluralistic era that any model of education needs to have inherent flexibility and addresses the a-cultural, universality of self in a *student-centered* classroom environment. The aim of such a model being the fostering and promotion of intercultural understanding, empathy with the other, and critical and creative thinking; necessary skills in facing the enormous challenges ahead – individual, social, national, and international – as, due to globality, all these spheres now overlap. The Confucian perspectives of self and the wholistic notion of self-cultivation integrated with Deweyan educational theory meet these criteria, offering the basis for a seamlessly conjoined East-West educational model.

(monastic) system, such as the tutoring system in large lecture theatres. See Allender, 2006
⁵²⁴ 2011, pp 623-4

⁵²⁵ Jacques, 2009; Jacques gives insightful treatment, not only to the current global situation, but also to the historical patterns of the rise and fall of empires and how those cycles impact on the respective cultures involved.

9.2 Transcultural Educational Philosophy of the Whole Self: A Confucian-Deweyan Learning Model

The Ugandan educationalist, Paul Wangoola, states that the “problems of human kind today cannot be resolved by modern scientific knowledge alone, or by indigenous knowledge alone. More durable solutions will be found in [a] new synthesis between indigenous knowledges and modern scientific knowledge.”⁵²⁶ In fact, it is more likely there will be new *syntheses* – many adaptations – of a philosophically pluralistic educational model (an infrastructure) informed by the cultural uniqueness of the society within which it is adopted by and adapted to (superstructure). This, accordingly, enables and mutually informs a balance between empirical Western methodologies (learning of sciences, technology and research techniques) and indigenous knowledges incorporating *their* respective worldview. That is, culturally unique perspectives on the environment, sustainability, and communitarian values would enrich the global narrative, socially and pragmatically. The educationalist, Joel Spring, makes the observation:

The concept of knowledges, in contrast to a single knowledge, assumes the existence of multiple ways of seeing and knowing the world. Many organizations and networks ... believe that schools will educate from the perspective of a single world knowledge. However, the adaptation of global ideas to local settings ... often involves recognition of *other* ways of thinking and knowing the world.⁵²⁷

This will be the way of the future as a non-Western middle class – confident in their ethnicity and economically enabled – determine a preferred form of education for their children. The infrastructural model referred to above would allow, in approaching glocal issues, both critical thinking and creative problem solving from a cultural perspective. That is, approaching global issues (such as environmental and economic sustainability) which impact on the locale, region and/or nation could be considered and problem solved through the lens of the community’s culture. Methods and solutions thus attained could inform other communities of different ways of thinking, therefore contributing to further pluralistic

⁵²⁶ Quote cited and referenced in Spring, 2009, p 145

⁵²⁷ Spring, 2009, p 145; my emphasis

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exchanges within the global arena.⁵²⁸ This is the ideal outcome of glocality. As discussed above, typical of the historical forces of globality, confluences of cultures inevitably continue; the question then becomes as to how balanced will these confluences be?

An educational model, encouraging such a direction of cultural balance in the future, is pivotal to this process. That is, implementing a culturally hybridized educational model – which broadens the scope of finding solutions to highly challenging issues in generations to come – is instrumental to a positive balance in the world’s future. This form of education would also allow indigenous cultures, not only to survive, but thrive within the larger global picture rather than becoming subsumed and made ‘redundant’ by dominant external forces. People who are assertive – as opposed to aggressive – in their ethnicity would ensure their voice would be heard and culturally undermining external forces would not become overwhelming. In fact, the dichotomy between external-internal forces would diminish substantially as there would be a discourse of mutually informing knowledge-cultures in, ideally, a balanced interrelationship. That is, one culture is not subsumed or diminished by another.

The key to achieving this direction is an understanding of the various cultural perceptions of self; that is, self in dynamic interconnection with the other – whether the other is human, environmental, and/or cosmological. The sociologists, Nandita Chaudhary and Sujata Sriram, outline this succinctly: “The idea of a dialogically created and socially sustained dynamic self, which supposedly transcends cultures, is more comforting to the oriental mindset.”⁵²⁹ That is, philosophically and socially, Eastern interaction with the world is more open to the other than in Western culture due to the East considering self as “dialogically created and socially sustained”, whereby in the West, self is seen more as a discrete isolated agent. In truth, the self is inextricably interconnected with the other. Hence, the utilization of an Eastern philosophic base for a transcultural educational model makes sense.

⁵²⁸ For example, Bali’s ancient system of rice terrace irrigation – still being implemented – creates micro-ecosystems to maintain health of soil and crop productivity as well as being a pivotal aspect of community and cosmological coherence. See J Stephen Lansing, 1987, ‘Balinese “Water Temples” and the Management of Irrigation’, *American Anthropologist* Vol 89, No 2, pp 326-341

⁵²⁹ 2001, p 380

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Tolerance and empathy are the keys to intercultural communication. That is, considering the other is tantamount to considering the self; cooperation as opposed to competition. As discussed in Chapter 4, the definition of self in Western thought is somewhat nebulous. Nevertheless, arguably it can be considered that the post-Modern self is, on the whole, individualistic, materialistic, and an agent unto itself; self and other stand in stark duality. This is the anthrocentric as opposed to the anthropocosmic self. Anthrocentric and anthropocosmic perspectives are applicable to both individuals and collectives.⁵³⁰ Collectively, a society or nation presents varying degrees of both an anthrocentric and anthropocosmic perspective, exhibiting traits which impact on the community – positively and negatively – whether the community is local, national and/or international as described in Figure 9.1:

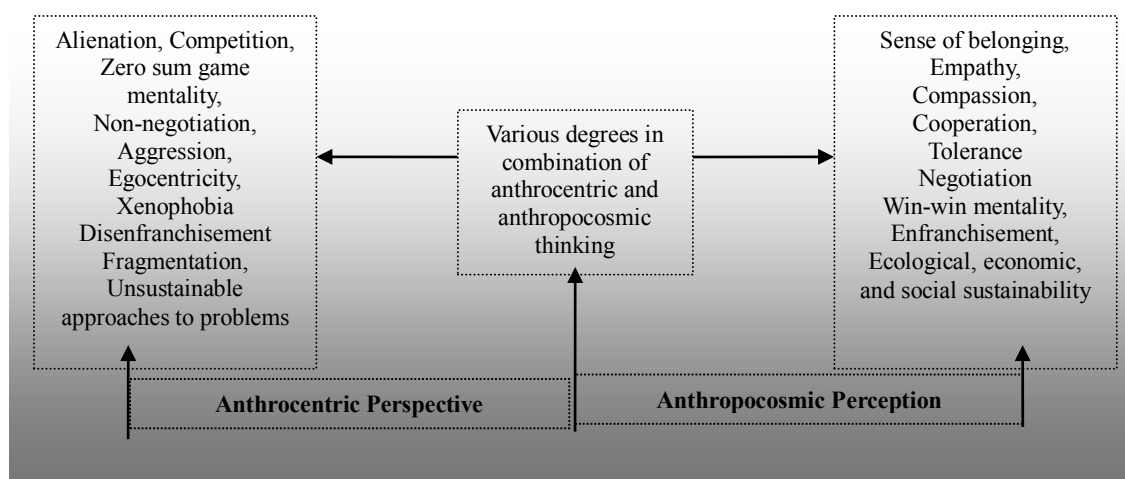


Figure 9.1 Anthrocentric ↔ Anthropocosmic Perspectives in Contrast⁵³¹

Between each end of the anthrocentric ↔ anthropocosmic spectrum above, lie varying degrees of the attributes indicative for each respectively. Individuals as well as a given collective will have complex combinations of anthrocentric and anthropocosmic elements – weighing, generally, more to one side than the other. In an ideal world, *all* people would be of an anthropocosmic disposition. Unfortunately, this is not the case and may never be. Yet, arguably, this is the ideal goal of education: to foster and enhance the anthropocosmic vision so all can live peaceably with a high quality of life due to sustainable practices. Ideally, the

⁵³⁰ See Chapter 5

⁵³¹ This diagram is amended from the original in Hale, 2013, p 54

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goal of education is to create a ‘critical mass’ of people in the future who think and behave with anthropocosmic intention so such a perspective becomes normative and elements of the anthropocentric perspective rare aberrations of human behavior.

Accordingly, having established above that an Eastern philosophy is best placed to offer the basis of an educational philosophy which considers the other as tantamount to the self, Confucian philosophy – with its strong communitarian values – further refines this choice. Confucian philosophy, with its secular, historical consistency and clearly defined and systematic understanding of the universal self – in interrelated social, physical, and metaphysical contexts⁵³² – provides a strong foundation for the building of such a transcultural educational model. The a-cultural universal self⁵³³ which Confucian philosophy describes – in core interpretations within various sub-schools – provides an open-ended basis for structuring and interlocking a curriculum which allows cultural flexibility.⁵³⁴ The self, arguably, is the key to knowledge acquisition and application; the self converts information to schematized knowledge. That is, the self – as the knowledge acquirer – contextualizes, finds commonalities, refutations or extensions of former knowledge systems, absorbs, consolidates, and applies in the act of converting disparate or seemingly irrelevant bytes of information into relevant, interconnected and cross-disciplinary knowledge.⁵³⁵ This includes not only pragmatic knowledge, but also knowledge of the various dimensions of self and other in evolution. This is true education of the self; the self which incorporates pragmatic wisdom⁵³⁶ by comprehending the interconnected – interpersonal, ecological, economic, and social – consequences of his or her intentions and actions.

In achieving this outcome, the Confucian idea of ‘self-cultivation’ – as the ultimate intention of the self⁵³⁷ – nourishes the whole self in all its aspects and therefore facilitates pragmatic wisdom. The self is understood as a phenomenon which has the potential to encompass the cosmos (the interrelated phenomenal world, both tangible and intangible) as opposed to a self which posits itself *solely* in the material realm. The expansive view of self,

⁵³² See Chapters 4 & 5

⁵³³ See Chapter 5

⁵³⁴ See sub-section 9.2.1 below

⁵³⁵ See Chapter 5, sub-section 5.4 & Chapter 6

⁵³⁶ Wisdom is defined here as being “informed by ... the fundamental pragmatics of life. These include knowledge and judgment about the meaning and conduct of life and the orchestration of human development toward excellence while attending jointly to personal and collective well-being ... Wisdom is generally considered the pinnacle of insight into the human condition and about the means and ends of a good life [in the Aristotelian sense].” Baltes and Staudinger, 2000, p 122

⁵³⁷ See Chapter 5, sub-section 5.4

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as described in Confucian thought, opens up greater possibilities in the aim of formal education and education's potential to accommodate many different perspectives that are viewed as equal in value.⁵³⁸ This would truly make a cosmopolitan world. The model of glocality informing this proposed model is described in Figure 9.2a and b below.

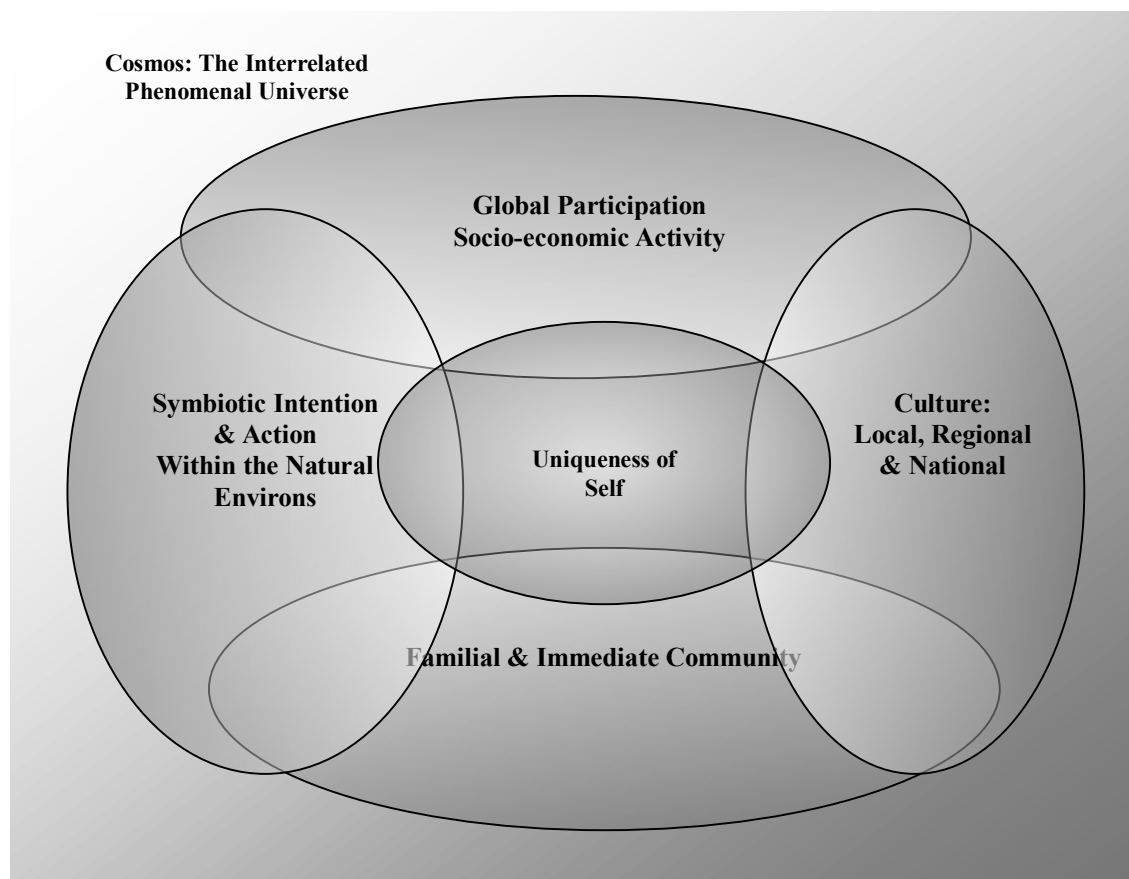


Figure 9.2a Model of Glocality⁵³⁹

The model is embedded in the cosmos – the interrelated phenomenal universe – with the uniqueness of self being constantly informed by immediate community, culture, the natural environs, and socio-economic activity in the global context. In turn, the outer environs is being formed and informed by the self in varying degrees as a bidirectional process. The uniqueness of self is pivotal in, not only absorbing and acquiring knowledge from these sources, but determining – regardless of degree – the direction and application of these sources. The uniqueness of the individual is maintained and enhanced by the simultaneous and continuous interplay of elements creating a highly dynamic – evolving or devolving –

⁵³⁸ See Chapter 5, sub-section 5.2 on *li* (propriety)

⁵³⁹ This diagram is amended from the original in Hale, 2013, p 56

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world both for self and other. As the self is described here in the globalized world, Figure 9.2b indicates the rich complexity of influences this dynamic creates as each person (as represented in the construct above and miniaturized below collectively) interconnects and interacts in their respective familial, social and cultural contexts within various communities and environments near and further afield, including cyberspace.

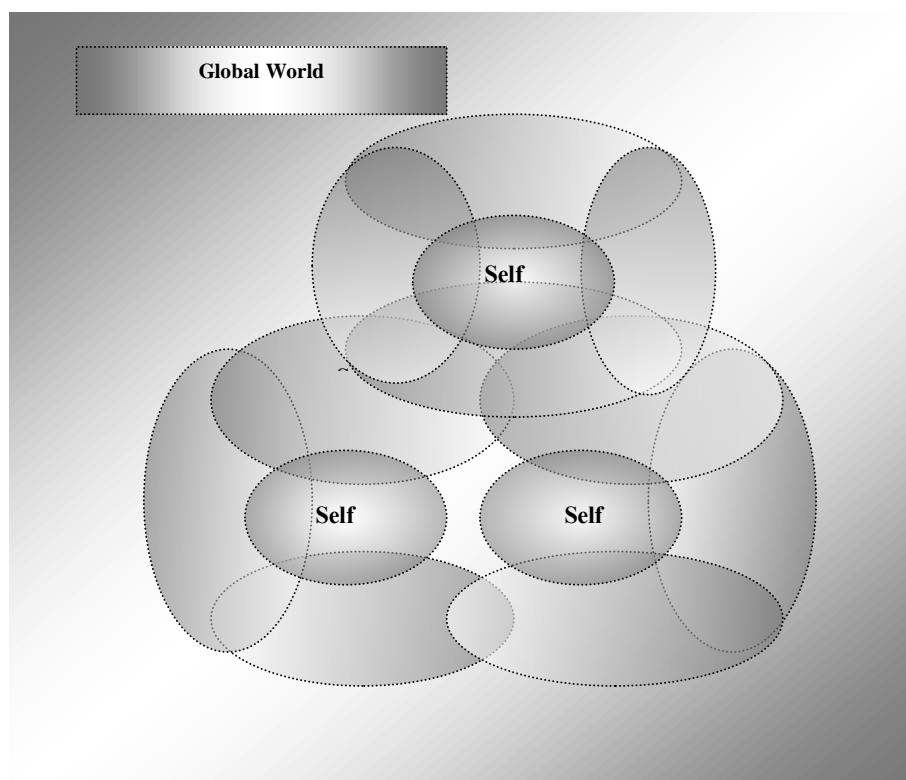


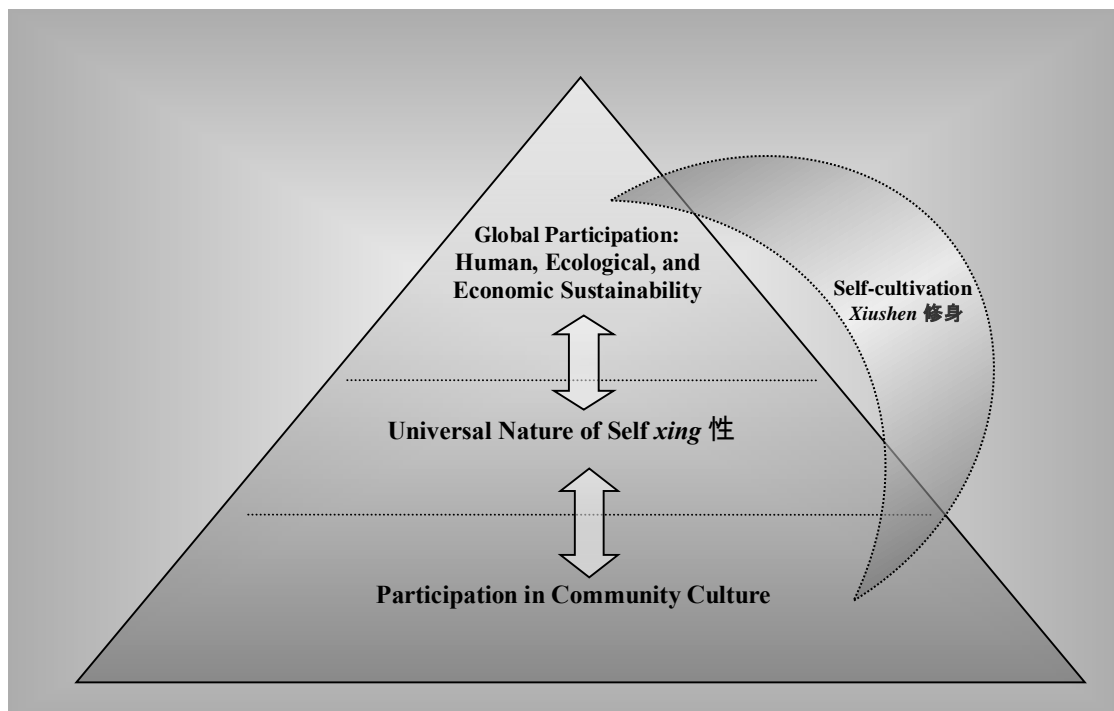
Figure 9.2b Influential, Mutually Informing Overlaps of Individuals as Unique Selves in the Global World

The various influences, direct and indirect, on another participating individual are wide-reaching. Although, for example, the spheres of ‘Familial and Local Community’ and ‘Culture: Local, Regional & National’ are mutually informing for the individual embedded directly in these worlds, there are indirect effects on people at a distance – both geographically and culturally distant – who are communicating with that individual. Information exchanged, differing *modus vivendi* in problem solving and approaches to issues, and ways of communication are all informing another to be absorbed into *their* former knowledge systems. These important life-long skills of learning and acquiring knowledge are first fostered in the formative schooling years.

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In educating the self to achieve harmony in dynamic with the elements described in this model of glocalization through formal schooling, there needs to be a flexible theory of education to overlay by which aims of a given curriculum can be established. That is, a flexible educational theory by which to pragmatically foster the uniqueness of self which forms and is informed by an intercultural glocalized world within curricula. Deweyan philosophy of education provides such a complementary dimension.⁵⁴⁰ Dewey's self in the act of learning is informed by the student's community and wider environs in direct correlation with self-cultivation (*xiushen* 修身) as depicted in Figure 9.3 below. That is, the realization of the universal nature of self (*xing* 性)⁵⁴¹ whereby empathy of the other is in constant consideration in intention and action.



**Figure 9.3 Mutually Informing Aspects of Evolving Personhood
A Confucian ↔ Deweyan Model**

⁵⁴⁰ See Chapters 6, 7 and 8

⁵⁴¹ See Chapter 5

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Essentially, the Deweyan self is socially constructed yet maintains a humanitarian and highly creative dimension;⁵⁴² the world is constantly being created and recreated through inter-dynamics of self with other. The complementary nature of Confucian and Deweyan thought balances the East-West aspect of the educational model suggested herein. Dewey's concept of self incorporates self and other in a non-dualistic framework, conjoining Confucian metaphysics and educational theory seamlessly as discussed in the body of this work. The ideal classroom methodology in fusing these two philosophic approaches to education for pragmatic outcomes is the Project – or Problem – Based Learning (PBL) approach.

9.2.1 Project – or Problem – Based Learning (PBL) as Curriculum: Realizing the Confucian-Deweyan Learning Model in the Classroom

Project Based Learning (PBL) was first developed in the late 1960s at McMaster University in Canada for medical education as a means to incorporate the overwhelming growth of technologies and knowledge in the field.⁵⁴³ Now expanded as an accepted interdisciplinary learning approach for every educational sector across all subject areas,⁵⁴⁴ essentially, PBL is a student centered methodology “empower[ing] learners to conduct research, integrate theory and practice, and apply knowledge and skills to develop a viable solution to a defined problem.”⁵⁴⁵ PBL methodology remains the learning tool of choice in the field of medicine where it began some 40 years ago and, accordingly, potentially provides valuable material for education research.

A meta-analysis of 20 years of PBL evaluation studies was conducted by Albanese and Mitchell (1993), and also by Vernon and Blake (1993), and concluded that a problem-based approach to instruction was equal to traditional approaches in terms of conventional tests of knowledge (i.e., scores on medical board examinations), and that students who studied using PBL exhibited better clinical problem-solving skills⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴² See Chapter 6

⁵⁴³ De Graaff & Kolmos, 2003; Savery, 2006

⁵⁴⁴ Savery, 2006, p 11

⁵⁴⁵ Savery, 2006, p 9

⁵⁴⁶ Savery, 2006, p 10

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There are, however, critical voices⁵⁴⁷ claiming: “Available evidence, although methodologically flawed, offers little support for the superiority of PBL over traditional curricula” and that “existing overviews of the field do not provide high quality evidence with which to provide robust answers to questions about the effectiveness of PBL”⁵⁴⁸ This is effectively due to the skills being assessed in some studies are exceptionally difficult to precisely evaluate both in the short and the long term and further research – with refinement of research methodologies – is needed.

Specifically this analysis of research studies [finding negligible difference between classroom methods] attempted to compare PBL with traditional approaches to discover if PBL increased performance in adapting to and participating in change; dealing with problems and making reasoned decisions in unfamiliar situations; reasoning critically and creatively; adopting a more universal or holistic approach; practicing empathy, appreciating the other person’s point of view; collaborating productively in groups or teams; and identifying one’s own strengths and weaknesses and undertaking appropriate remediation (self-directed learning).⁵⁴⁹

It is these attributes which PBL fosters over and beyond traditional teaching techniques and by anecdotal research, PBL is the learning technique preferred by students due to their higher level of engagement.⁵⁵⁰ Nevertheless, PBL has certainly proved effective in combination with other approaches to support learning as demonstrated in Shanghai⁵⁵¹ whereby schools have implemented PBL for some 10 years since date of writing. In the 2009 and 2012 OECD PISA outcomes, Shanghai is considered to have the highest performing students in the areas of reading, mathematics, and science.⁵⁵² “Critical to the success of the [PBL] approach is the selection of ill-structured problems (often interdisciplinary) and a tutor who guides the learning process and conducts a thorough debriefing at the conclusion of the learning experience.”⁵⁵³ Clearly, teacher development and training in student-centered learning, specifically PBL techniques, is crucial in successfully implementing PBL.

⁵⁴⁷ Savery, 2006

⁵⁴⁸ Sanson-Fisher and Lynagh, 2005, and Newman, 2003, respectively, as cited and referenced in Savery, 2006, pp 10-11

⁵⁴⁹ Savery, 2006, pp 10-11

⁵⁵⁰ Savery, 2006

⁵⁵¹ See Chapter 8

⁵⁵² Gilmore, F., 2004; Lai, Manhong & Lo, L.N.K., 2006; Law, 2007; Tan, C, 2012; Walker, A., Qian Haiyan, & Zhang Shuang, 2011; Wong, Jocelyn L.N., 2012; Zhang, Minxuan, 2012; Zhang, Minxuan & Kong, Linshuai, 2012; <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-overview.pdf> <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/46619703.pdf> [accessed 7th April 2014] & <http://www.oecd.org/countries/hongkongchina/46581016.pdf> [accessed 14th April, 2013] NB: PISA testing is undertaken every four years.

⁵⁵³ Savery, 2006, p 12

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Developing the skills for life-long learning is a crucial aspect to the PBL system in keeping abreast with constant changes and how those changes – both relative to knowledge, environments, and circumstances – impact on problem solving techniques in specific fields⁵⁵⁴. The future demands a great deal of flexibility, critical and creative thinking, and an individual's ability to not be overwhelmed by the growing influx of information and developments in his or her specific field and life in general. As the educationalist, W. W. Law states: "Many studies have shown how nation-states respond to the challenge of globalisation by reconfiguring their citizenship education curriculum into a multileveled framework comprising personal, social, local, national and global dimensions."⁵⁵⁵ Law's 2007 study of Shanghai students, teachers, and principals regarding the citizenship curriculum (as has been introduced in the Shanghai project mentioned above), found that "these four [global, national, local, and personal–social] dimensions important, and that complex relationships between these dimensions exist."⁵⁵⁶

In agreement with the model of glocalization described above, Law iterates that "in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world these dimensions intersect with, and are complementary to, one another. In a multileveled polity, different actors including global forces, nation-state, local government and individuals interact in an intertwined manner in the processes of remaking cities for modernisation and globalization."⁵⁵⁷ In fact, it is not only about "remaking cities" it is also, more extensively, about restoring, maintaining and enhancing natural environments, creating economic, energy, cultural, social, and food sustainability, and recreating – in perpetually shifting circumstances – harmonious connections in the four dimensions mentioned above: personal-social, local, national, and global. This is a constant co-creative process of which education is the key.

9.3 Education: Key to the Glocalized World Living in Harmony

Not only skills, but also perspectives are fostered in any educational process. Arguably, education – in conjunction with familial environs – forms and informs our

⁵⁵⁴ Kanter & Schreck, 2006; Rozenszayn & Assaraf, 2011

⁵⁵⁵ Law, 2007, p 18

⁵⁵⁶ Law, 2007, p 18

⁵⁵⁷ Law, 2007, p 18

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fundamental views of the world from an early age which can, accordingly, be potentially deconstructed and/or reconstructed by the individual as life progresses. Nevertheless, to develop educational directions *solely* from the point of departure whereby a vocational or professional life is the only outcome sought, is to overlook the values that are absorbed by the student during his/her schooling years, wittingly or unwittingly. Hence, the school environment, and the values realized pragmatically within that environment, creates a certain community culture of the school which the student takes into the world in its many facets. This, entwined with future professional directions, should be the conscious goal. All value-systems are only understood and adopted through example; positive values are only incorporated into an individual when those around him or her exhibit, in their intentions and behavior, those values. This is the realization of wisdom, pragmatic wisdom, the cultivation of modern sagehood. In the Confucian sense, the sage educates through example; not word, but deed.

Accordingly, both architects of curricula and teaching staff involved need to be highly conscious of the personal and social values being instilled in the student, not only theoretically, but by example in intention and actions. Therefore, curriculum does not stand alone as the only tool in values-learning, but all members of the school community must be critically self-reflective of their communications and interactions with other members of the school and wider community. This aspect of critical reflection should be coupled with, in the case of teaching staff, professional and methodological reflection. This fosters and enhances the praxis of true self-cultivation; future economic survival should not be the only goal for students. Deweyan concepts of the interrelationship between student-school-wider communities are crucial to this approach to positive values formation as mutually informing bodies. Educational philosophy, such as is explored herein, offers a strong beginning-point – a foundation stone – towards building a wholistic education for our future generation so they are enabled to live life harmoniously on every level. That is, it is the participants – those determining, living, creating, and recreating the superstructure – who, effectively, bring such educational achievements into reality.

Harmony is paramount to our well-being and that of the world. If we learn to harmoniously interact with another – regardless of ethnicity, beliefs, or any other form of difference – balanced glocalization is possible. In a world where current and future

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challenges impact us all, and the future, ultimately, is the hands of the next generation, a cross-cultural educational model which encourages and emphasizes tolerance, empathy, problem solving, and intercultural dialogue becomes the imperative. Common ground in finding solutions to economic, environmental and cultural sustainability becomes the only choice if the planet, and *all* her inhabitants, are to survive and flourish.

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University of Sydney

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Note on Chinese Author Names:

Traditionally, Chinese family names precede given names. Due to the current tendency of reversing this order for Western audiences*, and the fact that there are approximately only 500 family names, I have included the full given name when stated (as opposed to citing initials only) of Chinese authors in this in bibliography.

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