

REANIMATING THE UNIVERSE:
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND
PHILOSOPHICAL ANIMISM
Heesoon Bai

If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is: infinite.

—William Blake (1958)

PRELUDE

Arne Johan Vetlesen, in his study of empathy and moral conduct, makes a compelling case that the most destructive kind of crime is not the crime of passion but of *psychic numbing*,¹ the inability to feel, especially the suffering and pain of others. Not being able to perceive and feel the humanity in the other, psychically numbed criminals technicize and industrialize killing to the point that killing becomes just a technical problem. Thus, Vetlesen (1994) reports, at its peak of “productivity” Auschwitz killed “more than twenty thousand Jews in one twenty-hour period” (p. 184). Compare this record with the current alarming rate of species extinction brought on by human beings’ rapacious presence on this planet.² What we are witnessing is ecocide. Could it be that this ecocide is due to humanity’s inability to perceive and feel the intrinsic worth of the other—in this case, nonhuman beings?

If, as Vetlesen argues, there is an essential connection between psychic numbing and the kind of numb indifference that is destructive to the world, this understanding would be a powerful interpretive lens through which to investigate our destructive attitude and treatment of the environment. The thesis that such ecological psychic numbing has become a pervasive condition in modernity has been put forth by a number of thinkers in our time. Thomas Berry speaks of our collective spiritual “autism” with respect to Nature,³ observing that we have lost the ability to hear Nature. To our “deaf” ears, Nature is silent, and hence is the domain of dead matter. Raimundo Pannikar (1992), in outlining a nonary of priorities that challenge humankind today, names mechanistic and rationalistic worldviews as the topmost impediment to achieving an ecological renewal. He declares that “[n]o ecological renewal of the world will ever succeed until and unless we consider the Earth as our own Body and the body as our own Self”; and that “[t]he Earth is neither an object of knowledge nor of desire”; and that peace with the earth “requires

collaboration, synergy, a new awareness" (p. 244). Pannikar calls for a recovery of *animism*. I am profoundly moved by such a call, and this chapter is a response to his call. R. D. Laing (1980) is another thinker who points to the loss of "the *experience* of a bond between our experience and the universe of which it is a part, not apart" (p. 16). This loss precipitates in us an altogether instrumentalist mindset that "recommends [nature's] manipulation, control . . . exploitation and destruction" (p. 16). These atrocities are "not only allowable, not only barred by no prohibition, but gleefully and avidly pursued with self-congratulatory encomiums with the reckless abandon of extreme spiritual depravity" (p. 16). These are strong words, and we must take them like a strong medicine.

How can we reanimate our numbed perceptual consciousness so that the earth appears to us in full sentence and presence? How shall we recover the sensations and feelings in our numbed psyche so that we see, hear, feel the joy and pain, wonder and despair, in experiencing the earth and all its biotic communities? This is the quintessential question and quest that we face as we enter the *Ecozoic Age*, "the period when humans will be present to the planet as participating members of the comprehensive Earth community" (Berry, 1999, p. 8). It is not until we recover the faculty of animated perception, and experiencing the earth as an order of sentient beings that a fundamental change to our heedless and rapacious ways will take place. With this objective in mind, I first inquire how perceptual consciousness came to be de-animated in the first place. How did we become so numb, deaf, and blind when it comes to our perception of and feelings toward the earth community? Here, my aim is not a systematic examination, as such would take me deep and far into scholarship in archaeology and comparative civilization. Rather, I aim to work with a couple of diagnostic pulse points in the history of intellectual ideas, which gain us an insight into how we may address the problem. Such pulse points are, as shown here, Plato and René Descartes, the Grand Architects of western thought. I argue, along with other theorists, that Plato and Descartes made a decisive, immense, and enduring contribution to the creation of the disembodied and disembodied self and its attendant de-animated consciousness in the west.

Based on the insight gained from the first task, my second task is to explore a way to reanimate our disembodied perception. Can we *do* our perception differently so that the world may appear to us in its full intrinsic worth or, to speak in a more metaphysical language, in its numinous presence of Being? In answering this question, I suggest that the key to altering our normally disembodied perception is reversing the habitual superimposition of the conceptual over the perceptual. What could this seemingly esoteric sounding practice mean? A detailed explication of this practice awaits us in this chapter.

My hope is that this chapter helps environmental educators see that their fundamental task is to change, not just the content of our perception, but the very modality of perception. In his essay, *The Doors of Perception*, Aldous Huxley (1977) asks this rhetorical question: "[W]hen 'the sea flows in our veins . . . and the stars are our jewels,' when all things are perceived as infinite and holy, what motive can we have for covetousness or self-assertion, for the pursuit of power or the drearier forms of pleasure?" (pp. 27–28). I add: "and for the ecocide of the Earth?" William Blake (1958) says that "If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite" (p. 101). When we can *see* the world as a sacred space, then it is most unlikely that we would violate and exploit the world. The question is: How do we cleanse the doors of perception?

DESCARTES' AUTISM

In my diagnostic palpation of our collective psychic numbing with respect to the earth, I start not with Plato, the customary starting point, but with Descartes. My reason for this order is based on a sound diagnostic principle: Start with observing the symptoms. Descartes is a full-

blown symptom of Plato, and by clearly understanding how the Cartesian perception of the world operates and manifests, we shall be able to trace these symptoms back accurately to the defining features of Plato's philosophy that are responsible for the Cartesian perception.

It is true that Descartes bashing is quite fashionable these days. He is blamed for just about all the modern ills. In his defense, we need to see that, although undoubtedly a genius, he, too, was after all a symptom of his time. The idea of the clockwork Mechanical Universe was not his invention alone: It was part of the mechanical worldview then newly rising in 17th-century Europe. Descartes' decisive contribution, however, was his working out an ontology, and an epistemology to accompany it, that gave a philosophical justification for this worldview. In the present context, what I focus on is Descartes' theory of substance. This is how Descartes (1644/1985) defines substance: "By substance we can conceive nothing else than a thing which exists in such a way as to stand in need of nothing beyond itself in order for its existence" (p. 156). For Descartes, as for his and many of our own contemporaries, there are two fundamental substances in this universe: the mental or mind and the physical or matter. According to Descartes' understanding of substance, these two substances are completely independent of each other, meaning that they are separate entities and have nothing in common. In other words, whatever one is, the other is not that. Hence, the mental and the physical are mutually exclusive of each other. Given this absolute separateness of the two substances, Descartes had difficulty explaining how a human being was made up of both substances in a seemingly integrated manner. Such difficulty aside, Descartes' argument that human beings are made of two categorically separate substances was given ready and wide endorsement among leading philosophers of his day.⁴

The most disturbing implication of Descartes' theory of substances is just how degraded matter becomes when it is seen as having nothing to do with mind. When mind, or the mental faculty, is defined as the essence and perfection of humanity, it becomes therefore its most valuable possession. If matter is what mind is not, and mind is the only thing that has intrinsic value, then matter is just a stuff that has no intrinsic value and therefore has only instrumental value. This kind of degraded perception of matter is taken for granted in Descartes' ontology. Just how far Descartes took this degradation is seen in his formal definition of matter. He argued that "[t]he nature of body consists not in weight, hardness, colour, or the like, but simply in extension" (p. 224). What distinguishes matter is that it takes up space! Nothing else. He goes on to say that "[t]here is no real difference between space and corporeal substance" since "the extension constituting the nature of a body is exactly the same as that constituting the nature of a space" (p. 227). What Descartes did, with his theory of matter as extension, is basically stripping the object world of all qualities that make the world colorful and vivacious.

If we were confirmed and serious Cartesians, we would locate color, texture, and so on, in our perception rather than in the objects. Moreover, the qualities that would elicit and evoke our feelings of gratitude, respect, or even reverence, fondness, care, sympathy, and so on, do not belong to, are not part of, the objects themselves. All this has grave implications for the way we relate to and treat the world. When a person looks at his lover and thinks that the beauty that he previously thought belonged to his lover no longer does, and that it is he himself who is constructing his lover's beauty in his mind, would his admiration for his lover's beauty increase or decrease? Chances are that his lover would not appear so beautiful! The old saying that beauty is in the eyes of the beholder becomes a literal truth. To look at the natural world through the Cartesian lens is to see it stripped of sensuous qualities that have the power to profoundly move us emotionally. Berry (1996) rightly discerned the implications of Cartesian ontology when he vehemently cries out:

In [a] single stroke [Descartes], in a sense, killed the planet and all its living creatures with the exception of the human. The thousandfold voices of the natural world suddenly became

inaudible to the human. The mountains and rivers and the wind and the sea all became mute insofar as humans were concerned. The forests were no longer the abode of an infinite number of spirit presences but were simply so many board feet of lumber to be "harvested" as objects to be used for human benefit. Animals were no longer the companions of humans in the single community of existence. They were denied not only their inherent dignity, but even their rights to habitat. (p. 410)

When I first read this passage, it was as though I suddenly gained some additional senses, by which I could see, hear, and feel, even if still somewhat inarticulately, the intelligible and animated presence of beings around me. The trees outside my window, the blue sky above, the air that I was breathing in and out: All these and everything else that entered my consciousness at that moment seemed to have been transformed from being hardly noticeable, matter-of-factly mundane stuffs to being extraordinarily alive beings, full of life and "magic" of their own. The Cartesian curse was broken for me.

The Cartesian Universe is inanimate. It is *merely* "a senseless, impersonal aggregate of matter in motion" (Kohák, 1984, p. 211). It does not speak to us, we do not hear it; it does not touch us, and we are not moved by it, at least not in the way of *biophilia* (Orr, 1994). Biophilia means the love of and appreciation for Nature or biosphere and all the beings it contains. When we look at the world through a biophilic view, trees, animals, streams, mountains, and all that exists in Nature elicits in us deep feelings of love, gratitude, compassion, care, and respect. We appreciate their aliveness, and are emotionally affected by their presence. We are enlivened and enriched by their flourishing presence. Or we are moved to pity and compassion for their suffering and diminishment. We are even moved to indignation and rage toward those who abuse and harm them. Our love and appreciation for the beings in Nature is not a different kind from the same toward fellow human beings. All earth beings, including humans, are fellow sentient and phenomenal beings. But the Cartesian reduction and devaluation of nonhuman beings does not inspire such emotions in us; rather it leaves us indifferent or, even worse, interested only in their utility to us. In other words, we value beings and things, if at all, for their instrumental worth, but not for their intrinsic worth.

The world we create is the outer reflection of our inner psyche. The Cartesian Universe is an incarnation of the alienated human psyche. When the mental and the physical are seen as two mutually exclusive substances, as Descartes argues, "man" is a divided being, alienated from within. One part is alive, which is the Cartesian *cogito*—mind that thinks, reasons, doubts, imagines, and so on. But the other part, the body, made of matter, has no life of its own. By itself, the body is as good as "dead." Dead flesh is called meat. Thus, the human body is basically no different from meat. It is in this vein that Marvin Minsky, a contemporary artificial intelligence guru, speaks of human beings as computers made of meat!⁵ Minsky may not be a self-avowed Cartesian, but his view of human beings surely qualifies him to be a Cartesian. In any case, my suspicion is that when a Cartesian looks at the world, it is not quite alive—not quite animated and enchanted—because he is looking at the world through eyes that are not animated and enchanted. Who are these Cartesians? They are *us*—most of us, more or less, insofar as we think and see that the world is largely made up of insentient and inanimate things and objects. And an important point of connection I am making here is that how the world appears to us has all to do with the state of our consciousness, or the quality of our being. In the same way that, to a tired person, the world looks tired and tiring, to a disenchanted person, the world appears disenchanted and inanimate. This should give us a strong clue as to what we must do to restore a vital and sacred perception of the world: We need to recover our own animism within (Bai, 2001). We need to become completely animated in our eyes, ears, skin, and so on, until every

fiber of our flesh is charged with the vital energy of our carnality. However, there are serious obstacles to our becoming more animated. In the next section, I name the chief obstacle as the dominance of our conceptualizing mind, and trace its legacy to Plato's project.

PLATO'S LOGOCENTRICISM

If, as Berry accused, Descartes delivered a decisive last blow on Nature with a sledgehammer of philosophical argument, the first blow actually came much earlier—many millennia prior. Our perception of Nature had been losing its animation for a long time, and by the time Descartes arrived on the scene, Nature was already a reduced thing, stripped of her animating power. When did this de-animation start? Archaeological evidence, as interpreted by scholars like Marija Gimbutas (1991), seems to suggest that the beginning lies in prehistory, probably at the transition from a matrilineal to a patriarchal civilization, which is considerably earlier than the beginning of ancient civilization, such as Classical Greece. But because prehistory leaves no discursive texts behind, and because I am interested in philosophical arguments of the textual kind for my present analysis, I must turn to historical philosophical texts, for example, in Classical Greece. It is in Plato, the patriarch of western thought, that we indeed find an incisive philosophical argument that condemns the sensuous and animistic perception of the world that is achieved through the Homeric poetic consciousness. The Homeric poets appeal to the sensuous experience of the listener, and induces in the latter a trance-like hypnotic state in which the listener experiences an emotional identification or merging with what was presented to them through the poet's skillful performance. Tragic death stories enacted by the poet on stage left the audience weeping uncontrollably. Fearful stories inspired terrifying horrors in shrieking audiences, and so on. Plato's objection to the workings of the Homeric poetic consciousness is that the latter is not conducive to individuals developing their rational and analytic thinking. For the latter, one needs emotional dis-identification with the materials presented to one, and hence, requires a way to step outside the content of one's thoughts, perceptions, and feelings, and to coolly and calmly analyze the content. Plato's goal was to create a rational, as opposed to emotional, and a conceptual, as opposed to poetic, subjectivity. Plato's program was to create philosopher the thinker, as opposed to poet the bard. In short, Plato was heading a major epistemological revolution that changed the very texture, tone, and color of human consciousness: from the sensuous, emotive, empathic *participatory mind or consciousness*⁶ to the conceptual, abstract, and analytic rational mind or discursive consciousness. Ever since Plato, we have been under the spell, not of the sensuous, but of the discursive.⁷

In *The Republic*, Plato (1965) waged a war against the Homeric poets, arguing that "all poetry, from Homer onwards, consists in representing a semblance of its subject, whatever it may be, including any kind of human excellence, with no grasp of the reality" (p. 331). When Plato speaks of reality, however, we have to know that he has a very particular qualification as to what counts as reality. What we encounter here is Plato's ontology (the question of what is real) and axiology (the question of what is worthy) that devalue the sensible, intuitive, and emotive, and privilege the conceptual, logical, and the abstract. To wit, that which is *perceptible* to the senses and arouses emotions is not real; only that which is *intelligible* to the rational faculty of mind is real. In other words, what we can know through the senses (and feelings and intuitions, too) is not real; whereas what we can know through the intellect—the faculty of conceptualization—is real. This is an astonishing notion that, we can well imagine, Plato had a hard time selling to his fellow Athenians who were still quite steeped in the tradition of the Homeric participatory consciousness. This kind of consciousness is prone to merge with anything presented to them through poetic rendition. Imagine being told that what you thought was very real was, in fact, unreal. What

more devaluing can one face than being invalidated about one's sense of reality? Axiology is not separate from ontology. And ontology depends crucially on epistemology (the question of what one knows and how one knows), and therefore, axiology depends on epistemology. Change the ways of knowing, and we have changed both what is real and what is valuable. What Plato wanted was nothing less than a complete revolution of human consciousness, a radical turning away from the sensuous (sense-based understanding) to the intelligible (concept-based, discursive understanding) as the basis of knowing and acting.⁸

In Plato's appraisal, all arts, including poetry, are devoted to rendering matters perceptible to our senses and emotions. Hence, the arts are condemned as a shackle that prevents us from attaining our ultimate freedom, which lies on a higher plane of existence (the "noumenal" world). The well-known Allegory of the Cave in Plato's *The Republic* is an allegory of this situation of human entrapment. Humans are seen as literally trapped in their bodies and put under the spell of the senses. Philosophy alone is able to free the humans by opening their mind's eye, as it were, to the Real or the Supersensible. Given this notion, it is no wonder that the arts were considered inferior to philosophy. Plato explains that artists' and poets' specialty is simulation (*mimesis*), the art of presenting the subject matter in pictures and poetic words so as to arouse our senses and emotions. What is wrong with this? The Platonic answer, to put it succinctly, is that we cannot be independent and critical thinking persons when our senses and feelings are aroused and ready to do their trickery of distracting us from seeing and understanding things for what they *really* are, as well as distorting how they appear. Plato is determined to expose this deceptive artistry: "Strip what the poet has to say of its poetical coloring, and I think you must have seen what it comes to in plain prose. It is like a face which was never really handsome, when it has lost the fresh bloom of youth" (p. 331).

But, why, I have to ask, would anyone want to see the world without the "poetic coloring" which is like a "fresh bloom of youth"? Without such animating coloring, the world would appear drab and dreary: in short, a depressing place, would it not? Analogously, would one exchange one's color perception for black-and-white perception? Would any one in his or her right mind go for Plato's recommended perception of the world, one bleached of color and muted of sound (as well as drained of other sensorial qualities)? Why would we choose sensory and emotional deprivation? Plato's promise is that this sacrifice is made for a far more substantial reward. Plato has promised the potential followers of his epistemological revolution membership in the most powerful kingdom there is: that of Ideas, where there is no change, decay, and death, and there is only unchanging, imperishable Being, in short, Immortality. The way of the senses is perishable. Who can resist this incredible bargain of sacrificing the mere "poetic coloring" of the *phenomenal* world for the *noumenal* world of unchanging Truth, Beauty, Goodness? Insofar as all of us mere mortals are fearful of our mortal destiny of decay and death, and yearn for immortality, we are indeed tempted by Plato's persuasion. What we need to give up seems minimal compared to what we will gain.

Still, it must have been incredibly difficult to dissuade the common folk in Plato's Athens from giving up the way of the sensuous, which was the source of their feeling vitally alive and robustly real. Indeed, they were being continually well-fed and sustained on the rich diet of Homeric poetry. Plato alludes to a "long-standing quarrel between poet and philosopher" and mentions "countless tokens of this old antagonism" (p. 336). A long-standing quarrel implies that poets had been formidable matches for philosophers. The power of poetic reverie can easily rival the power of critical intellect, and the two wrangle interminably for an uncertain victory. Thinking like a strategist, I would say that, in light of this equal match of strengths, a way to win the battle without even needing to enter it would be most expedient. Hence (here, I am reading into Plato), Plato propagated the notion that the mimetic consciousness is developmentally inferior to

the philosophical one. Poets for Plato are like children: in need of growing up. And being in the constant company of the poets (and, we could add, using today's lingo, "artsy" folks in general) infantilizes us. Here is Plato's advice: "Instead of behaving like a child who goes on shrieking after a fall and hugging the wounded part, we should accustom the mind to set itself at once to raise up the fallen and cure the hurt, banishing lamentation with a healing touch" (p. 336). Indeed, are not these words very familiar to all of us? Have most of us not heard them repeated to us at home, at school, and in playgrounds throughout our childhood? And many of us have repeated them back, in many variations, to our crying children and hurting students.⁹

Plato's stern advice contains two implications. One, the participatory consciousness rich in empathic emotions is childish. Two, the feeling way of life wounds us easily. Denying feelings and emotions and putting up a brave front with the help of the distancing rational mind seems to have been Plato's solution to the suffering that we sensitive and vulnerable humans are so prone to in life through change, decay, corruption, and demise. It seems that Plato equated learning to deny or suppress feelings and devaluing emotions through cultivating an abstract and discursive mind with humanity's growing up and entering adulthood. This is truly unfortunate. To connect back to the notion of psychic numbing that inspired me to write this chapter, I am suggesting that Plato's condemnation of poets and the poetic (participatory) consciousness, and his call for an epistemological revolution have had a profound influence on the direction of our civilization.¹⁰ Hindsight is often perfect 20/20. In retrospect of history, we know better: The worst we can do to humanity is to suppress its capacity to feel and be empathic, for such is the *soul* of humanity. Destroy the soul, which creates a requisite condition for psychic numbing, and we can easily become inhuman, as Vetlesen, whom I quoted at the beginning of this chapter, amply demonstrates in his case study of the Holocaust. Extending Vetlesen's thesis, I am also suggesting that the soul destruction and consequent psychic numbing would also lead to the Holocaust of biotic communities. The soul destruction seems to precipitate soil destruction.¹¹ To note, I am not against Plato's project of promoting critical intellect and independent thinking. Critical intellect is a wonderful gift to humanity. My objection is to the privileging of critical intellect over and above, thereby devaluing another vital and precious gift to humanity: feelings. Moreover, I also object to the dualistic thinking that categorically separates intellect from feeling as if these are two separate entities or categories. We can think feelingly, and we can feel thoughtfully. For the well-being of our Planet and Humanity, we must cultivate this capacity more and more.

THE SPELL OF THE DISCURSIVE

From the colossal and lasting influence of Plato, a legacy that has endured for more than two millennia, we must conclude that his campaign for privileging the conceptual and discursive consciousness was quite successful. The Homeric empathy-based participatory consciousness has been largely supplanted under the philosophical persuasion of Plato and his successors. Today, in the spreading global civilization of late- or hyper-modernity (Borgmann, 1993), we all are, East and west, everywhere, children of Plato and Descartes. Our consciousness is dominated by the spell of the discursive, and by the time we are out of childhood and through formal schooling, most of us have largely disposed of the animated sensuous perception of the world. Many of us may recall how in our childhood the world seemed like an enchanted place, not because anything extraordinary and spectacular happened, not because we felt we were very powerful and could make things happen at will, but because we could feel the pulse of life and mystery of being in every thing and being that surrounded us. I recall one of my own childhood scenes. The very air that touched my skin was supercharged with an electrified sense of life; the droning, buzzing

symphony of life from all the critters (especially the cicadas) inhabiting the grassy hill as I lay half-buried in the grass that summer's morning, many decades ago, was simply intoxicating and made me almost too dizzy to get up. And how breathtakingly blue that sky looked as I peered out of the grass walls pressed against the contours of my small body that made a depression in the grass. The blueness was so vivid and alive, and so inviting that I just wanted to dive in and disappear into the vast blueness. Today, I still hear the symphony of life, but only faintly most of the time, as though I am overhearing it from the next room, through a closed door. The air thinned out, too, and now hardly throbs. The sky is still blue and beautiful but I do not get that rush just from beholding it. Instead, I make a few pleasantries, to myself and to others, about the beautiful blue sky.

The spell of the discursive gets thicker daily. Everywhere, the abstract, conceptual, logical, and symbolic order of the world makes an increasingly larger claim on our consciousness. I invite the reader to closely examine his or her consciousness. What is it filled with most of the time? Ideas, concepts, notions, views, beliefs, stories, questions, arguments, plans, lists (most of all, interminably, to-do lists, shopping lists)—mostly in the form of words and numbers. One thought after another, they arise thick and fast, constantly and endlessly occupying the mind. Our mind is so preoccupied by the stuff of the symbolic order that there is hardly any room left for anything else, like *fully* seeing, hearing, feeling what meets our senses immediately, that is, unmediated, in the moment. When reality is heavily mediated by the symbolic and discursive order, we lose, however momentarily or minutely, the sense of Being, of Reality—that intensely “real,” vivid, existential feel of being alive and seeing everything to be throbbingly alive. When we are gripped by such a sense, we often exclaim: “Unbelievable!” Indeed, inadvertently we are expressing the truth: that this experience of Being is not a matter of *beliefs*; that is, it does not belong to the conceptual, symbolic, and discursive order. The more our consciousness becomes entrenched in the conceptual and discursive order, the greater is our loss of this existential vivacity and of animism. When we become so entrenched in the discursive order that the conceptual functions as the real, what we have is, of course, *reification*: taking the abstract for the real. There are many common English expressions that describe this situation: “mistaking the map for the road” or “eating the menu instead of the food.” This is not to say that reading state-of-the-art maps is not useful or very exciting, or that lavishly worded and pictured menus are not very handy or can nicely work up the appetite. Personally, I love maps and menus. But we would not want to substitute reading the road map for seeing what is on the road; or substitute reading the menu description and gazing at the picture for eating a real apple pie. And yet, incredulously, this substitution happens massively and constantly in our lives. As *homo symbolicus*, especially in the age of Media, we eat and breathe reification. And a diet rich in reification does not nourish us, and leaves us still hungry and thirsty—for the real.

Take the case of money. Money is an idea, a concept, as Derek Rasmussen (2004) reminds us. In itself it is nothing other than colored bits of paper, scraps of metal, or more commonly now, rapidly moving number figures in ones and zeros in cyberspace. Yet, as we are fond of saying, money rules the world. Money is fast becoming the ultimate human value, one that supercedes all others: therein lies the sickness of our age, our civilization. Complete monetization of the world and our lives, toward which our culture and society are rapidly evolving, spells the ultimate reification. That people should almost imperceptibly lose their health, happiness, relationships, friendships, connections with the land, and even their actual lives, for the gain of money, should tell us just how thick and sick the spell of the discursive that has been cast over us is. The story of King Midas' touch is an allegory of the deadly power of the discursive. The greedy King Midas makes a wish for everything he touches to turn into solid gold; then, in an unthinking moment,

he affectionately embraces his beloved daughter, and to his absolute horror, the daughter turns into a lifeless golden statue.

Reification can de-animate us, in the way Midas turned his beloved daughter into a statue, by cutting us off from our source of vitality: the immediate, that is, in-the-moment, fully embodied, sensuous contact and connection with Being. The discursive content of the mind abstracts us from the in-the-moment sensuous experience that can have a most vivifying, enlivening effect on us. It is when we are fully and completely present in the moment to the phenomenal-material world that we are able to tap into what may be called the psycho-physical¹² energy of the universe. The latter is known in classical Chinese philosophy and practice as *qi*. Again, the fascinating theoretical inquiry into the nature of *qi* aside, what is of importance to us in the present exploration is the fact that when we become fully present to the sensuous reality before us, we feel extraordinarily awake and alive.

The world seen through this animated consciousness of *biophilia* is a very alive and enchanted place—a place that we want to fall in love with, rejoice in, celebrate, adore, hold sacred, and worship. In comparison, the world seen through the symbolically mediated and processed discursive consciousness is, however intriguing and stimulating to the intellect, pale and relatively lifeless. It thus fails to awaken the *Eros* in us that unleashes the urge to adore and protect, love and care. This is not to say that having a discursive consciousness is not useful to us. Rather, its over-usefulness has been the problem. We as a civilization have gone too far in the direction of the conceptual and the discursive. The result is a technologically very advanced engineering civilization that can divert a watercourse to erect a dam and blast a mountain to put in a highway but is unable to hear the water stream's love songs and the mountain's epic poems. To be able to think with concepts abstractly, logically, rationally is a useful thing, but not if it seriously interferes with the flow of empathy and sympathy in our intercourse with the world. The lasting legacy of Plato's epistemological revolution has been precisely this undermining of our ability to feel and commune with the physical world, resulting in varying degrees of psychic numbing with respect to the earth.

REANIMATION OF THE SENSES

It is not as though the spell of the discursive that Plato and others cast upon us stopped the operation of the senses. Our senses continue to operate and function: we still see and hear, feel and taste. But the mere fact that our physiological senses are working as they should tells us little about the qualitative phenomenological differences that exist in perception. The *phenomenological* quality of perception is what is at stake here. The discursive spell has thoroughly captivated perception to the point that much of our perception is an abstract conceptual exercise that bypasses the more sensuous experience of perception. Consider for a moment how we normally see. As our quick and sweeping gaze falls upon objects, we see "chair," "mug," "flower," "lamp," "sky" . . . Click, click. . . Each perceptual frame, already labeled, flashes across our mental screens at lightning speed. This is the so-called pattern recognition, about which cognitive science theorizes endlessly. Besides these simple naming labels, our conceptual mind also "sees" use-and-profit labels in things and beings we encounter. Upon seeing a rose, I think: "Oh, what a nice centerpiece that would make for my table!" Upon seeing the rain outside, I think: "What a bother! The rain is spoiling the picnic!" In other words, we visually process things to recognize and label what they are (and what they are not) and what they mean to us in terms of utility, convenience, or other purposes we have in mind. In this sense, as David Appelbaum (1995) explains, sight

has become a discursive exercise of comparative judgment. What does not happen is the more sensuous perception wherein we do not just conceptually process but attentionally engage with the sensory input. That the latter has a profound effect on the level of animism or vitality is a key point that I now wish to present and explain.

Let us start with a common observation: We experience fatigue when our mind is preoccupied and chased around by thoughts. There is no physical exertion, and yet we become very enervated when we experience mental exhaustion. Deep sleep is restful and restorative precisely because we are freed from this energy-draining activity of thought chasing, or more accurately, being chased by thoughts. Similar to deep sleep, a *thought-less* (which does not mean “thoughtless” in English) meditation is another way to experience restoration of energy. But how is it that the activity of thought, that is, conceptualization, is energy-draining? I find Appelbaum’s phenomenological explanation most compelling and coherent with my experience. Appelbaum (1995) points to the vital source of animal, organic energy: the body, the fleshy “organic fold” that belongs to the unity of the phenomenal world. Using the figure of blind Sampson at the pillar, Appelbaum illustrates what it means to return to body, and therefore to the phenomenal world:

Blind Sampson at the pillar is a man returned to his body, to corporeal existence. Inhabiting his organic fold, he no longer is a “thinking substance” but one that *resonates* with environmental tempos affecting him. His is a temporal existence, which means a tempoed one. As his hands grope to press the column, he gropes in his hands for the pressure of the *attention*. To accomplish this feat, he must occupy time *present*. The way time pulses in his fingertips is in tempo with the way it pulses through his whole body. Samson has returned to time from space that is separation, from distance that is *indifference*, cause and effect, dispersion, multiplicity. He has returned to the simple *unity* of life in time, in accordance with time, life no longer divided by desires, thoughts, and projects. (p. 30, italics added)

We can contrast what Appelbaum says about matter with Descartes’ conception of matter. Descartes (1644/1985) defines *matter* as that which occupies space (extension). Space, however, creates distance and, hence, separation and, as noted above, indifference, and so on. It is time *present*, yielded by attention, which phenomenologically transforms inanimate and indifferent Cartesian matter into the body that pulses with life energy. Matter (which is etymologically related to *matrix*, *mater*, the womb) is the source of energy. The phenomenal world of matter of which one’s individual body is a “fold,” like a crease or bend in the fabric, is the source of our psycho-physical energy. But our access to this source of energy, which Appelbaum descriptively calls the “return,” is not automatic. Just the fact of “having” the body does not guarantee this access. The access is attained through embodied awareness based on the practice of attention and presence.

What obstructs, distracts, and complicates our access to the source is—no surprise here—our habitual conceptualization. Habitual thought construction, “cut off from its organic context [the body],” disembodies us, that is, distracts, disengages, and abstracts us, from carnal awareness. We are, as it were, pushed out of the fleshy organic fold, which is the source of our energy, and we become drained of organic vitality. The animating, electrifying life-energy—*qi*, if you like—does not suffuse our being. Indifference sets in. Psychic numbness or indifference invades us. All these are phenomenological observations that can be easily validated by an individual who pays close attention to the quality of his or her experience. For example, notice how disembodied we become, that is, how we lose touch with the living reality of our bodies when we are engrossed in thought. Body awareness falls below the threshold of consciousness. This is a familiar phenomenon: When we are engrossed in reading a novel, we may not register sensations of discomfort in the cramped body. When we are engrossed in thinking while driving, we manage to autopilot around on

familiar roads without being aware of consciously seeing anything. We wonder later when we come back to consciousness: "Who was driving the car?"

How do we interrupt habitual thought construction and return to immediacy? How do we return ourselves to the source of vitality? This is the work of attention. Attention breaks and stops the trance of thought construction, or "the rational automatism" (Appelbaum, 1995, p. 17), and returns us to the "present sensory experience" (p. 22). Calling this attentional work the *stop*, Appelbaum explained:

To come *to* experience is always to come *from* a disembodied, disengaged state of thought construction. The first is the unhinging of the second, and the stop is the hinge. The stop is not the negation of movement. It is movement itself, a form of movement purer than that of body, mind, or feeling alone. It is movement away from entrapment of automatic and associative thought, just as it is movement toward an embodied awareness. The stop is a movement of transition. (p. 24)

What is the experience of the *stop* like? We have been talking about the impediment to experience, namely the habitual thought construction, and have indicated that a stop to the operation of thought construction is necessary for a more embodied experience. But what is this embodied experience like?

Again, Appelbaum has many insights to offer us. The *stop* halts the continuous, automatic leave-taking of the "percipient energy" that fuels "a conceptual frame that moment-by-moment constructs the world" (p. 77). In other words, "[t]he stop neutralizes a tendency of percipient energy to animate intellectual categories through which events are viewed" (p. 80). How I understand the explanation here is that thought-construction consumes energy, and takes this energy from the source—the body, which leaves the body so much more depleted. Put it another way, when the percipient energy no longer "escapes the fleshy folds of the body . . . it energizes the network of relations constituting the organism" (p. 77). Two points can be made about what happens here. First, feeling requires energy, and thus when there is no continual siphoning of percipient energy, more abundant and richer feelings become available. In other words, *perception becomes sensate or affective*. For example, eyes do not just see and record what is in their visual field, which is what objectification is. Objectification is indifferent seeing (hearing, touching, etc.). Seeing animated by percipient energy, however, becomes visual love-making. To see and hear the world through the *stop* is to make love to it. *Eros* regained.

The second point I make concerns the naturalistic nature, in contrast to the moralistic nature, of love that the stop engenders in us. What do I mean by this? In environmental education, as in moral education, there is an overwhelming tendency to prescribe and command respect, care, love, or what have you: "We ought to respect (protect, conserve, care about, love . . .) the environment." Invariably, we assume a moralistic tone. Apart from the usual annoyance and weariness that such a tone provokes in its listeners, the real problem is its ineffectiveness. If people could change just by being sternly but caringly told what to do or how to be, then learning and transformation would pose no problems and challenges whatsoever. Unfortunately or fortunately, this does not happen. At least, not usually. People are not programmable robots. They do not change just by being told, urged, scolded, or even threatened. Even if changes occur under external suggestion or duress, this creates more problems than it solves. It cripples the psyche and makes relational social life miserable. The solution lies elsewhere than moralistic persuasion. The solution is to learn to truly become the kind of consciousness that embodies respect, compassion, care, and love. Let the eyes, ears, mouth, skin . . . make love to the world! Transformation at the base of consciousness and at the heart of being is what we as educators are after here. It is not unless

and until our whole being becomes respectfully and lovingly relational to the world that we can truly practice respect, love, and so on. And again, being relational is not the usual social, moral practice that tries to bind individual egos by obligations and considerations of various social norms. Rather, as Appelbaum shows, what we do is return to the *place* where all there is is relationality. This is the place of the *stop*:

The return is to an organic, archaic level of experience. It is a return from a constructional, conceptual mind that predominates in the daily round. The return involves dwelling in the body as awareness while face-to-face with entrenched impulses to take flight. (p. 21)

Can we see this return as a critically important educational project today? Yes: very critical and very important. Although space does not permit me to fully explore the topic, this being a book that addresses the education community, I feel the necessity to at least put in a couple strong thoughts I have been having on education for participatory consciousness.

BEGIN HERE, AGAIN AND AGAIN

First of all, we start with an understanding that we humans have the native capacity for animism, that is, the capacity to be fully alive in the way that we sensuously participate in the phenomenological world of biotic communities. I believe that we are, in today's jargon, "hard-wired" for the capacity for participatory consciousness. It is a birthright of every child. The question of education then becomes not of how to create and inject a participatory consciousness into children (or anyone) but of how to protect, nurture, and expand the capacity that already exists and is ready to engage fully and grow, so that the capacity can manifest as full-blown experience and ability. The question also becomes one of asking how we may be vigilant and careful about conditions, circumstances, and structures that tend to dismiss, marginalize, "numb," and destroy this native capacity. Like the Hippocrates' injunction, we should think of education first and foremost in terms of not doing harm. Do not compromise and destroy children's native capacity for participatory consciousness—some call it the "aboriginal mind"—by forcing on them early, in the name of modern science education or progressive education, the mechanical worldview (Bai, 2001) that objectifies the world and sees it in mechanistic and quantitative terms. The initial damage to the Indigenous mind would be difficult to recover from and compensate for, even with high-quality environmental education. I feel very strongly about this point I am making here, having been put through a modernist education that nearly destroyed my own capacity for participatory consciousness or aboriginal mind. I am in recovery.

Second, recalling the connection I mentioned earlier among soil (earth), soul (the sensitive, empathic quality), and sole (the body and senses), I suggest that we provide ample opportunities formally or informally for students to make these connections themselves *experientially*. As it stands, in most conventional schooling experience, there is a relative paucity of opportunity for such connections. Our education marginalizes the embodied connection to soil, soul, and sole, by overemphasizing the discursive practices that not only crowd out such connections but also actively dismiss and discourage them. For example, conventionally, soil is considered worthless and dirty, and people who live close to soil are considered "primitive." Jobs that involve a direct contact with soil are less prestigious and important than jobs that require "brainpower." Given this bias, no wonder, then, there is little opportunity and encouragement in the curriculum to connect with soil: to study, work, worship, play, or, even more importantly, just *be with* soil. Why

not, for example, grow vegetables and flowers in school gardens, keep beehives in schools, keep compost, and adopt a nearby stream, pond, or forest? There are 100 other projects and activities we can undertake in the way of study and practice to increase our contact and connections with soil. And more importantly, why are we not including in school curriculum a lot more time and mindful opportunities for students to be outdoors in direct contact with soil (and rocks, trees, water . . .) and be more curious and conscious about their connection to the earth? As David Orr (1994) condemns, "indoorism," and I would add, "cerebralization," are the mainstay for current schooling. It is not for lack of ideas that the studies and practices that connect us to soil are not taken up seriously but for the lack of understanding and recognition that these are critically important and worthy as educational objectives, and that a priority must be given to them on par with literacy and numeracy. In fact, if we were to take the contact and connection with soil very seriously, then we will have to be changing, and would be changing, the whole paradigm of schooling from the current goal—although no school mission statements put it quite this way—of producing workers who will perpetuate the current commodity consumption-based, corporatist, capitalist industrial civilization that is so destructive to the earth.

Recall the previously mentioned understanding that when soul goes, soil goes, and what connects soil to soul is, most prominently and not exclusively, the sole of feet that make contact with the ground. I suggest that this threefold connection is mutual—hence, interconnected—and not linear. Destruction of soil (biotic communities) impacts the viability of soul understood here as the sensitive, empathic, and resonating part of humanity. Use it or lose it: One's capacity and ability for something does not develop if it is not called on regularly to exercise itself in response. Our eyesight would dim and eventually disappear if there is no visible world to see. Likewise, with the diminished presence of the biotic communities all around and all their members in our lives, our soul's capacity atrophies. Species extinction is not just an event outside humanity. Part of our own humanity diminishes as other sentient beings disappear, leaving the earth less teeming with diversity of life. Hence, soil renewal is soul renewal, and every mindful contact we make with the ground restores humanity. Walking is not merely a locomotion practice—for those who cannot afford to drive a car!—that gets us from Point A to Point B. Walking is a sacred act of cultivating and expressing our deepest humanity through the embodied contact with the earth. Thich Nhat Hanh (1996), Buddhist monk and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, says it very simply: "Walking *mindfully* on the Earth can restore our peace and harmony, and it can restore the Earth's peace and harmony as well. . . . Whether the Earth is beautiful, fresh, and green, or arid and parched depends on our way of walking. When we practice walking meditation beautifully, we massage the Earth with our feet and plant seeds of joy and happiness with each step" (p. 15, italics added). This passage brings me to my third and final comment and suggestions about educational practice.

Walking is a supreme practice with many physical, emotional, and spiritual benefits, and I recommend it most highly as a main educational practice. Coincidentally (perhaps, I should mean, "not accidentally"), "pedagogy," the art and science of teaching, has its Greek origin in the meaning of "walking," as *paidagogos* were the trusted slaves in ancient Greek households whose job was to walk the master's children to school and also assist them with instructions.¹³ However, going back to Hanh's passage, the most important concept here is not so much "walking" as "mindfully." Walking can be done in all manners, including manners that are hurtful, hateful, arrogant, disrespectful, and so on. It is not the activity *per se* that can do the great work of connecting us to the earth and reanimating us. It is the question of how: With what sort of consciousness do we approach and conduct whatever it is that we are doing or not doing? Curriculum designers and pedagogues (teachers) are prone to miss this critical point; so are students and parents. They think learning primarily in terms of particular subject matters, content

materials, and learning activities. They ask: "So, *what* do we have to study, learn, and do to save the planet?" Mindfulness means the participatory consciousness of receptivity, embodied sensitivity, openness, and fully being present to what is here and now. And in the tradition of Buddhist meditation that Hanh (1996) and others practice, conscious breathing is the main "tool" with which we attain the consciousness of mindfulness.¹⁴ Given just how foundational mindfulness is as a consciousness that supports our re-animation project, would it not make sense to practice it as the most basic—more basic than reading, writing, and math (and any other basics that the current culture supports)? The sign over Plato's Academy in Athens is said to read: "Let no man ignorant of geometry enter." My school, if I were to establish one, would have a different sign: "Breathe mindfully and enter."

It is the habit of our mind to take our perception to be the objective fact of the world. We project the content and the mode of our consciousness onto the world, and we then enact our projection as if that is the objective reality given to us. To the disenchanted, de-animated, objectified consciousness, the world is a place with corresponding characteristics. We then act out our perception and destroy the world, backwardly justifying that this soulless, machine-like world exists instrumentally as resources for our consumption. But to the consciousness that has been animated, that is, reawakened to its embodied participation in the world, this world appears numinously splendid and enchanted. St. Francis of Assisi (1182–1226) was one such consciousness:

*Such love does
the sky now pour,
that whenever I stand in a field.*

*I have to wring out the light
when I get
home.
(cited in Ladinsky, 1996, p. 48)*

Rumi (1207–1273) was another:

*On a day
when the wind is perfect,
the sail just needs to be open and the world is full of beauty.
Today is such a
day.*

*My eyes are like the sun that makes promises;
the promise of life
that it always
keeps
each morning.*

*The living heart gives to us as does that luminous sphere,
both caress the earth with great
tenderness.*

*There is a breeze that can enter the soul.
This love I know plays a drum. Arms move around me;
who can contain their self before my beauty?*

*Peace is wonderful,
but ecstatic dance is more fun, and less narcissistic;
gregarious He makes our lips.*

*On a day when the wind is perfect,
the sail just needs to open
and the love starts.*

*Today is such
a day*
(cited in Ladinsky, 1996, p. 79)

NOTES

1. This term, *psychic numbing*, was coined by Robert J. Lifton in the context of his study of Hiroshima survivors. I came across this term for the first time in Vetlesen's work (1994), *Perception, Empathy, and Judgment*, and have since made it a central concept in my work about moral perception and action. To briefly explain this concept: Psychic numbing is the inability to feel and hence be affected by the sight of pain and horror associated with death, especially associated with brutality and injustice. The pain and horror is too great to bear for the witnessing person whose psyche then shuts itself off from the painful reality. In other words, it goes numb. In the context of Lifton's study, psychic numbing was a regular symptom among war and atrocity survivors, such as Hiroshima bombing survivors, Holocaust survivors, and Vietnam War veterans. I am extending the application of this notion to the context of our relationship to the biotic community and all its constituent sentient beings, which, of course, includes human beings.

2. According to Tuxill's (1999) report: "the natural or 'background' rate of extinction appears to be about 1–10 species a year. By contrast, scientists estimate that extinction rates have accelerated this century to at least 1,000 species per year. These numbers indicate we now live in a time of mass extinction—a global evolutionary upheaval in the diversity and composition of life on Earth" (p. 97). The estimate that I quote here is from nearly 10 years ago.

3. http://www.natcath.com/NCR_Online/archives/081001/081001a.htm

4. Just to name a few such thinkers: Leibniz in Germany, Malebranche in France, Spinoza in Holland.

5. <http://content.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft338nb20q&chunk.id=d0e4891>

6. Again, space does not permit me to explicate this notion of participatory mind or consciousness fully here; even so, a briefest possible explanation is due. Rational mind sees itself separate from, and stands outside of, reality it perceives and comprehends. As such, rational mind is basically an alienated consciousness in that it does not experience feelings of merging, uniting, intimacy, and collaboration with what it perceives: that is, feelings of oneness are not present. Participatory mind is the polar opposite to the rational mind in that it merges with its objects of perception and comprehension, and in the process, it feels intimacy and co-emergence. Skolimowski (1995) expresses it like this: "In beholding we are articulating. In articulating we are co-creating. In the act of articulation mind and reality merge; reality becomes an aspect of mind" (p. 31).

7. Throughout this chapter, I use the word *discursive* to mean both "pertaining to logic" and "pertaining to concepts." In my usage, "discursive," "conceptual," "logical," "rational," "abstract" are all related as cognates, and are used more or less interchangeably.

8. For an extended discussion of the psychology of poetic consciousness in the Homeric tradition and Plato's epistemological revolution, see Eric Havelock's (1963) *Preface to Plato*.

9. One variation I witness today in the academy is devaluation of arts-based and arts-related qualitative research. The latter is seen as being soft and "fluffy," and not hard and rigorous. My graduate students worry about appearing like "flakes" if they do any research that smacks of artistic expressions. As in Plato's epistemology, there is a hierarchy of academic research. At the top sits quantitative research

that deals with hard stuffs, like numbers, facts, and data. Empirical researches that work with hard data command the best attention and biggest funding. At the bottom of the hierarchy are, ironically (given Plato's legacy), conceptual researches that do not gather and work with data, like most of the researches in Philosophy of Education. Qualitative researches that gather data, even if of the subjectivist kind, as in interviews, fare better.

10. I do not wish to be misread and misunderstood here. Inasmuch as I single out Plato as a thinker who has had decisive and long-lasting influences, I do not mean to make him out to be solely responsible for shaping a civilization that privileges the intellect. Although we do not know the origin of Plato's Idealism (some suspect that it is related to Pythagoras), I doubt if he was alone, or unique, in struggling against the Homeric poets and their hold on the education and culture of the citizens. If he was alone, his call for demoting the poets as educators would have fallen onto deaf ears, ignored. This did not seem to have been the case. Skolimowski interprets that Plato represents a transitional figure in the discursive trend from Socrates to Aristotle. By the time we come to Aristotle, systematization of intellectual knowledge becomes a strongly established pursuit.

11. Jungian analyst Robert Johnson (1987) mentions the connection between "soul" and "sole" (of feet): that the soul enters through the soles. My further elaboration on this takes me to connect "soul," "sole," and "soil." Our sentient connection to the earth (soil) is through our sensuous and empathic capacity (soul) that makes an embodied contact (sole) with the earth.

12. The word, *psycho-physical*, connotes nondualism of the mental and the physical. One of the most important contributions from Chinese culture and civilization is the philosophy of *qi*, vital energy or breath. According to this philosophy, the entire universe, that encompasses not only the material but also the psychical and spiritual realms, is composed of *qi*, and understands the multiplicity of phenomena and diversity of beings as due to modulations of *qi*.

13. Perhaps it is no coincidence that many *world teachers*, such as Socrates, Aristotle, Buddha, Confucius, to name a few, were almost constant and long-distance walkers, and often they conducted their teaching while walking with their students.

14. Space does not permit me to explain the more technical aspects of mindfulness practice and conscious breathing, and how such practice alters the consciousness. However, currently available are a whole range of mindfulness research studies and its applications, and interested readers are advised to do the literature search. This is a fast growing area of research. I myself have written about mindfulness and its application to education (Bai, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2006).

REFERENCES

- Appelbaum, D. (1995). *The stop*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Bai, H. (1997). Ethics and aesthetics are one: The case of zen aesthetics. *Canadian Review of Art Education*, 24(2), 37-52.
- Bai, H. (1999). Decentering the ego-self and releasing of the care-consciousness. *Paideusis*, 12(2), 5-18.
- Bai, H. (2001). Challenge for education: Learning to value the world intrinsically. *Encounter*, 14(1), 4-16.
- Bai, H. (2002). Zen and the art of intrinsic perception: A case of haiku. *Canadian Review of Art Education*, 28(1), 1-24.
- Bai, H. (2003a). Learning from zen arts: A lesson in intrinsic valuation. *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*, 1(2), 1-14.
- Bai, H. (2003b). The stop: The practice of reanimating the universe within and without. *Educational Insights*, 8(2). Retrieved January 14, 2007, from <http://ccfi.educ.ubc.ca/publication/insights/v08n01/contextualexplorations/bai/bai.html>.
- Bai, H. (2004). The three I's for ethics as an everyday activity: Integration, intrinsic valuing, and intersubjectivity. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 9, 51-64.
- Bai, H. (2006). Philosophy for education: Cultivating human agency. *Paideusis*, 15(1), 7-19. Retrieved January 14, 2007, from <http://journals.sfu.ca/paideusis/index.php/paideusis/issue/current/showToc>.

- Berry, T. (1996). Into the future. In R. S. Gottlieb (Ed.), *This sacred earth* (pp. 410–414). London: Routledge.
- Berry, T. (1999). *The great work: Our way into the future*. New York: Bell Tower.
- Blake, W. (1958). *William Blake*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, UK: Penguin Books.
- Borgmann, A. (1993). *Crossing the postmodern divide*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Descartes, R. (1985). *The philosophical writings of Descartes* (J. Cottingham, R. Stootholff, & D. Murdoch, Trans.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1644)
- Gimbustas, M. A. (1991). *The civilization of the Goddess: The world of Old Europe*. San Francisco: HarperCollins.
- Hanh, T. N. (1996). *The long road turns to joy*. Berkeley: Parallax Press.
- Havelock, E. (1963). *Preface to Plato*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University.
- Huxley, A. (1977). *The doors of perception & Heaven and hell*. London: HarperCollins.
- Johnson, R. (1987). *Ecstasy: Understanding the psychology of joy*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Kohák, E. (1984). *The embers and the stars: A philosophical inquiry into the moral sense of nature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ladinsky, D. (1996). *Love poems from God: Twelve sacred voices from the east and west*. New York: Penguin Compass.
- Laing, R. D. (1980). What is the matter with mind? In S. Kumer (Ed.), *The Schumacher lectures*. London: Sphere Books Ltd.
- Orr, D. (1994). *Earth in mind: On education, environment, and the human prospect*. Washington, DC: Island Press.
- Pannikar, R. (1992). A nonary of priorities. In J. Ogilvy (Ed.), *Revisioning philosophy* (pp. 235–246). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Plato. (1965). *The Republic* (F. M. Conford, Trans.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rasmussen, D. (2004). The priced versus the priceless. *Interculture*, 147(1), 5–38.
- Skolimowski, H. (1995). *The participatory mind: A new theory of knowledge and of the universe*. London: Penguin (Arkana).
- Tuxill, J. (1999). Appreciating the benefits of plant biodiversity. In L. Starke (Ed.), *State of the world* (pp. 96–114). New York: Norton.
- Vetlesen, A. J. (1994). *Perception, empathy, and judgment: An inquiry into the precondition of moral performance*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.