

The Chinese
Continuum
of Self-Cultivation

The Chinese Continuum of Self-Cultivation:

*A Confucian-Deweyan
Learning Model*

By

Christine A. Hale

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Dedicated to:

Ben-Ami Scharfstein

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

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FOREWORD

In *The Chinese Continuum of Self-cultivation: A Confucian Deweyan Learning Model*, Christine A. Hale has developed a hybridic philosophy of education—dare we say a Confucian pragmatism—grounded in the precepts of Confucian philosophy and the extensive research undertaken by pragmatist John Dewey in education and democracy as a response to the globalizing pressures of our own times. The targets of her critique are the prevailing ideology of individualism, anthropocentrism, and the almost default model of competitive individual actors winning and losing in the zero-sum interactions in almost every dimension of modern life: corporate commerce, international relations, sports, environmental exploitation, and so on. She has taken advantage of the best scholarship by many of the most distinguished scholars in Confucian philosophy, pragmatism, and higher education, and in making her arguments for an original twenty-first century philosophy of education, has made these resources her own.

Over the past two decades many scholars in seats of higher education in both China and the West have made much of resonances that can be gleaned from a dialogue between Deweyan pragmatism and Confucianism. At the heart of this movement is the Dewey Center at Fudan University in Shanghai and its sustained effort to orchestrate a team of Chinese scholars to produce an authoritative translation of John Dewey's complete works (37 volumes). Peking University Press sponsors a series that so far has produced translations of the eight most influential secondary sources on Dewey's pragmatism: Hickman, Rockefeller, Westbrook, Campbell, Fesmire, and so on.

This monograph could not have been written earlier. Hale traces this Deweyan-Confucian dialogue back to its origins in Dewey's two-year sojourn in the revolutionary "May fourth" China of 1919-21. Interestingly, there is a parallel between the anti-Confucian sentiments of Chinese intellectuals that has fueled this internal critique through the Maoist era up to the last decade of the twentieth century, and in America the virtual disappearance of Deweyan philosophy after the Second World War. It is only in the past generation that we have witnessed a revival of Confucian philosophy domestically in China as well as internationally, a turn that has

become exponential with the establishment of Institutes of Canonical Learning (*guoxueyuan*) on the campuses of nearly every university across China and with the international collaboration with the Chinese Ministry of Education of universities across the globe in the establishment of over 450 Confucius Institutes (*Kongzi xueyuan*). At the same time, there has been a resurgence of interest in pragmatism within the corridors of professional philosophy that began in the early eighties, and that now has become a phenomenon with international reach and influence.

We might understand this new philosophy of education as Hale's response to the fragmentation of contemporary society that has been fostered by post-modern values and its deconstructionist forces. Nowhere is this phenomenon more evident than in the transformation of more communitarian liberal values into a libertarianism in which neo-liberal individualism has become a pernicious ideology in the sense that in a post-Marxist rejection of a faceless collectivism, the doctrine of an autonomous, free, rational, and self-interested individual is the only game in town. But Hale through her research in both Confucianism and Dewey is keenly aware that such a concept of independent individuals is a fiction. We do not live our lives inside our skins.

Both Confucianism and Deweyan pragmatism offer a robust alternative to this fiction of individualism with a theorizing of person that begins from the primacy of a vital relationality. While this core notion of relational individuality is a common place in Confucian cosmology (and the other traditions such as Daoism and Buddhism), Dewey (with William James and George Herbert Mead) introduces a concept into the Western academy that is flat-out revolutionary.

Hale's argument drawing on these resources is that persons as "selves" are the product of physical, psychological, and cultural association in family and community, and are thus in all respects, irreducibly social. Their individuality, far from being a quantitative beginning, is the achievement of distinctive persons who through a regimen of self-cultivation (or education) achieve this distinction not exclusive of their relations, but by virtue of the quality they develop in the roles and relations they live, and that come to constitute them. Persons become persons through the process of a shared learning that we call education.

As Hale suggests, both Confucianism and Deweyan pragmatism are sustained challenges to our commonsense realism that separates self from

other, person from world, and knower from what is known. The correlative (or abductive) thinking that serves as an alternative to this realism begins from the normative nature of immediate, felt experience—the ordinary human experience as both source and ultimate warrant for our philosophical theorizing. As Hale argues, this conception of “self” as a learning model far from surrendering its uniqueness serves as a model in which particularity is more pronounced than familiar “essentialist” understandings of person in which we are assumed to be essentially the same (all children of God, bearers of an immortal soul, a locus of human rights, and so on) and only incidentally different.

In developing her arguments, Hale evidences a familiarity with the original sources and the terms of art of both the Chinese and the pragmatic traditions. Her reliance on Tu Wei-ming’s interpretation of the Confucian tradition—perhaps the most distinguished advocate of this tradition in both the Western and Chinese academy today—is well-chosen. She also appeals to the emerging American versions of Confucianism that are associated with scholars working in Boston and Honolulu. Given Tu’s emphasis on Confucian religiousness, Hale is able to register the importance of spirituality in education and the production of knowledge.

Embracing the holism that is corollary to the primacy of vital relationality, Hale is able to be inclusive of body and environment in the process of self-cultivation that underlies the evolving emergence of person. Bringing a concrete dimension to her hermeneutical investigation, she asks the question: To what extent does this Confucian and Deweyan understanding of the learning model inform the recent waves of progressive educational reforms we are witnessing in China itself? She cites authoritative sources that provide a fair account of this recent process, and quite properly defers judgment on its ultimate success.

Hale concludes this tour de force by trying to formulate a transcultural philosophy of education grounded in the “whole self”—the radically situated (local) person who is fully cognizant of cosmic implications (global) of human education and development.

Roger T. Ames
University of Hawai’i

PREFACE

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

By uncovering and describing the a-cultural universalities of self, an effective cross-cultural framework can be developed as a pragmatic and sustainable response to 21st century globality in the current and future generations. China's historical, cultural, and philosophical continuum—contextualizing the present with the past as the basis of their educational goals—is considered. The Chinese education system, as a work in progress, ideally wishes to meet these specific goals of maintaining cultural identity and the communitarian self in a globalized world. The elements addressed for this contextual background is the history and influence of Deweyan thought in China (Dewey lectured in China for two years, 1919-1921), the turmoil of China's 20th century education systems (tightly intertwined with its volatile politics), and the PRC's current education reform initiatives. China has a continuous and, effectively,

unbroken 5,000 year old civilization with a tradition of formal education of almost 2,000 years. China remains, in the 21st century, a country of diverse demographics comprising 20% of the world's population; a developing nation with an ever-increasing geo-political and economic presence on the world stage.

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

Christine A. Hale

Note to Readers:

- Chinese transliteration of pinyin has been used throughout this work except where authors quoted have used the Wade-Giles system of Romanization (pre-1990s).
- Both simplified and traditional characters have been cited as appropriate to quoted author's usage and the conventions of current Chinese philosophic writings.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

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

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

Existential disconnection is endemic in post-modern society. Disconnection is a major, if not core, contributor to social and psychological fragmentation; lack of empathy for the other, violence, and xenophobia, to name but a few of the many dysfunctions when sense of self is one of isolation (Hale 2013, Laszlo 2008). How one views one’s self in the

context of the other—one's sense of community, connection, and belonging—is an embedded social and cultural phenomenon. If one's self is perceived as *tantamount* in importance to the other, whether or not the other is of differing personal, social, cultural, and/or ecological worlds, then social and natural harmony is achievable. It is the formative process of education which can facilitate such a cultural shift; creating a future determined by empathetic and aware citizens who critically think relative to long term sustainability in every aspect of life. Perception of the equality of self and other is crucial for a collective move towards a harmonious and sustainable world ecologically, economically and culturally. Sustainable change in the external world can only be instigated by the collective movement of individuals' shifting *inner attitudes* as a result of *experience*, rather than externally imposed notions appealing to the intellect alone. It is on this idea that the philosophy of education explored herein is based.

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

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

As overviewed in Chapter Two, the concept of post-modern 'self' in Western thinking tends to be interchangeable with the word 'individual' and is considered predominantly in terms of the physical (a discrete

organism), social and psychological contexts and their interplay within these areas of life and living. Self, in Western thought, also has certain theological and metaphysical interpretations; interpretations that are subject to individual scholars' definitions and not commonly incorporated into wider societal thinking and life considerations. Confucian perspectives of self and the individual, on the other hand, have clear secularized and essentially widely and historically agreed upon interrelated definitions that seamlessly overlap and incorporate the physical, metaphysical, social and psychological realms. These ideas are embedded in the Chinese way of thinking from the mundane to the profound. Chinese philosophy, merged with the educational theory of the American pragmatic philosopher, John Dewey (1859–1952), creates what is termed here a Confucian-Deweyan learning model of self-cultivation.

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

Self and individual is viewed traditionally in Western philosophy by varied approaches, which more often than not, tend to be mutually exclusive. That is, the self can be viewed respectively through the lenses of ethics, existentialism, metaphysics, or pragmatism, to name a few sub-fields of Western philosophy. The self is a highly complex multidimensional entity, forming and informing both tangible (outer) and intangible (inner) worlds of self and the other. This we know through common sense experience. In Western philosophy, the metaphysical and pragmatic aspects of self are viewed as two exclusive schools of thought—with differing means of analyses—which are generally anathematic to each other.

The reader will find within this work not only a seamless merging of the metaphysical and pragmatic aspects of self—as exemplified in Chinese thought—but, in conjunction with Deweyan philosophy, there is a further enhancement and refinement of these self-same concepts. Cross-cultural universalities of self are more accessible when viewed through a Confucian-Deweyan lens. In a now globalized world we need to find correlations (albeit definitively tenuous in the initial explorations) with other cultures’ philosophies and worldviews to mutually enhance and extend the respective traditions. In Chinese philosophy, metaphysics and pragmatism go hand in hand; there is no distinct demarcations of the interrelated aspects of self, all aspects form and inform self and other in a two-way dynamism indicative of personal and social evolution.

The vehicle of Chinese philosophy—which historically recognizes the interrelatedness all things—in conjunction with Deweyan thought, make the ideal platform for the purposes of the project undertaken here. The wholistic approach to self, life, and living inherent in both Chinese and Deweyan thinking enables greater depth of consideration in the education of the individual. This philosophic hybrid provides cross-cultural relevance due to certain universalities of the human condition being addressed in both philosophies. The Confucian-Deweyan self is a communitarian self, not without unique individualistic drives and motivations, but these drives and motivations are informed by values which connect with the greater whole and the greater good of the whole. Accordingly, the greater whole is served by how the self processes information into knowledge which is then applied to enhance the inner and outer worlds of the individual.

The Self as Learner

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

and global). Knowledge, as such, also informs the complex inner worlds of the individual, enabling the self to reflect and subsequently evolve in the process of, not just being, but becoming. This idea of a dynamic self in the process of information→knowledge transference is outlined in the following diagram:

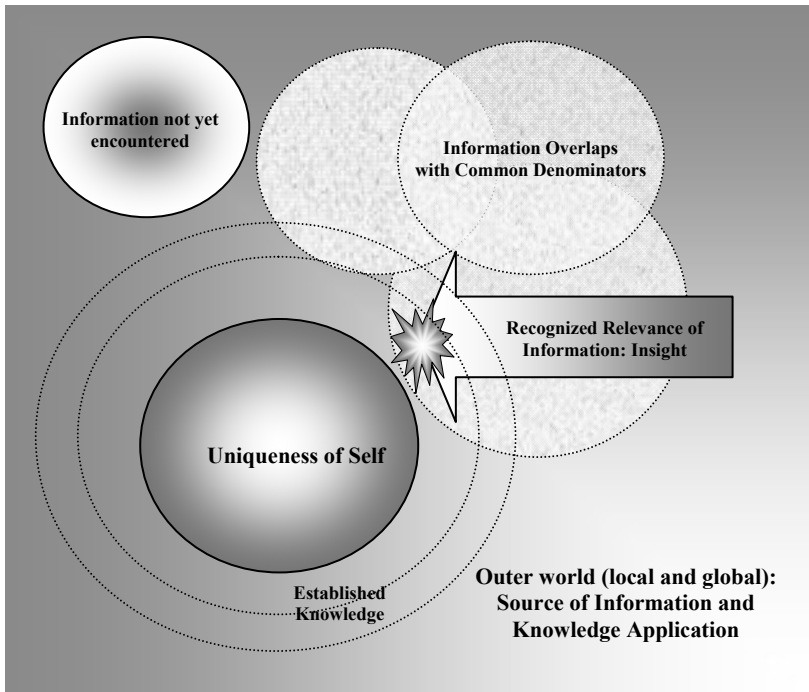


Figure 1.1 Self embedded in the world of information events

The events of information (denoted by the upper right hand circles, sometimes overlapping with shared elements) enter the concentric spheres of the individual's formerly established, consolidated, and integrated knowledge systems. Circles closer to the 'Uniqueness of Self' centre denote the more integrated and consolidated knowledge systems which inform, and therefore creates, the individual's unique perspectives. These knowledge systems, as continually amended by the influx of new knowledge, informs the self in a multi-faceted, constant dynamic—a dynamic particular to that individual—which, in turn, is applied to the outside world. The depiction of dotted lines around each outer circle (self and information events, respectively) represent the permeability of self with the outside world and the transferability and interconnection of information.

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

[The individual] came to be divorced from its original connection with social community ... [when] the liberal political tradition that developed from this conception emphasized the “bare” individual as bearer of absolute personal rights, as the parallel tradition of laissez-faire economics emphasized the purely egoistical rational agent. (2003, 168)

This situation in the West, whereby the individual became “divorced from its original connection with social community”, certainly needs to be redressed and the self (as the intentional agent of the individual) reconnect in respect to the other as exemplified in both Confucian and Deweyan thought. Hence, the educational model explored—as an amalgam of Western and Chinese approaches—has transcultural relevance for both Asian¹ and Western educational theory.

The humanistic universality of a Confucian-Deweyan self as the core of an educational philosophy, not only addresses the original idea of the individual as cited above, but emphasizes the concept of education for the betterment of community. That is, education which instigates empathy and the inner evolvment of self, not education that emphasizes *solely* the future socio-economic mobility of the individual; a philosophy of education whereby the self is in connection with the other for societal evolvment as a whole. Such an educational theory would also address the growing phenomenon of glocalization: “... a complex interaction of the global and local characterized by cultural borrowing” (Steger 2009, 77).

It is this “cultural borrowing”, the absorption of elements from other cultures to enhance localized culture and society—as opposed to one

culture subsuming another—which is appearing to be a strong counter-trend to global homogeneity as developing countries gain economic and, in turn, cultural confidence (Berking 2003; Bhawuk 2008; Lauderdale, 2008). If this is the case, there will be a need for an educational philosophy flexible enough to be adapted to specific cultural perspectives and community values whilst enabling the acquirement of 21st century technical, cross-disciplinary and critical thinking skills. That is, an educational philosophy which enables the self (learner) embedded in community—coupled with the complexity of the self’s unique worldview—to be a pivotal aspect of the learning process.

A Confucian-Deweyan self, with its universal humanistic and metaphysical denominators, provides a flexible platform to encompass and address the complexity of diverse cultural elements which are often ignored (if not completely unknown) when transposing Western educational models into non-Western contexts. A Confucian-Deweyan self developed into an educational philosophy would enable the learner—within her particular cultural perspectives—to be the centre of the educational process. That is, the learner constructs on-going knowledge schemas (from information received, which is accordingly processed and consolidated into former knowledge systems) to be applied into her world, determining future goals from her own unique perspectives in concert with the other. This is a creative process whereby the self forms and informs the world, rather than being subsumed by external forces; self-determination as empowerment in balance with the other. Such a model encourages a bottom-up, as opposed to a top-down, educational process involving all stakeholders. A bottom-up approach is illustrated in Chapter Six which outlines China’s on-going educational reforms.

Background to the Confucian Element

Confucianism is often viewed colloquially as a relic from feudal China, incompatible with a progressive 21st century society. In this simplistic view, there are predominantly misunderstandings regarding the notion of ‘filial piety’ (孝 *xiao*); unquestioning devotion of child to parent and, consequentially, individual deferment to the state, for example.² Confucianism, in fact, embodies a highly sophisticated metaphysics of self and a complex processual model of self-cultivation (*xiushen* 修身). The cohering key being the concept of ‘intellectual intuition’ or ‘embodied knowing’ (智的直覺 *zhi de zhi jue* or, in Wade-Giles transliteration, *chih te chih-chueh*), which the contemporary Confucian, Tu Weiming, describes

as “a direct knowledge of reality without logical reasoning or inference. But, unlike what is commonly associated with mysticism, it has very little to do with revelation” (1985a, 20).

This concept of intellectual intuition, in its machinations, can be adequately correlated to the term ‘insight’; in a sense, ‘eureka moments’ of greater or lesser degrees which can also be sets of insights in a series of cognitive moments—a *knowing*.³ That is, one can have a major insight as a result of a problem solving process, or a series of minor and almost imperceptible insights as information is being absorbed into former knowledge systems making connections that were formerly unknown. Tu’s interpretation of Confucian self-cultivation and intellectual intuition is accessible to the Western mind, and hence, presents as the ideal approach in developing the project in hand. Tu Weiming’s interpretation of these concepts and the full processual framework of knowledge schematization towards self-cultivation are discussed in Chapter Three, as is Confucian metaphysics.

Background to the Deweyan Element

John Dewey (1859–1952), the American process philosopher and educationalist, arrived in China on May 1st 1919 and stayed for 22 months. The timing of his visit was significant as it coincided with the student uprising which became known as the May Fourth Movement of 1919—a protest against the signing of the post-WWI Versailles Treaty which handed over formerly occupied German territories in China to Japan (J. Ching-Sze Wang 2007; Dykhuizen 1973).

The young Chinese republic--founded three years before the outbreak of war [WW I] -- gained little from its status as an ally. The 1919 Treaty of Versailles handed over control of Germany's colonial possessions in China to Japan ... China's humbling at Versailles had dramatic effects back home, triggering student protests that morphed into a modernising movement which contributed to the growth of the Communist Party (*The Economist* April 24, 2010, 41).⁴

Dewey arrived in the midst of one of the most tumultuous, yet intellectually active periods of modern Chinese history. Chinese nationalism had risen to fever pitch after the allied betrayal at Versailles and the intelligentsia was impatient to modernize and adopt Western ideas after the corruption, ineffectiveness, and subsequent collapse of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911), ending some 5,000 years of dynastic rule. Dewey’s

ideas were quickly spread by his former students from Columbia University (who had initially invited Dewey to China) and associated influential opinion leaders—most notable of the group was Hu Shih (胡適 1891-1962), Liang Shuming (梁漱溟 1893-1988), and Jiang Menglin (蔣夢麟 1886-1964, aka Chiang Monlin)—who had already established themselves as leading educators and intellectuals in the reform movement. Accordingly, Dewey’s former students “followed up [Dewey’s visit] with energetic action in the application of pragmatic philosophy to the concrete *sociopolitical* and educational concerns” (Ching 1985, 261, emphasis in text).

Although he lectured broadly across these areas, Dewey’s impact was most notable in education. Yet, despite Deweyan education theory becoming policy at the National Educational Conference in 1922 (Billings 1981; Pepper 1996), practical implementation became fragmented during the subsequent reform period as proponents of Dewey were becoming disengaged as cross-currents of both ideas and events took over the fledgling Nationalist government (Pepper 1996, 91). It is only now, in the more confident and stable post-Mao period, that Deweyan pragmatism and process philosophy has embedded itself in Confucian thinking. A fundamental reason for this is that Dewey defines the self predominately as socially constructed through *lived* experience: “Apart from the ties which bind him [the human being] to others, [s]he is nothing” (Dewey *Later Works* 7:323). This is not a negative or nihilistic perspective of the self, but on the contrary, an affirmation of the uniqueness of the individual in contrast and definition to the other. Dewey’s humanistic idea of self embedded in the world, formed and informed by the other, is highly compatible with Confucian thought.

For Dewey ... heart-and-mind [*xin* 心] is created in the process of realizing a world. Heart-and-mind, like world, is *becoming* rather than *being*, and the question is how productive and enjoyable are we able to make this creative process. The way in which heart-and-mind and world are changed is not simply in terms of human attitude, but in real growth and productivity, and in the efficiency and pleasure that attends this process. The alternative – for community to fail to communicate effectively – is for the community to wither, leaving it vulnerable to the “mindless” violence and “heartless” atrocities of creatures that have failed to become human (Ames 2003, 408, emphases in text).

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

living experience, which is characterized as an ongoing process (Wen 2009, 45).

Furthermore, within this agreement on the nature of self embedded in its sociological, cultural and experiential humanity—explicit in Confucian and Deweyan thought—is the notion of *creatio in situ* (Wen 2009). That is, a state of “*becoming* rather than *being*” (as Ames states above) whereby becoming is an ongoing, creative, dynamic process: the self as co-creator in interconnection with the other. This idea refutes the notion of an isolated, existentially discrete entity in a state of passivity and places the individual as an active but equal element in concert with the other to imaginatively form the world. Accordingly, the self is empowered in tandem with the other in mutually informing syntheses. These ideas are discussed in Chapters Three and Four, and applied to the said educational model in Chapters Six and Seven.

Despite these agreements between Confucian and Deweyan thought on the dynamic social embedded-ness of our humanity, these two philosophies differ when addressing the metaphysical definitions of self: the Confucian self involves an interconnection of well-defined cosmological implications⁵ and the Deweyan self, in fact, has no *explicit* metaphysics. Dewey wrote in essay format and did not articulate a systematic philosophy with a clearly defined ontology. Nevertheless, there are *implicit* metaphysics in Dewey’s ideas of self and fundamental agreements with Confucian concepts of self. The self of Confucianism strongly enhances Deweyan thought; together creating a sophisticated model of pragmatism: Confucian Pragmatism.⁶ Dewey’s communitarian self in on-going becoming, creatively forming and informing the outer world, enables a strong correlation with Confucian metaphysics and, by extension, Confucian pragmatic thought and action. This is discussed in Chapter Four.

The combined ideas of Deweyan and Confucian personhood—nature of self (*xing* 性), positioned with person in the world (*ren* 人) and humanity (仁) in co-creativity (*sheng* 生)—in the framework of education are developed after respective analyses of each philosophy. The following diagram outlines the merging of these two schools of thinking in an educational context as the core concept of this work:

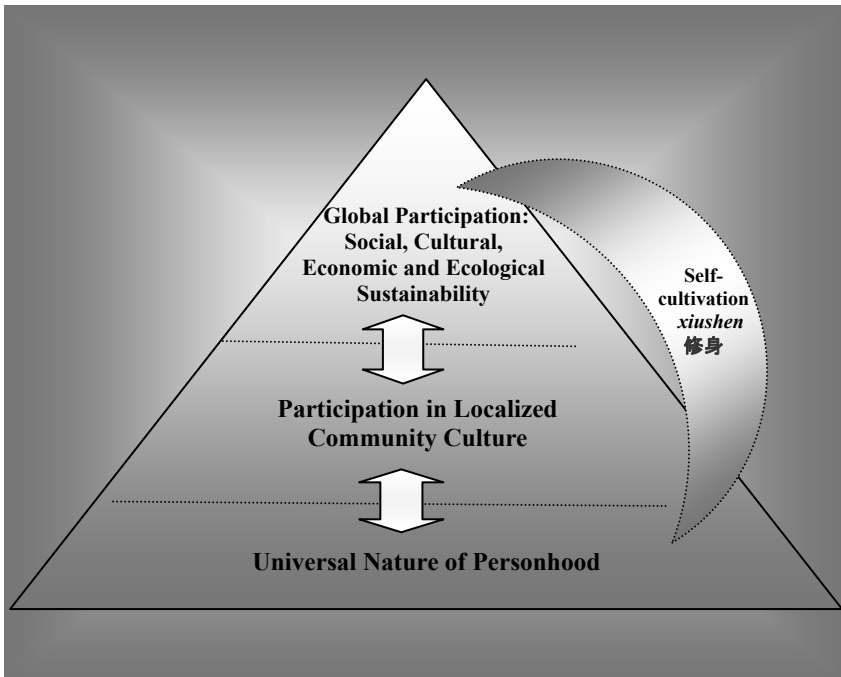


Figure 1.2 Mutually Informing Aspects of Evolving Personhood
A Confucian-Deweyan Model

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

Globalization, Glocalization, and Education

[Globalization is] a set of theories that provide researchers with conceptual tools for analyzing and understanding current economic, cultural, and technological changes, as well as “a process and a phenomenon” that is experienced in complex, uneven, and varied ways by people across

different places or locales. As a process and a phenomenon, globalization has “to be actively implemented, reproduced, serviced and financed” and it “relies for its functioning on several overlapping structures and relations from the local, to the national, to the global.” In other words, globalization is not a predetermined force that pushes and molds local contexts into uniform shapes. (Singh 2004, 103)⁷

Globalization of education refers to the worldwide discussions, processes, and institutions affecting local educational practices and policies. The key in this statement is the word “worldwide”. This means that events are happening on a global scale that affect national school systems. That is, global educational policies and practices exist in a superstructure above national and local schools. Nothing is static in this image. (Spring 2009, 1)

Accordingly, in developing the model herein, globalization and the issue of events “happening on a global scale that affect national school systems” is approached from a cultural perspective. The stance of the eminent political scientist, Samuel P Huntington, is taken into consideration as a valid call to underscore the importance of cultural understanding, mainly due to possible conflict flashpoints if cultures cannot harmoniously co-exist. Arguably, there is an urgent need for tolerance: understanding the unique ways in which other cultures function, incorporating a high degree of empathy with the other—crucial factors for the future of world peace. In his now famous paper ‘The Clash of Civilizations?’ (1993), Huntington claims that the future cause of world conflict will not be political ideology, the clash of nation-states, nor economic forces primarily, but that of potential conflict between civilizations. In this paper Huntington outlines six compelling arguments for his thesis:

(1) “differences among civilizations are not only real; they are basic”, (2) “the world is becoming a smaller place. The interactions between peoples of different civilizations are increasing”, (3) “the processes of economic modernization and social change throughout the world are separating people from longstanding local identities”, (4) “the growth of civilization-consciousness is enhanced by the dual role of the West. On the one hand, the West is at a peak of power. At the same time, however, and perhaps as a result, a return to the roots phenomenon is occurring among non-Western civilizations”, (5) “cultural characteristics and differences are less mutable and hence less easily compromised and resolved than political and economic ones, and (6) “economic regionalism is increasing” (28-9).

Huntington’s article is almost prescient given he wrote this in 1993: pre-9/11 (an event which, arguably, created deeper cultural schisms and instigated the ‘war on terror’); pre-GFC (post-GFC boosted developing