



# Asian and Asian-American Philosophers and Philosophies

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## ARTICLES

### *Embodied Knowledge: Body, Heart/Mind, and Spirit in Confucian Aesthetics*

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At fifteen, I set my mind upon learning (*xue*).  
 At thirty, I took my stand (*li*).  
 At forty, I had no doubts (*buhuo*).  
 At fifty, I knew the will of Heaven (*zhi tianming*).  
 At sixty, my ear was attuned (*ershun*).  
 At seventy, I follow all the desires of my heart  
 without breaking any rule (*congxin suoyu buyuju*)

*The Analects, 2.4<sup>1</sup>*

He who commands our liking is called good (*shan*).  
 He who is sincere with himself is called true (*xin*).  
 He who is sufficient and real is called beautiful  
 (*mei*).  
 He whose sufficiency and reality shine forth is called  
 great (*da*).  
 He whose greatness transforms itself is called sagely  
 (*sheng*).  
 He whose sageliness is beyond our comprehension is  
 called spiritual (*shen*).

*Mencius, 7B:25<sup>2</sup>*

If aesthetic experience is predicated exclusively on an abstract idea, such as a geometric form, or a permanent balance and equilibrium, such as the depiction of nature as a static structure, there is not even a rejected possibility for the Confucians to cultivate a sense of beauty. If nature out there is a sole source of inspiration for aesthetic sensibility, the Confucians may suffer from an acute case of autism. Surely, Confucians, like all other human beings, are capable of responding aesthetically to the elegant simplicity of lines and shapes and the awe-inspiring presence of nature, but the Platonic idea and the Aristotelian poetics are absent in their conceptual apparatuses. This does not mean that a Confucian philosopher cannot benefit from Western aesthetic insights derived from the Greek modes of thinking. Indeed, twentieth-century Chinese aestheticians, seasoned in Daoist and Confucian traditions, such as Zhu Guangqian and Zong Baihua, developed sophisticated literary and artistic theories as a result of their exposure to Western learning, in particular German idealism. In this preliminary inquiry, I present a distinctive style of Confucian philosophizing. For the sake of brevity, I will make only a few specific references to comparative aesthetics, but since Asian and comparative philosophy define my mode of questioning, the relevance to

the dialogue between American and Chinese aesthetics should be obvious.<sup>3</sup>

It is commonly assumed that Daoism, rather than Confucianism, is the real source of inspiration for Chinese aesthetics. This is obviously true as evidenced by the seminal work of Xu Fuguan. Xu's exploration of the artistic spirit in traditional China is primarily an interpretation of Daoist aesthetics, with particular emphasis on the poetic insights of Zhuangzi, even though he was a well-known Confucian intellectual historian.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, if we focus our attention on the Confucian project of human flourishing, especially on its self-cultivation philosophy, we may find that it offers a different and equally challenging perspective on comparative aesthetics.

**I. Lived Concreteness.** The concrete living person here and now is the point of departure for Confucian aesthetics and ethics. The reductionist mode of thinking is absolutely necessary for making universalist claims. Without reducing humanity to a definable dimension—a rational being, a political animal, a tool user, or a linguist creature—it is difficult to imagine how we can say anything general, or at least generalizable, about the human. Yet, common experience tells us that we never encounter a person who is merely rational, political, a user of tools, or linguistically competent. A concrete person is always multidimensional, a combination of several essential features. The Confucian classics, as repertoires of human wisdom, suggest that we are simultaneously poetic, social, political, historical, musical, and metaphysical beings, and this list is far from complete. Indeed, a concrete person is always that particular person with all the specificities of race, gender, age, language, place, class, and faith.

Furthermore, as a living person, the “primordial ties” that are constitutive parts of a particular configuration are dynamic processes rather than static structures. They are constantly changing, growing, and evolving. When we begin to learn consciously to be fully human, as Confucius did at the age of fifteen, our primordial ties can be nurtured to give meaning to our lives. They are not merely passive constraints imposed upon us by forces totally beyond our control. Surely, we are all fated to be unique individuals (“no two faces are alike”); truthfully, we are forever differentiated by the given realities of our birth and socialization, and we are, by and large, at the mercy of our physical endowment, temperament, intelligence, and sensitivity. But learning (*xue*) is awakening (*jue*).<sup>5</sup> Through learning, the right kind of *paedeia*, we can transform our “fatedness” into an instrument of self-fulfillment. We become what we ought to be not by rejecting our ethnicity, sexuality, linguistic background, age cohort, land of birth, social class, or religious community, but by realizing ourselves through them.

A defining characteristic of Confucian learning is “learning for the sake of the self” (*weiji zhixue*).<sup>6</sup> From this view, without self-knowledge, family harmony, communal solidarity, political stability, and universal peace cannot be attained. The commandment in the *Great Learning*, “From the Son of

Heaven to the commoner all, without exception, must take self-cultivation as the root,”<sup>7</sup> is a moral imperative that all Confucian thinkers take for granted as self-evident. This emphasis on the dignity, autonomy, and independence of the self is essential for understanding the Mencian line of Confucian humanism.<sup>8</sup> Since virtually all major thinkers in Neo-Confucianism, whether in the Cheng-Zhu or the Lu-Wang schools, were exponents of Mencian teaching, the mainstream of the Confucian tradition in the last millennium has been self-cultivation philosophy. Understandably, Confucian learning is variously explicated as “learning of the body and mind” (*shenxin zhixue*), “learning of the mind and nature” (*xinxing zhixue*), “learning of the profound person” (*junzi zhixue*), or “learning of sages and worthies” (*shengxian zhixue*).

The underlying logic of these seemingly unconnected explications of body, mind, nature, profound person, worthy, and sage is captured by the felicitous statement in the *Analects* when Confucius’s disciple Zixia said, “Extend your learning and hold fast to your purpose; question closely and meditate on things at hand: there you will find the fullness of your humanity.”<sup>9</sup> The deliberate choice of categorizing the most influential anthology of philosophical insights by Neo-Confucian thinkers, edited by Zhu Xi and Lu Zuqian as *Reflections on Things at Hand*, is relevant here.<sup>10</sup> Confucius cherished the practice of asking pertinent questions and reflecting on things at hand because he believed that without an experiential basis, intellectual inquiry may degenerate into abstract universalism not at all germane to the lived concreteness of the student’s lifeworld. The situatedness of the questioner is a primary datum that must be foregrounded in a fruitful interchange. The student must first personally sense the meaningfulness of the question and have already given a great deal of thought to its practical implications before posing it as a common concern worthy of exploring for the whole community of like-minded seekers of the Way.<sup>11</sup>

A distinction between “personal” and “private” is in order here. I am willing to share an experience that is profoundly meaningful to me, for example, an idea, insight, vision, impression, or memory that has existential significance for me. Such an experience is sharable, discussable, and publicly accountable, for it is potentially neither private nor subjective. I may be overwhelmed by bodily sensations and mental processes that exclusively concern my own ego. Normally, these are the private matters that I would keep to myself or reveal only to my intimate friends. It is at least conceivable that I can be intensely personal without being either private or subjectivistic.<sup>12</sup>

Learning for the sake of the self is learning for the body and mind. It is both physical and mental. Confucian *paideia* is physical, a form of bodily exercise. All six arts—ritual, music, archery, charioteering, calligraphy, and calculation—involve the body, the “four limbs” (*siti*). They discipline the body so it can become a proper expression, or, more appropriately, a proper manifestation (*tixian*) of the self. Strictly speaking, I do not own my body. My body is never my possession. Nor is it simply a given. I try to become my body by learning to sit, stand up, walk, run, dance, talk, play, and act. Indeed, I learn to realize myself through my body.<sup>13</sup> Building physical strength is part of my bodily exercise, of course, but more important perhaps is that I learn to discern the subtle signs of the emotive as well as physical states of my body in performing ritual acts or in playing a musical instrument. Needless to say, the six arts are also mental disciplines. Confucius’s favorite sport was archery. As the profound person’s competition par excellence, the art of archery combines elegant form, inner strength, concentration, and timing.

Confucian *paideia* is not only physical but also mental. It is a form of spiritual exercise. The reason that I do not own my body, that the body is not a given, and that I learn to become my body is because it is the only, and potentially the most fitting, home for my mind. It should be noted at this juncture that *xin* (for the sake of convenience translated or mistranslated here as “mind”) has often been rendered as heart-and-mind, for it encompasses both the cognitive and affective dimensions of the mental experience. As the proper home for the mind, the body, strictly speaking, is mental and spiritual as well as material. The modern Chinese term “body” (*shenti*) is derived from the classical expression “to embody it in one’s body” (*tizhi yushen*). This is not the place to elaborate on the epistemological as well as moral and ontological significance of “embodied knowing” (*tizhi*); suffice it to mention that in this holistic mode of thinking, which rejects the exclusive dichotomy of body/mind or spirit/matter, knowing, especially knowing oneself, is never pure cognition.<sup>14</sup> It is inevitably a transformative act. By analogy, physical and mental disciplines, as spiritual exercises, are laden with aesthetic and ethical implications. This is the philosophical context for Mencius to articulate what he took as patently obvious: “Our body and complexion are given to us by Heaven. Only a sage can give his body complete fulfilment.”<sup>15</sup>

**II. Embodiment.** Learning for the sake of the self is learning of mind and nature because beneath the vicissitudes of concrete living human beings here and now, there is a common humanity as an experienced reality, a deep structure of communication, and a shared aspiration. While there is a multiplicity of “lived concreteness,” there is convergence, integration, centrality, unity, and oneness in Heaven-endowed nature. The opening statement in the *Doctrine of the Mean* makes it explicit that our nature is decreed by Heaven. If we envision Heaven as creativity in itself, not only human beings, but also animals, plants, trees, mountains, rivers, rocks, and dust are all creations of the cosmic process, the “great transformation” (*dahua*). There is continuity, connectivity, and consanguinity among all beings. If our blue planet evolved out of the chaos after the Big Bang, as contemporary astronomy seems to suggest, Heaven’s creativity made it possible for the emergence of the earth. The evolutionary process that enabled the advent of life forms is true evidence, a plausible interpretation, or a mysterious sign of Heaven’s continuous creativeness. What is the implication of this magnificent display of cosmic creativity for human self-understanding?<sup>16</sup>

The idea of partnership, in the form of “Heaven creates and humanity completes” (*tiansheng rencheng*), features prominently in archaic Confucian literature. The assumptive reasoning is deceptively simple. Our body, “the sentience that infuses the human frame,”<sup>17</sup> is so sensitive and responsive to the world around us that there is virtually nothing that lies outside the orbit of our human care and concern. A star yonder or a speck of dust here is no exception. As the most sentient being ever to come into existence as the result of Heaven’s creativity, we are endowed with the heart-and-mind to know, understand, and appreciate. Might it not be the purpose of our lives to take an active part in Heaven’s creativity by becoming sensitive and responsive admirers of what is unfolding in front of us? There are numerous examples to support this view. The idea of “participating in the transforming and nourishing process of Heaven and Earth and forming a trinity of Heaven and Earth”<sup>18</sup> in the *Doctrine of the Mean* has become a basic motif in perhaps one of the most demanding spiritual exercises in the Confucian tradition: “forming one body with Heaven, Earth, and myriad things” (*yi tiandi wanwu weiyiti*).<sup>19</sup>

The experience of universal embodiment, far from being a romantic assertion requiring no more than wishful thinking,

is an anthropocosmic vision rooted in a complex philosophical argument and a sustained spiritual practice. Zhang Zai's *Western Inscription* provides a glimpse of what must have been an age-long cumulative wisdom definitely predating Mencius's acknowledgement that he was proficient in nourishing his "stupendous vital energy" (*haoran zhiqi*):<sup>20</sup>

Heaven is my father and Earth is my mother, and even such a small being as I finds an intimate place in their midst. Therefore, that which fills the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I regard as my nature. All people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions.<sup>21</sup>

The mental discipline and spiritual exercise implicit in this science and art of embodiment is "integration and liberation." It entails a twofold process: horizontal expansion (liberation) and vertical inclusion (integration).

Learning for the sake of the self is learning to be fully human. The full actualization of humanity entails our ability to embody all forms of interconnection in our self-awareness and personal knowledge: self, family, community, society, nation, world, nature, and cosmos. Not surprisingly, the self is, in theory and in practice, not an isolated individual but a center of relationships. As a flowing stream, rather than an island, the self is a constantly evolving process, never a static structure. For the self to grow, develop, and realize its full potential, it needs to learn to transcend egoism, nepotism, parochialism, communalism, nationalism, and anthropocentrism. As we expand our intellectual and spiritual horizon to incorporate an ever-expanding network of meaningful relationships into our care and concern, we gradually realize that we are integral parts of an immensely complex, highly differentiated, and yet integrated wholeness. While we try to liberate ourselves from all the constraints imposed upon ourselves without our consent, we want to be embedded in our lived concreteness by situating ourselves in those structures that enable us to be unique. Confucian thinkers, from Mencius to Zhang Zai, endeavored to demonstrate through exemplary teaching that our lifeworld, as well as our life of the mind, can be greatly enriched by fruitfully interacting with an ever-expanding network of relationships.

The implications of the Confucian idea of "embodiment" for aesthetics are far-reaching. For one thing, aesthetic sensitivity is uniquely human. Literature, music, and art are the essential features of humanity. Without an aesthetic sense, humanity is not only impoverished but also diminished. Human beings are sentient beings before they are rational animals. We learn to think rationally but we are naturally endowed with feelings and emotions. Our humanity expresses itself naturally in affective terms. Only with rigorous discipline can it be expressed in cognitive concepts. Human feelings and emotions, in short, human affectivity, underlie all other dimensions of humanity: conativity, rationality, sociality, and so forth. Understandably, among the four primordial germs of the human heart-and-mind in the *Book of Mencius*, commiseration, involving both sympathy and empathy, is the most essential. Not surprisingly, for those who follow Mencius, the saddest condition for human beings is the death of the heart-and-mind. When a person is no longer capable of responding with any affection to the world around, he ceases to be human. Cheng Hao, employing a medical analogy of the "paralysis of the four limbs," describes such a condition as the absence of humanity (*uren*).<sup>22</sup>

This conception of aesthetics fundamentally reconfigures the Kirkegaardian tripartite division of aesthetics, ethics, and religion in a new philosophical anthropology. Ethics is rooted in the sensuality of the body. The primary concern of ethics is the cultivation and refinement of the experience of

moral sentiments rather than the establishment of rules and regulations to govern behavior. The completion of the ethical realm requires that it be expanded, through embodiment, to encompass community, world, and the cosmos. It is not the "leap of faith" but digging deeply into one's ground of being to reach the common spring of humanity that enables the "faithful" to enter into the blissful state of true subjectivity<sup>23</sup>:

The profound person steps in the Way in order to find it within his own heart. When he is at ease with it, he can draw deeply upon it; when he can draw deeply upon it, he finds its source wherever he turns.<sup>24</sup>

It may not be far-fetched to suggest that, in this connection, aesthetics is the minimum condition for and maximum realization of learning to be fully human. To stay with the water analogy, no one can afford not to have some supply of sympathetic feeling in his heart-and-mind. It may only be possible for him to respond to the suffering of his closest kin (parents and children). Thus, the spring of his humanity does not have enough water to overflow a small pond. Through self-cultivation, which consists of all the spiritual exercises that help to enhance his awareness, consciousness, and sensitivity of an ever-expanding world of interconnectedness, he transforms his self-centered, nepotistic, and parochial ego into an open, responsive, and responsible self; the spring that did not have enough water to gush forth is now in a state of abundance: "Water from an ample source comes tumbling down, day and night without ceasing, going forward only after all the hollows are filled, and then draining into the sea."<sup>25</sup> Even "the stupendous vital energy" is no longer merely an imagined possibility.

Aesthetic vision, so conceived, is always experiential and personal. It is inevitably rooted in lived concreteness. Yet, it is communicable, sharable, learnable, and publicly accountable. However, the idea of imitating nature as an objective reality out there is quite alien to this mode of thinking. The proper way of learning from nature is not to observe, analyze, and dissect an object from the outside, although the technique of representation is relevant and necessary. Rather, it is to see, hear, smell, touch, taste, and feel with all of our senses so that we can become an acquaintance and a friend. As the old master instructed the novice, the best way to paint a mountain scene is not to look at it from a distance but to live in it and experience it from within. It is true with a much simpler task, such as depicting a horse. Even if we manage to capture its likeliness, it is only a superficial grasp of what is out there. True artistry is never captured by the technique of representation, no matter how refined the detail. The spirit of the horse can only be apprehended if we experience it as a friend.

How can we befriend nature, or any inanimate object? The ability to establish an "I-Thou" relationship is essential. It is a precondition. Without the ability to transcend the mentality of being confined to an "I-It" situation, there is no hope for any meaningful communication, let alone a "spiritual communion" (*shenhui*, literally a spiritual meeting or a spiritual encounter) with nature. What does communicating with nature mean then? Although the vital energy that underlies all modalities of being is differentiated into numerous configurations, the continuity, connectivity, and consanguinity among them enable us to establish an internal relationship with the myriad things as well as Heaven and Earth. To the Confucians, nature is not merely "a collection of objects" but a "communion of subjects."<sup>26</sup> The mountain that has become a friend is alive with character, temperament, and moods. This seemingly anthropomorphic reading is predicated on a deep sense of the human as an appreciator, participant, partner, and co-creator of the cosmic process:

Only those who are the most sincere (*cheng*, authentic, true, and real) can fully realize their own nature. If they can fully realize their own nature, they can fully realize human nature. If they can fully realize human nature, they can fully realize the nature of things. If they can fully realize the nature of things, they can participate in the transforming and nourishing process of Heaven and Earth. If they can take part in the transforming and nourishing process of Heaven and Earth, they can form a trinity of Heaven and Earth.

This anthropocosmic vision is a manifestation of “embodied knowledge” (*tizhi*), which is simultaneously feeling, willing, appreciating, understanding, and acting. The paradigmatic example of this vision rooted in knowledge, wisdom, and spirituality is the ontological insight exemplified in the *Classic of Change* (*Yijing*). Not surprisingly, virtually all major Confucian thinkers have offered their hermeneutic perspectives on this wisdom book. To them, the *Classic of Change* is a perception of the cosmic process symbolized by sympathetic, appreciative, and thoughtful interpretations of the sages, notably Fuxi and King Wen. Their cumulative effort, a combination of “concerned consciousness” (*youhuan yishi*), responsiveness, responsibility, discernment, and self-reflexivity, enabled them to apprehend the purpose of human life from the perspective of cosmic creativity. The message is straightforward: we ought to learn to be ceaselessly self-strengthening like Heaven and limitlessly virtuous like Earth.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, it is within our power to complete the “great work” (*daye*) of the cosmos through our personal self-realization.

This moral idealism against the background of a profound awareness of the human limitation is succinctly captured by Mencius:

For a man to give full realization to his heart is for him to understand his own nature, and a man who knows his own nature will know Heaven. By retaining his heart and nurturing his nature he is serving Heaven. Whether he is going to die young or to live to a ripe old age makes no difference to his steadfastness of purpose. It is through awaiting whatever befalls him with a perfected character that he stands firm on his proper destiny.<sup>28</sup>

The creative tension between destiny and willpower makes the lifeworld of a seeker of the Way rich and complex. Our potential to liberate ourselves from the constraints of our environment is great and no matter how we are restricted by predestination, the promise of integrating all the conditions into a concrete program of self-realization is always alive. Ontologically, every human being can become a sage.

Nevertheless, in the existential situation, no one, including Confucius, can ever claim to have fully realized themselves. Confucius’s autobiography clearly indicates that from when he embarked on learning at the age of fifteen, his effort of *paedeia* never ceased. The harmonious fusion of aesthetic pleasure with moral obligation that he attained at the age of seventy is a wonderful expression of self-cultivation. Yet, as Confucian thinkers in the seventeenth century observed, if the Master had lived longer, like the historical Buddha, until the prime old age of eighty, he would have worked harder to continue and refine this blissful state of “following the dictates of my heart without transgressing the boundaries of right.” Confucius personally demonstrated that human flourishing is a broadening and deepening process of creative self-transformation through “embodiment.”

**III. Humanity (*ren*).** Confucian aesthetics in literature, art, or music is an integral part of human flourishing. It involves the

sensuality of the body, the sensitivity of the heart-and-mind, the character of the soul, and the strength of the spirit. The underlying self-cultivation philosophy entails the disciplining of the body as the point of departure. Since the body is, in practical terms, the lived concreteness of the self, rather than the prison house of the soul or the manifestation of unruly passions, it is the proper home for the full development of the person. The purpose of Confucian self-cultivation is not to overcome sensuality but to deal with inertia (bad habits), limitation (the “small body” as opposed to the “great body”<sup>29</sup>), and self-deception (confusing the selfish desires of the private ego for true subjectivity). Accordingly, Confucian pedagogy in the training of the heart-and-mind is not merely confined to mental activities. Techniques such as breathing exercises, quiet sitting, meditative strolling, deep listening, and face-to-face communication are all relevant to expanding critical self-awareness and enhancing the capacity of the heart-and-mind to respond to constantly arising circumstances. If we follow Mencius’s quest for human excellence—good, true, beautiful, sagely, and spiritual aesthetics—is laden with profound ethical and religious implications.

A glance at a general survey of Confucian aesthetics gives the distinct impression that it is human, all too human. Primary data of aesthetic reflection are suffused with references to human feelings, emotions, temperaments, and intelligences. Basic aesthetic terms were derived from understanding the human condition. As Xu Fuguan observes, historically the elementary aesthetic vocabulary used in music, painting, and literature evolved from the art of capturing the salient features of outstanding personalities.<sup>30</sup> Physiological and physiognomic ideas are integrated into the aesthetic terminology that compound words formed, with bone, flesh, blood, and the vital energy constituting an important aspect of Confucian aesthetics. Potent notions, such as “uprightness” (*xueqi*, literally “blood and vital energy”), “character” (*fenggu*, literally “wind and bone”), and “strength” (*jingu*, literally “bones and muscles”), are used. But the spirit that infuses the physical form is the center of attention. Expressions such as “spiritual demeanor” (*shencai*), “spiritual vitality” (*shenqi*), and “spiritual resonance” (*shenyun*), practically untranslatable, are prevalent in Chinese literary, painting, and music criticism. However, it is mistaken to assume that anthropomorphic language is superimposed on nature in Confucian aesthetics, and it is misleading to assert that Confucian aestheticians fail to understand “art for its own sake” because in their obsession with morality, they, at least inadvertently, subsumed literature, painting, and music under moral education in their claim that the purpose of art is for the sake of life.

Surely, Han Yu’s motto that “the purpose of literature is to convey the Dao” has been widely accepted by Confucian thinkers, but Dao, from the anthropocosmic perspective, is inclusive. It is aesthetic as well as ethical and religious. I would like to offer an illustration.

Music features prominently in Confucian aesthetics. The idea that sound, rather than sight, touches the innermost core of human sensitivity occurs frequently in the classical texts. The “attuned ear,” a spiritual realm that Confucius attained at the age of sixty, is attuned to the meaning of the rhythm of the cosmic order in a fashion that the fleeting images caught by the eye can never grasp. This way of privileging the audio perception is vividly displayed in the etymology of the character “sage” (*sheng*), with a built-in “ear” (*er*) radical, which enables the Sinologist William Boltz to offer the felicitous translation of the sage as the “audient.”<sup>31</sup> In the newly discovered Guodian material, the virtue of the ear is pronounced, which offers an excellent background understanding of the assumptive reason

behind Mencius's characterization of Confucius as the "timely sage" and his decision to use musical metaphors to present Confucius's "timeliness." The art of listening is such a cherished value in Confucian aesthetics that an artist (a painter and a writer as well as a musician) learns to hear the sound of the world and of nature by listening not only with ears but with the whole body (eyes, heart, mind, and the spirit). The dichotomy of art for art and art for life is a rather impoverished view of the Dao in its all-embracing fullness.

In the case of painting, especially literatus painting (*wenren hua*), we may use one single example to illustrate the relevance of the anthropocosmic vision. Audio perception is pertinent here. The phenomenon of constitutive blankness, or aniconicity, like the fruitful silence in music, lies at the heart of several eminent landscape painters, such as Ma Yuan of the Southern Song dynasty and Ni Zan of the Yuan dynasty. In comparison with the Romantic Landscape painting in the West, what distinguishes the Chinese landscape painter's view of a vision (normally in the form of the portrait of a fisherman, scholar, or traveler) is that what is seen from within the painting (by the imagined naked eye of the character portrayed in it) and is not represented by the painting. What the painting presents, rather than represents, is the absent or "vanishing" landscape by way of contrast. The technique is not readily understandable. We need not concern ourselves with the technical aspects of the argument. Philosophically, the most intriguing issue is the significance of the void (the functional equivalent of silence in music) in Chinese landscape paintings. In other words, the materiality of the painting (paper or silk) that is untouched, or perceptually unpainted by the artist. It is difficult to imagine any landscape painting or portraiture in the Western artistic tradition that is deliberately left alone. As our attention is directed to the near at hand, as different from that evinced by the internal viewer, we see that the artist presents a secondary picture with its own logic and its human construction: the marking and remarking of the artificially depicted nature as landscape and the seemingly insignificant human figures in it. A landscape by Ma Yuan or Ni Zan is not out there to be seen. We are invited to enter into it by assuming the multiple perspectives that the artist shares with us. We need to learn to use our eyes to listen, smell, touch, experience, and embody it. We are, after all, the little figures in the landscape. We are embedded in the midst of mountains, rivers, trees, rocks, and clouds. We find our bearings by embodying all of them in our self-awareness.

The idea that human beings are co-creators in terms of "Heaven genders and humanity completes" is succinctly exemplified by Dong Qichang (1555-1636): "From the standpoint of splendid scenery, painting cannot equal [real] landscape; but from the standpoint of the sheer marvels of brush and ink, [real] landscape is not at all the equal of painting."<sup>32</sup> Dong's polemic need not concern us here. Obviously, he endorses "the expressive Southern School mode over the descriptive or narrative mode of the Northern School, which he dismisses by declaring that a painter can never reproduce all the sensate wonders of 'splendid scenery'." The implicit argument of the Northern School seems persuasive in light of Western Romanticism: "A painter can only hope to isolate several out of the myriad sensations of light, atmosphere, color, texture, and sound, which in nature are ever-changing. In a painting, they are immutable. In this way, the experience of nature is far preferable to a painted representation."<sup>33</sup>

Dong argues that the artist, "through the sheer marvels of brush and ink," can create a new sense of pattern, equilibrium, and vitality that is not readily apparent and yet potentially realizable and authentically imaginable in nature. The interpretive assertion that "in this new artistic process,

nature represents only an intermediary to be replaced and transcended ultimately by the only true reality—the artist's own mind"<sup>34</sup>—reflects too much a modern individualist mentality. It is more likely that what Dong envisions is a dialogical mode, a genuine interchange, and a mutually illuminating encounter with nature. The reason that artists can create something as wonderful as landscape is that culture, in the best sense of the term, is not only humanistic but naturalistic as well.

Dong, one of the most versatile calligraphers in Chinese art history, was so proficient in employing brush and ink in his artistic expression that the writing instrument seemed to be a natural extension of his body. The idiom *dexin yingshou* (handle with ease) literally means that the hand dexterously responds to whatever the mind wants. In other words, when the artist has fully mastered the knack of brushwork, calligraphy is in his element as his second nature. This aesthetic experience is uniquely human. It is human to form one body with Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things. Mencius said:

All the ten thousand things are there in me. There is no greater joy for me than to find, on self-examination, that I am sincere (true and real) to myself. Try your best to put reciprocity into practice and you will find that this is the shortest way to humanity.<sup>35</sup>

In the Mencian interpretation of Confucian humanism, aesthetics is about human flourishing. The *paideia* implicit in Confucian aesthetics is embodied knowledge, a form of knowing as a transformative act. It involves the body, heart, mind, soul, and spirit. It transcends the boundaries of aesthetics, ethics, and religion. I believe that such a mode of knowing deserves rigorous philosophical investigation.

#### Endnotes

1. Simon Leys, trans. *The Analects of Confucius* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), p. 6.
2. D. C. Lau, trans. *Mencius* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 199.
3. My work on Confucian humanism has focused on moral and religious philosophy. However, my interest in Confucian aesthetics has been strong since my college years. My B.A. thesis was on Chinese literary criticism. My idea of "embodied knowledge" (*tizhi*) was inspired by my aesthetic experience in literature, music, and art. I believe that experience, especially profoundly meaningful personal experience, provides the primary datum for philosophical reflection. My essay, "The Idea of the Human in Mencian Thought: An Approach to Chinese Aesthetics," was first presented at a conference on "Theories of the Arts in China," sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies in June 1979. I have learned a great deal from colleagues in art and literature since I first embarked on my academic career at Princeton University in 1967. I am indebted to Eliot Deutsch, Fang Wen, James Cahill, Wai-kam Ho, Li Zehou, Daya Krishna, Imamura Tomonobu, Stephen Owen, Susan Bush, and Maureen Robertson for broadening my aesthetic horizons and for refining my artistic sensitivity.
4. Xu Fuguan. *Zhongguo sixiangshi lunji* (Collection of Essays on Chinese Thought) (Taipei: Student Book Co., 1983), 245.
5. Sinologists often assume that defining learning as "awakening" is a post-Buddhist practice. It is important to note that awakening is one of the basic definitions of learning in the *Shuowen jiezi*, the Chinese dictionary compiled before the introduction of Buddhism into China.
6. *Analects*, 14.24.
7. *The Great Learning*, chap. 1; see Wing-tsit Chan, trans. and comp., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 86.
8. See my essay, "Sociality, Individuality, and Anthropocosmic Vision," presented at the Beijing Forum organized by Peking

- University in 2004, to be included in a volume in honor of Henry Rosemont.
9. *Analects*, 19.6; Leys, trans., *The Analects of Confucius*, p. 95.
  10. Wing-tsit Chan, trans. *Reflections on Things at Hand: The Neo-Confucian Anthology*, comp. by Chu Hsi [Zhu Xi] and Lü Tsu-ch'ien [Lu Zuqian] (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967).
  11. In its Bradley Lecture Series (1998), the Library of Congress identified the *Analects* as one of the eight essential books for the public intellectual in America; see my essay, "The Confucian Analects," submitted to the Library of Congress, December 2005.
  12. The following have helped me to think through this issue. Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1958); Richard R. Niebuhr, *Experiential Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972); and Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. by Arnold Davidson and trans. by Michael Chase (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).
  13. I have benefited from Eliot Deutsch's "Concept of the Body," in *Self as Body in Asian Theory and Practice*, ed. by Thomas Kasulis (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993) and from Yasuo Yuasa's *The Body, Self-Cultivation, and Ki-Energy*, trans. by Shigenori Nagatomo and Monte S. Hull (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993).
  14. For a general discussion, see my essays in Chinese, *Tu Weiming wenji* (Tu Weiming's Collection of Essays), ed. by Guo Qiyong and Man-long Cheng (Wuhan: Wuhan chubanshe, 2001), vol. 5, pp. 329-76.
  15. *Mencius*, 7A:38. See Lau, trans., *Mencius*, p. 191.
  16. I have been engaged in a Christian-Confucian dialogue with Gordon Kaufman. See Gordon D. Kaufman, "A Christian View of Creativity: Creativity as God" and Tu Weiming, "An Anthropocosmic Vision on Creativity." The papers were presented at the American Philosophical Association's (Eastern Division) 2004 Annual Meeting in Boston. The two essays, together with comments from Robert Neville and John Berthrong, will be published in *Dao*, ed. by Huang Yong.
  17. Huston Smith. *Forgotten Truth: The Primordial Tradition* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 63.
  18. *Chung-yung (Zhongyong, Doctrine of the Mean)*, XXII. Chan, trans. and comp., *A Source Book*, p. 108.
  19. "Understanding Humanity" (*Shiren*), in *The Survived Works of the Two Master Chengs (Ercheng yishu)*, 2A:3a-b. See Chan, trans. and comp., *A Source Book*, p. 530.
  20. For a general discussion of this important idea, see *Mencius*, 2A:2. Lau's translation is "floodlike *ch'i* [*qi*]." See Lau, trans., *Mencius*, pp. 77-78.
  21. These are the opening lines in the celebrated essay by Zhang Zai. This essay, commonly known as the "Western Inscription," is a key text in Neo- (Song-Ming) Confucian thought. See Chan, trans. and comp., *A Source Book*, p. 149.
  22. Cheng Hao's statement is worth quoting: "The man of *jen* [*ren*] regards Heaven and Earth and all things as one body. To him there is nothing that is not himself. Since he has recognized all things as himself, can there be any limit to his humanity? If things are not part of the self, naturally they have nothing to do with it. As in the case of the paralysis of the four limbs, the vital force no longer penetrates them, and therefore they are no longer parts of the self." See Chan, trans. and comp., *A Source Book*, p. 530.
  23. The contrast with Kierkegaard should not give the impression that the great theologian's existentialism is taken as diametrically opposed to Confucian humanism. In my own effort to bring understanding to Confucian spirituality, my confrontation with Kierkegaard as a "radical otherness" is a continuous source of inspiration. I take his thought-provoking and emotionally highly-charged original ideas seriously. To me, they are not merely an idiosyncratic "local knowledge" of a pre-modern Danish Christian thinker. Rather, they are universally significant reflections on the human condition. Undoubtedly, from the Confucian humanistic perspective, they must be subjected to a critical examination. I have yet to formulate such a critique. Admittedly, it is personally painful to think through Kierkegaard's salient issues, but I believe that a sympathetic understanding of each of them is necessary for constructing a meaningful contemporary interpretation of Confucian humanism: melancholy, loneliness, inwardness, despair, irony, repudiation, dependency, sacrifice, seduction, inherited sin, the absurd, the demonic, repudiation, indirect communication, love as an obligation, existential stages, teleological suspension of the ethical, and the tenacious resistance to embrace the aesthetic.
  24. *Mencius*, 4B:14 I use "profound person" rather than "gentleman" to translate *junzi*. See Lau, trans., *Mencius*, p. 130.
  25. *Mencius*, 4B:18. Lau, trans., *Mencius*, pp. 130-31.
  26. Thomas Berry's wise counsel from a "geologist's" perspective is in perfect accord with the Confucian orientation toward nature. See Tu Weiming, "The Ecological Turn in New Confucian Humanism," in *Confucian Spirituality*, ed. by Tu Weiming and Mary Evelyn Tucker (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2004), vol. 2, pp. 480-508. A shorter version of the essay is published in *Daedalus* 130:4 (2001): 243-64.
  27. The *Classic of Change* is often referred to as the first among the Confucian classics. It is a source of inspiration for both Daoist and Confucian cosmology and ontology. Its moral metaphysics was a basis for the Confucian revival in the twentieth century. The message consists of two statements from the two "images" (*xiang*) of the first two hexagrams, *xian* and *kun*. It is interesting to note that Tsinghua University, one of the two most prestigious universities in China, adopted the message as the university motto in the 1920s.
  28. *Mencius*, VIIA:1. Lau, trans., *Mencius*, p. 182.
  29. For a discussion of this issue, see Tu Weiming, "The Value of the Human in Classical Confucian Thought," in Tu Wei-ming, *Confucian Thought: Selfhood as Creative Transformation* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1985), pp. 67-80.
  30. Xu Fuguan, *Zhongguo yishu jingshen* (The Spirit of Chinese Arts) (Taichung: Tunghai University, 1966), pp. 144-224, especially pp. 150-57.
  31. William Boltz. *The Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Writing System* (New Haven, CN: American Oriental Society, 1994), pp. 115-16.
  32. Wai-kam Ho and Dawn Ho Delbanco, "Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's [Dong Qichang] Transcendence of History and Art," in Wai-kan Ho, ed., *The Century of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, 1555-1636* (Seattle: University of Washington Press and Kansas City, MO: Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 1992), vol. 1, p. 35.
  33. *Ibid.*
  34. *Ibid.*
  35. *Mencius*, VIIA:4. Lau, trans., *Mencius*, p. 182. I have used "humanity" rather than "benevolence" in translating *ren*. By the way, it is intriguing to note that in the Guodian texts, the character is invariably depicted by the body (*shen*) on top and the heart-mind (*xin*) below.

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## ***Mountains and Rivers without End: The Intertwining of Nature and Spirit in American Aesthetics***

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### **I. East and West**

Our topic is “integration and liberation” as themes in Chinese and American aesthetics. Of the many aspects that Chinese and American philosophy might share, the one of aesthetics is initially puzzling. First, there is the fundamental difference between East Asian and Western art traditions. Art in the West, at least since the Renaissance, has been the assertion or expression of creative individual genius. Western art is not demure but commands attention. It is form dominating matter as the intellect and will dictate. East Asian art is the result of attained harmony of spirit; it is quietly receptive and, like the “empty” space in ink landscape painting, invites the viewer to enter the work with plenty of room for imaginative interplay. Individual style, be it the misty, dark forms of Mi Fei or the pure linear tracteries of Ni-Tsan, is not assertion of self but an achievement of harmony between self and world. The participatory nature of art finds a marvelous example in paintings called “Mountains and Rivers without End.” These are long scrolls meant to be gradually unrolled depicting an ongoing journey that the viewer can take in imagination, walking along mountain paths, crossing streams on rustic bridges, and resting at inns or temples along the way.

And there is the deep difference between East Asian and Western conceptions of philosophy and the role of the “aesthetic.” Aesthetics is not regarded as a very important, much less central, part of the Western philosophy.<sup>1</sup> Rather, metaphysics, ethics, and logic have constituted the core.<sup>2</sup> Platonism’s ontology of the beautiful is the noble exception, but it quickly becomes the yearning of the soul for God. “*Sero te amavi, pulchritudo tam antiquae et tam nova, sero te amavi!*” says Augustine.<sup>3</sup> Contrast the yearning in that utterance with the matter-of-fact statement of the Taoist, Kuo Hsiang (d 312 CE): “The music of nature is not an entity existing outside of things.”<sup>4</sup> In similar vein, Greg Whincup observes, “The essence of Chinese poetry is emotion linked to landscape. Chinese poets make the natural world an expression of human emotion. This is more than just a convention. The unity of man and nature is part of the traditional Chinese perception of the world.”<sup>5</sup> Classical Chinese thought focused on living in harmony with the Tao. Confucianism in particular turned to art as essential to cultivating the *chün-tze*, the noble scholar; the *Book of Odes* was a canon for wholesome values; music and ritual manifested and maintained our open-hearted humanity. If the Taoist rejected the art and ritual, it was to experience more purely and intimately the great harmony of nature itself. As Kuo Hsiang says, nature is music.

It is no surprise that the cultural images of “the philosopher” should contrast as well. The Western philosopher, especially since the beginning of the modern period, seeks to refine analytical methodologies: *regulae*; nature or Being is to be known to be mastered; physics is mathematics; mathematics is logic; logic is philosophy. Philosophy becomes a manipulation of concepts by symbols. Contrast this with the philosopher as *chün-tze* who tries to cultivate his spirit, and his brush may as easily paint a landscape and write a poem; or contrast the Western “master of nature” with the Taoist rogue, for whom philosophy is one with laughter.

### **II. Chinese and American Philosophy: The Aesthetics of Living**

In spite of these profound differences, I do think there can be a significant connection between classical Chinese and classical American thought. There is an important part of the American philosophical tradition that places emphasis upon the aesthetic aspect of experience as crucial for self-realization and sees philosophy as ultimately concerned with this life of vitalized experience. In other words, “aesthetics” should be understood first and foremost as the “aesthetics of human existence,” as I have termed it.<sup>6</sup> Three major examples of thinkers in this tradition are Emerson, Dewey, and Santayana. But we can detect an aesthetic strain in Jonathan Edwards’s insistence on the primacy of seeing the “excellency” of things, the “consent of being to being,” as the essence of grace.<sup>7</sup> Aesthetic phenomenology pervades Peirce’s idea of Firstness as well as James’s radical empiricism. Stanley Cavell’s “moral perfectionism” and Richard Rorty’s ironism may be diluted contemporary examples. Dewey summed up this approach when he said,

To esthetic experience, then, the philosopher must go to understand what experience is. For this reason... the theory of esthetics put forth by a philosopher... is a test of the capacity of the system he puts forth to grasp the nature of experience itself.<sup>8</sup>

Moreover, the themes of integration and transcendence form part of the central dynamism in this tradition. Dewey’s aesthetics is decidedly one of integration; the consummatory experience is a cumulative realization of the possibilities for deep, qualitatively expressive meaning achieved through the interaction of human beings with each other and with nature. Santayana’s aesthetics of existence is one of liberation, seeking escape from the “realm of matter” as well as the needs of the petty ego. (This approach is less characteristic of his early humanistic ideal of the “life of reason” but dominates his later thought with its concern for the “spiritual life,” which is a discipline of aesthetic intuition.) And both of these moments, integration and liberation, are present in Emerson’s thought and are equally significant for him. They constitute a dynamic polarity between spirit and nature, fusing in his concept of “character,” the realized self, as the transformative medium where both God and world become living symbol. The human spirit is the perpetual act of creation.

In all three thinkers we find, then, the idea of “lived aesthetics” as a central concern for realizing human existence with the topics of integration and liberation reflected in the tensive relation between nature and spirit.<sup>9</sup> Only in a very secondary sense is “aesthetics” related to issues normally included in philosophical discussions of the topic focusing on the nature of fine art and our experience of it. In a way, then, this approach may be compared with the Chinese view of the aesthetic as an “attainment” of spirit, primarily a discipline of existence and experience. Because Emerson holds these two aspects of integration and liberation together, while Dewey and Santayana emphasize one over the other, my focus will be on Emerson. Furthermore, Emerson offers the possibility of what might be called a “spiritual aesthetics of nature.” Not only does this also establish a point of contact with the East Asian tradition, but it has a more imminent bearing. We are at the point in the history when we must collectively care for the ecology of the planet. I do not think we come to care for things unless we can behold them and love them in their wonder and beauty. If we are to live with an ecological wisdom, I think it will be because we have encountered nature with a deep aesthetic engagement that not only makes us care for it but makes us realize it as the

home of spirit. Thus, I believe our topics have serious bearing on the way Western philosophy has been practiced.

### III. Romanticism and the Aesthetics of Nature<sup>10</sup>

Before turning to Emerson, however, we should pause and reflect how deeply Western culture carries with it a spiritual alienation from nature and how anomalous this is when compared with other worldviews. Most cultures around the world and throughout time have experienced the world as holy. By this I mean that people experience aspects of the world as aesthetically profound relationships that connect them with vital meanings.<sup>11</sup> The world is “home,” *oikos*. Not far from where I grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, you could see the beautiful form of *Tzodzhil*, “Mt. Taylor,” one of the sacred directional mountains defining *Dinetah*, the Navajo homeland, and, in the Navajo worldview, a living being. A traditional Navajo home has the doorway facing East so that the first act of the day is welcoming Dawn Boy in a sacred manner, with an offering of pollen or corn meal. The Navajo pray: May I go with Beauty before me; May I go with Beauty behind me; May I go with beauty above and below me. The idea of beauty for the Navajo, *hozho*, is not an “aesthetic” concept; it refers primarily to living in harmony, the “health” of moving along the path of a human life, which involves feelings of connection and relationship to family, nature, gods, and the past: *sa’a nakai, bikhei hozho*—as it has long been, so may it be always done in *hozho*. Part of the beauty-way involves giving and sharing, remembering and passing along the traditional stories and songs, being a dynamic passageway for *nilchi’i*, the Holy Wind, the spirit of life, which is process. The very act of breathing is being connected—being a vessel for this spirit.<sup>12</sup>

Platonism made the beauty of the world a living shadow of the Beautiful-itself but was willing to defend the beauty and goodness of the world against Gnostic dualism.<sup>13</sup> For Plotinus, nature was the final outpouring of the cascade of forms from the One. With the rise of modernity, the holiness of the world as an aesthetic home has been fading away. In 1611, John Donne wrote,

And new Philosophy calls all in doubt,  
The Element of Fire is quite put out;  
The Sun is lost, and th’earth, and no man’s wit  
Can well direct him where to looke for it.  
And freely men confess that this world’s spent,  
When in the Planets and the Firmament  
They seeke so many new; then see that this  
Is crumbled out againe to his Atomies  
’Tis all in pieces, all cohaerance gone;  
All just supply, and all Relation...<sup>14</sup>

The death of the Medieval cosmos was not just an intellectual change, the shift of one “paradigm” for another, but a cultural trauma involving a dislocation in feeling and embodied relationship to the universe. Shortly after Donne wrote his poem, Descartes composed *Le Monde*, setting forth the modernist vision of nature as a vast, soundless, colorless machine performing mathematical equations, an ocean of power that could be mastered by science guided by a spectral, disjoined “thinking thing,” us. The project of the “mastery of nature,” as Descartes calls it in the *Discourse*, now presents us with the literal, not just metaphorical, possibility of the “death of nature” as a result of the success of the project of modernity. Philosophy, in general, has understood itself in terms of this project. The “post-modern” reaction has, however, done nothing to reconnect humans to the aesthetics of the world. If anything, it has intensified the sense of meaninglessness. This is why I think that the Romantic movement is such a crucial, if mixed, part of our heritage, with implications for philosophy

insofar as it gave us a radically new way of experiencing nature and ourselves and found thereby a renewed experience of the divine that was existentially transformative.<sup>15</sup>

In America, of course, it was primarily Emerson who defined our version of Romanticism, i.e., Transcendentalism. Whether or not one classifies Emerson as a “philosopher” as well as a “thinker,” his influence on the subsequent major figures of classical American philosophy is unquestionable.<sup>16</sup> Though Dewey was not a “Transcendentalist” but a post-Darwinian naturalist, he accorded Emerson the highest respect.<sup>17</sup> And Dewey’s naturalism is a non-reductive one in which creativity, emergence, and the ontological possibility of ideals are at its heart.<sup>18</sup> In *A Common Faith*, Dewey stressed the religious implications of this view, arguing for the importance of the religious quality of experience and according an immanent role to the idea of “God,” much to the concern of his followers.<sup>19</sup> Thus, Dewey picked up the theme of “integration.” Santayana, by contrast, repudiated idealism of any sort and turned his back on any form of Romanticism, though he was, in a sense, far more “transcendentalist” than Emerson in his quasi-Platonic concepts of “the realm of essence” and “the realm of spirit.”<sup>20</sup> While articulating a concept of a life of spirit, of perpetual possibility of aesthetic awareness, Santayana removed it from all earthly connection so that it might be free, a discipline of liberation. Leaving Dewey and Santayana for later, let us turn, then, to Emerson, in whom the two themes of integration and liberation are both given weight.

### IV. Emerson: Liberation and Integration as Self-Realization

The intimate relation of nature and spirit—indeed, the ascension of spirit through nature—is the subject of Emerson’s first book, *Nature* (1836). This theme is explored in a variety of directions throughout the two series of *Essays* as well as in various addresses (including the notorious “Divinity School Address” given at Harvard in 1838 and which kept him from being re-invited as a speaker there for nearly thirty years). Emerson’s break with Christianity as an institution was for the sake of a revived spirituality of experience.<sup>21</sup> Like the existentialists of a century later, Emerson was concerned with the problem of human alienation—alienation from nature, from self, and from God. He saw two reasons for this: the dead weight of tradition obscuring our own creative power and the reigning materialism in science. These are both results from a lack of the use of imagination on our part. The “Transcendentalist turn” was to affirm our own capacity to “enjoy an original relation to the universe” and so rediscover ourselves and God.

The axis of our vision is not coincident with things, and so they appear not as transparent but opaque. The reason why the world lacks unity, and lies broken and in heaps, is because man is disunited with himself. He cannot be a naturalist, until he satisfies all the demands of the spirit. Love is as much its demand, as perception. Indeed, neither can be perfect without the other. In the uttermost meaning of the words, thought is devout, and devotion is thought.<sup>22</sup> Deep calls unto deep. But in actual life, the marriage is not celebrated. There are innocent men who worship God after the tradition of their fathers, but their sense of duty has not yet extended to the use of all their faculties. And there are patient naturalists, but they freeze the subject under the wintry light of the understanding. Is not prayer also a study of truth—a sally of the soul into the unfound infinite? No man ever prayed heartily, without learning something. But when a faithful thinker, resolute to detach every object from personal relations, and see it in the light of thought, shall at the same time kindle

science with the fire of the holiest affections, then will God go forth anew into the creation.<sup>23</sup>

The key here is the phrase “axis of vision”: the solution lies in *how* we experience ourselves and the world. The method Emerson proposed was to turn away from dead custom and belief toward nature and thereby we could discover for ourselves the inherent metamorphosis of symbols that constitutes the presence of spirit in experience. *Nature* was written as a sort of “discipline” of ascension to regenerate our own capacity for original vision, and it begins with a paradoxical dualism of “Soul” and “Nature” as the “me” and “not me.”<sup>24</sup> As the lower ego is transcended, the “not me” changes from opacity to transparency. The eye itself has a synthetic power to grasp *vitas* as wholes within a defining horizon and permeated by a constitutive mood so that “all mean egotism” vanishes.<sup>25</sup>

Emerson proceeds to overcome our experiential alienation through stages that might be called “analogous understanding,” i.e., degrees of seeing ourselves in nature and vice versa. He does this through the ascending topics of “Commodity, Beauty, Language, and Discipline.” Our technologies are extensions of natural forces; beyond this the world appears as beautiful in its own right, and the interplay of eye, light, and object is the basis for the beauty of art, virtue, and intellect.<sup>26</sup> “A work of art is an abstract or epitome of the world. It is the result or expression of nature, in miniature.”<sup>27</sup> Nature is the basis of language, but nature itself is “symbol of the spirit.”<sup>28</sup> Our experience is fraught with presence and suggestive meaning from the beginning, and these symbols grow throughout our lives.<sup>29</sup> In symbols we experience meaning as metamorphically alive.

This explains Emerson’s own chosen style for writing, so often dismissed or condescended to by “professional philosophers.” Regenerative language must be poetic, and images, symbols, not only speak, but *think*.<sup>30</sup> The world is growth and metamorphosis of meaning, and this *life* of meaning is the presence of spirit in nature. This is the ultimate discipline of nature: “The visible creation is the terminus of the invisible world.”<sup>31</sup> From the embodied context of our existence come the ideals of civilization, the arts, sciences, and philosophies. Beyond this is the interconnection and unity of all things, a “central Unity,” which for Emerson was the pervasive, creative immanence of God, intuited holistically by “Reason,” not analyzed by the “Understanding.” Thus, “Nature is made to conspire with spirit to emancipate us.”<sup>32</sup>

Emerson’s *Nature* was not only full of his enthusiasm for idealism, but it ended by seeming to soar off into the heavens. If so, it would only be another avatar of Neo-Platonism (which Emerson studied and admired) and so a philosophy of transcendence.<sup>33</sup> What is distinctive, however, is Emerson’s insistence that it is the act of creative individuation in the world that constitutes the life of God, and this leads him to break with Neo-Platonism for an emphasis on immanence. Emerson’s goal was the regeneration of human experience *in the world*, not the “flight of the alone to the Alone.” The true “axis of vision” to be attained was a perpetual, creative act of vision with “new eyes” linking human being and nature; this was “God going forth anew into creation.” This meant the continuous re-establishment of new, unique “angles of vision.” In other words, the epiphany of the Divine requires a plurality of individually realized relations—it is a dynamism of ever-adjusting perspectives, just like our own vision, which depends on two eyes with different angles constantly moving back and forth across the visual field; this is how objects come to have visual form.<sup>35</sup>

Emerson’s emphasis upon the need for spirit to actualize itself in concrete relationship with nature comes out in his understanding of the purpose of art and the role of “exemplary” individuals, like “The Poet.” It is the creative individual who

is more important as an inspiration to us than the “art” he or she produces. As Dewey would say later, Emerson insists on the latent creativity in the act of experience itself. In “Art,” he comments, “Because the soul is progressive, it never repeats itself, but in every act attempts the production of a new and fairer whole. ...What is that abridgment and selection we observe in all spiritual activity, but itself the creative impulse?”<sup>36</sup> Human experience is the “self-explication” of nature and the artist uses his own creative vision to generate similar creative powers in others. Historically, art has been an “education” in the perception of beauty. “We are immersed in beauty, but our eyes have no clear vision.”<sup>37</sup> Works of art train our powers of perception to behold the beauty of the world itself: “the excellence of all things is one.”<sup>38</sup> Painting and sculpture are “gymnastics of the eye” that transform how we see ordinary objects, people, and scenes, and, ultimately, how we see ourselves. Great works of art “restore to use the simplest states of mind; and are religious. Since what skill is therein shown is the reappearance of the original soul, a jet of pure light, it should produce a similar impression to that made by natural objects.”<sup>39</sup> To find beauty in the world we “must carry it with us or we find it not.” The end of art is not to add to the number of objects in the world but to make our perception of the world artistically and aesthetically alive: “Nothing less than the creation of man and nature is its end. ...A true announcement of the law of creation...would carry art up into the kingdom of nature and destroy its separate and contrasted existence.”<sup>40</sup> Again, anticipating Dewey, Emerson criticizes the idea of art as separated from the ordinary and useful, segregated as a moment of “pleasure,” “solaces and compensations,” or “voluptuous reveries” apart from living. We create beauty from “religion and love” rather than by the pursuit of pleasure.<sup>41</sup> We better “serve the ideal” from the start in daily existence, in “eating and drinking”; then beauty will be found in “the railroad, the insurance office...the galvanic battery, the electric jar, the prism...”<sup>42</sup>

Emerson’s well-known but not well-understood individualism is a discipline of self-transcendence toward a receptive and creative relationship toward the world. The “self” that is to be “relied” upon is the “deep Self,” the creative influx of the divine that reconstitutes the nature of perception and rejuvenates the “angle of vision,” whereby things are seen in their transparencies; it is fundamentally a call to a new way of experiencing the world. “Our faith comes in moments; our vice is habitual. Yet there is a depth to those brief moments, which constrains us to ascribe more reality to them than to other experiences. ...Man is a stream whose source is hidden.”<sup>43</sup> For Emerson, this connection with the hidden source was the root of his experience of divinity, which did not vanish in an ineffable cloud of unknowing but resulted in a renewed capacity to see the world as whole and alive:

We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal One. And this deep power in which we exist, and whose beatitude is all accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one. We see the world piece by piece, as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree; but the whole of which they are shining parts is the soul.<sup>44</sup>

In other words, the theophany of God lies in the fulfillment of an experience that achieves a spiritual aesthetics of nature: “From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things, and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light

is all.”<sup>45</sup> And: “The soul looketh steadily forwards, creating a world before her, leaving words behind her.”<sup>46</sup>

Emerson often explicitly used the term “metamorphosis” to express this idea, but it is implied in his use of “form” as well. He uses “form,” for example, in speaking against materialism; he complains that we no longer have a “doctrine of forms” but have a dualistic philosophy that sees us as “put into our bodies the way fire is put into a pan, to be carried about.”<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, the world is regarded as a field of objects, of literal meanings, rather than as a multi-symbolic realm of meaning in which spirit can realize itself and the world. “For,” says Emerson, “we are not pans and barrows, nor even porters of the fire and torch-bearers, but children of the fire, made of it, and only the same divinity transmuted, and at two or three removes, when we know least about it.”<sup>48</sup> The true nature of form lies in *transformation*; this is why form is to be understood as “symbol” rather than as “essence.” Symbols are dynamic, not fixed identities, and their dynamism lies in their power to grow and to liberate, to allow spirit to escape the shell of the past for a new incarnation.<sup>49</sup>

Thus, Emerson finds the figure of “the Poet” as a representative person to be herself a symbol because she reveals to us the true relationship we have to nature. Most people, says Emerson, “cannot report the conversation they have had with nature,” but the poet “traverses the whole scale of experience.”<sup>50</sup> It is the duty of “the Poet” as the “Sayer” of the Universe to know that “Beauty is the creator.” Before there is expression in language, the poet has a “whole new experience.”<sup>51</sup> This is the establishing of that “original relation to the universe” that had been called for at the beginning of *Nature*. Thus, the poet becomes more important for revealing the possibility of human experience in general to have that relationship than for any particular artistic product. In other words, the poet stands for Emerson as a way of existing and experiencing. Our meaningful experiences are not drawn from the thin air but are found in the primary interactions we have with the qualities of the world. The poet experiences the symbolic depth of things as inherent in their being. It is in this sense that Emerson says, “the soul makes the body”: “Here we find ourselves...in a holy place. ...We stand before the secret of the world, where Being passes into Appearance, and Unity into Variety.”<sup>52</sup>

As Dewey would say, Emerson finds the roots of meaning and value constituting experiences in the *aesthetic* contact with the objects of our lives. For example, the oldest known forms of art, the great Magdalenian cave paintings, show a spiritual connection between the hunter and sacred respect for the creature that gives its life in the hunt. Modern hunting, as expression of power over nature, is the result of the general “detachment and dislocation” from nature. For Emerson, it is the poet “who reattaches things to nature, and the Whole.”<sup>53</sup> This is a perpetually needed activity, for the forms that were expressive symbolic connections in the past are the dead literalisms of today. The symbol is the way in which the “angle of vision” is achieved, for “all symbols are fluxional; all language is vehicular and transitive, and is good, as ferries and horses are, for conveyance, not as farms and houses are, for homestead.”<sup>54</sup> The symbol, then, is a process of growth, of transformation, of metamorphosis.

Emerson’s “angle” or “axis of vision” is not an epistemological standpoint arrived at by a careful analytical methodology but an act of self-realization in which the “I” that stands off from nature becomes the medium of the spirit giving life to nature and of nature giving embodiment to the spirit. Of course, we can find here the exaggerations and extremes of Romanticism—the idea of will as the root of personality or the suggestion that the value

of nature lies only in its potential for spiritual meaning. Chinese philosophy, I think, would see this as an unfortunate and unnecessary reflection of the West’s emphasis on individualism and see nature as material for use. It would insist, against the Romantic emphasis on “creativity,” on the value of receptivity, which is not to be confused with passivity. Yin is not *hule*; it listens and its yielding is a response, like a lover’s touch. We must admit that Romanticism is shot through with the needs and anxieties that gave birth to the modern. Yet—and perhaps because of these tendencies—it has acted as a counterpoint to modernism. It has been the West’s way of hearing “the music of nature.” Emerson’s (misunderstood) statements on “self-reliance” must be put in the context of what “self” one is relying upon and how. It is the higher self, or the deeper, creative self if you prefer, and it demands the eradication of all “mean egotism.” Furthermore, we access it through receptivity and silence, not by Promethean act of will. Emerson calls this “intellect receptive.”<sup>55</sup> If the artist inspires us by her ability to express and bring meaning to life, more importantly, the artist shows us how to listen, be open, and, through silence, renew that “axis of vision.”<sup>56</sup>

## V. Aisthesis

As I indicated, Dewey and Santayana, both naturalists (though in very different senses), followed a different aspect of Emerson’s “aesthetics,” Dewey pursuing the theme of integration, Santayana that of liberation. I can only briefly indicate how they both retained the centrality of the aesthetics of existence in their philosophies. Dewey quite severely limited the concern for knowing and contextualized it within the more important concern for experiencing.<sup>57</sup> The theory of inquiry was a modest aspect of the theory of experience; the wholeness and depth of which was treated in Dewey’s understanding of “the consummatory” and aesthetic—hence his claim that the test of any philosophy of experience is its understanding of the aesthetic. The aim of knowledge and education and politics and ethics should be the realization of meaning and value as experiential, consummatory events in human experience. What we needed was to see how what happens in the arts is capable of happening in the range of human experience, and often does, though without the recognition of it as “art.” The most significant way to do this is by developing habits of aesthetic perception, both in the sense of realizing the consummatory as well as seeing its possibilities. Through our care of the expressive potential of the world, we can come to realize it as experienced meaning and value. On a social and cultural level this becomes the ability of communities to integrate themselves with the possibilities of their environments. In Deweyan terms, we see nature’s actualities in terms of possibilities and realize that we are involved to the core of our being with the potentiality of process.

Santayana is enough of a modernist to hand over the “truth” of nature to the physical sciences, poetically and pragmatically understood.<sup>58</sup> We never “know” the realm of matter—the realm of causality—but our scientific symbols come to terms with it. So be it. The ends of life are elsewhere. The realm of spirit is unconcerned with the ebb and flow of events, with the needs, desires, anxieties, and fears of the psyche struggling in the world, being “that inner light of actuality or attention that floods all life as men actually live it on earth.”<sup>59</sup> Taking a step back and simply acknowledging the stupendous, poetic beauty always before us achieves a liberation from all that. The second we abandon concerns for “integration” we see the simple, luminous purity of the non-existential realm of essence. This is to achieve “spirit,” and spirit offers itself as a way, a life, a “realm of spirit.” Santayana speaks of it as a “healing intelligence” that “embitters nothing”; it “comes at any moment and pervades

all times when intuition supplants convention and passion rises into self-knowledge.”<sup>60</sup> “Spirit is the witness of the cosmic dance” in which the self ceases to be the living psyche and becomes a “transcendental centre” concerned with the whole realm of possibility, the “realm of essence,” and so is “infinitely open.”<sup>61</sup> The life of spirit was a discipline of transcendence by the psyche for this joyful impersonality, this gratitude of beauty everywhere. Thus, though Santayana would reject Dewey’s concern for “integration” with the world, like Dewey, Santayana regards the “aesthetic” primarily as a way of experiencing, a discipline of the self as a way of life. Nature and the living self or psyche are the conditions of the life of spirit, and spirit transmutes them into objects of eternal purity.

Dewey treats the aesthetic as a culmination of our engagement with the world that bears within it the history of that interaction; hence, it is a “consummation” that achieves a union or closure in experience, that is, nature. Santayana has enough “natural piety” to acknowledge the parentage of spirit in the flux of matter and the organs of the psyche, but finds its objects, the “essences,” inhabiting a non-existential realm. But both thinkers view the aesthetic as a way of life, a developed way of experiencing, that affects the very meaning and value of our existence. When we place them with Emerson, I believe we can see a rather distinctive line of thought that is promising for developing a “spiritual aesthetics of nature,” which has implications for our being “at home” in the world and so caring for it.

The world is not primarily or even mostly an object for cognition (which is what the modernist tradition has claimed). We exist in the world qualitatively, as lived and suffered, and as relational beings, not as autonomous substances (another modernist theme). Our primary relationship to the world is “aesthetic,” that is, it is non-cognitive, tonal, affective, and expressive, and conditional for any “conscious,” much less cognitive functions. Given the limitations of the word “aesthetic,” let us call this mode of experiencing the world *aisthesis*. *Aisthesis* is the way in which spirit inhabits nature and how nature becomes its home. Cultural traditions tacitly and explicitly educate their members from infancy on to develop special forms of *aisthesis*, that is to say, in fundamental ways of engaging with, of experiencing the meaning of the world.<sup>62</sup> The symbols, language, customs, habits of a culture shape the *aisthesis* of the world for its members. More specifically, how we experience something, the *aisthesis* with which we engage it and how it manifests itself in the world, largely determines how we treat it and think about it.

Humanity is now entering into the phase of its history where we simply must take care of the earth—and with this comes the need to develop global habits of understanding and communication. Philosophy, of all disciplines, should be primarily concerned with this, whatever else it does. Can we articulate an *aisthesis* of nature that can be a home to “spirit” today? Is this an opportunity for genuine dialogue between American and Chinese (or East Asian) philosophy? Though I think Emerson, Dewey, and Santayana are extremely helpful thinkers to consider as we approach this question, yet we can observe how very “Western” they can appear when contrasted with their East Asian counterparts. Emerson pulsates with the Romantic themes of creativity and individuality. Dewey’s consummatory experience seems to be the result of activity trying to harmonize tensions. Santayana echoes Platonism. I think the East Asian traditions have a great deal to teach us. We need to develop our ability to listen to the music of nature, which is not something apart from it, as Kuo Hsiang said. The realization of *aisthesis* comes more from trying to live in harmony with the Tao than from imposing our will on

things. And, by learning to see the emptiness and suchness of things, we may develop compassion. Thus, I think the power of Chinese aesthetics, Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist, may help us develop the sort of way of philosophizing that will contribute to an ecologically wise civilization.

#### Endnotes

1. The term itself is less than three hundred years old.
2. This goes back to the divisions of the Stoa, but even Kant repeats it, though he himself included aesthetics as part of one “leg” of the critical tripod in *The Critique of Judgment*.
3. “Late, late, have I loved thee, Beauty, so ancient and so new.” *Confessions X*, xxvii.
4. *Sources of the Chinese Tradition*, Vol 1, ed. William Theodore de Bary, Wing-Tst Chan and Burton Watson (Columbia University Press, 1960), 240. Even the one point where Western philosophy says something like this, namely, Pythagoreanism and its “harmony of the spheres,” shows the fundamental contrast, for number “orders” and “governs” nature and philosophy turns to mathematics as a catharsis to purify the soul.
5. Greg Whincup. *The Heart of Chinese Poetry* (Anchor Books, 1987), 7.
6. See Thomas Alexander, “The Human Eros,” *Philosophy and the Reconstruction of Culture: Pragmatic Essays after Dewey*, ed. John Stuhr (SUNY Press), 1993 and “John Dewey and the Aesthetics of Human Existence,” *Classical American Pragmatism*, ed. Sandra Rosenthal (University of Illinois Press), 1999.
7. “There has been nothing more without a definition than excellency, although it be what we are more concerned with than anything else whatsoever.” And “This is an universal definition of excellency: The consent of being to being, or being’s consent to entity,” *The Mind*, No 1 (1723) in *A Jonathan Edwards Reader*, ed. John Smith (Yale University Press, 1995), 22, 26. This may be the first time a Taoist philosopher and Jonathan Edwards have been connected in the same breath!
8. *Art as Experience*, p. 274.
9. By “spirit” I mean the fulfillment of human existence in the creative and receptive engagement with the world. It is meant to be inclusive of Emerson’s concept of character, Dewey’s description of “God” as the transhuman interrelation of the ideal and the real, and in Santayana’s idea of spirit as a witness to essence.
10. I realize Romanticism is not a popular approach in contemporary philosophy, but I think the Romantic movement contains the one thing in the Western tradition that we need—and the one with which we might connect with the traditions of integration and liberation in Asian thought. For this reason, too, Emerson is a key figure.
11. Even in Hinduism, where the ideal of transcendence as liberation (moksha) is ultimate, the Hindu experience of the world is in terms of embodied holiness; God is *here*, not “away” and we need to see and feel that.
12. Richard Farella. *The Main Stalk: A Synthesis of Navajo Philosophy* (University of Arizona Press, 1990); James Kale McNeely. *Holy Wind* (University of Arizona Press, 1991).
13. See Plotinus, *Ennead* II.9, “Against the Gnostics.”
14. John Donne. *An Anatomie of the World*, “The First Anniversary,” a poem nominally commemorating the death of Elizabeth Drury.
15. Wordsworth’s and Coleridge’s *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) can be read as consciously offering itself as the antidote to Donne’s alienation and beginning to articulate a vision that evolved into Wordsworth’s great poem *The Prelude* (1805/1850).
16. See Russell Goodman, *American Philosophy and the Romantic Tradition* (Cambridge, 1991).
17. John Dewey, “Emerson—The Philosopher of Democracy” in *Middle Works 3* (SIU Press, 1977 ), pp. 185-92. Dewey’s

- own work takes a significant turn just after this essay due, I believe, to his re-exposure to Emerson at a crucial period in his own development.
18. I have discussed Dewey's metaphysics of aesthetic experience in my *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience, and Nature: The Horizons of Feeling* (SUNY Press, 1987). Dewey's naturalistic humanism or emergentism is the central theme of his major book, *Experience and Nature* (1925, 1927).
  19. *A Common Faith* (1934).
  20. One might argue for the influence of the enigmatic figure of Schopenhauer, upon whom Santayana wished to write for his dissertation until Royce objected. There is something of that high pessimism that is present in Santayana's later thought, especially in terms of "the realm of matter." Both Santayana and Schopenhauer turned toward Platonism and Hindu philosophy for solace and insight.
  21. In this respect much like Dewey's aversion to "religions" in favor of the "religious" quality of experience they often inhibit rather than generate.
  22. Heidegger likewise draws attention to the etymological relation of "thought" and "thank" (*Denken, Danken*); see *What Is Called Thinking?* Part II, Lecture iii.
  23. Emerson, *Nature*, in *Essays and Lectures* (Library of America, 1983), p.8, p. 47.
  24. *Ibid.*, 8.
  25. *Ibid.*, 10. Hence the fortunate or unfortunate image of the "transparent eyeball."
  26. Emerson clearly follows the ascension of Eros in Plato's *Symposium*.
  27. *Ibid.*, 18.
  28. *Ibid.*, 20.
  29. In an essay, J. R. R. Tolkien says that one power "fairy stories" have—that is, stories that truly come from *Faërie*, "the Perilous Kingdom," is "recovery" of our own nature:  
We should look at green again, and be startled anew (but not blinded) by blue and yellow and red... Recovery... is a regaining—regaining of a clear view. We need, in any case, to clean our windows; so that the things seen may be freed from the drab blur of triteness or familiarity—from possessiveness. ... And actually fairy-stories deal largely, or (the better ones) mainly, with simple or fundamental things, untouched by Fantasy, but these simplicities are made all the more luminous by their setting. ... It was in fairy stories that I first divined the potency of the words, and the wonder of the things, such as stone, and wood, and iron; tree and grass; house and fire; bread and wine." "On Fairy-Stories" in J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Tolkien Reader* (Ballantine Books, 1966), 57-59.
  30. The imaginative and metaphoric root of reason has been extensive explored by philosopher Mark L. Johnson and linguist George Lakoff. See Johnson and Lakoff, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago 1983).
  31. Emerson, P. 25. See: "Idealism is a hypothesis to account for nature by other principles than those of carpentry and chemistry," p. 33.
  32. *Ibid.*, 33.
  33. Thomas Taylor's translated selections from *The Enneads* was among Emerson's favorite books.
  34. *Ibid.*, 48.
  35. Experiments that take the Cartesian one-eye perspective and fix the eyeball from moving make the subject increasingly uncertain of the location and eventually nature of the object they are seeing. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Structure of Behavior*.
  36. "Art," *Essays: First Series in Essays and Lectures*, p. 431. Dewey makes much the same point in *Arts Experience*.
  37. *Ibid.*, 432.
  38. *Ibid.*, 433. Perhaps an echo of Edwards' "excellency" is present in this passage.
  39. *Ibid.*, 434.
  40. *Ibid.*, 437-38.
  41. *Ibid.*, 439.
  42. *Ibid.*, 440.
  43. "The Over-Soul" in *Essays and Addresses*, p. 385. See, for example, the story Wordsworth tells in Book I of *The Prelude* in which he takes a rowboat at night and, in row up to a cliff beneath the stars, has a dim stirring of the divinity within and above nature.
  44. *Ibid.*, 386
  45. *Ibid.*, 387.
  46. *Ibid.*, 388
  47. "The Poet," 447.
  48. *Ibid.*
  49. See the account of the sculptor of Phosphorus in "The Poet," pp. 458-59. See also "The Over-Soul," p. 389.
  50. *Ibid.*, 448.
  51. *Ibid.*, 450.
  52. *Ibid.*, 453.
  53. *Ibid.*, 455.
  54. *Ibid.*, 463.
  55. This is worked out in some detail in "Intellect," an essay Dewey especially admired for its insights into the "unsaid" or "silent logic" in thought ("Emerson—The Philosopher of Democracy"); see Dewey's own emphasis on this at the end of Chapter 2 in *Art as Experience*.
  56. "Happy is the hearing man; unhappy the speaking man. ... The waters of the deep have ingress and egress to the soul. But if I speak I define, I confine and am less. ... The ancient sentence said, Let us be silent, for so are the gods. Silence is a solvent that destroys personality, and gives us leave to be great and universal," p. 426.
  57. This is why it is incorrect to label Dewey by the term "instrumentalism." Instrumentalism is the part of Dewey's philosophy that pertains to inquiry; his philosophy of experience is far broader than concerns with "knowledge," as "The Postulate of Immediate Empiricism" and *Experience and Nature* explicitly say.
  58. See *The Realm of Truth* (Scribners, 1938).
  59. *The Realm of Spirit* (Scribners, 1940), p. vii.
  60. *Ibid.*, xi.
  61. *Ibid.*, 8, 10-12.
  62. This is necessary in fulfilling what I have described elsewhere as "the Human Eros," the primary drive we have as human beings to experience the world with meaning and value. Thomas Alexander. "The Human Eros." In *Philosophy and the Reconstruction of Culture*, ed. John Stuhr (SUNY Press, 1993), 203-22 and "Between Being and Emptiness: Toward and Eco-Ontology of Inhabitation." In *In Dewey's Wake.*, ed. Bill Gavin (SUNY Press, 2003), 129-60.