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Education and the Kyoto School of Philosophy

Pedagogy for Human Transformation

Springer

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Chapter 9
Ecological Imagination and Aims of Moral Education Through the Kyoto School and American Pragmatism

Steven Fesmire

Educational institutions must do a better job helping youths to see beyond simple relations of consumers to commodities if we are to respond to a global economic milieu in which expanding affluence sanctifies the innocence of consumers—an innocence purchased by ignorance of the social, environmental, and inter-species hazards posed by our 'business as usual' behaviors. Contemporary moral perception requires supplementation and expansion beyond the speck of self-interest around which most daily consumer concerns orbit. Toward this end, moral education for the globalizing twenty-first century must better enable youths to intelligently negotiate complex systems, from economic systems to ecosystems, in private choices and public policies.

Even amid rising international awareness of the unplanned systemic effects—such as global climate change—that radiate from our actions, it has ironically become increasingly difficult for ordinary citizens to give coherent and positive moral meaning to the relationships that twine us up with each other and with biotic systems.[1] Saito Naoko has argued that this lack of moral coherence reveals, at least for Japan and other techno-industrial societies, 'the state of nihilism in democracy and education'.[2] Kamata Yasuo adds that 'the narrowing of imagination, in order to bond one's interests with consumer goods, seems to be the general problem of our society'.[3]

[1] For American studies of this theme, see Bellah et al. (1996) and Putnam (2001).

[2] Personal communication (2007). This chapter follows Japanese naming conventions for all Japanese authors, with family name followed by given name. However, all Japanese names and words are given in Romanized characters.

[3] Personal communication (2007).

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Clearly an education focused exclusively on technological training and transmission of discrete knowledge will do little to ameliorate this problem.

In order to clarify and develop aims for moral education that contribute to moral coherence and are relevant to the globalized effects of our choices and policies, we need global philosophical dialogue that taps intellectual resources for reinvesting our social and natural interconnections while avoiding moralistic or authoritarian instruction that impedes human becoming and freezes growth. The Kyoto School of modern Japanese philosophy and the classical pragmatist tradition in American philosophy can help us to better perceive the relational networks in which our finite lives are embedded. In the first section of this chapter I explore relational thinking in the Kyoto School and American pragmatism to help develop, in the second section, a concept of 'ecological imagination'. In the final section I draw from the foregoing to clarify some appropriate aims for contemporary moral education.

Relational Thinking in the Kyoto School and American Pragmatism

Kyoto University is where modern Japanese philosophy began with Kitaro's Nishida (1870–1945) work reconstructing the tools and concepts of Western philosophy, such as the idea of pre-conceptual pure experience in William James (1842–1910), to contribute an Eastern standpoint to Western philosophy. Nishida built the philosophy department at Kyoto University, secured an appointment for Hajime Tanabe, launched the career of Tetsuro Watsuji, and attracted Keiji Nishitani among other students, continuing what became known as the Kyoto School (*Kyoto-gaku-ha*) tradition.

In *Philosophers of Nothingness*, James Heisig argues that the Kyoto School of Nishida, Tanabe, and Nishitani 'marks a watershed in intellectual history' (Heisig 2001, p. 3). They achieved, with varying degrees of success, a philosophy that falsifies the old essentialistic, Kipling-esque view that East is East and West is West (Heisig 2001, p. 8). These figures, Heisig argues, were much more than voices of the wisdom traditions of Japan. They wrote *for* and *about* the world, and they were among the first to bring a distinctively East Asian perspective to enlarging and challenging the philosophical tradition that began in ancient Greece (Heisig 2001, p. 8, 304). This is not to suggest that it is a mistake to speak inclusively of East Asia's wisdom traditions as philosophies, only that the Kyoto School thinkers were not using the term in this sense. For example, Nishitani wrote: 'When I say "philosophy," ... I first of all mean Western philosophy, since this is the most influential one. ... To think [the Buddhist] standpoint by way of philosophy is my basic concern' (Nishitani 1990 p. 1, 4).[4]

[4] Nishitani, far more than Nishida, explicitly understood his project in relation to Buddhist religion.

Nonetheless, among the minority of professional philosophers in the West who could name a twentieth century Japanese philosopher, it is common to conceive Kyoto School thinkers as relevant primarily to Japan Studies or Asian Studies. This is due in part to post-WWII blowback from their complicity in wartime nationalism,[5] but their complicity is sometimes cited as a red herring to avoid acknowledging that Western philosophers are more readily assumed to merit an audience beyond their mother tongue: imagine Heidegger introduced as a figure of mostly regional interest to scholars in Germanic Studies. Western traditions may thereby betray a more provincial countenance than is typically acknowledged, not solely due to the postmodern truism that we are limited by our culture's conceptual repertoire, but also because we have not fully taken in an emerging global philosophical culture that includes unfamiliar questions.

This highlights some difficulties for English-language writing on philosophy of education and the Kyoto School, particularly for a chapter such as this one penned by a relative newcomer to their corpus. There is a risk of orientalism, 'a kind of oriental spice to enliven certain questions on the menu' of Western philosophical traditions (Heisig 2001, p. 8). Or Kyoto School thinkers might be reduced to comparative points tethered to Western traditions that equally rebel against subject-object and theory-practice dualisms, such as phenomenology or pragmatism. If we only notice Kyoto School responses to questions currently asked in Western tongues, then we may miss what Heisig calls 'the particular constellation of their thinking' (Heisig 2001, p. 13). Acknowledging upfront that comparative projects can tend toward 'self-centered, monological, and appropriative modes of ... historical thinking' (Huang 2008, p. 156), it will nonetheless be helpful to begin, warily, with several strong affinities between the American pragmatist and Kyoto School traditions.

1. Both traditions strive to avoid fallacies of reification that privilege agents over situations, static forms over processes, substantive nouns over transitive verbs—what James dubbed the 'psychologist's fallacy', Dewey recognized as '*the* philosophical fallacy' (LW 1:27–29), and Whitehead labeled 'the fallacy of misplaced concreteness'. The term 'frog', 'pond', or 'tree' signifies not only an object one can point to at a simple location, but also 'an organized integration of complex relationships, activities, and events which incorporate a whole transactional field' (Alexander 1987, p. 109). Whitehead's 'fallacy of simple location' highlights our tendency to forget this horizonal field.

[5] On the Kyoto School and wartime nationalism, see Heisig and Maraldo (1994). In 'The Development of American Pragmatism', Dewey insightfully writes: 'In considering a system of philosophy in its relation to national factors it is necessary to keep in mind not only the aspects of life which are incorporated in the system, but also the aspects against which the system is a protest. There never was a philosopher who has merited the name for the simple reason that he glorified the tendencies and characteristics of his social environment; just as it is also true that there never has been a philosopher who has not seized upon certain aspects of the life of his time and idealized them' (LW 2:6).

This recognition that things exist only in relation and never wholly by themselves informed the Buddha's teaching that all things are conditioned and impermanent so that our thirst for fixity is the source of avoidable misery. The core Buddhist idea of dependent co-origination (Japanese: *engi*; Sanskrit: *pratitya-samutpada*) was developed in *The Heart Sutra* as the doctrine that form and emptiness (*śunyata*) are identical. In contrast with the Platonist, who conceives knowledge of form (*eidos*) as the disclosure of a thing's timeless, essential being, the Buddhist aims for immediate insight into the deep, irreducible networking of *this* or *that* concrete, transitory thing or event. The Kyoto School philosophers further developed *śunyata* into the notion of nothingness (*mu*), as in Nishida's phrase 'the field (or place) of nothingness' (*mu no basho*) and his concept of 'absolute nothingness' as the absence of any non-relational, transcendent grounding. Nishida famously contrasts the Western tendency to cognize form as timeless and placeless being with the Eastern tendency to immediately open up to *this form here* as emptiness:

> In the splendid development of Western culture in which form is regarded as being, and giving form as good, there is much to be respected and learned. But at the bottom of the Eastern culture that has nurtured our ancestors for thousands of years, isn't there something such that we see the form in the formless and hear the sound of the soundless? Our hearts long for these. (In Yuasa, 21)

Basho's most famous haiku is sufficient to clarify Nishida's point: Old pond/a frog jumps into/the sound of water. *Furu ike ya/kawazu tobikomu/mizu no oto* (Basho 2008, p. 59).[6] There is indeed a 'sound of the soundless', and it forms the auditory horizon of Basho's poem. Silence *forms* this haiku as much as the 'plop!' of the frog, and we have a greater felt awareness of the silence because it is not verbalized. That is, the form is not willfully imposed upon the material scene. The reader abstracts from the 'suchness' of the haiku's immediate visual and sonorous images, perhaps reflecting on the simplicity of truth, the transience of all awareness, or 'the sound of the soundless'. But the image suddenly, without commanding, recalls us from our construction of conceptual analyses and distinctions; there is just *this* concrete event, unbroken into subject and object, knower and known. There is no timeless being, nor any Western-style monistic extra-relational substratum. Nor are there separate existences. There is only this undifferentiated event that wraps itself around our awareness as the poem receptively invites us to enter. This is the East Asian standpoint that Nishida longs to contribute to the global philosophical dialogue. It is also an East Asian path to ecological wisdom.

Perhaps more than any other Western philosopher, James opens the way to mutually transformative East-West dialogue by reprioritizing perceptual experience over conceptual experience and thereby perceiving a relational world of 'pure experience'. As John McDermott observes of James's contributions to global

[6] I am grateful to Thomas Alexander for an unpublished essay titled 'Form, Emptiness, and Nature' that uses Basho's poem as a way to explain Eastern and Western conceptions of form.

culture: 'James's stress on relations rather than objects ... is congenial to cultures other than that of Western civilization; he espouses a congeniality far more in keeping with the contemporary reality of a truly global culture' (McDermott 2007, pp. 147–148).

2. Philosophers in each tradition articulate 'a "focus/field" or "foreground/background" model of immediate experience which is unified by a pervasive aesthetic quality with intrinsic value' (Odin 1996, p. 381). James calls the often-obscured and forgotten relational field the horizon, penumbra, or fringe, a key James-inspired concept in Nishida's *An Inquiry into the Good (Zen no kenkyū)* (Nishida 1990, p. 4ff). James and the Kyoto School philosophers concur that the lifeworld comes in a mosaic of directly experienced natural and social continuities, and *awareness* of this horizon could fund more meaningful, value-rich, and responsive lives.[7] This is why McDermott claims we are suffering in techno-industrial societies from 'spiritual anorexia', a moral, aesthetic, and intellectual starvation for relations that make life significant (McDermott 1986, pp. 128–131). James's therapy for healing relation-starvation, his radical empiricism, aims in part to respect experience through 'the re-instatement of the vague', i.e., attentiveness to the horizon (James 1950, p. 254).[8] Following James's lead, Dewey's 'denotative method' aims at an 'intellectual piety toward experience' that liberates us from our 'will to impose' (LW 1:392). Dewey's *Experience and Nature*, in the words of one commentator, consists of 400 pages teaching you to think out of the corner of your eye.[9]

   Individuals co-constitute the horizonal field. Social and natural relationships are popularly conceived as discovered, found, *given*. James, meanwhile, recognized that we create relationships as well as find them, and we thereby change reality. For James and Dewey we do not create relations from outside or above. Instead, our relational constructions are genuine possibilities of situations that we actualize through our interactions—perhaps most clearly through the arts, civilization's source of renewal and redirection.
3. Both traditions emphasize intrinsic and constitutive relations over extrinsic ones and hence criticize moral philosophies based on radical autonomy,[10] and they reject the Kantian transcendental subject—I emerge as a 'locus of activity' through interactions; I am not an antecedently existing entity.[11]

[7] A central thesis of William James's *Essays in Radical Empiricism* is that we also directly experience discontinuities, equally real, and we must be equally open to disjunctions as to conjunctions.

[8] Cf. James, 'The Thing and Its Relations', in *Essays in Radical Empiricism*.

[9] Thomas Alexander, personal communication.

[10] In constitutive relations, as Roger Ames explains, 'the dissolution of relationships is surgical, diminishing both parties to the degree that this particular relationship has been important to their continuing identity. ...Under such circumstances, people quite literally "separate", "change each other's minds", "break up", and "divorce"' (Ames 2007, p. 55).

[11] As Heisig explains it, for Nishida I am an event, a 'locus of activity' rather than a 'preexisting entity' (Heisig 2001, pp. 73–74).

An analogy to modern physics suggests an implication for ethics of this emphasis on constitutive relations. Einstein demonstrated in the general theory of relativity that gravity is the geometric pattern of spacetime in the presence of massive bodies, and these bodies are themselves not ultimate individuals independent of velocity and time. Contrary to the common-sense Newtonian view, gravity is not a 'force' that reaches out to attract distant objects. Spacetime is a relational *event*, not a substantive thing that contains separately existing bodies in motion. This suggests as a postulate, to closely paraphrase a central thesis of James's radical empiricism, that the parts of existence are held together by relations that are themselves parts of existence. There is no need for any 'extraneous ... connective support' (James 1912, p. xii). Partly under the direct influence of James's theory of relations, physicists later theorized that the same event structure holds for quantized bundles of matter and energy, a phenomenological level at which the physical universe appears to *be* statistical.[12]

Here is the 'moral': just as the 'force' of gravity is a function of relational interplay without any extraneous pressure, so no transcendent reference point is required as a connective support to bind moral agents to what is good, right, or virtuous—i.e., no divine commands, unchanging moral laws, transcendental principles, fixed teleology, or the like. The typical Western demand for a moral bedrock or ahistorical moral matrix conceals that moral life has always found guidance only from within a relational network. Unfortunately, much Western ethics continues its futile debate about the single right way to reason about morals in search of an illusory connective support, though thankfully there are positive signs that the stage of Western ethics is being redesigned.

Many Western philosophers are inclined to reject relational ethics as incompatible with transformative social criticism, due to the absence of bedrock principles. Christopher Ives, who co-translated Nishida's *An Inquiry into the Good*, criticizes what he calls Nishida's 'contemplative passivity ... which provides no impetus for social criticism or transformative activism' (Ives 1994, p. 25). 'The content of our will(s)', Nishida writes, 'is given only by the self-determination of history in actuality' (In Ives 1994, p. 25). Ives argues that this fusion of is and ought is incompatible with 'morality' because it lacks a metric of transcendent 'autonomous moral principles' (Ives 1994, p. 35). Dewey develops a third way that promotes social criticism while preserving relational ethics. For Dewey things are not ultimately, even from the widest possible view, what they ought to be. Nor is there any need for transcendental principles. To say 'the act ought to be done' differs only verbally from saying 'this act will meet the situation' (EW 3:108–109).

4. For both traditions (with James's individualism as a possible exception), individual and society emerge from each other; neither is derivative of the other. Bao Zhiming compares the Confucian model of moral agency with the model of free-willing autonomy that has dominated Western ethics. He writes: 'Ultimately, man is social, hence relational.... Man as an individual abstracted away from the social and political relationships he is born into never enters the picture of Confucius' ethical world (In Zhiming 1990, p. 207). This East-West contrast reveals itself in linguistic usage. For example, English urges speakers to identify causal agents when interpreting events, whereas it is common in East Asian languages to avoid attribution of casual agency (Becker 1991, p. 167).

A brief sketch of themes in Dewey and Tetsuro Watsuji, Japan's premier twentieth century ethicist and a philosopher in the general orbit of the Kyoto School, reveals rich possibilities for East-West dialogue on this theme of social selfhood. Watsuji and Dewey oppose individualistic philosophies that, Watsuji writes, 'remove (or abstract) the human being from social groups, and deal with him as a self-sustaining being' (Watsuji 1996, p. 13). In his *Rinrigaku*, Watsuji defines ethics as 'the pattern through which the communal existence of human beings is rendered possible. In other words, ethics consists of the laws of social existence' (Watsuji 1996, p. 11).[13]

Dewey shares the communal and non-dualistic orientation of Watsuji's ethics, in which identity is inextricably linked to place and temporality. Both are nuanced observers of the mutualism between concrete particulars and spatio-temporal relational horizons. They each probe the aesthetics of moral understanding, recognize that there is freedom in structure, and steer between the Scylla of nihilistic drift and the Charybdis of inflexibility. And each reconstructs *res* as situational, so that ethical inquiry begins in problematic situations. 'The locus of ethical problems', Watsuji asserts, 'lies not in the consciousness of the isolated individual, but precisely in the in-betweeness of person and person (*Hito to hito to no aida*)' (Watsuji 1996, p. 10).[14]

5. In *Neglected Themes & Hidden Variations*, Bret Davis highlights another important affinity between the Kyoto School and American pragmatism: anti-zealotry and a rejection of absolute moral bedrocks. Davis discusses the rich, pragmatic anti-zealotry of Ueda Shizutera's Nishida-influenced interpretation of Zen. Davis explains Ueda: 'The zealous moralist who does not pass through this radical experience of letting go [of one's cherished distinctions between good and evil] would remain driven by the three poisons of desirous attachment to whatever has been posited as categorically good, hate of whatever has been posited as categorically bad, and delusion with respect to' the possibility of an epistemological bedrock for passing absolutistic ethical judgments (Davis 2008, pp. 242–243). Nishida translator Christopher Ives adds that for Zen ethical conceptions are 'pragmatically useful distinctions rather than unchanging, metaphysically grounded essences' (Davis 2008, p. 243). No matter how socially concerned or eco-friendly she may be, the moral zealot, fearful of moral

[12] On the influence of James's radical empiricism on Niels Bohr, see Snyder (1994).

[13] Revealingly, *Habits of the Heart* author Robert Bellah published in the 1960s 'the first essay about Watsuji in a Western language'. William LeFleur, forward to Watsuji (1996, p. viii).

[14] *Hito to hito to no aida*. In *Fūdo*, Watsuji makes clear that his ethics extends to the in-betweeness of persons and nature, offering at least implicitly a resource for environmental ethics. Odin (1996, p. 397) defends this position.

ambiguity, clings to received moral codes as fixed compass points and becomes, to use a well-worn comment by Mark Twain, good 'in the worst sense of the word'.

6. Nishimura Takuo's chapter (Chap. 6, this volume) highlights the role of the aesthetic in Kyoto School theories of human transformation (education), and indeed the aesthetic is central to Nishida's and Watsuji's perspectives. Dialogue with the American philosophical tradition may be helpful for drawing out some pedagogical implications. For example, university professors East and West are aware that students too often conceive education as something that orbits the strong gravity of their self-interest. Yet the exemplary student sympathetically approaches fields of knowledge in the same way they engage other people and nature: not simply as material for their own egoistic preferences, but as immersion in a current wider and deeper than themselves. Most of the beauty and vitality of liberal learning reveals itself only after such sympathy, while concealing itself before it. The student's aesthetic receptiveness, indeed her care, is the necessary ingredient for her learning. Whatever learning takes place without what early American philosopher Jonathan Edwards would call this 'sense of heart' is pale and anemic by comparison.

There are also deep tonal and conceptual differences between the Kyoto School and classical pragmatism, differences as dramatic as that between classical pragmatism and the 'pragmatism' of Realpolitik. For example, Watsuji's *Rinrigaku* challenges any form of universalizing in moral philosophy, and Dewey's own conception of a universal human nature—which underlies his moral, educational, social, and political thought—warrants careful rethinking in light of Watsuji's critique. Watsuji, meanwhile, retains controversial elements of feudal communitarianism by subordinating individuals to the emperor as the symbol of communal life. The state, according to his famous student Yuasa Yasuo, thus becomes for Watsuji 'the ultimate standard of value'.[15] Meanwhile, Dewey conceives a democratic way of life as 'the way' of communal existence and prioritizes communicative interaction that secures 'flexible readjustment' of social institutions.[16] Watsuji's ethical and political theories tend toward centralization and unification, while Dewey's are pluralistic and democratically de-centralized.[17]

The individualism of James, inspired in part by Emerson, is more distinctively American, while the annihilated ego of Nishida is more distinctively East Asian.

[15] Yuasa Yasuo, Appendix to Watsuji (1996, p. 315).

[16] See Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, Chapter 7.

[17] This is not to suggest that Dewey's political stances were unproblematic. Biographically, both Dewey and Watsuji at least tacitly supported disastrous wars for the sake of a national ideal: America making the world safe for democracy (WWI, for Dewey), and Japan liberating Asia from Western colonial hegemony (WWII, for Watsuji). Dewey, while sharing none of the three myths he found prevalent in Japanese culture during his 1920 visit (see 'Liberalism in Japan', MW 11:156–73), believed in the late 1930s that American culture was unique in its liberation from European bickering, and at that time he urged isolationism on this basis. Watsuji, meanwhile, upheld the uniqueness of the Imperial system that he believed essential to unify and preserve Japan's traditional culture. The three Japanese myths Dewey criticized were (1) 'racial homogeneity', (2) 'continuity of the imperial dynasty', and (3) indebtedness to 'the original virtues of the divine founders and to those of their divine descendents' (MW 11:172).

This is not limited to East-West comparisons. American environmental philosopher J. Baird Callicott expresses a view common among some 'ecocentric' philosophers when he frames relational fields as ontologically 'more real' than focal individuals. Dewey and James would recoil, as this can underemphasize the creative contribution of individuals and downplay the need for a full, felt response to the pulse of individual organisms. Tanabe, for example, exhibits this tendency in his nationalistic writings of the late 1930s and early 1940s, though Tanabe's view differs from Western ontologizing in that he conceives 'the true self as a goal to be striven for rather than as a reality to be awakened to' (Heisig, 168). Tanabe writes:

> The act of self-denial in which individuals sacrifice themselves for the sake of the nation turns out to be an affirmation of existence. Because the nation to which the individual has been sacrificed bears within itself the source of life of the individual, it is not merely a matter of sacrificing oneself for the other. Quite the contrary, *it is a restoration of the self to the true self.* (In Heisig, p. 169)

In *Philosophy as Metanoetics*, Tanabe (1986) writes in what Heisig calls a 'spirit of repentance' for such excesses (Heisig 2001, p. 169). In 'Time and Individuality', Dewey argues that if relegation of the individual is widespread, a culture's developmental potential will go unrealized (LW 14:98–114). Nonetheless, Dewey urged a point that parallels Tanabe: social habits are temporally antecedent to individual habits (see MW 14). The relational field in which we live is temporally prior to individuation, and hence, as Yuasa observes, 'the modern European idea of seeing the world from the standpoint of self-consciousness' is deeply flawed (Yuasa 1987, p. 23). A language of 'betweeness' is an appropriate antidote to what Raymond Boisvert calls Europe's cephalocentrism. But Dewey did not value the phenomenological level of encompassing wholes *over* that of the particular, as Tanabe did in his wartime writings. Relations between things, James urges, are *as* real as, not *more* real than, the individuals they reflexively constitute. This again parallels modern physics: to give a physical description of light, James Clerk Maxwell recognized in the 1860s that electromagnetic fields *between* particles are as real as, not more real than, the particles.

In addition to the contrast between Dewey's democratic ideal and Tanabe's and Nishitani's imperialism, the Kyoto School thinkers are more concerned with ideals of religious self-awareness than with ideals to guide practical conduct. They exhibit a 'passion for inwardness', according to Tanabe's leading disciple Takeuchi Yoshinori (In Heisig 2001, p. 14). The Kyoto School's divorce of 'religious consciousness from social conscience' (Heisig 2001, p. 15), religion from morality, contrasts sharply with Dewey's notion in *A Common Faith* of religious experience as a psychological adjustment directed toward 'the doings and sufferings of the continuous human community in which we are a link' (LW 9:57).

Ecological Imagination

Like the terms space, time, and mass to the modern physicist, the terms individual and system signify to the ecologist things and the relationships that synergistically constitute them rather than ultimate existences. Kyoto School and classical pragmatist

philosophers were among those skilled in a form of imaginative inquiry discussed today as ecological, and many of the metaphors of interconnectedness used in the ecologies today are found scattered throughout their works. But they seldom framed relational connections explicitly in terms of ecosystems, and it is historically careless to refer to all thinking about interrelatedness as ecological.

Conditions demand that we extend perception deeper into the socio-cultural, natural, and interpersonal relationships in which we are embedded. Ecological literacy has become essential to this. But even the most thorough knowledge about complex systems will overwhelm rather than enhance moral intelligence if that knowledge is not framed by *imagination*—here understood not as a faculty but as a function—in a way that relates one's individual biography to one's encompassing environment and history. In Wallace Stegner's words in *Angle of Repose*, imagination is our means for shaping definite contours, lines, and forms 'out of the fog of consequences' that is our future.

Ecological thinking, at least as it enters into our deliberations about private choices and public policies, is a function of this sort of imagination. Before turning to a discussion of ecological imagination, it is essential to better understand (or at least to stipulate) what imagination *is* and *does*, particularly given dramatic variability among Western theories of imagination.

What *is* imagination from a cognitive standpoint? Cognitive scientists studying the neural synaptic connections we call imagination define it helpfully as a form of 'mental simulation' shaped by our embodied interactions with the social and physical world and structured by projective mental habits like metaphors, images, semantic frames, symbols, and narratives (Lakoff 2008, p. 241).[18] Mental simulation is the most accurate technical description of imagination from a cognitive standpoint because neuroscience reveals that imaginative cognitive processes piggyback on the same neural connections involved in physical interactions. There is no localized 'imaginative' region of the brain, nor any distinct faculty of imagination. Seeing a birch tree activates the same neural region as dreaming about it, walking on Nishida's namesake 'Philosopher's Path' in Kyoto activates the same neural region as rehearsing or remembering the walk.[19] Imagining a landscape simulates a physical encounter and strengthens synaptic connections in the same neural region that would be involved in a direct sensorial encounter (see Lakoff 2008, pp. 240–241).

Because imaginative experience is of the same stuff as physical interactions, the way imaginative habits develop along definite lines through our embodied interactions is no more (or less) mysterious than any other neural function. However, this does not imply that the way imaginative experience simulates sensorial encounters is everywhere the same or that the capacity for fine-grained mental simulation is simply a universal 'given' rather than an individual achievement. Kyoto School thinkers offer a clue beyond this tendency to universalize human transformation. In work on

[18] For a bibliography of research on imagination in cognitive science, see Lakoff and Johnson (1998) and Johnson (2007).

[19] For a general survey on the embodied basis of meaning, see Gibbs (2005).

mental-physical unity, they argue that body-mind integration is as much or more an achievement as an established fact. For example, Thomas Kasulis observes of Yuasa Yasuo's influential book *The Body*: 'Eastern philosophies generally treat mind-body unity as an *achievement*, rather than an essential [ontological] relation' (In Yuasa 1987, p. 1). Western philosophers neglect the meditative achievements of exemplary individuals and assume, Kasulis continues, 'that the connection between the mind and body must be constant (not developed) and universal (not variable among different people). ... [T]he emphasis falls on the universal human condition instead off on the perfected state' (In Yuasa 1987, p. 3). Such insights help to steer theories of imagination away from Piaget-style universal developmental schemes, in accord with critical concerns voiced by the INPE panelists in this volume.

What does imagination *do*? Despite eulogizing of imagination by Adam Smith and David Hume, Enlightenment faculty psychology followed the lead of Plato's low estimation of imagination in the *Republic* and *Ion*. Faculty psychology is responsible for imagination's being mostly ignored even by those who urge that moral theories must be psychologically plausible. It is conceived as a limited capacity prone to frivolous fantasy and opposed to reason, and hence of little relevance to practical issues. So it is relegated to a subsidiary role in cognitive life or, transfigured by Romanticism, admired on a pedestal. In John Searle's philosophy of mind, our flickering imaginations are thought at best merely to form a pre-intentional 'background' for thought.[20]

John Dewey's work offers a powerful resource for framing a theory of imagination that is compatible both with contemporary cognitive research and with Kyoto School insights on human becoming. Perhaps Dewey should have jettisoned the term imagination as hopelessly entangled in Enlightenment mistakes, but he chose instead to reconstruct its meaning to accord with a functional psychology. More than a capacity to reproduce mental images, Dewey highlights imagination's active and constitutive role in cognitive life. 'Only imaginative vision', Dewey urges in *Art as Experience*, 'elicits the possibilities that are interwoven within the texture of the actual' (LW 10:348). Only through imagination do we see actual conditions in light of what is possible, so it is fundamental to all genuine thinking—scientific, aesthetic, or moral. To think involves more than data storage and retrieval. Dewey observes: 'To fill our heads like a scrapbook, with this and that item as a finished and done-for thing, is not to think. It is to turn ourselves into a piece of registering apparatus. To consider the bearing of the occurrence upon what may be, but is not yet, is to think' (MW 9:153).

Imagination is essential to the emergence of meaning, a necessary condition for which is to note relationships between things. For example, many migratory songbirds I enjoy in summer over a cup of coffee in my home state of Vermont are

[20] See Searle (1983, ch. 5), 'The Background'. For a critique of Searle's account of imagination, see Johnson (1987, pp. 178–191).

declining in numbers in part because trees in their winter nesting grounds in Central America are bulldozed to plant coffee plantations. This awareness amplifies the meaning of my cup of coffee. 'To grasp the meaning of a thing, an event, or a situation', Dewey notes in *How We Think*, 'is to see it in its relations to other things' (LW 8:225). Or as Mark Johnson recently put it, 'The meaning of something is its relations, actual or potential, to other qualities, things, events, and experiences' (Johnson 2007, p. 265). Meaning is amplified as new connections and relationships are identified and discriminated. Such meaning enables intelligent and inclusive foresight of the consequences of alternative choices and policies.

All active intellectual life is imaginative, according to Dewey, *to the degree* that it 'supplements and deepens observation' by affording 'clear insight into the remote, the absent, the obscure' (LW 8:251). Imaginative reflection of this sort is as ordinary for humans as nest-building is for birds. Never placeless or timeless, imagination, amplified by art and science, extends perception deep into the place (*basho*, for Nishida) and time in which we live. Indeed a geographical coordinate in space becomes an inhabited place, rich in stories, only through the mediation of imagination. This fundamental role for imagination in reflective life extends beyond the conventional dualism, echoed uncritically by Stuart Hampshire in *Innocence and Experience*, that imagination 'leaps and swerves' while rational intellect advances 'by rule-guided steps' (Hampshire 1989, p. 126).

Before exploring imagination in an ecological context, consider the nature and moral import of our more general imaginative 'capacity to foresee and forestall'.[21] In *Human Nature and Conduct* and other writings by Dewey on the psychology of moral reflection, deliberation is (descriptively) an indirect mode of action that substitutes for direct action by placing before us 'objects which are not directly or sensibly present, so that we may then react directly to these objects, ... precisely as we would to the same objects if they were physically present' (MW 14:139). There is an obvious evolutionary benefit of a neural adaptation that enables experimental simulation: 'An act tried out in imagination is not final or fatal. It is retrievable' (MW 14:132–133). By means of such simulations, actual and potential relations (including past lessons and as-yet-unrealized potentialities) 'come home to us and have power to stir us' (LW 9:30). When alternatives for dealing with problematic situations contend with one another as we forecast the consequences of acting on them, the ensuing suspense sustains deliberation (LW 8:200). Such deliberation, Dewey says, is 'a kind of dramatic rehearsal' in imagination (see Fesmire 2003).[22]

In sum, dramatic rehearsal is a capacity for crystallizing possibilities for thinking and acting and transforming them into directive hypotheses. Whatever else may or should be involved in moral deliberation, an adequate theory of moral reflection and by implication of moral education must at least be compatible with

[21] For a book-length treatment of Dewey's theory of imagination in a contemporary context, see Fesmire (2003).

[22] Dramatic rehearsal is one phase or function of the deliberative process. But this function is so essential for Dewey that it lends its name to the whole process.

these psychological operations. Unfortunately, philosophers working on moral education have given too little attention to imagination. As Ronald Hepburn cautions, 'When a set of human experiences is ignored in a theory relevant to them, they tend to be rendered less readily available as experiences. ... the experiences are felt ... as off-the-map; and, since off the map, seldom visited' (Hepburn 2004, p. 45).

What is *ecological* imagination?[23] Because human choices and policies are themselves part of a transactional field of complex relationships and events, deliberation will tend toward irresponsibility—in the rich sense of a failure to perceive and respond, not in the more limited Western sense of a failure to be accountable (see Ames 2007)—whenever imagination fails to shuttle back and forth between things and their relations. Or more to the point, we tend toward irresponsibility whenever our imaginative rehearsals fail to shuttle between things and the contextual relationships that are relevant to intelligently mediating the situation at hand.

Environmental examples in the U.S. abound—the soda (corn syrup) or cheese (corn-fed cows) hitched to the eutrophied 'dead zone' in the Gulf of Mexico, the iceberg lettuce linked to California's Imperial Valley border farms drawing off the last trickles of the Colorado River, the light switch twined up with West Virginia's coal industry. The sort of imaginative stretching required by these examples holds relationships before attention as we reflect. It confers significance upon otherwise mechanical and surficial experiences, and it opens the way for critical assessment and redirection of individual and institutional practices.

It is a general truth that we *cannot* respond to what we do not perceive, and we *will* not respond to perceptions unless they are immediately felt. This suggests an aesthetic dimension to environmental ethics and concomitantly to environmentally responsive moral education. In the vocabulary of Dewey's aesthetic theory, all active *artistry* in life (scientific, aesthetic, or moral) is funded by *aesthetic* perceptiveness. Or in Nishida's own artistic-aesthetic vocabulary of 'active intuition' (his mature development of the Jamesian concept of 'pure experience'[24]) both moral action and artistic creativity (as examples of *poiesis*), are simultaneously active and intuitive, transformative and receptive. Along these lines, by situating us within relational fields of dizzying complexity, the ecologies dilate aesthetic perception and open us to enjoyment and bereavement on a wider scale. These relationships are immediately felt as we simulate them in imagination, and the resulting qualitative field marks an experience with its distinctive character.

This immediately felt qualitative field gives an experience its identity and meaning and funds concerted moral action—'concerted' because our wisest doings and

[23] The adjective ecological is preferred here because, like the Japanese word kankyo, 'environmental' dualistically connotes external surroundings. The term ecological accommodates the concept of a live creature stretching to notice the very relationships that synergistically constitute it.

[24] In 1936, Nishida wrote in the Preface to an edition of *An Inquiry into the Good*: 'That which I called in the present book the world of direct or pure experience I have now come to think of as the world of historical reality. The world of action-intuition—the world of *poiesis*—is none other than the world of pure experience' (Nishida 1990, p. xxxiii).

undergoings are seldom the works of isolated individuals. As Watsuji implies of the Japanese tradition of *renga* 'linked' poetry and we may observe of jazz improvisation, we must respond empathetically to each other instead of imposing insular designs, and we must rigorously imagine how others will respond to our actions (see Fesmire 2003). Watsuji explains: '[I]f there are self-centered persons in the company, a certain "distortion" will be felt and group spirit itself will not be produced. When there are people, who, lacking individuality, are influenced only by others' suggestions, a certain "lack of power" will be felt, and a creative enthusiasm will not appear'. We must, says Watsuji, attain to Nothingness while remaining fully individual if we are to wisely negotiate relational networks (In Carter 2004, p. 10).

A culture's understanding of ecosystems is an in-road for revealing how they conceive their place in a matrix of relations.[25] Empirical tools from cognitive science can disclose some of the rich—albeit often incoherent—ways we conceive natural systems. What we learn is that the contours and horizon of ecological imagination are marked out by metaphors.[26] There are many conventional metaphors by which English-speakers make sense of ecosystemic relationships (e.g., web, network, community, superorganism, economic system) and trophic relations (e.g., energy flows, chains/links, pyramids). Image-schematic structures such as containment, verticality, force, balance, and the like also play a vital role. These metaphors structure the logic of much of the debate clustering around Eastern and Western folk metaphysical models: what Roger Ames contrasts as the 'object ontology' implicit in the folk metaphysics of most modern Western cultures (compatible with a mechanistic, linear-sequential, and reductive philosophy) and the 'field ontology' of Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist thinking (see Ames 2007).

An adequate account of ecological imagination would need to build a case for three interrelated theses. Space will not permit full development, but I list the theses here in order to clarify terminology. (1) Moral deliberation is fundamentally imaginative in the sense that it involves mental simulations shaped in part by metaphors and related cognitive structures. (2) One practical role of imagination is that it enables our moral deliberations to zoom in on things, events, concepts, and persons without losing sight of their relational context—a child in relation to family, a sunrise in relation to the solar system, a statement in relation to its interpersonal, sociocultural, or literary context. Many remediable moral failures stem from mal-development of our capacity for double-barreled focus on things and their

[25] Ecology has become more than the science of the relationships between organisms and their environments. The meaning far exceeds what Ernst Haeckel had in mind when he coined the word ecology in 1866 (a word that had been casually tossed off by Thoreau earlier) or Arthur Tansley when he coined the word ecosystem in 1935 (to substitute quantifiable energy fields for fuzzy, quasi-mystical eulogies to universal connectedness (see Callicott 1989).

[26] On Lakoff and Johnson's (1998) view, metaphors are not limited to elliptical similes for illustrating concepts that, for sharper minds, could be replaced with a precise literal rendering. Our sense of who we are, how we understand situations, how we relate to others and to nonhuman nature, and what we see as possible courses of action and mediation all depend significantly on the stable metaphors and models we inherit, share, and live by.

relations. (3) This imaginative capacity is particularly important for dealing with complex social and natural systems, from economic systems to ecosystems. Our deliberations enlist imagination of a specifically ecological sort when the metaphors we use to make sense of ecosystemic relations—some of recent origin and some millennia old—shape our mental simulations. This is ecological imagination. This conceptual approach to ecological imagination differs from the Kyoto School emphasis on immediate perception and insight. Still, the shaping of ecological imagination by blended metaphors is a valuable resource for any grappling with complex systems, and it is indispensable for direct dealings with ecosystems.

How tight, slack, localized, or stable physical relationships may be is an empirical issue. Superempirical speculation about butterflies in China very likely exaggerates the case as much as atomism minimizes it. Settling these empirical issues is, happily, beyond the scope of this chapter. Nonetheless, a theory of ecological imagination in moral education is as relevant to James Lovelock-style biosphere-as-superorganism theorists as to his detractors, who are as at ease with disjunctions between things as with conjunctions.

Aims of Ecologically Responsive Moral Education

An adequate account of the aims of moral education must try to incorporate the best interdisciplinary and cross-cultural reflections from the sciences and humanities on the sort of people we are becoming and the world that we are helping to make. Such reflection must compensate for at least four mistakes in contemporary moral education, taking 'moral education' here to include formal and informal efforts to selectively encourage moral dispositions.

1. Moral education is confused with moralistic lessons. This style of instruction is inherently undemocratic, ethically misguided, and pedagogically bankrupt. It does not take human or social transformation seriously, but seeks only to perpetuate established mores.
2. Western education is too often conceived narrowly as content-mastery in a formal classroom while the classroom is conceived as a value-free space, aside from rudimentary manners. Moral education, in that case, is at best an oxymoron, at worst a bad idea. These narrow conceptions would nullify the social values of liberal education, where the explicit aim is to liberate human energies from enslavement to mechanized habits toward lives of critical inquiry, social responsiveness, emotional engagement, and artful consummations.
3. Most Western cultures conceive moral maturation primarily as progressive sophistication in applying moral rules and principles, either heteronomously or autonomously conceived. This ignores cultivation of imagination. As a result, much work in philosophical ethics is too cut-and-dried to mediate the relational muddles of moral life.

4. The fourth mistake is that citizens of techno-industrial societies tend to see themselves in detachment instead of in relation. We must aim to awaken dormant imaginative capacities in youths to be more context-responsive, yet *not* simply to minimize jostling of societal norms, meet group expectations, or maximize interpersonal comfort.

I claimed at the outset that moral education should aim to help youths intelligently negotiate complex natural and social systems. This may sound like a simple plea for including ecological literacy as a curricular aim. That plea is warranted, but it lacks philosophical import. The foregoing reflections on American pragmatism and the Kyoto School support several interrelated, general inferences about some appropriate experimental aims to guide moral education toward ecological responsibility.[27]

1. There is rarely a single right thing to do. Moral education should help to cultivate tolerance for ambiguity.
2. We can rarely if ever do a single thing. Insofar as actions affect any complex system, wise moral deliberations forecast overlapping shock waves that will spread invisibly and irrevocably. For example, although above-ground we see trees as individuals, they form network communities in which individuals are root-grafted to each other and share energy through mycorrhizal fungi, so logging often kills non-targeted trees. Due to relational continuities of this sort, as Garrett Hardin observes, no action has a singular result.

   In a chapter on 'The Standpoint of *Śunyata*' in *Religion and Nothingness*, Nishitani uses this image of a tree root as a metaphor for conceiving inter-being from the standpoint of nothingness: 'To say that *a thing is not itself* means that, while continuing to be itself, it is in the home-ground of everything else. Figuratively speaking, its roots reach across into the ground of all other things and help to hold them up and keep them standing. It serves as a constitutive element of their being' (Nishitani 1982, p. 149). Any focal object is simultaneously, David Jardine observes, 'on the periphery of ... others, proximal to some, distant to others' (Jardine 1998, p. 71). From the standpoint of classical pragmatism, a vague sort of religious awareness of *general* interconnectedness is insufficient on its own. We must attend to *specific* relationships that are relevant to our dramatic rehearsals if we are to practically mediate troubled situations. The consequences of past decisions should be our guide. 'With James', McDermott observes, 'we hold that all events, all decisions are pregnant with connections, many of which show themselves only subsequent to the human plan enacted' (McDermott 2007, p. 152). Moral education should aim to cultivate the habit of forecasting (in imagination) the way *this* act *here* will tug at proximal and distant others.
3. The prototypical Western—and particularly American—concept of harm as immediate, localized, intentional, and directed toward individuals is out of step

[27] 'Aims' are here understood in Dewey's sense in *Democracy and Education*: 'The educational process has no end beyond itself; it is its own end; the educational process is one of continual reorganizing, reconstructing, transforming' (MW 9:54).

with the actual conditions of our lives in complex systems. The concomitant concept of responsibility for these harms is likewise inadequate. Take global climate change as an example. We are increasingly aware that the simple acts of heating or cooling a home, fueling a car, or turning on a light switch cause harm. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and international relief organizations project that the harm will be worst for future generations, impoverished citizens of developing nations, poor and disenfranchised citizens of industrialized nations, other species, and non-human nature more generally. That is, the greatest harm caused by local greenhouse gas emissions is long-term, widely distributed, unintentional, and not directed toward individuals.[28] Yet the harm is real, we are causing it, so moral education should help youths to perceive and respond to a wider range of harms.

In tandem with expanding the perception of harm, moral education should help youths understand that the causes of harms are frequently systemic rather than individual. Yet it is easier to think atomistically than systemically. With more refined relational imaginations, the coming generation will be better equipped to make individual choices and systemic policies to squeeze through the social and ecological bottlenecks they are inheriting.

4. Moral principles and rules must be analyzed and justified without recourse to the Enlightenment assumption of an autonomous, detached, dispassionate individual consciousness that reduces ethical decision-making to applying rational principles to concrete cases. Of course we need all the help we can get to ameliorate troubling circumstances, and principles and rules can help us to feel and think our way through tangles of our relational web. Moral education should help youths to become aware of themselves in relation, from the standpoint of being situated or placed. This should be the primary standpoint rather than standpoints steeped in Platonic conceptions of form as timeless being, such as divine commands, universal laws of reason, timeless moral intuitions, natural laws, or universal maxims.

   The foremost need in moral life is for what Ames, in an essay on Chinese philosophical themes, calls 'relational virtuosity'. Youths should also learn to use and develop principles and rules, which in Confucian-influenced societies of East Asia may compensate for the partiality exhibited in family or group-based relational moralities. Greater skill in principled deliberation could also potentially help to compensate for anthropocentric tendencies in Confucianism.[29] But these principles should be conceived as tools to be evaluated by the work they do, not as ahistorical, a-contextual, and placeless verities. Contrary to centuries of Western moral philosophy, principles and procedures cannot on their own tell us what we should do. They make people *confident* that that they are acting within precise moral limits, but no matter how much we 'magnify the signs of rigorous thought and rigid demonstration' (MW 12:91) confidence does not entail responsibility.

[28] Cf. Dale Jamieson's (2007) analysis of harm and global climate change.

[29] On this theme, see Hall and Ames (1999).

5. We cannot respond to everything that makes a legitimate demand upon us. Hence, moral experience is irreducibly tragic, in the classical sense: in any moral situation there are more things to which we *ought* to respond than we *can* respond. That is, there are circumstances in which, contrary to Kantian rationalism, ought does not imply can. Moral education should help youths beyond the usual attitudes we learn to cope with the burden of inexhaustible oughts: resignation, guilt (especially in Western cultures), or shame (especially in Eastern cultures). Instead, moral education should cultivate the courage to respond to moral problems without cowering from the truth in James's defense of pluralism, the pragmatic upshot of his theory of a relational world: 'The word "and" trails after every sentence. Something always escapes. "Ever not quite" has to be said of the best attempts made anywhere in the universe at attaining all-inclusiveness' (James 1977, p. 145).
6. We must nonetheless believe and act with patience and courage amid ambiguity, and ethical reflection is born of this need. Unfortunately moral theorizing has quested for a certainty of conviction even greater than the moral convictions of the majority who parrot the reactive mores that philosophers rightly distrust. Most Western ethicists still want three things from a theory: a right way to reason about morals based on principle-driven moral agency, a clear procedure for definitely resolving moral quandaries, and a single right thing to do. This would be fine if moral problems could be solved by hitting upon a coherent and compelling arrangement of ideas, but the locus of moral problems is situational.

As with many of the moral images and conceptual models we construct to organize our moral experiences, traditional Western ethical theories can help us to be more perceptive and responsive. Philosophical ethics can proffer hypotheses that, in Dewey's words, enlarge perceptions and 'render men's minds more sensitive to life about them' (MW 12:91–92). It is valuable only insofar as it renders this service, so the quest for finality and completeness has been a distraction save as it has unconsciously enlarged perceptions. There is always a remainder, expanses of the relational network that legitimately press for our consideration yet are not spotlighted by our moral framework or conceptual schema. As McDermott writes of James's philosophy of relations: 'Everything we perceive teems with relational leads, many of them novel, and therefore often blocked from our experience by the narrowness and self-defining, circular character of our inherited conceptual schema' (McDermott 2007, p. 147). Thus James's pluralism, as Dewey explains it in 'The Development of American Pragmatism', 'accepts unity where it finds it, but it does not attempt to force the vast diversity of events and things into a single rational mold' (LW 2:9).

There is a Chinese idiomatic phrase for tunnel-vision: 'like looking at the sky from the bottom of a well'. The emphasis in the Kyoto School and classical pragmatism on immediately experienced relations and connections, to draw from McDermott, 'provides us with the metaphysical subtlety necessary as an antidote to the single vision which dominates so many of our endeavors' (McDermott 2007, p. 154). Moral education should aim to help youths to be patient with the suspense of moral inquiry, distrustful of ego attachments that breed moral zealotry, aware of the fallibility and incompleteness of any moral deliberation,

and imaginative in pursuing 'relational leads'. There is need for fallibilistic confidence without sanctimoniousness and puritanical fervor, boldness and courage in mediating troubled situations without need or expectation of certainty, and ameliorative action without fatalistic resignation or paralyzing guilt and shame. As an aim for moral education, this is perhaps the most difficult. As McDermott observes: 'it would take a major change of heart for the present human community to take seriously even the possible plausibility of positions, claims, and attitudes to be inevitably pluralistic' (McDermott 2007, pp. 150–151).

7. When in pain, near death, Einstein was asked 'Is everything all right?' 'Everything is all right', he replied, 'but I am not' (In Isaacson 2007, p. 541). Most people believe, with Einstein, that there must be a relational attunement that can ultimately be affirmed as good and beautiful and worthy of our greatest contemplative moments. This is not a faith Dewey shared, nor is it needed in a robust, defensible account of ecological imagination and ecological citizenship. One of course has a right to believe this, but neither the right nor the need to insist that others believe this. Most philosophers prior to the twentieth century, and most people today (East and West), assume such a congenial universe as a condition for the possibility of the best-lived human life. Perhaps the relational fabric(s) is ultimately congenial to being grasped as a unity by our minds and warmly appraised by our judgments, but moral education must proceed independent of such faith.
8. Finally, moral education should aim to cultivate ecological imagination, both to help youths deal intelligently with the global scene of human impact on the natural environment *and* to help them become aesthetically (perhaps religiously, Nishitani urges) reconnected with encompassing natural and social relationships. Ecological imagination is both a tool of awareness-through-mental cultivation, as Kyoto School thinkers would emphasize, and simultaneously a tool of responsibility-through-action, as classical pragmatists would highlight. Through active exercise of ecological imagination we are already healing ourselves and our environments. Naming this capacity simply discloses its contours so we can avoid a situation that is both hopeless and meaningless.

A fine-tuned ecological imagination is not a panacea for aesthetic insensitivity. But married to virtues of patience, courage, and responsibility, and framed in the context of respect for human becoming, a finely aware ecological imagination can make the deliberations of the coming generation more trustworthy than that of their forebears as they appraise possible avenues for acting with an eye to systemic effects.

The presenters at the INPE session that occasioned this book were inspired by the Kyoto School philosophers to critique the theory-*praxis* split as an impediment to human becoming. This is perhaps the most notable parallel between the Kyoto School philosophers and Dewey with regard to their philosophies of education. The INPE presenters did not, however, engage the actual practice of education. I close with a very brief practical test case for cultivating ecological imagination in moral education.

The disconnection most of us have from our modern industrialized food system exemplifies a paucity of ecological imagination, yet it also signals a way for

educators to cultivate this vital cognitive capacity in formal and informal settings. Dewey observed that people, whether children or adults, learn in concentric circles of increasing abstraction. Children in his 'laboratory school' at the University of Chicago at the turn of the last century learned mathematics and economics through a carefully designed curriculum that included cooking in the school kitchen. Today, children at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School in Berkeley, California plant, nurture, and harvest food in a schoolyard garden, cook it in the school kitchen, and consume it in the dining hall. This is not superadded onto the 'real' curricular work at the school; it is thoroughly interwoven into the curriculum. Through an ongoing rhythm of doing and reflection they learn, for example, about the recycling loop of growth, maturity, decline, death, and decay.[30]

As mentioned, imaginative simulations activate the same neural regions as physical interactions, so these children are continuously developing their capacity for ecological simulation in the garden, in the kitchen, in the dining hall, and in the brick-and-mortar classroom. They explore, for example, how food cycles in the garden intersect with larger natural systems: the water cycle, the cycle of seasons, and the like. In this way these children learn that every action has systemic consequences, and they are more likely to become the kinds of people who habitually take a measure of responsibility for these consequences.[31]

This accords well with the work of progressive educators in the sustainability movement, who have for some decades been experimenting with pedagogies that are more rooted (place-based, bioregional, etc.), contextualized and relationship-based (vs. mechanical and disconnected), interdisciplinary/integrative (vs. isolated), and pluralistic (for diversity rather than mere efficiency and uniformity). Such educators strive to refine aesthetic sensibility and disclose relations (rather than obscuring them); they regard teachers and students as co-inquirers (vs. a pedagogy of content-delivery and data storage/retrieval); and they prepare students for success in their ability to perceive and respond to complex relationships rather than preparing students for success in their ability to out-consume others.

Conclusion

Earth's 7 billion people, and the billions still to join us, will determine much of the future of terrestrial life. We will simultaneously determine the extent to which we will share dwindling natural resources, or continue through military means to

[30] In 2006 and 2008 presentations at the Terra Madre international Slow Food gathering in Turin, Italy, representatives of Green Mountain College in Vermont presented on a college-scale version of Berkeley's edible schoolyard.

[31] Cf. Capra (2005). On the Edible Schoolyard Project, see: http://www.edibleschoolyard.org/cla_eco.html. A free packet titled *Getting Started: A Guide to Creating School Gardens as Outdoor Classrooms* can be obtained at: http://www.ecoliteracy.org/publications/getting-started.html. On ecological education, cf. Orr (1992).

enforce a disproportionate distribution of environmental burdens and benefits. The Kyoto School and classical American pragmatism can help us along the path of ecological wisdom. Infinite relationships between ourselves and our 'fellows and with nature *already* exist', Dewey observed (MW 14:226). The chief end of moral education is to attend and respond to these relationships, ideally with wise ecological perception of the complex nature of problems, cultivated empathy for those affected by our choices, imaginative probings for technical and communal solutions, sensitivity to cultural traditions, and rich aesthetic responses to natural and cultural landscapes.

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Note on Abbreviations All references to Dewey are to 1969–1991. The Collected Works of John Dewey, ed. Jo Ann Boydston, 37 vols. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. Citations are to EW, MW, or LW (Early Works, Middle Works, or Later Works), followed by volume number, followed by page number.

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