

THE RELEVANCE OF ROYCE'S APPLIED ETHICS:
STUDIES IN WAR, BUSINESS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

By

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Reference
BW	McDermott, John (Ed.). <i>The Basic Writings of Josiah Royce</i> , 2005
California	Royce, Josiah. <i>California: A Study of American Character</i> , 1886
EP	Light, Andrew and Katz, Eric (Ed.). <i>Environmental Pragmatism</i> , 1996
ES	Kohák, Erazim. <i>The Embers and the Stars</i> , 1983
HGC	Royce, Josiah. <i>Hope of the Great Community</i> , 1916
PF	<i>The Personalist Forum</i> . Vol 15, No. 1, Spring 1999
POL	Royce, Josiah. <i>The Philosophy of Loyalty</i> , 1908. I have used the Vanderbilt University Press reprinting, 1995
RAP.	Royce, Josiah. <i>The Religious Aspect of Philosophy</i> , 1885
RQP.	Royce, Josiah. <i>Race Questions, Provincialism, and Other American Problems</i> , 1908
SGE.	Royce, Josiah. <i>Studies of Good and Evil</i> , 1898
SMP.	Royce, Josiah. <i>The Spirit of Modern Philosophy</i> , 1892
SRI.	Royce, Josiah. <i>The Sources of Religious Insight</i> , 1912
WIA.	Royce, Josiah. <i>The World and the Individual, Vol 1</i> , 1900
WIB	Royce, Josiah. <i>The World and the Individual, Vol 2</i> 1901
WJ.	Royce, Josiah. <i>William James and Other Essays on the Philosophy of Life</i> , 1911

CHAPTER I

THE RELEVANCE OF ROYCE'S APPLIED ETHICS

In dialogue with such pragmatic luminaries as C.S. Peirce and William James, Josiah Royce (1855-1916) is considered to be the major American representative of idealism during the period of flourishing of the new American philosophy of pragmatism. As a professor and department chair at Harvard University's philosophy department, and as president of the American Philosophical Association and the American Psychological Association, Royce was also an influential voice in his discussions of public ethics. His arguments regarding the ethics of militancy and war, for instance, appeared in high-level political discussions and in major public newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic. Royce was also presciently devoted to what were then less publicly prominent causes of applied ethics: as an environmental ethicist, he criticized the destruction of natural landscapes and of the depersonalizing of the animal world; and as a business ethicist, he criticized the disloyal cabals of both labor unions and capitalists, and racism in business—including racism in the Academy, as in some supremacist arguments in psychology¹--and praised other types of business loyalty, such as that of the benefactors and alumni who founded

¹ Jacquelyn Ann K. Kegley reads Royce in dialogue with contemporary race theorists, like Zack, West, Gutman, Appiah, and Gannett. Royce was among the first philosophers to diagnose racism in America, inveighing in his 1886 history of California against political and economic racism that targeted Mexicans and Native Americans; and in his 1906 "Race Questions and Prejudices," writing about academic and intellectual racisms against the Japanese and persons of African descent. Kegley describes Royce as attacking essentialist understandings of race, and replacing them with plastic and developmental notions of race based on self-creation; and the identification of the self with provincial loyalties. Writes Kegley, "... There is not in Royce the strict opposition of identity and difference often seen in much discussion of identity issues. Rather, there are much more subtle forces at work in self-formation. It should be, and often is, a highly creative process with contributions of the unique self, the social context, the physiological/biological, psychological, and mental aspects of an individual as well as the complex individualities of the self's social others." Forthcoming in *The Relevance of Royce*, Fordham University Press.

and supported the burgeoning American higher education system, and of the for-profit businesspeople whose international insurance policies promised new manners of growth of peaceful relations among disparate peoples.

After a decades-long period of comparative neglect, Royce's applied ethics have seen a recent resurgence in scholarly interest. In medical ethics, for instance, Griffin Trotter, Jacquelyn Ann K. Kegley and Mary Mahowald have written on the applicability of Royce's theories, each seeking to promote the increase of the number of consistently loyal suggestions and the terms of relations amongst distinct loyal medical voices in contemporary practice. In business ethics, F. Byron Nahser and Randall E. Auxier have given Roycean critiques of corporate persons, while Richard Hall has written on Royce's advocacy of international insurance as a means to decrease the dangerous conditions that tend to provoke international warfare. Judith Green and José Orosco have studied the usefulness of Royce's theoretical and applied ethics to war ethics, with Orosco arguing that Royce gives a justified defense against genocide, even in defense of other peoples. And Frank M. Oppenheim, Robert V. Hine, John Clendenning, Thomas Price, Kegley and I have variously noted ecological influences, and environmental ethics, in Royce's thought.

Despite these specific applications, Royce has not yet been studied in detail as an "applied ethicist." The purpose of this dissertation will be to bring into synoptical focus resources in Royce for an applied ethics, and to study reasons for the practical relevance of Royce's ethics to his own day and to ours, in terms of its ability consistently to meet dilemmas that occur at the point of conflict between loyalties. I will do this with special reference and chapters dedicated to three areas of applied ethics prominent in Royce's

thought: war, business, and environmental ethics. Also I hope to suggest some ways in which applied ethics are central to understanding Royce's systematic thought—and to show that it is not the case, as it was described in the program guide for the 2007 Harvard University conference on Royce, that *The Philosophy of Loyalty* (1908) marked Royce's late-career turn to these types of questions. They were, rather, there as a central theme from the very beginning of his thought, as from his first book, *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy* (1885), and to his subsequent studies of war, business, and environmental ethics in his home state of California (from 1886 onwards), and figuring prominently in his Gifford Lectures, published as *The World and the Individual* (Vol. 1, 1900, Vol. 2, 1901)—and in many other parts of his writings as well.

Such a study of Royce's applied ethics is also called for because there has been a lack of sufficient historical and theoretical attention paid to this area of his thinking—despite the recent interest of Royce scholars, “mainstream” applied ethicists have typically begun their historical researches into the origins of their tradition decades after Royce's death. More broadly, for a period of some decades, it was not merely Royce's ethics, but the rest of his thought as well, that was largely ignored by philosophers. Fortunately, Royce's status in academia has become far more prominent, even since I began writing this dissertation. Recent conferences on Royce at Vanderbilt University (2005), Oklahoma City University and Oklahoma State University (2006), Harvard University (2007), and the University of Opole, Poland (2008), have seen important new work on Royce conducted by scholars from Germany, Austria, Canada, Italy, Spain, Poland, and the United States—including such internationally prominent thinkers as Cornel West and Hilary Putnam; and including scholars from the disciplines of

philosophy, mathematics, history, religion, and literature. This reading of Royce's applied ethics is intended as a complement to the broader resurgence of interest in Royce's thinking, and will seek to include resources from the various disciplines that have been represented in this recent rediscovery of his thought.

Why was Royce so long ignored, and why is his thought now being rediscovered in such a forceful and sudden way? I believe the answer to both questions has to do with the loss and subsequent rediscovery of academic interest in applied ethics, in interdisciplinarity, and in idealism—areas of Royce's major strengths. Let us turn for a moment to the latter two features of Royce's system. Royce practiced a broadly interdisciplinary style of philosophy that is again coming into vogue, after a long period in which philosophy, with some notable exceptions, turned inward and essentially neglected the methods and results of other disciplines, and neglected philosophy's traditional role as an interdisciplinary interpreter. Royce was an exemplar of the interdisciplinary approach, and I hope to show in what follows that he can make crucial contributions to our contemporary efforts in this area.

Second, even while Royce was central to the development of American pragmatism, he was primarily known as the most prominent American defender of idealism. Idealistic metaphysics, contrary to those interpreters who suggested it terminated upon Royce's death, nevertheless was of little interest to post-World War II American philosophy, which instead received its primary motivations from realism, a metaphysical doctrine that Royce repeatedly and forcefully rejected. Royce was not so much refuted by these later realists as he was simply ignored by them.² But idealism, far

² Likewise too, Royce was ignored by those who rejected not merely idealism, but realism as well, and indeed anything that sounded like metaphysics.

from disappearing from the philosophical scene, merely migrated to the European continent, largely under the protectorate of Husserl, his students, and subsequent phenomenologists. Fortunately here too there are the important beginnings of a rapprochement between phenomenology and American pragmatism, and Royce will prove, I think, to be a keystone to the recovery of this dialogue.³ (While hints of Royce's phenomenological importance will be seen throughout this dissertation, a lengthy consideration of Royce as phenomenologist must be saved for another day.)

Dwayne Tunstall has recently complained that many recent moves to consider Royce's applied ethics have simply ignored his idealistic metaphysics⁴—and several authors indeed have sought to “rescue” Royce's ethics from his metaphysics, saving the former while jettisoning the latter. But these “anti-metaphysical” formulations fail to understand that it is the idealism that gives form and content to Royce's ethics: namely it is the critical absolute of respect for loyal others and the conditions of loyalty, and the critical absolute of opposition to that which is predatory on loyalty and its conditions, that is the primary ethical and epistemological means to address our metaphysical condition as individual persons—painfully fragmented but organically linked in a way that allows us to overcome, in certain ways, our fragmentariness.

Without Royce's absolute of relations and respect for them as they are found among loyalists, and between the loyal individual and the world, as by his doctrine of “loyalty to loyalty,” his applied ethics will seem just as *ad hoc* as do many of the formulations now

³ A role first suggested for Royce by Jacquelyn Ann K. Kegley, in “Royce and Husserl: Some Parallels and Food For Thought,” in “Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society,” Summer 1978, Vol. 14 issue 3, pp. 184-200.

⁴ “Concerning the God that is Only a Concept: A Marcellian Critique of Royce's God,” *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society: A Quarterly Journal in American Philosophy*. Summer 2006. Vol. 42, issue 3, pp 394-416.

offered by philosophers that are widely ignored by the broader public. But Royce's applied ethics were not ignored, and his idealistic program, far from rendering him obscure, was heard by presidents of the United States (and at least one prime minister, of Australia), prominent business leaders, august public assemblies (like those formed at Royce's Lowell Lectures in Boston and the Gifford Lectures in Scotland), and in prominent public newspapers like the *New York Times* as with publications on the other side of the Atlantic.

Tunstall indeed has attacked what he considers to be overly rationalistic formulations in Royce's idealism, even while defending idealism itself. I share Tunstall's belief that we must consider Royce's idealism as foundational to all his thought, including his applied ethics, even as I believe Royce's rationalism can be defended against Tunstall's, and in turn Marcel's, critique. A concerted defense of Roycean "rationalism" must be deferred, since my purpose at present is not to defend Royce's metaphysics, but to defend his applied ethics. We may see, however, an important clue, in these applied ethics, and in his foundational critical concept of "loyalty to loyalty," how loyalties may be critically balanced according to a rational absolute, without an inordinate rejection of any of the individual experiencers or individual parts of experience, which are as co-equally real, in Royce's account, as the rational whole that links them. But despite this difference in evaluating the role of "rationalism" in Royce's metaphysics, I will take Tunstall's warning about divorcing Royce's ethics from his metaphysics very seriously, and I will constantly bear in mind, in what follows, the importance of idealism to understanding the unity and forcefulness of his ethics--especially for its ability to bring criticism to bear on

social-ethical violations, in a systematically valid, interdisciplinary, and publicly forceful way.

A third reason for the re-emergence of interest in Roycean ethics is, of course, his own extensive writings and engagement in areas of applied ethics—these are finally being rediscovered in an era when philosophy is again returning to fill its ancient office in the *Agora*, after for some decades neglecting it. I will endeavor to give an extensive survey of Royce's writings in applied ethics in what follows, but I will not, however, attempt to give a strictly exhaustive review of all his writings in this area. Instead I will primarily consider three specific areas in which his applied ethics were especially well-developed: his war and peace ethics, business ethics, and environmental ethics. By way of preparation for these three accounts, and for understanding Royce's applied ethics generally, in the next chapter I will discuss the centrality of the critical philosophy of loyalty as the ground of his applied ethics, and Royce's interdisciplinary methodology as it informs and unifies his various accounts.

Throughout the discussions of the applied accounts, I will argue for a consistency that was enabled by Royce's theory of loyalty and by his overall idealistic system, in particular by its pluralistic yet critical philosophy of loyalty that sought for the processive growth of knowledge and personhood in the world by the increase of the terms of sovereign loyalty and autonomous choice of loyalties, and that criticized forces that were predatory upon the existence and growth of these loyalties. This consistency will afford me, I hope, a stable foundation from which I will seek to apply Royce's critical philosophy of loyalty at the point of adjudication between and among conflicting loyalties in applied ethics in our own day.

Above all, I hope to show in the following discussions that Royce's theory of loyalty to loyalty has addressed a modern need for a critical, respectful and publicly relevant method of adjudication at the point of conflict between differing loyalties in applied ethics--loyalties that subjectively appear to be and actually are in some measure valid for their practitioners, but which nevertheless sometimes conflict in dangerous and destructive ways in the real world of social interactions. In examining various areas of applied ethics, we encounter instances of competing loyalties: in war, for instance, one nation's loyalty to its own goals are at odds with the goals of another; in business and environmental ethics, Americans' loyalty to their independent and enterprising pioneer spirit and goals of financial success conflict with the loyalty of celebrating and preserving the natural character and beauty of the land.

As an alternative to ethical systems which are inflexibly rigid in their critical hierarchies of loyalties, as those that would put the rights of individuals above communities, or communities above individuals, or of certain loyal communities over other well-functioning types, and as an alternative to relativisms which seem to preclude any type of criticism altogether, Royce' concept of loyalty to loyalty serves successfully, I hope to show in what follows, as a call to avoid the unnecessary conflict among loyalties, so as to seek for the general increase in the autonomous centers of loyalty, while retaining a narrowly constrained right to conflict--to criticize and oppose those selfish loyalties and individualisms that war against the general social spirit of loyalty. This rare but forceful criticism is key to understanding Royce's approach and may be of valuable instruction to contemporary applied ethics—which in its rigid monistic formulations often wastes its efforts criticizing far too much of what merely amounts to

justified expressions of creative autonomy, while failing to hold much in reserve to criticize egregious ethical violations; and which at other times, because of a metaphysical adherence to notions of mere relativism of individuals with nothing to link them, cannot muster the energy either to define or criticize ethical violations. Royce's philosophy of loyalty represents a critical middle—a pluralistic absolute that saved its strength for forceful occasional criticism of destructive loyalties while it gained its sustenance from the appreciation of a broadly flourishing range of loyalties. This gave Royce great public relevance to questions of applied ethics in his own day, and his example will serve, I believe, as a worthwhile model for philosophers in our day. And because recent applied ethics has struggled, very often self-admittedly, to find its public voice and its proper range of critical efficacy, Royce's public forcefulness and theoretical consistency in examining various aspects of applied ethics justify an extended study of this area of his thinking.

CHAPTER II

LOYALTY AND INTERDISCIPLINARITY AS FOUNDATIONS OF APPLIED ETHICS

Although Royce's fullest development of his philosophy of loyalty, and his critical description of "loyalty to loyalty," were not specifically named until decades after he began writing his philosophy, the ethical notion of loyalty may be found as an operative concept from his earliest publications—a philosophy of respect for the other of the world's social experience and intentions, including a criticism of that which was predatory on the world's Well-Ordered Systems.⁵ As the study of loyalty both grounds and systematizes his various forays in applied ethics, we will do well to begin our study with an extended reflection upon this concept.

As John McDermott has shown in his introduction to Royce's philosophy of loyalty, loyalty is a major motivating force in the lives of human individuals and human communities, a fact that is well-explored in literature but largely ignored by philosophers other than Royce. Because of this lack of critical attention, Royce, before giving a prescriptive account of loyalty, and a systematic justification for it, begins his account of loyalty by discussing its prominence as a psychological and sociological motivator in human life. He gives the following as a preliminary—and not yet critical—definition of loyalty as the belief and practical activity of a loyalist, regardless, for the moment, of the ethical worth of the particular chosen objects of loyalty:

⁵ This is found especially in Royce's writings on skepticism, wherein he seeks for the preservation of the multiple intentional ends that are simultaneously held in view by the skeptical inquirer. This thought is developed throughout his career, but its most devoted study is found in his early-career book, *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy*.

*[Loyalty is] the willing and practical and thoroughgoing devotion of a person to a cause. A man is loyal when, first, he has some cause to which he is loyal; when, secondly, he willingly and thoroughly devotes himself to this cause; and when, thirdly, he expresses his devotion in some sustained and practical way, by acting steadily in the service of his cause.*⁶

Loyalty is an ideal belief in the existence of social values worthy of individual service, but it is pragmatically efficacious in its appeal to the whole person, including the body, as directed towards real practical service in honor of the cause, as for Royce, “I cannot be loyal to barren abstractions. I can only be loyal to what my life can interpret in bodily deeds. Loyalty has its elemental appeal to my whole organism...In order to be loyal, then, to loyalty, I must indeed first choose forms of loyal conduct which appeal to my own nature.”⁷

Although loyalty was often mistakenly dismissed as if it were the product of mere compulsion, for Royce, loyalty can by the above account never be merely compelled, since it can only exist when it is freely willed, and practically endorsed, by the cooperating individual, as Royce writes that: “The loyal man’s cause is his cause by virtue of the assent of his own will. His devotion is his own. He chooses it, or, at all events, approves it. Moreover, his devotion is a practical one. He does something. This something serves his cause. Loyalty is never mere emotion. Adoration and affection may go with loyalty, but can never alone constitute loyalty.”⁸

⁶ POL pg. 9. Royce gives examples of loyalty from a variety of walks of life, political, religious and businesslike: “Instances of loyalty are: The devotion of a patriot to his country, when this devotion leads him actually to live and perhaps to die for his country; the devotion of a martyr to his religion; the devotion of a ship’s captain to the requirements of his office when, after a disaster, he works steadily for his ship and for the savings of his ship’s company until the last possible service is accomplished, so that he is the last man to leave the ship, and is ready if need be to go down with his ship.” POL pgs. 9-10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 130-131.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 10. For Royce, applied ethics was correct to oppose moral theory that sought for an impossible critical purity while it ignored the practical realm of loyal action, and which tended to “paralyze the effectiveness of many conscientious people.” *Ibid.*, 8.

Some forms of these common ideals have been perpetuated by an unbroken series of individual loyalists for centuries and millennia: the devotion of ships' captains to their passengers, Hippocratic Oaths, and the oaths of certain other guilds are obvious examples of such loyal causes; but even more broadly, a critical study of loyalty is called for because these and other loyalties, for good and for ill, are and have long been a widely extant ideal and practical belief of individuals in the reality and worth of a great variety of social causes. Put another way, causes affect us, whether or not we personally subscribe to them—although virtually everyone will subscribe to *some* loyalty, there is a dizzying array of loyalties that have such effects on our own lives. But still, for Royce, something can be said of the logically common nature of all types of loyalty, despite the great plurality of its species:

The essence of it, whatever forms [loyalty] may take, is... this: Since no man can find a plan of life by merely looking within his own chaotic nature, he has to look without, to the world of social conventions, deeds, and causes. Now, a loyal man is one who has found, and who sees, neither mere individual fellow-men to be loved or hated, nor mere conventions, nor customs, nor laws to be obeyed, but some social cause, or some system of causes, so rich, so well knit, and, to him, so fascinating, and withal so kindly in its appeal to his natural self-will, that he says to his cause: "Thy will is mine and mine is thine. In thee I do not lose but find myself, living intensely in proportion as I live for thee."⁹

The "protean" nature of loyalty means that it is not an exclusively aristocratic, oligarchic or high intellectual ideal, as the possibility of the loyal life is very widely spread, and diverse in its objects. It is the love, by biological individuals, for communities that are valued as persons:

Loyalty may thus exist amongst the lowliest and amongst the loftiest of mankind. The king and the peasant, the saint and the worldling, all have their various

⁹ Ibid., 21-22.

opportunities for loyalty. The practical man of the world and the seemingly lonely student of science may be equally loyal.¹⁰

A cause of loyalty directs and motivates actions, giving individuals a consistent and continuing plan of action that they may consult in the face of danger or assault--or merely in the face of moral perplexity--a plan of action in defense or advancement of values which, from the perspective of the individual, are worth defending and saving. But moreover, service of the cause gives loyalists something to do, a chosen path to direct their efforts that mediates between unharmonized individual desires and unharmonized social suggestions or compulsions, and hence service of the cause is the continuing key to individual autonomy. Loyalty, again, might or might not be a real moral good, but at least it *seems* to be a good to the loyalist, because it gives this (at least relatively) coherent plan of action. And these loyalties are indeed not merely passing moral goods, but central ones, giving us our purpose in life and our conscience. Thus, as Royce describes it: "Loyalty is for the loyal man not only a good, but for him chief amongst all the moral goods of his life, because it furnishes to him a personal solution of the hardest of human practical problems, the problem: 'For what do I live? Why am I here? For what am I good? Why am I needed?'"¹¹

The answer that loyalty provides hypothesizes and practically acts as if there is real value in these social causes, in which loyalists partake but which may trump their own individual interest in self-success as mere fragments removed from that cause. The truth-telling attitude, whether of an honest witness in court, or a devoted scientific laborer, gives a widespread example of such loyalty. Loyalty to truth, Royce argues, is a

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 55.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 28.

kind of loyalty to the experiential observation of everyone—and a belief that the Other’s experience is sometimes more real than our assertions, as when we are in error. To assert a world in which error is possible, where witnesses could testify to the actual truth of the matter, or otherwise to assert a world of shared fact, as by cooperative scientific inquiry, were fundamental displays of loyalty to the validity and worth of others’, and groups’, experiences, as for Royce: “The very assertion, ‘Human experience, taken as a totality of facts, exists,’ is a momentous example of just such an assertion.”¹²

The truth world, like the world of loyal objects considered more generally, is insofar hypothetical from the perspective of merely individual experience, because we act as if such collective experience exists, even though no individual can ever accurately report having actually witnessed or possessed the whole of the human experience. For Royce, the hypothesized relation of the experiential union that allows for truth and error is more than can be accounted for in dualistic or realistic doctrines that urge that individuals must be finally sundered as discrete individuals, or that “idea” is sundered from “reality.” For in acknowledging a world of truth, even if asserting in a “realistic” metaphysics that individuals are finally discrete or sundered from one another, we acknowledge the value of ties between and among people that are beyond our, or anyone’s, ability precisely to verify, and thus the truth-telling attitude is itself an attitude of loyalty.¹³

The loyal hypothesis of a world of common experience that enables the possibility of truth and error, one that can make an individual’s and even a unanimous group’s assertions true or false, is an example of how all loyalties privilege the relations *between*

¹² *Ibid.*, 155.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 66.

individuals, in the form of the commonly experienced cause--and it is in this sense that an individual scientific researcher working in a lab might be loyal to the truth, or a soldier to a patriotic cause, even if the principal investigator in charge of the experiment or general in charge of the war is not loyal, and is merely self-interested. Loyalty is not, in Royce's account, to mere individuals considered as discrete entities, but to the relational ties that unite them.

Clearly there are many types of loyal causes in the world; further, for Royce, a *critically comparative* morality already exists in the world, in a "loyalty to loyalty" not merely to our own chosen group, but loyalty to the validity of others' self-chosen causes as well. The effort to organize rationally--meaning to compare among forms of organization looking for a maximally compossible set (rather than a merely relativistic or monistic set), from which we can best choose the special objects of our loyalty, rejecting just those possibilities that do not fit in what Royce terms a Well-Ordered Series--means also that respectful criticism is indeed at the heart of human civilization, as, for Royce:

...loyalty to loyalty is not a novel undertaking. It began to be effective from the time when first people could make and keep a temporary truce during a war, and when first strangers were regarded as protected by the gods, and when first the duties of hospitality were recognized. The way to be loyal to loyalty is therefore laid down in precisely the rational portion of the conventional morality which human experience has worked out.¹⁴

We will return to this more complicated theme of critically comparative loyalty to loyalty later, but we might wonder why there is even loyalty to single causes—why, that is, would individuals sacrifice their seeming self-interest in favor of advancing the interest of a social cause, often to their self-disadvantage, and sometimes to their own injury or death?

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 66.

In answer, Royce refers to loyalty not as a mere effusive decoration but as the only possible solution to a painful and universal paradox that is faced by all finite beings—wherein exclusive reference either to merely the individual will considered as a totality of its unharmonized appetites and conflicted plans, or to mere social demands considered as the total available set, fails to provide a consistent plan of coherence of idea or action. An individual's actions, if he or she seeks strictly to please the inner will, or all outer social demands, will soon fall into injurious self-contradiction. But these inner and outer demands are both real and permanent. First, as with the demand for autonomy of will:

‘What reason can I give why my duty is my duty?’ . . . indeed, we find that no external authority, viewed merely as external, can give one any reason why an act is truly right or wrong. Only a calm and reasonable view of what it is that I myself really will,—only this can decide such a question. My duty is simply my own will brought to my clear self-consciousness.¹⁵

It is only by the judgment of “your own will and your own desire, once fully brought to self-consciousness, [that] furnish the only valid reason for you to know what is right and good,”¹⁶--the principle of autonomy shared by classical moral theorists such as Kant, Socrates, Augustine, and by Royce. And yet autonomy is not the same thing as isolated individuality. Mere biological individuality, just the possession of a small organic fragment that refuses to imitate or to cooperate with fellow humanity, is a lonely and painful condition.¹⁷ Understanding this, we find that our autonomy, in the sense of

¹⁵ Ibid., 13.

¹⁶ Ibid., 13-14.

¹⁷ “For what end, I insist, is your moral independence good? Do you find anything finally important in the mere fact that you are unlike anybody else, or that you think good what another man condemns? What worth could you find in an independence that should merely isolate you, that should leave you but a queer creature, whose views are shared by nobody? No,—you are still a social being. What you really mean is, that you want to be heard and respected as regards your choice of your own cause. What you actually

achieving a coherent plan of action, is not to be found by solipsistic isolation or realistic “independence,” since our individual desire, abstracted from stable social reference, provides no rationally coherent set of suggestions for action:

I can never find out what my own will is by merely brooding over my natural desires, or by following my momentary caprices. For by nature I am a sort of meeting place of countless streams of ancestral tendency. From moment to moment, if you consider me apart from my training, I am a collection of impulses. There is no one desire that is always present to me. Left to myself alone, I can never find out what my will is.¹⁸

Such painful finitude is immediately obvious in our own youthful cries and in all our later travails, and this constitutes the main reason for our turn to social suggestions for what we ought do with our individual autonomy—we seek in the social world not merely for advice but for some consistent plan by which our individual desires may be sustainably met in the social world; moreover, for Royce, this is where we have already sought, at least those of us who have consented to be socialized when we were children:

We all of us first learned about what we ought to do, about what our ideal should be, and in general about the moral law, through some authority external to our own wills. Our teachers, our parents, our playmates, society, custom, or perhaps some church,—these taught us about one or another aspect of right and wrong. The moral law came to us from without.¹⁹

Thus:

It is our social existence...as imitative beings...that suggests to us the sorts of plans of life which we get when we learn a calling, when we find a business in life, when we discover our place in the social world. And so our actual plans of life, namely, our callings, our more or less settled daily activities, come to us from without. We in so far learn what our own will is by first imitating the wills of others.²⁰

intend is, that nobody else shall determine, apart from this your own choice, the special loyalty that shall be yours.” *Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 14.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

As Royce extensively discusses in his psychological writings and in his *The World and the Individual*, and as recently described in Griffin Trotter's book on Roycean medical ethics, we display the first prospects of loyalty in our more original acts of social imitation, as when we learn a language, or trust that others have experiences that are relevant to our own, and that the ends they achieve by their actions may be achieved by us if we imitate those actions. We believe, having granted it a long time ago in our own imitative youths, in the bodies of our fellows and of the whole phenomenal world that enables our own bodies to imitate the deeds of their actions. Indeed we find enough evidence of success in these endeavors that we willingly perpetuate in these acts of imitation, and thus of the valorization of our neighbors as the worthwhile sources of imitable behaviors.

But, as with mere individual desire, social suggestions considered as a total set fail self-evidently to form a rationally coherent set—the advice that we receive conflicts, to put it mildly, and simply following social examples as they come leads us into painful self-refutation, and still lacking a rationally coherent life-plan.²¹ This, then, is the paradox that calls forth loyalty as a solution (and that will likewise ground critical loyalty to loyalty), as the individual seeks for a plan that at once meets demands for autonomy of the will, and the necessity for such plans to engage in a consistent plan of sociality. As Royce writes:

Neither within nor without, then, do I find what seems to me a settled authority,-- a settled and harmonious plan of life,--unless, indeed, one happy sort of union takes place between the inner and the outer, between my social world and myself, between my natural waywardness and the ways of my fellows... This happy union is the one that takes place whenever my mere social conformity, my docility as an imitative creature, turns into exactly that which... I shall call loyalty.²²

²¹ Ibid., 17.

²² Ibid., 19.

“Loyalty...tends to unify life, to give it centre, fixity, stability...”²³ so that we have access to motivation for consistent action. Bridging the divide between the will’s demand for self-aggrandizement and various social demands for obedience, loyalty idealizes and practically serves a cause that exists at once within the individual and in the social group—as a conceived, felt, and served common relation to an ideal cause. Here loyalty, from the descriptive but still not critically ethical perspective, “...solves the paradox of our ordinary existence, by showing us outside of ourselves the cause which is to be served, and inside of ourselves the will which delights to do this service, and which is not thwarted but enriched and expressed in such service.”²⁴

Such loyalty is indeed, Royce argues, a necessary condition of developing personhood, given that no coherent plan that would express the individual will is otherwise available. Loyalty is useful because it gives a plan that has at least some temporal consistency, and fellow servants (or intended temporal consistency and intended fellow servants), and the purposes of loyalty provide a measure for the individual so that actions may cohere in a unified direction over time. Thus loyalty is not a mere emotional outburst—even as loyal service will have its emotional charms--but a serially ordered activity that aims for the achievement of specific purposes that may themselves grow over time as the cause and/or the individual loyalist grows or comes into new relations with the social world. Loyalty, that is, does not merely tell the loyalist what to do *now*, but it tells also what to do *next*, and how what must be done now relates in a coherently ordered temporal series to what the loyalist is trying to accomplish:

²³ Ibid., 12.

²⁴ Ibid., 21.

...no one act of my life, and no limited set of acts of mine, can ever completely embody my ideal...My cause... is greater than my individual life. Hence it always sets before me an ideal which demands more of me than I have yet done,-- more, too, than I can ever at any one instant accomplish. Even because of this vastness of my ideal, even because that to which I am loyal is so much greater than I ever become, even because of all this can my ideal unify my life, and make a rational self of me.²⁵

Because of its vastness, but yet because of the enduring personality or character of the specific cause, loyalty as our conscience is our moral ideal, against which we judge our present actions to see whether they advance the purposes of the cause.²⁶ And here we meet the cause as a critical self-corrective, as we inhibit certain expressions of activity that we would otherwise commit, but that we do not do because they would be injurious to the advancement of the cause.

While loyalty, as we shall see, is not a sufficient condition for achieving genuine moral goods, since some loyalties tend to destroy or diminish the conditions of social respect that make any loyalty possible for autonomous individuals, having some loyalty, Royce argued, is a necessary condition of achieving that good. In this sense, for Royce:

All that you can say of the defects of loyalty leaves still untouched the one great fact that, if you want to find a way of living which surmounts doubts, and centralizes your powers, it must be some such a way as all the loyal in common have trodden, since first loyalty was known amongst men...unless you can find some sort of loyalty, you cannot find unity and peace in your active living...This cause must be indeed rational, worthy, and no object of a false devotion. But once found, it must become your conscience, must tell you the truth about your duty, and must unify, as from without and from above, your motives, your special ideals, and your plans. You ought, I say, to find such a cause, if indeed there be any ought at all.²⁷

Given that we need a cause to have any chance at the harmonization of a life-plan, while having *any* cause doesn't guarantee us the harmonization that we desire—as the

²⁵ Ibid, 81.

²⁶ Ibid., 81.

²⁷ Ibid., 23.

service of some causes can in some instances even destroy the possibility of achieving any consistently loyal good--Royce now looks to go further, to use loyalty as the basis for what might be termed his version of the categorical imperative, in his distinction between loyalties that are "loyal to loyalty" and those that are "disloyal to loyalty." By this standard, loyalties (and autonomous acts that owe their creation and ongoing conditions to loyalty), are criticized by Royce when they violate the conditions for the perpetuation and stable growth of the world of loyal relations—the necessary keystone for meaningful autonomy.

Loyalty to Loyalty and the Critique of Disloyalty

Loyalty, then, provides a plan of action that allows us a plan of escape from our original paradox, in which we can neither satisfy the competing demands of the inner will and the social will; but, as Royce shows, while all loyal causes seem good to their adherents, some may prove evil to everyone else:

...many causes... may appear to any given person to be hateful and evil causes, to which he is justly opposed. A robber band, a family engaged in a murderous feud, a pirate crew, a savage tribe, a Highland robber clan of the old days—these might constitute causes to which somebody has been, or is, profoundly loyal. Men have loved such causes devotedly and have served them for a lifetime. Yet most of us would easily agree in thinking such causes unworthy of anybody's loyalty. Moreover, different loyalties may obviously stand in mutual conflict, whenever their causes are opposed. ... War-songs call the individual enemy evil names just because he possesses the very personal qualities that, in our own loyal fellow-countrymen, we most admire. Our enemy, as you see, is a slave, because he serves his cause so obediently. Yet just such service we call, in our own country's heroes, the worthiest devotion.²⁸

Given that our autonomy, and the critical moral measure of our conscience, are founded in our self-chosen loyalties, we may be impressed by the seeming good that our loyalties offer, even while our chosen cause in fact effects evil in the world by destroying

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 51- 52.

the continuing possibility of the spirit or hypothesis, practically served, of loyalty, and of the autonomy that loyalty allows for. And such a result gives a clue, for Royce, as to how, while: “Loyalty is a good for the loyal man... it may be mischievous for those whom his cause assails. Conflicting loyalties may mean general social disturbances; and the fact that loyalty is good for the loyal does not of itself decide whose cause is right when various causes stand opposed to one another.”²⁹

And too we must remember that alongside the contingent will of individual autonomy, there stands another principle, that of social compulsion. Nations and rulers do not always merely kindly ask for loyalty, but at times demand the types of loyalty that create these social disturbances that eventually destroy the social conditions of autonomy. But the principle of autonomy provides, for Royce, the first inkling of a critique of loyalties or demands for loyalty that will prove disloyal in the wider world of loyalty:

Tradition has usually held that a man ought to be loyal to just that cause which his social station determines for him. Common sense generally says, that if you were born in your country, and still live there, you ought to be loyal to that country, and to that country only, hating the enemies across the border whenever a declaration of war requires you to hate them. But we have declared that true loyalty includes some element of free choice.³⁰

Loyalty, that is, is not merely asked for or compelled; it must also be freely given. And the principle by which autonomy is gained through loyalty provides the next step in critique of the compulsion to loyalty that would require us to engage us in destructive assaults on our neighbors’ objects of loyalty or on the necessary means by which they express their loyalty, because it was just the right to freely chosen relations that first enabled the possibility of happiness in our socially situated autonomy.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 52-53.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 52.

While it is common (and dangerous) to think that our loyalty is worthy because it makes our group superior to all our fellows, in fact loyalty more fundamentally allows us to have fellow workers in the spirit of loyalty, although only a few of them will be loyal to our specific causes, and perhaps no others will be loyal to just our own unique system of them. The good of loyalty is not, then, for Royce, a good of collective social self-superiority to all other collective forms, but it is simply the great advantage that cooperation allows, when it facilitated consistent recurrence, compared to our miserable condition when we are unable to cooperate--whether because we were not yet socially trained, or because we have willfully destroyed, by schismatic selfishness or by the service of disloyal loyalties, the possibility of any longer having loyal causes.

Since, for Royce, only the possession of some loyalty can save us from the miserable condition of lonely individual finitude, and because loyalty can only be created and maintained with the assent of individual servants of the cause, loyalty's critical function is based, so to speak, in its interest in its own recurrence, regardless of the other specificities of the chosen cause. Such a critical function may legitimately chastise those modes of loyalties or individualisms that war against the willingness of people to have loyalty, or that prevent them from having or serving causes, or that take away their means to serve them. For all such behaviors tend to destroy the ability of people to have practical faiths in causes, and thereby diminishes the number of terms of actual and possible loyal relations founded upon the autonomous hypothesis, by individuals, of their loyalty.

The existence of this critical function against disloyalty, founded simply upon the necessity of autonomous choice in order for loyalty of any sort to work, stands opposed

to the criticism of those opposed to loyalty itself, who believe that it is and can be nothing but an external compulsion that destroys individual autonomy and reason itself.

Exemptions to such compulsion exist so long, Royce writes, as individuals have a crucial role to play in the willing selection of their loyal causes:

...if you think that a man must be loyal simply to the cause which tradition sets before him, without any power to direct his own moral attention, then indeed the conflict of loyalties seems an insoluble problem; so that, if men find themselves loyally involved in feuds, there is no way out. But if, indeed, choice plays a part,-- a genuine even if limited part, in directing the individual's choice for the cause to which he is to be loyal, then indeed this choice may be so directed that loyalty to the universal loyalty of all mankind shall be furthered by the actual choices which each enlightened loyal person makes when he selects his cause.³¹

For loyalty to be at all efficacious, we must, in Royce's account, freely select the cause in order for it to function as a motivator for us. Loyalty is never merely imposed, but it must be selected and chosen by its individual servant. The more possibilities offered, the better will be the chance that we will find a genuinely compelling loyalty and set of loyalties amongst them. A mere demand or a mere compulsion, to the contrary, fails to recognize this need for autonomy, and it in fact wars against the existence of the choices and possibilities of loyalties that would allow individuals the chance at a selection that would accord with the demands of their own individual will.

Mere compulsion is inconsistent with genuine rational loyalty, or even loyalty of any sort, since it attempts to impose one course, when the individual must have selected one *from* the many to be truly inspired by the cause. And to choose worthily our own causes, then, we must have an authentic selection of causes that can only be provided by the continuing autonomy of our loyal neighbors. Thus it is for epistemological as for ethical reasons that Royce argues, by his principle of loyalty to loyalty, for a repetition of

³¹ *Ibid.*, 58.

the conditions by which the individual and social will are first harmonized by single loyalties. Loyalties that harmonize individual actions for a brief time, while disrupting the social and individual conditions that allow for loyalty, eventually prove disharmonious, whereas in loyalty to loyalty, the individual loyalist seeks, by his or her service, to establish a long-enduring cooperative and rational form of service of both individual loyalties as a coherent system within an individual loyalist, and a harmonious system of loyal corporate “bodies” in relation to one another. One loyalty is not really possible in a strictly isolated sense, since the harmonization that the single loyalty allows the single loyalist is dependent on a general right to social imitation and thus a harmonization of a system of loyalties, even though we only subscribe to a much smaller number of local causes within the greater system. As Royce describes it:

Loyalty is a good, a supreme good. If I myself could but find a worthy cause...then my highest human good, in so far as I am indeed an active being, would be mine. But this very good of loyalty is no peculiar privilege of mine; nor is it good only for me. It is an universally human good. For it is simply the finding of a harmony of the self and the world,—such a harmony as alone can content any human being.³²

While the specific causes of loyalty are innumerable and are constantly changing, and while we may master very few of them and may only even be acquainted with a small group of them relative to the whole world of loyalty, the basic logical spirit of the relation—the individual’s willingness and ability to serve a social cause that agrees with the interests of his or her own will—is relatively simple, and shared by any who would be loyal. The defense of this shared spirit, the willingness to idealize and to serve a beloved social cause that allows the only escape from the painful condition of the paradox of finitude, wherein we seek, often at cross-purposes, both to obey our individual will and to

³² *Ibid.*, 123.

submit to social compulsions, forms the basic term of critique of selfish individualisms and selfish loyalties that would violate this common spirit in pursuit of the aggrandizement of a schismatic value, since loyalty itself, as a basic form of relation, is a good without which we may not find our harmonized autonomy. Attacks upon this basic possibility, necessary as it is for individual happiness, is then, by Royce's account, the standard by which predatory attacks are judged to be evil:

If the loyalty of A is a good for him, and if the loyalty of B is a good for him, then a feud between A and B, founded upon a mutual conflict between the causes that they serve, obviously involves this evil, namely, that each of the combatants assails, and perhaps may altogether destroy, precisely what we have seen to be the best spiritual possession of the other, namely, his chance to have a cause and to be loyal to a cause. The militant loyalty, indeed, also assails, in such a case, the enemy's physical comfort and well-being, his property, his life; and herein, of course, militant loyalty does evil to the enemy. But if each man's having and serving a cause is his best good, the worst of the evils of a feud is the resulting attack, not upon the enemy's comfort or his health or his property or his life, but upon the most precious of his possessions, his loyalty itself.³³

Royce's loyalty to loyalty thus privileges the right to the relations that name, create and sustain objective value; rather than seeking to make value inhere in unrelated objects, as if value were a discrete real object, possessed, but not shared, by merely and finally discrete finite individuals—with no chance of organic unity between them. This right of self-determination of shared local causes, and the rejection of the idea of a supremely conquering political, religious or other sort of loyalty that would enable its adherents to lord it over their self-minding neighbors is central to Royce's various essays in applied ethics, to his prescient anti-imperialism, anti-racism, and to his critical studies of the relation of business to the environment. Likewise, as I hope to show in my exploration of his specific applied ethics in the following chapters, his philosophy of loyalty was key to the consistent forcefulness of his public critique in promoting

³³ *Ibid.*, 54-55.

consistent loyalty and in opposing disloyal loyalties—local loyalties that undermined the broader reality and possibility of loyal relations.

For Royce, as was earlier discussed, our own loyalties were first suggested to us by others to whom we just chanced to be in relation, and our only chance at rational growth as loyal persons depended upon turning these occasions of chance into a meaningful and rationally repeatable system. That in turn demanded the ready availability of loyal suggestions that we might choose among as the special objects of our loyalty in our quest for our own special objects of devotion; and this in turn demanded the ready availability of other self-minding loyalties-- even indeed of special causes that are not our own nor likely ever will be, so that our own selection of a cause might be valued as *chosen*, so that we may pick ones specifically charming to us, and so that we might choose new ones as we grow in our powers of social efficacy. Such respect for foreign loyalties also recognized that the loyalties we personally choose are meant only to do *some* work, not *all* work, and thus by merely letting others be, to persist in their own self-chosen loyal labor, we might profit by their example and by the surplus of their loyal labor.

Because of the work of our loyal neighbors, we have the luxury of not needing to choose some monistic loyalty that will force us to do *everything* in making all decisions for all agents, never having any rest nor any possibility of success. Likewise the possibility of rest and success are undermined, for our own causes, when our loyal neighbors are being destroyed, whether by unwise business, war, or environmental decisions. The relative good of loyalties is thus Royce's ethical absolute, but it is no "mere relativism" that urges that every choice is equally justified—since, for instance,

certain predatory loyal choices are of such a nature as to destroy the possibility of loyal choice and are justly opposed by the world of self-minding and respectfully cooperative loyalists, even despite other differences in the specific causes of their loyalties.

Thus respect for others' loyalty is not mere sympathy or benevolence, but an ethical and epistemological imperative, as the growth of loyal relations in general is indeed the only means of progressively overcoming our finitude and of escaping the painful limitations that still accompany us even in our collective social finitude—even when armored by our causes, these still are finite relative to the whole world of causes. Even as loyalty allows us to escape the miserable aspects of merely isolated individuality, there still exists a rational ethical necessity to make life more organized, more inclusive, and yet still always by our free personal assent and our individual service: "...My loyalty will be a growing loyalty. Without giving up old loyalties I shall annex new ones. There will be evolution in my loyalty."³⁴

That others' causes have and may become our own is part of the general cause of the growth of our loyalties, but obviously every cause may not be equally our own, since our interests, time and powers are limited by our finitude and by the choice of our rational self-interests. But still the consistent right of autonomy in selection of loyalties is itself a good, since it means that we may choose our causes rather than having them imposed upon us. Additionally, we may learn loyal techniques from the loyal other, even when their cause is not directly our own: as when we are inspired by the example of the devotion of others to the service of their own self-chosen causes, or by learning to imitate their special techniques (one might think of how Olympic athletes may bring innovations of sport that they observe at the Games back to their own homelands); and, of course, we

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 63.

may profit from the surplus of the labor of others' self-minding causes. For these reasons, Royce urges, "My fellow's special and personal cause need not be directly mine. Indirectly he inspires me by the very contagion of his loyalty. He sets me the example. By his loyalty he shows me the worth of loyalty."³⁵ The loyal other, then, is never merely other.

Because of these various aspects of the good of others' loyalty in terms of the perpetuation and growth of our own loyalties, those aspects of selfish individualism or selfish loyalties that disloyally prey upon self-minding neighbors are to be opposed, while the rest of the world of loyalties are to be respected and encouraged. For Royce, the vast majority of the work of the respect for these "foreign" loyal relations was thus merely respectfully passive—the primarily active part, for us, was the mastery of a very limited form of the work of the specific causes: a narrow attention to an expertise, accompanied by a recognition of the limits of one's finitude, and of the presence of loyal others who are beyond and who mark our boundaries. But such respect is not, for Royce, entirely passive, since self-minding work and respect for other loyalists means that: "Whoever is loyal to his own therefore helps on the cause of universal loyalty by his every act of devotion, precisely in so far as he refrains from any hostile attack upon the loyalty of other people, and simply lets his example of loyalty work."³⁶ For Royce, one of the greatest moral tasks was to learn to mind our own business, and to leave others to mind theirs—not in terms of ignoring the values of their loyalties or the results of their loyal labors, or in terms of ignoring evidence of injustice, but in terms of refraining from domineering attempts to subsume others' loyalties under our own.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 64.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 73.

Both to preserve the avenues of growth of our own direct objects of loyalty, and to preserve the general social spirit of loyalty, Royce's principle of loyalty to loyalty thus asks that the individual loyalist and individual loyalty serve at once two purposes, both a practical service to the specialized causes in its worthy appeal to our own interests, and a concordant commitment to advance *everyone's* loyalty. One must serve, that is, the local loyalty, but in a way that tends to increase the universal relations of loyalty in service of the consistency of the practical ideal of loyalty. We are to honor and serve the loyalties of our own province, but not as a mere prideful boast, that our place is better than all the others. It is rather that there are valuable and unique places that may be served in valuable and unique ways by individuals that is important. This principle serves as a critical ethical imperative, when loyalty is both local and locally repeatable:

In so far as it lies in your power, so choose your cause and so serve it, that, by reason of your choice and of your service, there shall be more loyalty in the world rather than less. And, in fact, so choose and so serve your individual cause as to secure thereby the greatest possible increase of loyalty amongst men. More briefly: *In choosing and in serving the cause to which you are to be loyal, be, in any case, loyal to loyalty.*³⁷

This principle provides an escape route from the mere *demands* of coercion that are sometimes a problematic portion of loyalty, as when a corporate or military loyalty acts to compel our loyal service in favor of disloyal ends. To accept such service in the name of a disloyal loyalty would, by Royce's account, undermine the practical worth of the loyal hypothesis that allows us to escape from our original condition of hopelessly conflicted and painful finitude—disloyal loyalties, that is, solve the problem of “what am I to do with myself?” only by creating hefty new problems, while undoing the capacity to meet them with acts of future cooperation. By our loyalty we admit both that we are

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 57.

painfully limited, and that others hold the valuable keys that we need in order to escape from that painful condition; to aggrieve others' right to self-chosen loyalty is to condemn ourselves to stultify in our painful finite condition, and worse, because we will assault far more loyal relations than we directly assaulted mere individuals.³⁸

Loyalty to loyalty, then, is no vicious formalism, but is an effort practically, critically and rationally to repeat and improve the social conditions that give us our lived and embodied autonomy—we joyfully exult in our own individual body when we perform the deed that will advance the loyal cause. But we may do this ethically and rationally, without imperialism, hedonism or triumphalism attached to it. Thus:

I shall serve causes such as my natural temperament and my social opportunities suggest to me. I shall choose friends whom I like. My family, my community, my country, will be served partly because I find it interesting to be loyal to them. Nevertheless, upon another side, all these my more natural and, so to speak, accidental loyalties, will be controlled and united by a deliberate use of the principle that, whatever my cause, it ought to be such as to further, so far as in me lies, the cause of universal loyalty. Hence I shall not permit my choice of my special causes to remain a mere chance. My causes must form a system. They must constitute in their entirety a single cause, my life of loyalty. When apparent conflicts arise amongst the causes in which I am interested, I shall deliberately undertake...to reduce the conflict to the greatest possible harmony.³⁹

Alongside and complementary with this principle of respect, there is a principle of criticism of those types of loyalty that war against the spirit of loyalty. As Kegley and Mahowald have argued, Royce's critical system here has an advantage over predominant

³⁸ "...My cause, by our own definition, is a social cause, which binds many into the unity of one service. My cause, therefore, gives me, of necessity, fellow-servants, who with me share this loyalty, and to whom this loyalty, if complete, is also a supreme good. So far, then, in being loyal myself, I not only get but give good; for I help to sustain, in each of my fellow-servants, his own loyalty, and so I help him to secure his own supreme good. In so far, then, my loyalty to my cause is also a loyalty to my fellows' loyalty. But now suppose that my cause, like the family in a feud, or like the pirate ship, or like the aggressively warlike nation, lives by the destruction of the loyalty of other families, or of its own community, or of other communities. Then, indeed, I get a good for myself and for my fellow-servants by our common loyalty; but I war against this very spirit of loyalty as it appears in our opponent's loyalty to his own cause." *Ibid.*, 56.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 62-63.

communitarian approaches, which, like Royce argue that only by participation in communities may we attain a genuinely valuable individuality, but which typically fail to give a principle by which communities that attack the broader service of community may be criticized and opposed. As Michael Raposa has likewise observed of the scope of Royce's applied ethics, it is not just individuals who may be graceful or graceless in their relation to others; loyal causes may be so as well⁴⁰—but Royce is one of few who attend to these ethics of loyal “group persons,” who dwell between the abstracted extremes of individuals considered as merely discrete, or as merely brought under the monistic union of The State or mystical union of The One.

Here Royce's principle of loyalty to loyalty serves as a development of Kant's Kingdom of Ends; Royce's demand for the repetition of the conditions of loyalty is also a kind of categorical imperative, but in Royce's account the categories are not static, they are constantly emergent as people become loyal in new ways. For Royce, communities are understood to serve or to refute what might be termed the Kingdom of Loyal Ends by their attitudes of relation to the loyalties, and the possibility of loyalty, of their fellow communities. This grants a limited right to criticism, what might be termed a communitarian categorical imperative:

What I sought for myself I should then be explicitly seeking for my whole world. All men would be my fellow-servants of my cause. In principle I should be opposed to no man's loyalty. I should be opposed only to mens' blindness in their loyalty, I should contend only against that tragic disloyalty to loyalty which the feuds of humanity now exemplify.⁴¹

Loyalty, then, as the ideal service of a relation, is not a simple real given, but it is also of the nature of a tenuous idea that requires for its continued existence and efficacy the fact

⁴⁰ See his article forthcoming in the book *The Relevance of Royce*, eds. Parker, Bell, Fordham University Press.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 60.

of its being consistently available and widely shared. This forms the central basis of Royce's critical moral theory, his contrast of loyalty to loyalty with disloyalty to loyalty, in the test of whether a particular loyalty supports or opposes the right of people *in their own provincial locality* to their own loyalty. For Royce, people had not merely a right to their lives, but to their self-chosen labor, and thus we have not merely a duty to serve our own loyalty, but also to serve a general social principle of "loyalty to loyalty," in which loyalty is made consistently systematic by respect for the whole world of our fellow loyal laborers:

And so, a cause is good, not only for me, but for mankind, in so far as it is essentially a *loyalty to loyalty*, that is, is an aid and a furtherance of loyalty in my fellows. It is an evil cause in so far as, despite the loyalty that it arouses in me, it is destructive of loyalty in the world of my fellows. My cause is, indeed, always such as to involve some loyalty to loyalty, because, if I am loyal to any cause at all, I have fellow-servants whose loyalty mine supports. But in so far as my cause is a predatory cause, which lives by overthrowing the loyalties of others, it is an evil cause, because it involves disloyalty to the very cause of loyalty itself.⁴²

This principle demands that we seek to avoid unnecessary conflict, but it does not shy away in principle or in Royce's applied ethical practice from necessary conflict, since it devotedly seeks to oppose just those modes of social expression that war against the right of individuals and groups to self-determination in their own loyalties:

...The principle of loyalty to loyalty obviously requires you *to respect loyalty in all men, wherever you find it*. If your fellow's cause has, in a given case, assailed your own, and if, in the world as it is, conflict is inevitable, you may then have to war with your fellow's cause, in order to be loyal to your own. But even then, you may never assail whatever is sincere and genuine about his spirit of loyalty. Even if your fellow's cause involves disloyalty to mankind at large, you may not condemn the loyalty of your fellow in so far as it is loyalty. You may condemn only his blindly chosen cause...Prevent the conflict of loyalties when you can, minimize such conflict where it exists, and, by means of fair play and of the chivalrous attitude towards the opponent, utilize even conflict, where it is inevitable, so as to further the cause of loyalty to loyalty.⁴³

⁴² *Ibid.*, 56.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 74.

Thus, for Royce, much of conflict between loyalties was to be avoided by generally abstaining, unless the case absolutely demanded it, so that the general right of people to their loyalty may be protected against predatory aggression, from judging and opposing a neighbor's self-chosen loyalty. But occasionally loyalties do come into conflict, and a major reason for the relevance of Royce's ethics to his own day and to our own is that his concept of the autonomous right of peoples to their loyalty, and the right of defense of disloyal attacks against it, gives flexibly critical mediation at the point of the conflict between loyalties. While the study of the conflict of loyalties has come into vogue in recent literature in applied ethics, many theorists have given fixed accounts wherein they seek to provide a rigid hierarchy of types of loyalties (as between loyalties to the environment and loyalties to business), and that provide hopelessly *ad hoc* justifications for the orderings that they provide.⁴⁴ But no such *ad hoc* justification actually can so simplify the moral situation, since much of the paradox of any genuine moral dilemmas depends upon the particularities involved in two or more competing goods *in a specific situation*.

Contrary too these views, Royce's principle of respect for others' autonomy dictates that business is a legitimate loyalty, and so too are other types—which is good critical news, since we indeed want the captain of a sinking ship on which we are passengers to attend to the typical loyalties associated with the profession in a fully robust way, regarding the need to ensure passenger safety before he or she seeks safety in

⁴⁴ For instance (and as I will further discuss in the chapters on business and environmental ethics), in regards to the proper ethical place of business loyalties *vis-à-vis* other types of loyalties, some theorists have urged that business loyalties ought once and for all be placed above many other types of social loyalties (Friedman, Hubbard); others, that business must be subsumed to other types of social loyalties (Soles, Duska, Randels). See Elbert Hubbard, *Loyalty in Business*, and for the author authors, see *Honest Work: A Business Ethics Reader*, eds. Ciulla, Martin, Solomon.

the lifeboat, whereas it would be bad news if the ship's officer decided, like Conrad's Lord Jim, that business loyalties after all are not so important, compared to other ones, once the ship starts sinking.

According to Royce's system, business *can* be chosen as an object of loyalty without that cause replacing respect for all other human relations, since loyalties may (and, as we shall see, must) form a critical system in addition to existing in relation to a specific cause—since, in Royce's concept of loyalty to loyalty, one is loyal both to a special object and to the basic spirit of relation of any loyalist to any loyal objects that do not commit their adherents to the destruction of their fellows. Such a principle allows both special service to a local cause and a rationally coherent regard for the whole world of loyalty, without engaging in hasty *ad hoc* generalizations of the worth of other peoples' loyalties, or hasty normative prescriptions that demand that people re-order their loyal priorities according to an individual loyalist's or to a philosopher's *a priori* whims.

This, I will argue, is the major advantage of Royce's critical conception of loyalty to fixed competitors in recent literature, as Royce provides an evolving critical standard by which these questions of superiority and subsumption are not predetermined once and for all in all specific cases, since the right of all individuals to autonomy in their choice of loyalty is the evolving but absolute standard of judgment of loyalty to loyalty. It is usually best, according to Royce's study, when people are respectfully left to mind their own loyal business; but when various conflicts arise among loyalties, ethical decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, after careful study, and grounded upon the rights of individuals to autonomy in their own choice of social loyalties. Fixed hierarchical approaches, on the contrary, violate the right to autonomy in choosing and systematizing

one's own causes (as by suggesting that individuals *must* be loyal to business above other causes or to other causes above business), whereas for Royce causes may be served specially as our own, while others' causes are recognized as being productive and worthy in their own right.

Recent theorists who have used Royce's method have tended to avoid these errors, and to maintain a critically flexible account at the point of adjudication of the conflict among loyalties. For Royce, as for these scholars, loyalty to loyalty as an adjudicating principle does not "overdetermine" the ethical situation—the individual loyalist is typically the best judge of how he or she ought serve the loyal object of devotion, save if the choice involves disloyalty in regard to neighbors, and no *a priori* answer could decide these particular instances which loyalty ought to be served. The evidence of the particular case matters, and the autonomy of the individual loyalist making a critical decision is paramount. Still, without announcing permanent hierarchies of the worth among loyalties, loyalty-based ethics can critically oppose approaches that aggressively seek to place some local category of loyalty permanently over other sorts of loyalty by acts of extermination or predation.

Unlike the "fixed" systems of critical loyalty appearing in recent scholarship that act as if general types of loyalty may be placed in permanently valid hierarchies in relation to one another, Royce's critique of disloyalty is very narrowly defined, recognizing that our own limitations of knowledge are at least in some senses permanent, even as we are relatively empowered by participation in the various forms of loyalty. Our loyalties, that is, give us some knowledge that we would not otherwise have, and a conscience that forbids certain activities, but still our knowledge remains far from

perfect. As I will suggest in subsequent chapters, it is precisely this narrow limitation of the right to criticism that allows Royce's critique of disloyalty to be so forceful in regard to questions of public ethics—in contrast, approaches which argue that business must be permanently subsumed to other types of loyalty, or permanently placed above them, have already wasted their ammunition, so to speak, and fail to hold in reserve anything to critique those types of egregious business that would destroy species, ecosystems, indigenous peoples, healthfulness, and natural beauty in the quest for profit; or those overly aggressive eco-loyalties that would destroy the human right to work or to profit, and that thereby would force people into bankruptcy and starvation, in order to serve a naïve loyalty to nature.

Royce's account is more helpful-- while the overcoming of an individual's finitude by loyalty is real, it is an overcoming only in part, and we remain in perpetual finitude even in our causes; thus there is a continuing need to overcome it by reference to social appreciation, imitation and creative cooperation in reference to others' causes.⁴⁵ A first reason, then, for the success of Royce's applied ethics in his own day and in recent scholarship is that it presents a simple but effective epistemological principle to undergird ethical respect for self-minding loyalists, and it allows a narrow but forceful ethical critique of those who fail to mind their own loyal business in the senses spoken of above, and whose loyalty or whose individual self-service thus proves disloyal to loyalty itself.

A second reason for the effectiveness of Royce's approach, as I will suggest in the remainder of this chapter, is Royce's devoted use of interdisciplinary methodology to examine the increase and decrease of loyalty at the actual points of conflict among loyalties—seeking for agreement among disciplines on common problems, and on

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 96.

common methodological solutions, is a primary means by which Royce gives content to the form of loyalty to loyalty.

Royce's Interdisciplinarity

In searching for the best evidence to identify the fitting objects of loyalty, and to determine a rational course of action when loyalties come into conflict, Royce frequently turns to interdisciplinary method. Likewise, the modern academy has recently placed a high premium on interdisciplinarity with a professed view toward unifying the efforts of various disciplines at points of common questions and efforts, and in address of pressing social problems—including in applied ethics, where many recently established ethics centers, while typically directed by a philosopher, include the participation of many of their colleagues from throughout the academy. While colleges and universities might long ago have been merely the finishing schools for the social elite, purporting to present the fixed and final products of eternal wisdom, the academy today is asked, by its public and private benefactors, to address and to resolve a dizzying array of intricate and expensive problems. Especially in the formation of these ethics centers, philosophers are asked to become interdisciplinary maestros, in addition to continuing to attend to the more specialized technical details of their own disciplinary craft.

In looking for virtuous historical exemplars of successful interdisciplinary effort by philosophers, eyes turn naturally to Royce. This was first evidenced by the large diversity of academic disciplines represented in the recent re-emergence of Royce in scholarly discourse, as I briefly discussed in the introductory chapter. The root of this blossoming is Royce himself, who was indeed an interdisciplinary maestro. He was elected the president of both the American Philosophical Association *and* the American

Psychological Association; he was a professor of literature at the University of California-Berkeley before he was a professor of philosophy at Harvard University; his work on the history of California is regularly discussed by contemporary American historians; he employed cutting-edge mathematical theory in his logical investigations; he used political theory to inform his forays in applied war ethics; he was invited to give lectures on scientific method by prominent scientific societies, and at his logic seminars at Harvard University, “Royce enlisted...the aid of colleagues from many disciplines, especially the sciences. As his guests they could come to its meetings to read their newest papers and to debate with one another and with him the philosophical principles of their work. Like him, they were seeking terms of unity.”⁴⁶

Royce’s purpose in these famous seminars was to discover what the methodological connections were (if any) between geology and chemistry, physics and astronomy, psychology and philosophy. In this, Royce’s interdisciplinarity was no accident, but systematically related to his idea of loyalty to loyalty and to his beliefs about the ideal of inquiry itself and to his arguments about the contributions that academic philosophers could make to the furtherance of interdisciplinary inquiry. For Royce, the philosopher had what he termed a “business ethic,” a duty of interdisciplinary labor in the corporation of the academy. Writes Royce, “philosophy itself, in so far as it is a legitimate calling at all, may in fact be compared to a sort of [travel] bureau. Its servants are taught to speak various languages—all of them ill—and to know little of the inner life of the numerous foreign lands to which they guide the feet, or check the luggage of their fellow men.”⁴⁷ For Royce as for Socrates, the persistent posture of the

⁴⁶ Grover Smith, *Josiah Royce’s Seminar, 1913-1914*. New Jersey. Rutgers University Press. 1962. Pg. 2

⁴⁷ BW 712.

questioning student is the philosopher's specialization, allowing inquiry to seek for common problems and solutions across specialized boundaries.

In Royce's presidential address to the American Psychological Association in 1902, he observed that one consequence of increasingly precise specializations within science, as within the twentieth century academic system, was that researchers were less able to understand one another's questions and methods—not just between sciences, but even within individual disciplinary specializations such as those found in psychology. Here is a force that surely stands opposed to the furtherance of interdisciplinary inquiry. To help unify the purpose of inquiry itself over these divides, Royce called for a “new science,” the “comparative morphology of concepts. . .” that would “occupy a borderland position,” so as to:

...offer large ranges of what one may call neutral ground, where philosopher and psychologist, special student and general inquirer, historian and sociologist, may seek each his own, while a certain truce of God may reign there regarding those boundary feuds which these various types of students are prone to keep alive, whenever they discuss with one another the limits of their various territories, and the relative importance of their different tasks.⁴⁸

The justification for the “comparative morphology of concepts” is a pragmatic test of predictive success under controlled conditions and a phenomenological success in describing experience, and for Royce:

...This effort to justify scientific theories solely by their success in producing conceptual constructions that correspond in definite and controllable fashion with the phenomena, leads to a sort of practical theory of the business of thinking which closely relates the point of view of the logician to that of the psychologist.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pg. 657. For Royce, this meant that neither the logical nor the empirical was reducible to the other, but the common test of organic improvement meant that advances could be begun or felt on either side: “... I cordially accept, for myself, the view that the central problems of the logician and of the psychologist are quite distinct, and that the logician is not responsible for, or logically dependent upon a psychological theory of the thinking process. Yet I am unable to doubt that every advance upon one of these two sides of the study of the intellectual life makes possible, under the new conditions to which all our human progress is naturally subject, a new advance upon the other side.” *Ibid.*, pg. 661.

For the latter must view the thinking process as one of adjustment to the environment; and he must suppose the mental motives which determine the choice of one rather than another way of thinking to be in the long run determined, as to their natural history, by the success of one method of adjustment as compared with that of another.⁴⁹

Such interdisciplinary and evolutionary success helps show that the categories of thought are indeed plastic, relative to the rigidity of some non-pragmatic versions of Kantian idealism, and leading ideals and theories do decay and die, but the test of “adjustment to the environment” remains the ultimate organic test, and the ultimate theoretical test. Likewise, the fecundity of aggregations of empirical data brought about by “leading ideas” is the major interdisciplinary test of the success of all special sciences.

Royce’s notion of increasing interdisciplinary means of securing new knowledge closely resembles his theory of loyal ethics. Just as it is an ethical failure to subsume individuals to communities, or communities to hedonistic individuals, or communities one to the other, likewise, for Royce, the fecundity of interdisciplinary criticism revealed that knowledge is neither achieved when disciplines contemptuously ignore others’ researches, nor merely a fixed matter of percept in opposed relation to concept, i.e., of *a priori* epistemologies attached to pre-evolutionary versions of realism and idealism, but also of a third activity, the (ongoing) comparison of ideas between specialized modes of inquiry that responds to and causes evolutionary variation—a comparison that is better and more harmoniously conducted with more constitutive loyal groups of inquirers than with fewer.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pg. 673.

⁵⁰ “All such processes of comparison are equally characteristic of the cognitive activity which goes on during our explicitly and literally social life and of the cognitive activity which is needed when we think about our relations to our own individual past and future. In brief, neither the individual Ego nor the Alter of the literal social life, neither past nor future time can be known to us through a cognitive process which may be defined exclusively in terms of perception, of conception, and of the ideal ‘leadings’ of the pragmatists. The self, the neighbour, the past, the future, and the temporal order in general become known

Interdisciplinarity, then, is viewable as an academic version of the principle of “loyalty to loyalty” stated above. In regard to the special loyalty of philosophy, for Royce, any data are relevant to philosophy in its role of critically comparing ideas and consequences; and each discipline conducts its own affairs, so long as it always loves the truth more than it fearfully guards its own disciplinary borders, beyond which other researchers cannot cross, and beyond which it cannot cross. This means that philosophy is not “dependent on psychology for its worldview”; nor is philosophy the King or Queen of the academic disciplines. Rather it is the servant of all, seeking to bring to light the capacity of inquiry to describe human problems and to improve human life. And so it is a servant of inquiry itself, lifting it above the stultification brought by jealously guarded disciplinary (and even subdisciplinary) walls.

Keeping in mind the definitions of loyalty and critical loyalty to loyalty given above, and Royce’s use of interdisciplinary resources as a tool for discerning the difference between consistently growing loyalty and inconsistently disloyal or predatory loyalties, I will, in what follows, examine how Royce’s philosophy can adjudicate at the points of crisis of the conflict of loyalties, especially in the realms of war and peace, business and environmental ethics.

to us through a third kind of cognition which consists of a comparison of ideas—a process wherein some self, or quasi-self, or idea interprets another idea, by means of a comparison which, in general, has reference to, and is more or less explicitly addressed to, some third self or idea.” BW pgs. 747-748.

CHAPTER III

ROYCE'S WAR AND PEACE ETHICS

If your fellow's cause has, in a given case, assailed your own, and if, in the world as it is, conflict is inevitable, you may then have to war with your fellow's cause, in order to be loyal to your own. But even then, you may never assail whatever is sincere and genuine about his spirit of loyalty. Even if your fellow's cause involves disloyalty to mankind at large, you may not condemn the loyalty of your fellow in so far as it is loyalty. You may condemn only his blindly chosen cause. All the loyal are brethren. They are children of one spirit. Loyalty to loyalty involves the active furtherance of this spirit wherever it appears . . . Prevent the conflict of loyalties when you can, minimize such conflict where it exists, and by means . . . of the chivalrous attitude towards the opponent, utilize even conflict, where it is inevitable, so as to further the cause of loyalty to loyalty.⁵¹

A first reason to study Royce's war ethics is its critical and historical relevance to his own day. Royce, rare among philosophers, found a prominent public voice by which to criticize aggressive war-mongering, whether it originated at home or abroad. His critique of 1840's American aggression in California surrounding the "War of Conquest" provoked a sustained national controversy, given that many Americans of the day believed that their fight was in self-defense, rather than—as Royce shows—a brutal attack against a people who had been minding their own business.⁵² And when Royce came to argue for the American duty to support the enemies of Germany in World War I, the news was widely carried in major American and European newspapers of the day, while his January 1916 speech, "The Duties of Americans in the Present War" was attended by

⁵¹ POL 74.

⁵² Royce's California critique showed, for Pomeroy, a willingness to engage in genuine philosophical critique, even at cost to his personal reputation, by standing up to overwhelming public opinion. Pomeroy writes: "He attacked the integrity and humanity of leaders of the armed forces when Americans were joining as never before to honor their aging military heroes... this was the era of best-selling military autobiographies." Pomeroy, Earl. "Josiah Royce, Historian in Quest of Community." *The Pacific Historical Review* 40 (1971): 1-20.

2,500 people who gave him a standing ovation.⁵³ During the war, editorials were widely published concerning his arguments for increased international insurance to follow the hoped-for allied victory against Germany so as to replace reparations payments and/or imperial oversight—the usual course of punishment for the vanquished—with the peaceful relations of international business. He was invited to prominent political meetings to discuss war policy (as with the ex-president Roosevelt, in the run-up to World War I),⁵⁴ and he used his position of influence with his decades-long friends, the American President Woodrow Wilson and the Australian Prime Minister Alfred Deakin, to promote his policy of anti-imperialism and anti-militarism. And finally, while the proof on the subject has not yet been fully made, several scholars have suggested that there is plausible evidence that Royce's ethics had a crucial influence on Wilson's advocacy of the Fourteen Points that were issued following the Allied victory in World War I, and that Royce had some influential role in inspiring the League of Nations, the first broadly international governing body in the modern world, a body that might indeed be termed the ideal parent of the United Nations.

Royce's applied cases against the aggressors in *The War of Conquest* and World War I manifested Royce's remarkably prescient political theories that condemned the too-close association of national loyalty with militancy: as with his 1907-1908 *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, with its critique of the exclusive identification of loyalties with war loyalties:

We need more means for symbolizing loyalty, both in public monuments, and in ceremonials, as well as in forms of common public service to our community.

⁵³ Clendenning, 377.

⁵⁴ Remarkably, this was an opportunity that Royce turned down, on the grounds that the ex-president would feel entitled to direct the order and terms of the discussion so that the other participants would have no genuine opportunity to express their thoughts. See Clendenning, 369-370.

European nations glorify the army as a practical teacher of loyalty to the youth. The loyalty thus won is mingled with the war-spirit, and is therefore dear bought. But we unquestionably need substitutes for military service, as a means of training for a loyal life. It belongs to the task of our social leaders to invent, and to popularize such substitutes. Herein lies one of the great undertakings of the future.⁵⁵

Royce was here thinking of the nascent invention of peaceful global bodies like the Red Cross, of international insurance contracts, and other forms of international business and international scientific societies; but the 20th and the 21st century have begun to vindicate his hope in a broader sense, with the advent of organizations like the Peace Corps (1961), *Médécins Sans Frontiers* (1971), the availability of programs like *Civildienst* in European nations that have served as needed substitutes for what was once mandatory military service, the creation of regional and international bodies of political interpretation (such as the United Nations) that have allowed nations in dyadic conflict access to broader systems of interpretation—and that have, at least in some instances, helped to prevent imminent war. Additionally, Royce gave what is apparently the first philosophical defense of the idea of “crimes against humanity,” aggressive acts that preclude a peoples’ ideal right and the necessary material means of the self-determination of their group, well prior to its having become a legal principle that has come to have an increasingly important role in international jurisprudence.⁵⁶ Given all this, Royce was certainly among

⁵⁵ POL 125.

⁵⁶ It has been variously reported that the phrase “crime against humanity” first originated in the Nuremberg trials after World War II; in the 1915 communiqué of the Allied Powers (England, France, Germany) that accused the Ottoman Empire of a crime against humanity in the massacre of Armenians; in the 1907 Hague Convention preamble; or in George Washington Williams’ 1890 letter to the United States Government accusing King Leopold’s Belgian government of crimes against humanity in the Congo. In fact the phrase does not occur in Hague Convention preamble; and the phrase first appears to have been used by Williams, but in an 1873 condemnation of an incident that occurred in Cincinnati, when black children were removed from an orphanage simply on the grounds of their skin color. The first use of the phrase to condemn unjust war appears to be Joseph Conrad’s 1905 critique of Russian aggression in the Russo-Japanese war, but interestingly his critique was mainly focused on the crime against Russian subjects by their autocratic lords:

the most pragmatically efficacious philosophers who have ever lived in terms of questions of war ethics.

After a long period of silence on this issue in Royce's thought, modern scholarship has begun to reawaken to Royce's discussions of war ethics, with recent accounts of it given by Richard Hall, José Orosco, Judith Green, Andrew Fiala, and Randall Auxier. But still no synoptical account of his various practical forays in war ethics, in connection with his overall ethical and systematical theory, has been given, a lack which I hope to rectify at present. And by usually limiting themselves to the historical consideration of one of Royce's forays in war ethics, or by application to a single modern conflict, recent scholarly accounts have each in themselves tended to portray Royce as either a pacific or a warlike figure without showing how his war ethics were rooted in a critical, rational and repeatable standard of judgment that occasionally advocated war while it generally opposed it.

The disjunction between those who have focused on Royce's pacifism and those who have emphasized the more war-like aspects of his thinking is clearly stated between Nevins' and Davis's** criticisms of Royce. Nevins described Royce as a "thorough-going pacifist to whom any fighting of any character was abhorrent"—hoping to show that Royce's criticism of the American insurrection in California (an insurrection which

"The Government of Holy Russia, arrogating to itself the supreme power to torment and slaughter the bodies of its subjects like a God-sent scourge, has been most cruel to those whom it allowed to live under the shadow of its dispensation. The worst crime against humanity of that system we behold now crouching at bay behind vast heaps of mangled corpses is the ruthless destruction of innumerable minds. The greatest horror of the world--madness—walked faithfully in its train. Some of the best intellects of Russia, after struggling in vain against the spell, ended by throwing themselves at the feet of that hopeless despotism as a giddy man leaps into an abyss." (From the *Notes on Life and Letters*). But these accounts fix the label to specific incidents without explaining the general meaning of the principle they have invoked, and with primary reference to crimes of a nation against its subject people. Royce's account appears to have been the first to precisely define a "crime against humanity" as the direct destruction of a people's self-chosen loyalties, or of the necessary material conditions for the existence of those loyalties.

Nevins favored) was not based on the specific facts of the case, but was merely an *ad hoc* response based on his general hatred of war;⁵⁷ while Davis argues that Royce's: "...image of the heroic bourgeois vigilante who episodically buckles on his six-gun to restore law and order to a society over-run by criminal immigrants and their corrupt politicians would be an enduring California myth, inspiring anti-Asian Progressives in the 1910s and 1920s as well as suburban nativists in 2000s."⁵⁸ Both writers are even commenting on the same book—Royce's study of California!

Indeed both sides of the disjunction are false, and neither the permanently pacifist Royce nor the bloodthirsty Royce are anywhere to be found in his stated beliefs. Royce was against war as a perpetually valuable end in itself, but he argued that occasionally struggle needed to be waged against groups of people who thought and moreover acted as if war were an end in itself. Thus against Nevins' charge of Royce's pacifism is the fact that Royce advocated armed struggle, even in his book on California—on the rare occasion that the defense of productive self-minding loyalty against aggressively selfish loyalties necessitated it. Against Davis' charge of Royce's militancy is, first, that Royce clearly and repeatedly condemned the scapegoating of immigrants in California for crimes committed or caused by the American invasion,⁵⁹ and second, that Royce condemned virtually all acts of vigilante justice in that state as ineffectual and often destructive, and spoke well of only one armed rebellion in California, the "Business

⁵⁷ Nevins was seeking to show that Royce's criticism of his favored military hero, Frémont, was merely a result of Royce's general pacifism and had nothing to do with Fremont's behavior in the fight. <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0030-8684%28197102%2940%3A1%3C1%3AJRHIQO%3E2.0.CO%3B2-B>

⁵⁸ www.rohan.sdsu.edu/~rgibson/vigilante.pdf

⁵⁹ For a clear statement of Royce's anti-racism, see: Kegley, Jacquelyn Ann K., *Is a Coherent Racial Identity Essential to Genuine Individuals and Communities? Josiah Royce on Race* The Journal of Speculative Philosophy - Volume 19, Number 3, 2005 (New Series), pp. 216-228. See also Royce's article, "On Race Questions and Prejudices," included both in *The Basic Writings of Josiah Royce*, John McDermott, ed., and in Royce's RQP; and in Royce's book: *California: From the Conquest in 1846 to the Second Vigilance Committee in San Francisco; A Study of American Character*.

Man's Rebellion" of the Second Vigilance Committee, which lessened violence more than it committed it, and which disbanded as soon as the law that it had demanded began to come into existence.

Other recent studies of Royce's war ethics have avoided such an obvious error as Davis' and Nevins' of ignoring all contravening evidence, but they still have tended to overlook the connection of Royce's war ethics with his overall systematic theory, focusing on either his pro-peace writings (indeed most recent accounts have focused on this aspect), while some other accounts have focused on instances in which he supported war. These studies have been quite accurate in bringing out important aspects of Royce's war ethics, but in themselves they have tended to portray a Royce who is either pacifistic or warlike, without showing how his various forays in public war ethics were critically grounded in his systematic philosophy of loyalty and its epistemology and metaphysics. Each of these aspects of Royce's thinking urges that ignorance and finitude are to be overcome by the mutual growth of the individual terms of autonomous loyalties and the relations among them, and thus that by Royce's account, war of aggression is to be entirely avoided, while defensive struggle against predation is "necessitated" when a group of loyalists take it as their supreme right to destroy self-minding others in pursuit of their own particular ends.

Royce condemned war loyalty as an end-in-itself, or when it was predatory upon the creative produce of neighbors' loyalties, but he believed that occasionally wars needed to be fought against those who believe the war spirit of their local people is indeed a worthy end-in-itself and who would kill and maim innocent persons or causes in quest of the aggrandizement of their own cause. Thus no strictly *a priori* standard is

possible for Royce—that war is always or never permitted-- since the decision needs to be made, in part, by reference to the particular evidence of legitimate defense or illegitimate aggression: “...some faint hearts forget that it is as immoral to make light of grave wrongs, and merely to condone them, as it is irrationally to cry out with lust of vengeance...”⁶⁰

My main purpose in what follows will be, first, to discuss Royce’s theoretical ethics in relation to applied war ethics; and second, by considering Royce’s practical forays in questions of war ethics in his own day and by reference to recent scholarly discussion, I will seek to show that for Royce neither *a priori* ethical commitment, that is, neither serving the war spirit of one’s own people with no regard to the justice of its particular call for war, nor committing to peace at any cost regardless of the crimes against humanity being witnessed, was sufficient to maintain critical balance in protecting the right to the persistence and growth of loyalty amongst peoples. Instead Royce’s concept of “loyalty to loyalty” is the key to understanding the critical distinctions of his war ethics. This ethics of consistent loyalty represents Royce’s interest in humanity’s possibility of progressively overcoming its local finitude by increasing the practical structures of cooperation among autonomous groups, so that individual groups, by respectful interaction with other loyal groups, could cooperate to overcome their limitations, rationally repeating the process by which individuals first overcome their limitation by participating in a loyal group. By Royce’s account, militant action as an end in itself, or as a means to subject other people’s loyalties to the rule of our own, was disloyalty to the growth of loyalty itself—and indeed such “disloyal” loyalty was the sole reason for “necessitated” defense by self-minding loyalists.

⁶⁰ HGC 7.

I will further argue that Royce was consistent in his various practical accounts of war ethics, and with his overall ethical and epistemological theory, by means of his “extremely limited” right and duty to necessitated conflict in defense of self-minding loyalties against predatory attacks and in his criticism of all modes of aggression that did not meet this test.⁶¹ The epistemological underpinning of these war ethics, for Royce, is that interpretation occurs not in individual isolation, but as a part of a community of inquiry; but these communities of inquiry are still finite by reference to the love of the specificity of their own causes, and so need to consult with other loyal communities in order to find the more significant relevance of their own undertakings. Against this process, war as an end in itself is a threat to the growth of relations among self-minding loyal peoples, and is thus an epistemological affliction on all causes that are or that might come to be in critical relation to an aggrieved group of loyalists.

Royce’s general principle of “loyalty to loyalty” suggests that the primary ethical problem is not (contrary to the label of much of ethical theory) the natural egoism of individuals, but rather, their uncritical altruism in the service of their local causes. One’s own State could act as if it were the All and could turn into a would-be empire whose central belief is that any who do not share in the loyalty of that state are worthy only of being conquered and consumed. In contrast, Royce’s principle of loyalty to loyalty argues that the central method of overcoming the limitations of power and knowledge that inevitably accompany the service of local loyalties comes through a dual reference to our own local cause, as produce is most sustainably created by practical adherence to the

⁶¹ Royce’s war ethics are also notable, as we must negatively observe, for *refraining* from ethical judgment on many of the conflicts of his day. Royce uses these conflicts as occasional evidences—the bravery of the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese war to refute racist claims that the Japanese were passive and child-like, for instance; but he actually weighed in for one side or the other in very few cases, as he did in his discussion of California’s War of Conquest and German aggression in World War I.

mastery allowed by our own specialized type of shared work, and by respectful relation to the work of other causes.

This dual focus, which together sought for the pluralization of loyalties as its Absolute, is, I believe, the central reason for the critical relevance of Royce's war ethics—his accounts were not, as in Davis', Nevins', and Vincent Buranelli's argument, *ad hoc* emotional responses, but systematically based in the rights of people to their self-minding loyalties, and evidence-based in terms of appealing to specific proofs of the protection or violation of the rights of people to their loyalties in a given instance of war. In Royce's various accounts, war is only advocated under very clearly defined conditions that protect the rights of peoples to mind their own loyal business against those who would be imperialistic predators upon it, and that forbids loyalties that prey upon others' loyalties in the quest of aggrandizement of a local loyalty. This forms the crux of Royce's arguments in his criticism of aggression by America in California during the War of Conquest and by Germany against neutral Belgium and on the high seas in World War I—in each case, the war loyalties of the aggressors disrupted the ordinary course of business, which disrupted relations among peoples (even those not directly attacked), and in demonstrable ways precluded the fruits of labor to individual workers, to individual groups, and to all those who were previously in beneficial trading relations with the aggrieved group.

Both of these critical applied accounts are commonly grounded in the principle that war is justified only as a necessitated defense against an attack on the right of peoples to their loyalty. War was unjustified by a belief in the superiority of one's own cause in any realm save for one—it is morally inferior to aggrieve others' right to

loyalties, and morally superior to mind ones' own business and leave the self-minding other alone, while respecting their right to their unmolested loyalty. Thus, for Royce: "...you respect the loyal ties of all other men, and you contend with other men only in so far as the defense of your own cause, in the interest of loyalty to the universal cause of loyalty, makes such contest against aggression unavoidable."⁶²

For the most part, then, we leave others alone; but sometimes we are faced by groups of loyalists who do not leave others alone, and who hope for some gain to be achieved by force of arms—and sometimes too we find that the causes to which we ourselves have pledged our service have turned predatory on the loyalties of neighbors in quest of our own imperial expansion. In either case, Royce says, we may criticize the particular loyalty by the test of the preservation and growth of loyalty itself. While we know very little about the specific causes of loyalties that inspire others, we know that our loyalties, and our free choice of them, give us our good, and we find these loyalties only by their being first readily available as social suggestions. Predatory warfare, by attacking the number of these suggestions, thus is an attack on the whole world of loyalty by minimizing the number of loyal suggestions by which autonomous individuals might choose to gain, and grow, in a life-plan. Hence we are to value both the specific cause of our loyalty, but also the general right of autonomy by which we came to it.

In loyalty to loyalty, the loyalist seeks for the repetition of the conditions under which the first loyalties were discovered. Loyalty to loyalty is in this way simply a rational repetition of the conditions that make any loyalty first possible—the ability of individuals freely to choose and serve their cause. Thus, for Royce, as an ethical principle: "What I sought for myself I should then be explicitly seeking for my whole

⁶² POL 68.

world. All men would be my fellow-servants of my cause. In principle I should be opposed to no man's loyalty. I should be opposed only to men's blindness in their loyalty, I should contend only against that tragic disloyalty to loyalty which the feuds of humanity now exemplify."⁶³

By this same principle, the right to the defense of self-minding loyalty against aggression is strictly limited to opposition to predatory disloyalty, since overreaching, as by the attempt to glorify a local cause over its rivals, would consist of an attack on the autonomy of individuals in their selection of their self-chosen causes and on the general recurrence of loyalty itself:

...my right to judge the choices of my fellow is thus very sharply limited. I cannot say that he is disloyal because his personal cause is not my cause, or because I have no sympathy with the objects to which he devotes himself. I have no right to call him disloyal because I should find that if I were to do what he does, I should indeed be disloyal to causes that I accept. I may not judge a man to be without an object of loyalty merely because I do not understand what the object is with which he busies himself.⁶⁴

Loyalty to loyalty, in this sense, is a broadened repetition of the ethical hypothesis that we first make when we ideally hypothesize and practically serve the good of our own chosen loyalties, to our families, professions, religions, nations, and the like. Given the first necessity of *some* type of loyalty so as to provide a unifying plan that both appeals to the individual's will and to the demands of the social will, and the second necessity of loyalty to loyalty so that finitude might be progressively overcome, rather than permanently instantiated in a new form,⁶⁵ an "extremely limited right to judge" aggressive loyalties is no aberrant departure from Royce's moral theory but is rather an integral part of it. Royce's ethics defends the epistemological value of widespread

⁶³ POL 60.

⁶⁴ POL 96.

⁶⁵ As I further discuss in the second chapter.

loyalties, since, as we discussed in the preceding chapter, a sufficient selection among causes is key to meaningful autonomy, and interaction among them is central to the possibility of the growth and attainment of genuine autonomy. A single specific cause cannot appeal to everyone, but with a robustly sufficient set, “a” specific cause may appeal to anyone, when individuals may choose among them to find the ones that cohere with their own individual interests. But just one or very few loyal choices, as in the choice given to the subjects of the “self-estranged” state of the Empire, fails in regard to the psychological and epistemological needs of the individual.

This principle gave Royce a common grounds for criticizing aggressively imperialistic loyalty wherever it originates, since, far from proving the superiority of one cause over its neighbors, such disloyal aggression tends to take away the local motivation both from the imperialistic oppressors and from those attacked—it takes away, that is, the plurality of causes and the individual selection that enables individuals to be willingly inspired to give their labor in common cause, and thus it attacks the central means by which value is produced and shared. Imperialism could seize the fruits of already extant productive labor undertaken by loyal laborers, but only at cost of killing the tree—the unifying power of the self-chosen cause that would have produced future fruit. It is to everyone’s benefit that people attend to their own labor and oppose those who would be predatory upon it, and thus, for Royce, a critical standard of loyalty is able to oppose local loyalties that prove aggressively disloyal in the broader social world:

...My statement of the moral principle gives to us all an extremely limited right to judge what the causes are to which any one of our neighbors ought to devote himself...If he is unquestionably loyal to something, to his country or to his profession or to his family, I may criticize his expression of loyalty in so far as I clearly see that it involves him in unnecessary assault upon the loyalty of others, or upon their means to be loyal. Thus, all unnecessary personal aggression upon

what we commonly call the rights of other individuals are excluded by my formula, simply because in case I deprive my fellow of his property, his life, or his physical integrity, I take away from him the only means whereby he can express in a practical way whatever loyalty he has. Hence such aggression, unless necessary, involves disloyalty to the general loyalty of mankind, is a crime against humanity at large, and is inconsistent with any form of loyalty. Such is the range of judgment that we have a right to use in our moral estimates of other people.⁶⁶

Against the War Spirit

I want to return, for a moment, to Davis' suggestion that Royce proved himself a war monger in his California writings, similar to Buranelli's claim about Royce's World War I-era German writings. Both argued that Royce succumbed to the war spirit in a prideful quest to exalt his own loyalties by diminishing those of his neighbors. I will first discuss these claims in contradistinction to Royce's general theoretical opposition to war as an end in itself, while I will reserve for later a defense of Royce based on the specifics of his writings on California and Germany.

From his earliest writings, Royce places himself in opposition to the glorification of the war spirit, as when he points to the brutal results of battle as a refutation of naïve optimism: "Contemplate a battle field the first night after the struggle, contemplate here a vast company the equal of the population of a great town, writhing in agony, their groans sounding at a great distance like the roar of the ocean, their pain un eased for many hours, even death, so lavish of his favors all day, now refusing to comfort..."⁶⁷

Royce continues this opposition to the war spirit as a worthwhile end in itself through his mature ethical theory as well, for instance arguing in 1907-1908 against common-sense patriotic claims that individuals are duty-bound to war against their neighbors whenever the call comes, regardless of the particular justice of the call:

⁶⁶ POL 94-95.

⁶⁷ BW 6.

Tradition has usually held that a man ought to be loyal to just that cause which his social station determines for him. Common sense generally says, that if you were born in your country, and still live there, you ought to be loyal to that country, and to that country only, hating the enemies across the border whenever a declaration of war requires you to hate them. But we have declared that true loyalty involves some element of free choice...tradition alone is for us an insufficient guide.⁶⁸

Indeed Royce writes that his book *The Philosophy of Loyalty* was initially conceived of in opposition to von Steinmetz, who championed war loyalty as a good in itself. While, “[For von Steinmetz], war gives an opportunity for loyal devotion so notable and important that, if war were altogether abolished, one of the greatest goods of civilization would thereby be hopelessly lost... I disagree with him very profoundly as to the relation of war both to true loyalty and to civilization in general.”⁶⁹

The war spirit, Royce argued, far from being an exemplar of loyalty, was just one of its types, and far from being the most important one: “...There is no necessary connection between loyalty and war; and there are many other forms of loyalty besides the patriotic forms. Loyalty has its domestic, its religious, its commercial, its professional forms, and many other forms as well.”⁷⁰

While war loyalty, as with any sort of loyalty, gives unity of action both for the individual in harmonizing his or her own actions and in cooperative union with others, von Steinmetz was incorrect that it is the main or best way of achieving consistent harmonization, since other types of loyalty too bring people together to face and overcome common evils, and in typically more sustainable ways:

...Men have not to fight one another in order to display loyalty. Open your eyes, then, to observe better the loyalty of the peaceful, as well as of the warriors. Consider especially the loyalty of the obscure, of the humble, of your near neighbors, of the strangers who by chance come under your notice. For such

⁶⁸ POL 52.

⁶⁹ POL 8.

⁷⁰ POL 21.

exemplars of loyalty you always have. Make them your leaders. Regard every loyal man as your leader in the service of the cause of universal loyalty.⁷¹

Of course the Steinmetzian love of the war spirit does not merely belong to a few theorists and a few tyrants, but to the range of common sense opinions that demand warfare when it is called for, no matter the justice of the cause. Corrupt leaders have an interest in promoting such loyalty, with no self-reflectively critical spirit; “common sense” patriotism suggests that we should war for our nation’s causes, regardless of their justice--the countless millions of tracts of Hubbard’s *Letter to Garcia* that have been distributed to conscripts of various of the world’s armies exemplify this argument, that soldiers ought simply to follow orders without question of their legitimacy.

But for Royce, it was an “ancient and disastrous association,” much obscuring a critical definition of loyalty, that viewed “the warrior as the most typical representative of rational loyalty.”⁷² Royce’s narrow right of justified self-defense contrasts with the love of militant loyalty, as a merely momentary gain of a individual purpose and of fellow servants, which is a failure when it precludes the furtherance of the conditions of trust that make loyalty possible. So too for Royce it is an error to argue, as some do, that loyalty ought be rejected on the basis that it inevitably is converted into war loyalties:

...When loyalty is indeed emphasized and glorified, it is then far too seldom conceived as rationally involving loyalty to universal loyalty. Hence we all think too often of loyalty as a warlike and intolerant virtue, and not the spirit of universal peace. Enlightened loyalty ... means harm to no man’s loyalty. It is at war only with disloyalty, and its warfare, unless necessity constrains, is only a spiritual warfare. It does not foster class hatreds; it knows of nothing reasonable about race prejudices, and it regards all races of men as one in their need of loyalty. It ignores mutual misunderstandings. It loves its own wherever upon earth its own, namely, loyalty itself, is to be found. Enlightened loyalty takes no delight in great armies or in great navies for their own sake. If it consents to them, it

⁷¹ POL 134.

⁷² POL 7.

views them merely as transient necessary calamities. It has no joy in national prowess, except in so far as that prowess means a furtherance of universal loyalty. And it regards the war-spirit . . . as at its best an outcome of necessity or else of unenlightened loyalty, and as at its worst one of the basest of disloyalties to universal loyalty.⁷³

Whence the War Spirit?

To oppose the war spirit effectively, in the critically nuanced “surgical” way in which just those parts of an aggressor’s loyalty that commits him to disloyal predation might be opposed, while preserving the healthful parts, Royce suggests that an understanding of the psychological and sociological origins of the war spirit are in order.⁷⁴ For Royce, idealism is not merely a theoretical philosophical proposal but the animating feature of already extant loyalties—the group and its various relations exist, for good or for ill, because the individual servants of its cause conceive it to exist, and act as if it does exist, as an entity of real value even apart from their individual service of it. Indeed the strict egoism, which moral philosophy often acts as if we must be steered away, is hardly to be found in human nature, given the widespread and indeed nearly universal altruism of individuals in the service of some sort of loyal cause.

As counterintuitive as it seems from the perspective of egoism, still we know of countless instances in which soldiers cheerfully rush into battle, and each nation has its own publicly heralded examples of those who willingly martyr themselves for the larger cause. Sometimes, of course, these causes are bad ones. Even a specious good, when multiplied by the war spirit, is a powerful psychological motivator—loyalties, whether or not they fail by tests of broader consistency, give at least a temporary good to the

⁷³ POL 100.

⁷⁴ Here we may do well to remember that Royce served as president of the American Psychological Association, and wrote many psychological treatises (these have been relatively ignored in the recent renaissance of Royce studies, which has tended to focus more on his conventionally philosophical writings).

individual loyalist by unifying his or her actions under the form of a social cause, which is taken, in turn, to be a good in itself, in possession of values and purposes that transcend (but include) the interests of its individual servants, and which are hypothesized to exist outside the individual servants, so that the good of the cause may grow even by the act of perishing in its service. The strength of the cause itself is taken, by the individuals who thus self-sacrifice and by those who memorialize them, to grow precisely by virtue of such individual acts, even as the individuals, qua individual biological agents, disappear from the field of immediate activity by their self-sacrifice on the field of battle.

Abstracting from ethical values, the war spirit that moves nations to predation and destruction, for Royce, stems from the psychological reward that immediately accompanies the individual's ideal conception of and service to the social cause as a proposed solution to the evil that we experience as a result of our finitude as individual organisms. In martial loyalty, as with all loyalties, the proposed solution of the loyal cause is felt as a pleasurable respite from the problem of the paradox of social empowerment, the paradox wherein the individual powers we gain by submission to the processes of imitation of others "heighten by contrast our vague natural sense of importance of having our own way."⁷⁵ The self of individual desire and the social self of external compulsion are "naturally at war," since "our fellows...overwhelm us with the might of their customs, and we in turn are inflamed with the naturally unquenchable longing that they should somehow listen to the cries of our every individual desire."⁷⁶

The intensity of the feeling of joy given by common action that defines the military cause is not, then, *ex nihilo*, but is a pragmatic response to the problem of the

⁷⁵ POL 17.

⁷⁶ POL 59.

conflict between the individual will and social compulsion that precedes these acts of warfare. Royce writes of the experience of such a one who feels the paradox, that is, who painfully feels the contradiction between his own desires, which fail to harmonize even with themselves, and the social compulsions, which fail to harmonize with his individual desires and with one another, and who just does not know what to do with himself, when then he hears the call-to-arms:

...Now suppose that there appears in this man's life some one of the greater social passions, such as patriotism well exemplifies. Let his country be in danger. Let his elemental passion for conflict hereupon fuse with his brotherly love for his own countrymen into that fascinating and blood-thirsty form of humane but furious ecstasy, which is called the war-spirit. The mood in question may or may not be justified by the passing circumstances. For that I now care not. At its best the war-spirit is no very clear or rational state of anybody's mind. But one reason why men may love this spirit is that when it comes, it seems at once to define a plan of life, -- a plan which solves the conflicts of self-will and conformity. This plan has two features: (1) it is through and through a social plan, obedient to the general will of one's country, submissive; (2) it is through and through an exaltation of the self, of the inner man, who now feels glorified through his sacrifice, dignified in his self-surrender, glad to be his country's servant and martyr, -- yet sure that through this very readiness for self-destruction he wins the rank of hero... This loyalty no longer knows anything about the old circular conflicts of self-will and of conformity. The self, at such moments, looks indeed *outwards* for its plan of life. 'The country needs me,' it says. It looks, meanwhile, *inwards* for the inspiring justification of this plan. 'Honor, the hero's crown, the soldier's death, the patriot's devotion—these,' it says, 'are my will. I am not giving up this will of mine. It is my pride, my glory, my self-assertion, to be ready at my country's call.' And now there is no conflict of inner and outer... This social power is the cause to which we are loyal.⁷⁷

At least for a psychologically satisfying period, but perhaps longer or shorter by other ethical or epistemological measures, the loyal company enjoys its camaraderie in opposition to the evil of the painful position of merely individual human finitude and in opposition to mere social compulsion. Even if the particular evil that is to be opposed by militant conflict is an illusion, the evil of limitation is felt truly enough, as is the joy of

⁷⁷ POL 20-21.

camaraderie that fights against the supposed evil. The intensity of the pain of the finite condition, and the pleasure that we feel as we overcome it in beloved cooperative action, explains the willing readiness of individuals to martyr themselves for the glory of their causes. The willing martyrs of militant loyalty (as with other types of causes) take the cause to include but transcend their own good, and they believe that their own good would be lost if divorced from the good of the cause, and that the cause itself, by inclusion of the acts of its constituent servants, may be increased by the self-sacrifice of its servants.

Thus those who see in loyalty mere mindless submission, Royce argued, neglect to attend to the psychological feeling of empowerment that motivates whatever submission must accompany it. Royce gives the example of the adherents of the Japanese martial code of Bushido who submit to it and to their master, but this loyalty is certainly no mere submission, as its adherent "...never lacked his own sort of self-assertion. He had his chiefs; but as an individual, he was proud to serve them."⁷⁸ While such a martial loyalty indeed has "...discouraged strident-self assertion," still "it has not suppressed individual judgment,"⁷⁹ as the samurai were among the most prideful individuals who have ever lived. With the Bushido code as with other types of militaristic loyalty, submission is not mere submission, as whatever is submissive in it is undertaken for the sake of proud empowerment as a part of the cause, and such a servant may fiercely defend his personal honor as a worthy servant of the cause. And likewise, but more generally, while a person may be compelled into military service, as by a draft, only an act of individual will on behalf of the cause can command an individual happily to

⁷⁸ POL 35.

⁷⁹ POL 36.

perform the dangerous military service rather than abandoning the post when the first opportunity presents itself or the first danger arises.

Thus, while some regard the war spirit as pure self-abasement, Royce saw it as a quest of individual empowerment undertaken in the context of the empowerment of the community of which the individual is himself or herself a member. In the war spirit, the problem of finitude is cast in the form of the particular loyalty of the neighbor, and to destroy it is seemingly to gain power over the evil that enchained us before: the now-powerless enemy dead, the spirit of community among the warriors who are fighting on the same side, the spoils of war, the adoration of the victorious soldiers by the civilians of the homeland, all serve to explain the psychological motivations for the cheer with which soldiers of various lands and in various times have rushed into battle, despite the danger. The loyal warriors identify their individual good with the good of the cause; its victories are their victories, and their victories are its victories. Since the evil of limitation facing the cause itself is seemingly being conquered by self-sacrifice, the soldier-martyr believes it would be worse to stay alive in a world such that the evil flourished because it had not been opposed, where their beloved people would become or persist as the mere slaves or subjects of another, without the power and comfort of their animating loyalties. The pain of injury or death seems a trifle to pay for the accomplishment, a small and incomplete value traded for a larger, more complete one.

The War Spirit as False Optimism

The war spirit, when it is cultivated as an end in itself by a militant people, here is understood as a kind of optimism about the chances of success against the evil of limitation and the happiness of the union of camaraderie that loyalty brings may cause its

servants to find the evil of limitation even where it is not, simply so that its phantom may be attacked with the spirit of common labor which is always a seeming good: “In so far as these evils give him opportunity for service, they appeal to his loyalty as a warrior against them.”⁸⁰ Indeed it seems to many that the surest way to achieve good is to destroy the causes of pain, and so in the focus of popular history, man is “always the destroyer of ill,”⁸¹ with more destruction gaining greater historical glory. Naturally, we hate the pain of evil, and for “saints and warriors” and commonsense alike, Royce writes, “much is to be gained by destroying evil,” and the task is optimistically conceived: “all evil must be destroyed.” For the reasons of the social paradox, in which compulsion is felt as pain *vis-à-vis* the individual’s desire for empowerment, the chief cause of preventable ill is often taken to be other people, who “ought to be destroyed.”⁸²

But the seeming may be false, and in quest of cherishing our own closest relations, we may in fact be encouraging them in their most destructive aspect as regards the possibility of future loyal relations themselves. By the light of the war spirit, to destroy is taken to be logically equivalent to achieving the good, and the more arduous task of creating good by creating sustainable cooperative structures is more seldom attended to-- popular historical interest exemplifies the individual psyche in holding that Napoleon seems more glorious than Washington, for having destroyed more: “No doubt the lovers of Washington find him glorious. But where, in his career, belongs the glory of having put an end to the Holy Roman Empire, or of having destroyed the polity of the Europe of the old maps?”⁸³

⁸⁰ SRI 234.

⁸¹ SRI 219

⁸² BW 1042-1043.

⁸³ BW 1041-1042.

Knowing, by the lesson taught to us by our own social imitation of others, that labor oftentimes benefits not just the laborer but the whole social order, nations and peoples heroize killers for being most capable of destroying, once and for all, the evil that lies just beyond their borders: “The heroes of song and story, and often of history as well, are fascinating partly, or chiefly, because they could kill and did so. We love victory over ill. Killing seems to involve such a victory.”⁸⁴ The killing itself is taken as proof of success in destroying evil, and there is less popular interest in analyzing critically whether an Achilles’ cause is a just one—his killings might have been murders, after all, if the invasion of Troy was launched against a people who had been minding their own non-aggressive business—or in asking the question of whether the intended solution of killing actually meets a real evil or whether it itself creates more evil, more pains of finite limitation, and more dyadic strife between individuals and individual causes.

The war spirit’s idealistic optimism in regard to the possibility of eliminating evil finds a home not just in the local causes of theological or nationalistic fervor, but also in transnational ideals that seek to liberate humanity once and for all from the evils that pain it--of Shelley’s optimism, and that of Romanticism in general, regarding the great promise of the Revolution, and of their failure to attend to the material conditions that limit ideals, Royce writes that:

The mistake lies in recognizing from one side only that eternal activity which we noticed at the outset—the life-power whereby men make anew at each instant their works of good and evil; ... while forgetting the other side, to wit: the fact of ... the perennial laziness of human nature, which prevents men from forming their ideas at any moment differently from the way in which they formed them the moment before, unless both new method and new impulse are present to their consciousness. The Revolution said: Men make their lives such as they are; therefore, if but men willed it, the world would be happy; therefore, grant freedom of action, and nature will do the rest...the fault of optimism is its blindness, in its

⁸⁴ BW 1041.

naïve trust in the power of good intentions. In our time our duty is to correct this optimism by recognizing the ever-present fact of evil in the world.⁸⁵

Revolutionary idealism, like Shelley's, was indeed correct in its insight that people are the authors of their social ideals, but the errors are in neglecting the force of habit in authorship and in the optimistic claim that victory over pain and limitation is imminent if only people would change their thinking: "...the truth is that men do will and must will to be as wretched as they are unless both knowledge and stimulus unite to bring them to a better mind; and even then the change will be slow, weary, full of anguish."⁸⁶

An American example of overwrought and un-self-critical idealism in hopes for the automatic good of militant Revolution occurred in the American insurrection against the Mexicans in California, in which the optimistic/transcendentalist appeals to the value of "liberty itself" trumped local laws, such as those governing property rights. For Royce, this resulted only in the diminishment of the law, of genuine liberty, and the destruction of actual and nascent forms of valuable cooperative business between peoples in that state, and such errors gave a negative lesson as to the genuine means and the slow speed by which progress may genuinely and sustainably occur:

It is to be hoped that this lesson, showing us as it does how much of conscience and even personal sincerity can coexist with a minimum of effective morality in international undertakings, will someday be once more remembered...our mission in the cause of liberty is to be accomplished through a steadfast devotion to the cultivation of our own inner life, and not by going abroad as missionaries, as conquerors, or as marauders among weaker peoples.⁸⁷

For Royce, the optimism of the war spirit, that evil was to be finally defeated by armed struggle, was an illusion; the evil of painful limitation was a constant

⁸⁵ BW 244.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 244.

⁸⁷ California 156.

accompaniment to individual finitude and the still-finite social logic of dyadic loyal relations by which we seek to overcome our individual limitation by uniting ourselves to a cause. Instead of by war, conceived of as a perpetually valuable end-in-itself which tends to diminish the actual and possible terms of social relations, Royce argued, finitude is more progressively and finally defeated by self-limitation that allows for mastery of a specific task and for new relations with others:

...in general, every form of more complex rational life means a triumph over ourselves whereby alone we win ourselves. Whoever has not faced problems as problems, mysteries as mysteries, defeats as defeats, knows not what that completer possession of his own life means which is the outcome and also the present experience of triumph in the midst of finitude and disaster. For in the victorious warfare with finitude consists the perfection of the spirit.⁸⁸

And by this standard, war is at best a transient necessity, because the surest way progressively to overcome finitude is through ever-growing structures of cooperative understanding and ever greater numbers of co-laborers, making recurrent, that is, the good that our first loyalties provided us. Thus the premise:

‘Evil should be simply put out of existence,’ proves to be a palpable falsity. As our knowledge of such ills grows clearer, we commonly find that there is, indeed, something about them, as they at any one moment appear to us, which ought, indeed, to be annulled, set aside, destroyed. But this annulling of one momentary or at least transient aspect of the ills is but part, in such cases, of a constructive process, which involves growth rather than destruction....Such ills we remove only in so far as we assimilate them, idealise them, take them up into the plan of our lives, give them meaning, set them in their place in the whole....In the presence of these idealised evils, man the destroyer becomes transformed into man the creator. And he does so without in the least abandoning his justified moral distinctions, without indulging in any sort of ‘moral holiday,’ and without becoming unwilling to destroy what he cannot otherwise rationally face the facts before him than by destroying. He is not less strenuous in his dealing with his moral situation because he has discovered how to substitute growth for destruction and creative assimilation for barren hostility.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ WIA 381-382.

⁸⁹ SRI 235-236.

The Defense of Autonomous Imitation

To criticize the sorts of social imitation in service of a local cause that destroy the possibility of continued social imitation as the source of a growing system of loyalties, Royce seeks to show how the power of individual autonomy derives from the ideal hypothesis and the practical service of recurrent social relations, not in individual isolation nor in the isolation of individual causes. While individual causes are innumerable, and constantly changing, still the hypothesis of a social value that may be obtained by our imitation of the forms of cooperation is basic, and shared by any who are loyal. Since autonomy is only available by reference to the self-chosen participation in these social causes, the war spirit that would reduce the number of loyalties, or the relations among them, is thus declared to be an evil that limits the scope of individual autonomy:

In general, as is plain if somebody's loyalty to a given cause, as for instance to a family, or to a state, so expresses itself as to involve a feud with a neighbor's family, or a warlike assault upon a foreign state, the result is obviously an evil; and at least part of the reason why it is an evil is that, by reason of the feud or the war, a certain good, namely, the enemy's loyalty, together with the enemy's opportunity to be loyal, is assailed, is thwarted, is endangered, is, perhaps, altogether destroyed. . . . The militant loyalty, indeed, also assails, in such a case, the enemy's physical comfort and well-being, his property, his life; and herein, of course militant loyalty does evil to the enemy. But if each man's having and serving a cause is his best good, the worst of evils of a feud is the resulting attack, not upon the enemy's comfort or his health or his property or his life, but upon the most precious of his possessions, his loyalty itself. . . . Where such a conflict occurs, the best, namely, loyalty, is used as an instrument in order to compass the worst, namely, the destruction of a loyalty. It is true, then, that some causes are good, while some are evil. But the test of good and evil in the causes to which men are loyal is now definable in terms which we can greatly simplify in view of the foregoing considerations.⁹⁰

Others could not be condemned merely for having a set of loyalties that differed from our own values, but approaches which aggressively overstep the local value of

⁹⁰ POL 54-56.

loyalties in a quest for power itself could be criticized as not only diminishing the world of power available for membership or imitation by diminishing the terms of relation within it, but as also causing suffering even for the imperialists as a self-imposed isolation from the recurrence of participation in social causes, and thus as a condemnation to a perpetual and growing finitude of powerlessness. The empire-building tyrant can never be satisfied with his/her mere province and its joys:

After fortune had long seemed to be actually unable to thwart Napoleon, he went on to destroy himself, merely because his lust for power grew with what it fed upon, until the fatal Russian campaign became inevitable . . . To serve the cause is an honor; and this honor [the loyal] have in their own possession. But in this same world the seekers for power are never at home. If they have conquered Western Europe, power lies still hidden in the Far East, and they wander into the snows of a Russian winter in pursuit of that ghost of a real life which always beckons to them from the dark world beyond.⁹¹

Likewise, to heed a national call to destroy the free choice of an innocent neighbor would, for Royce, be a form of moral suicide, attacking the value that we cherish as our *summum bonum*, our right freely to choose our loyalties from among a sufficiently robust set of possibilities. And again, by the test of the self-consistency of loyalty to the conditions that allow it, militantly aggressive loyalties of a great many types are forbidden by Royce's account:

If . . . I find a cause, and this cause fascinates me, and I give myself over to its service, I insofar attain what, for me, if my loyalty is complete, is a supreme good. But my cause, by our own definition, is a social cause, which binds many into the unity of one service. My cause, therefore, gives me, of necessity, fellow-servants, who with me share this loyalty, and to whom this loyalty, if complete, is also a supreme good. So far, then, in being loyal myself, I not only get but give good; for I help to sustain, in each of my fellow-servants, his own loyalty, and so I help him to secure his own supreme good. In so far, then, my loyalty to my cause is also a loyalty to my fellows' loyalty. But now suppose that my cause, like the family in a feud, or like the pirate ship, or like the aggressively warlike nation, lives by the destruction of the loyalty of other families, or of its own community,

⁹¹ POL 42-43.

or of other communities. Then, indeed, I get a good for myself and for my fellow-servants by our common loyalty; but I war against this very spirit of loyalty as it appears in our opponent's loyalty to his own cause.⁹²

For Royce, to cultivate an attitude of respect for others' loyalties, in the attitude of loyalty to loyalty, is as much an epistemological and metaphysical hypothesis as an ethical one—but it is one that everyone who has consented to socialization already has hypothesized, at least to some degree. The critical idealistic insight that we have no inborn knowledge of the *ding an sich* does not eliminate the fact that we hypothesize by repeated imitation a metaphysics of ideal relation of the *Alter* to ourselves by our submission to imitative socialization—as by our belief in a world of truth that can contradict our assertions, and by learning a language and customs. We come to the social world, even as we are the authors of our own submission to it, as something that we believe to possess values that are independent of our ideal social hypothesis; i.e., we value the mastery of behaviors that seems to allow others to get what we too want, and we seek to possess others' ends for ourselves by our imitation of the actions which we believe secure them these goods, and so we refrain from more immediate modes of self-expression so as to attain this goal (as from Royce's analysis in *The World and the Individual*). The imitated other is thus not a *mere* other, since in submitting to observe actions and in repeating them (and refraining thereby from more immediate modes of self-expression), we hypothesize that the other holds a power that we desire but do not yet possess and that the other is thus the valuable and necessary means to overcoming our finitude. And of course, too, we gain the feeling of pragmatic success in the harmonization of our individual actions in a loyal plan that coheres with the actions of others.

⁹² POL 56.

Whether we are able to act *consistently* with such harmony depends on the willingness to continue such cooperative acts when new causes are needed, either because tasks are successfully enough accomplished that we are now able to turn to new ones or because we learn that the causes we have first served were insufficient for the needs of the task at hand and that we must turn to new ones. Due to growth and change both in ourselves and in our social world, and to the perpetual problem of our individual finitude and that of our causes, we must perpetually turn, that is, to other sorts of social suggestions to which to be loyal, but if we have denied ourselves the habit of respect for others, or have actually destroyed the terms of loyal relations, we find that the world of social harmonization that loyalty allows is less possible or impossible for us. Still then we will continue to feel our painful limits, but now we have no better suggestions to imitate in pursuit of our own success.

It is not because [the imitative functions] are common, or because they are in their deepest origin partly instinctive, that I lay stress upon them; it is because they are, in their proper and almost inextricable entanglement with our individual or temperamental functions, absolutely essential elements of all our rationality, of all our mental development... The task of the imitative functions [is] probably the most important task in the psychology of the immediate future... [for] without imitativeness [there] is no higher development of rational thought in any of us. Only the imitative animal can become rational. [W]ithout imitativeness [there] is no chance for the development of the social conscience, [for] reason... is explicitly imitative in its purpose [as is] conscience, [by] set[ting] before us ideals of character, and then bid[ding] us imitate them... This process of acquiring one's selfhood vicariously, as it were, [does not] end in childhood.⁹³

For this reason, even by simply allowing neighbors to express themselves freely in their own loyalty, we may be inspired in our own loyalty: "My fellow's special and personal cause need not be directly mine. Indirectly he inspires me by the very contagion of his loyalty. He sets me the example. By his loyalty he shows me the worth of loyalty,"⁹⁴ and

⁹³ Josiah Royce, "Imitative Functions, and Their Place in Human Nature," *Century Magazine*, May 1894.

⁹⁴ POL 64.

by encouraging the neighbor's service of loyalty, our own loyalty thus may be encouraged. In fighting unjust aggression and refusing to become involved in it even if one's own nation demands such service, loyalty to loyalty thus seeks the preservation of the route of imitation by which we discover and choose the ethical absolute of our self-chosen loyalties.

In contrast, imperialism, by bringing soldiers away from their provincial loyalties, and by stifling the goods of local enjoyment of those attacked, is thus doomed on both sides, Royce writes, to result in a failure of intelligence, by reducing the total number of loyal causes and by reducing the habit of the willingness of the oppressors to repeat the imitative hypotheses that brought them to the practical service of their first ideal purposes. In this sense, for Royce, the domination of a conquered people creates a "very lively and intense irritation in the minds not only of the pupils but also of the teachers...irritation, viewed merely in itself, is not an enlightening state of mind."⁹⁵ The vanquished may lose the motivation of their self-chosen ideals, and thus their willingness to work; but also the attack on ideals in quest of the empowerment of a single ideal tends to diminish the unique value even of what was first worthwhile in the specialized loyalties of those who later became oppressors, so that, for Royce: "the consequences of long-continued and oppressive militarism...and sometimes the burdens of ancient imperial responsibility, have tended ... to discourage, or even quite to subdue, many forms of that fidelity to ideals upon which surely all higher civilization in any country depends."⁹⁶

⁹⁵ BW 1095.

⁹⁶ BW 1112.

A major cause of the self-estrangement that constitutes the imperialistic personality type and that leads to perpetual war is the lack of comprehensible systems of loyal social order in which willing imitation might sustainably be undertaken. Here the psychological limits of the individual's conception of the cause are pushed to their breaking point, where they become too immense any longer to appeal to the individual will as a respite from the paradox of social empowerment. To meet the needs of individual psychology, loyalties need to be varied and local, a goal best achieved by limiting one's immediate loyal efforts primarily to one's own familiar province, where the scope of these loyalties can be more personalized by their familiar scale; and for Royce surpassing this scale was a dangerous proposition: "Freedom...dwells now in the small social group, and has its securest home in the provincial life. The nation by itself, apart from the influence of the province, is in danger of becoming an incomprehensible monster, in whose presence the individual loses his right, his self-consciousness, and his dignity."⁹⁷

The province, precisely because of its uniqueness—its relative limitation *vis-à-vis* vast national and international ideals—allows individual persons to approach it as a kind of fellow person, one that he or she may wrap his or her mind around, so to speak, and in which he or she may find his or her particular purposes, whereas the vast aggregations of political and economic power that mark the imperialistic system are simply too far removed from the individual to allow him or her to form coherent individuating plans within it. Far from improving on what was good in the local, imperialism causes it to be forgotten and fails from the perspective of the growth of knowledge, Royce argues, because its unitary massiveness interferes with the psychologically satisfying world of

⁹⁷ BW 1083-1084.

diverse, locally suggested loyalties that are compelling precisely because their limitation makes them distinctly colorful in our imagination and because such local loyalties are varied enough that we may find ones that especially appeal to our individual wills. The individual servants of the aggressively militant cause, if they are victorious over their neighbors, are thrown back on their original condition of finite powerlessness—but now, indeed, in a worse condition, unable to figure out what to do with themselves after their temporary purpose is met, because they are now living in a world with fewer suggestions of causes around which a life’s plans might be centered.

Limits to War: Chivalry as Loyalty

Support for Auxier’s and Kegley’s recent suggestions that Royce may have been a process philosopher is to be found in Royce’s theory of chivalry in war ethics, which urges that nations are ethical processes rather than simply good or evil, in a binary sense, and that armed struggle, even just struggle against unwarranted aggression, is to respect what is currently and potentially valuable in the loyal causes even of those whose causes have turned predatory, given the hope (and the already extant evidence) for the evolution of causes over time:

...The various nations differ in the degree to which, at any stage of the conflict, their cause is just. In certain respects and with regard to certain of their enterprises they may be, and are, explicitly aware that they intend to serve the community of mankind; while in other respects, or in regard to other matters, they may act with a more or less explicitly deliberate hostility to the cause of the community of mankind. Their moral position may, therefore, vary accordingly.⁹⁸

While there is a right of defense of self-minding loyalties against unrestricted war loyalties, the demand for loyalty to loyalty accompanies even the limited right to fight, and nations cannot do just anything to win even a fight that commences in self-defense.

⁹⁸ HGC 32.

For Royce, chivalry preserves the idea of the increase of loyalty, so that warriors may be inspired even by their enemy rather than harboring a total contempt for the enemy which thereby seeks only for the outright destruction of their loyalty--and a concordant reduction in the terms of loyal relation available to everyone. Thus Royce expressly forbade in his philosophy of loyalty and by his application of it to particular questions in war ethics the right to make war on civilians, to torture the captured enemy to force them to renounce their loyalties, to steal the enemy's property after a victory, or to seek to annihilate the right of a neighbor to choose his or her own loyalties after the temporary aggression is defeated, lest the victorious warriors, even if their cause was at first just, lose sight of the value of the relation of loyalty itself in an exclusive quest to exalt a mere particular loyalty above all particular competitors. To do so would condemn the loyalist to stasis in current finitude in the place of growth of the powers of loyalty, putting, that is, a premature end to loyalty's ordinarily recurrent ability to forge new cooperative social relations.

This notion of loyalty to loyalty, even in the midst of conflict, calls loyal defenders chivalrously to respect the overall loyalty of their opponents, even as they must oppose what is destructive in the particular immediacy of the destructive commands of their loyalty:

Whenever you have to fight ... learn the art of honoring your opponent's loyalty, even if you learn of it mainly through feeling the weight and the sharpness of his sword. 'It is a deep cut; but a loyal enemy was he who could give it to me'—to think in such terms is to lighten the gloom of conflict with what may sometimes be more precious than a transient victory; for at such moments of honoring the loyally dangerous enemy, we begin to learn that all the loyal are in spirit serving, however unwittingly, the same universal cause. To be sure, when men have once sufficiently learned that lesson, they cease to fight. But while fighting lasts, if you cannot love your enemy, it is a beautiful thing to be able to enjoy the sight of his loyalty.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ POL 134.

Indeed, for Royce, it was better to lose in the political realm while keeping the ability to form the future relationships of loyalty than to abandon the consistent practice of loyalty by being singly committed to winning a particular fight, no matter the cost. Doing anything to win in the present fight can destroy the recurrence of the hypothesis of loyalty by making the highest ideal of a people something that is merely attainable in the world, leaving the victors all over again with the problem of “what am I to do with myself” after the enemy is destroyed (or indeed if the quest to destroy them fails); further, the condition of the victors may be worsened by the destructive victory, since it leaves fewer social suggestions available by which they might unify their individual efforts in common action once the loyal example of the annihilated other is gone from the field of social imitability. On the other side, a nation could lose politically, and by the resultant glorification of their ideals in hope and memory, and the resultant growth of the richness of social relations, their loyalty could become progressively better than what once was comprised in a mere political kingdom. Royce cites the examples of Israel, Athens, Poland and Ireland, which became enduring and unifying ideals especially after political nationhood was lost, each able to accomplish far more after military defeats, in terms of what Royce calls the spiritual hypothesis of loyalty, than they were able to accomplish when they were mere political kingdoms.

Former enemies may become friends--if they are not annihilated, that is. Here one might think of the way that 20th century adversaries of the United States are its trading partners and friends in the 21st century; but moreover, their temporary hostility may be key to inspiring the kinds of legitimate opposition to our own purposes that create new

forms of the good by our growing acquaintance with the genuine limits of our own power. Thus the foreign other, if we first feel their presence as they aggressively pain us, are to be challenged in their disloyalty but are not to be perpetually hated or destroyed. They, as with other sources of limitation that we face, teach us the more general notion that there is work to do, and that only loyalty can do it, and they symbolize the essence of reality: “these ills constitute not an opaque hindrance to insight, not a cloud over the sun of reason and of loyalty, but rather a source of insight...They show us how the triumph of the moral will over such adversities is perfectly consistent with the recognition that the most rational type of life demands the existence of just such adversities.”¹⁰⁰

Practical Studies of Royce’s War Ethics

Having discussed theoretical motivations for Royce’s understanding of war ethics, I will turn now to practical applications, first with a discussion of recent scholarly accounts of his war ethics, then with a discussion of his own war ethics in his critique of American aggression in the War of Conquest and German aggression in World War I, and then concluding with suggested applications of Royce’s war ethics to conflicts that have occurred since his death. While I earlier suggested that recent scholarly accounts have tended to portray Royce as exclusively war-like or pacific by their usual focus on one or another practical aspect of his war ethics, without considering how his critical theory explains both his usual pacific stance and his occasional willingness to endorse armed struggle, these accounts have brought out particularly important aspects of Royce’s war ethics. They show, first, how for Royce epistemological success requires not merely a loyal community of interpretation, but multiple self-minding communities of interpretation, while epistemological failure attends the attempt to subsume neighboring

¹⁰⁰ SRI 238.

loyalties under the aspect of a single national loyalty. Second, they have shown the integral function of interdisciplinary studies as a tool of evidential adjudication at the point of conflict between warring loyalties so as to determine whether aggression is a legitimate defense, or an illegitimate attack upon, the world of loyalty. And third, they have shown—especially in Hall’s work—Royce’s primary focus on international business as a tool by which dangerous dyadic relations between nations and peoples could be converted into rationally interpretive triads—the idea that, above all, served as the inspiration of Wilson’s Fourteen Points.

The major strain of recent discussion has focused on anti-imperialist, pro-peace and internationalist strains of Royce’s thought. For Hall, Royce’s “mercantilist” attempt to promote peace through international insurance is a more workable alternative to Leibniz’s and Kant’s (and one might add, Spinoza’s) efforts to promote peace by counseling national political orders and theological organizations so that they might become more rational—since, for Royce as for Hall, such organizations tend to be too self-interested in the glorification of their local cause to have much chance of soon becoming critically self-conscious moral agents.

Of the accounts that have focused on the peace-breeding qualities of Royce’s ethics, Hall’s account has likely been the most sustained, and so we will do well to begin here. For Royce, as Hall cites, “A pair of men is what I may call an essentially dangerous community”¹⁰¹—even worse than a “Zero Sum” game in which one’s victory is another’s defeat, here a victory is a defeat even for the victors, by placing them in relation with others who now appear more threatening than before, because they may now lack a needed resource or resent the competitor’s triumph, while the other’s defeat may be a

¹⁰¹ Richard Hall, from an unpublished manuscript: “Royce’s Philosophy of Insurance.”

danger for their neighbors as well—as when a disaster that afflicts one nation causes it to become impoverished and so more likely to invade its neighbors to seize what it lacks. But also in the ordinary state of affairs, even vast loyalties still find themselves living in a world in which purposes are limited at every turn by external social forces that seem to be mere compulsions and frustrations to the group’s intended aims.

Thus nations too, more powerful than individuals but still comprising a finite set of loyal purposes, tend to meet each other in the destructive spirit of dyadic relations, in which *A*’s victory *or* loss is felt as a loss to *B*. Hall cites Royce again: “War itself persists because the nations still cultivate dyadic relations too exclusively.” A people afflicted by such dyadic thinking believe that the particular cause of their loyalty is not just their *summum bonum*, but that it is the only one, and anyone who does not share it is then, by definition, inferior. The first powers of socialization and of loyalty are achieved by successful imitation that enables later social cooperation; but often the lesson is forgotten in favor of wallowing in the feeling of triumph over the previous dark of the unenlightened condition. Here the light that a particular loyalty provides seems to be the only possible refuge from the darkness, and anyone who does not carry it may be taken to be the enemy. As Hall writes of Royce’s description of this dyadic tension, “conflict is the result not of malice or some evil disposition in the hearts of adversaries but simply of inescapable difference in interests, aims, temperaments, and beliefs between any two individuals or groups, such that tensions are bound to increase over time and may issue in open conflict.” It was the clash of altruisms that was the most pressing moral problem, in Royce’s theory, and not the effort to convert supposedly selfish egoists into rational altruists, as in much of moral theory, since, Royce argued, the clash of these loyal

altruisms was far more commonly met than are exemplars of mere individual egoism or of universal altruism.

For Hall as for Royce, shared global interest in profits, together with statistical calculation of risk in the actuarial sciences and the proven ability of insurance to increase cooperative economic risk-taking by sharing and thus mitigating common risks,¹⁰² means that the extension of insurance from national to international concerns is one of the most significantly peace-breeding social structures created by humanity, and one of the most rational, with its reliance on statistical theory and actuarial data to create transnational communities of investment that would reduce common risk while increasing cooperative adventure—turning dangerous dyads, competing in what is now termed a “Zero Sum” game, into creative interpretive triads, able to understand how profit and cooperation may be of mutual benefit.

As Hall shows, Royce’s “Great Community” and “Beloved Community” were no merely *a priori* ideals, but were progressively created in time as the practical structures of cooperation among people were created. While the ideal had indeed been predictively “glimpsed” by poets and mystics, in its fullness it consists in the growth of actual structures of cooperative community among nations and peoples, and thus is no impractical ideal. Insurance is especially efficacious in this regard by making cooperation among people profitable by allowing for extremely complex structures of relation among adventurers and investors, which in turn makes aggression appear in its fullness as a cost—a destruction of the credit values that allow for working relations among peoples.

¹⁰² In terms of increasing cooperative risk, Royce cites the example of drastically increased home-ownership rates after the advent of modern insurance; prior to that, only those very few who could actually buy and self-insure could afford houses, otherwise the risk of adventurers and beneficiaries alike losing everything was too great.

Further, insurance does not attempt to predetermine the future nature of human creativity, as by declaring that some mode of human accomplishment is so superb that it ought triumph and rule over the others. Insurance instead increased the willingness of people to undertake cooperative adventures by reducing the risks of ruining the intended beneficiaries if their adventures should go awry, and by reducing the costs for various investors insofar as the adventure succeeds.

Andrew Fiala has used Royce's arguments for loyalty to loyalty to support the enduring value of "practical pacifism" in the midst of calls for war, since the facts that are advanced to support such calls are often confused in the fog of war, such that fear and aggressive nationalism constantly threaten that war loyalty is the only publicly expressed type, while more patiently critical analyses of the evidence are ignored. Practical pacifism differs from absolute pacifism in that Fiala writes that war can be justified with good evidence, but given the modern condition of confusion and intentional deceit in presenting the case for war to the public, such evidence is exceedingly difficult to come by, and peace is to be practically counseled wherever the case for war is not certain. For Fiala, practical pacifism helps nations critically examine calls for war while permanently representing the enduring value of peace as being the highest, most satisfactory, most harmonious goal--an exemplar of loyalty to loyalty itself.

Judith Green uses the scathing tone of Royce's criticism of the American invaders of California in her analysis that finds the United States guilty, in its reprisals for the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center Buildings, of displaying the kind of violent group-think characterized by Royce's description of "mob spirit," blindly looking for foreign enemies upon whom to avenge its domestic pain. The mob cannot criticize itself

with reference to distinct perspectives, Royce argued, since it is all in sympathy with itself in its desire to avenge and eliminate its pain. For Green, it was such mob spirit that led in the United States “to unquestioning majority support for a pre-emptive war in Iraq instead of clearer, wiser thinking about how to transfer the root causes of these dreadful events.”¹⁰³ Green argues that the possibility of such wiser thinking is found in Royce’s interpretive Great Community that would:

[Translate] amongst communities of our nation...It will require that justice-minded Catholics and justice minded Baptists (and justice-minded Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and Native American Traditionalists) reach out to each other, while bravely challenging those within their own communities who betray their founding spirit by rejecting a wider ‘loyalty to loyalty’ while insisting on a narrow, hierarchical orthodoxy within their communal interpretative process.¹⁰⁴

Randall Auxier has argued that Royce’s systematic critical idealism originated in his early-career arguments against the justice of the popular War of Conquest in California—here, Royce’s critical war ethics is seen by Auxier as central to inspiring his entire systematic theory:

What the California experience and later reflection upon it provided for Royce was a poignant and personal example of the distance between what is ideally possible, its great distance from actual life, and how various ways of cultivating the inner life can either reveal that distance to us, or lead us to conceal it from ourselves. It was the collection of solutions to these problems of self-deception, ignorance, and error that provided the impetus, the direction, and the goal of Royce’s entire philosophy, in all of its particulars. The cultivation of the inner life in quest of community as a remedy to loneliness, isolation, fear, feelings of abandonment, depression, and despair was the human lot. Thus, the hypocrisies of California were as much a negative lesson as its free communities were a positive influence on Royce’s thinking.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Green, forthcoming in the book *The Relevance of Royce*, eds. Kelly Parker and Jason Bell, Fordham University Press.

¹⁰⁴ Green.

¹⁰⁵ From a forthcoming book manuscript on Josiah Royce, to be published with Open Court Press.

Auxier, like Green, sees an applicable connection between Royce's criticism of the self-delusions of imperialism, in reducing the possible terms of criticism of our local ideals, and the current war in Iraq, to show that the aggressive empire does not merely damage the nations it defeats, but destroys its own relationship to the experience of other perspectives, and hence forgoes the central means of determining the real limits of our own powers:

The outcome is a divided and desperate personality. I know of many institutions that suffer from such afflictions. Unsurprisingly, the persons who serve them often display the effects. Not being able to admit a mistake is bad enough, and common, but not being able to own a betrayal of one's own best purposes, such as, for example the Bush administration did in creating a war in Iraq, damages an institution permanently. Atonement is not possible. When, for example, is the U.S. likely to admit to the world its betrayal of its own intentions? Ask the people of Iraq for forgiveness, and the world for help in atoning for the betrayal?

Frank Oppenheim and Michael Raposa have focused on the self-critical aspects of Royce's theology by which religious groups can avoid becoming predatory on their neighbors due to feelings of creedal superiority. Oppenheim emphasizes critical inquiry among denominations, while Raposa says more about intrademoninational means of "theosemiotic" self-criticism. Each suggests Royce's ethics is suited to promote peacefully critical dialogue among religions, in large part because his "loyalty to loyalty" demands respect for other causes as a central means of self-growth and works to decrease the kinds of uncritical hubris that inspires fighting so as to glorify one's own cause by clumsily direct means. Such attempted glorification actual has, as a consequence, the stagnation of knowledge by decreasing the terms of relations with others.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ For Raposa: "Theosemiotic is a form of inquiry that is always socially located, its conversation a real exchange of ideas with other persons in the community, its interpretations always tested against alternatives proposed by others, modified in this process, verified to the extent that they prove to be shared. On Royce's view, the recognition that there exist other minds whose ideas both contrast and compare with my own, and

Royce's occasional advocacy of war has received comparatively little scholarly attention—two accounts, Davis' and Buranelli's, have superficially considered Royce's occasional advocacy of struggle as having been caused by a kind of uncritical national pride and hatred of others' causes. A more accurate account of Royce's occasional advocacy of military struggle, under strictly defined conditions, has been given by Orosco's study of Royce's philosophy of loyalty in connection to his advocacy of armed struggle against Germany in the First World War, as giving a justification to current United Nations peacekeeping efforts to prevent genocide, as in Sudan. Orosco has shown that Royce provided a right to warfare based not merely on immediate self-defense, but of self-defense of the broader terms of relations of loyalty, as with the right to defend aggrieved peoples with whom we were in productive working relations (or with whom we might gain productive future working relations) when they are attacked by a predatory aggressor nation.

Orosco argues, against Vincent Buranelli and Daniele Archibugi, that Royce gives a coherent and critically self-limited argument by which genocide and imperialism may be met by a justified opposition that did not itself fall prey to genocidal or imperialistic temptations,¹⁰⁷ as in Archibugi's claim, that: "studying the statements of politicians and commentators in support of military intervention to defend human rights, it becomes

the "will to interpret" these others, are all that is required in order to establish some "community of interpretation."

¹⁰⁷ Intervention, as Orosco describes, in an article in the forthcoming Fordham volume *The Relevance of Royce*, does not necessarily mean direct military force, as Royce had suggested that sympathy, financial aid, and munitions ought be given to the enemies of Germany in World War I, while sanctions, criticism, and cessation of diplomatic relations could be used to punish aggressor nations. But it seems from Royce's tone that he was willing to support direct war against Germany once a real possibility arose: "We owe to those allies whatever moral support and whatever financial assistance it is in the power of this nation to give. As to munitions of war: it is not merely a so-called American right that our munition-makers should be free to sell their wares to the enemies of Germany. It is our duty to encourage them to do so, since we are not at the moment in a position to serve mankind by more direct and effective means." HGC 11.

clear that a coherent philosophy to guide the international community... simply does not exist.”¹⁰⁸ But, for Orosco, “a coherent position on the matter of the moral duty of humanitarian intervention can be reconstructed from the work of Josiah Royce,”¹⁰⁹ and “humanitarian intervention can be conceived of as a tool for the forging of a global community firmly committed to peace[ful] cooperation, and human rights.”¹¹⁰ Orosco argues that Royce’s position gives approbation to humanitarian intervention to counteract genocide, and in particular to the United Nations Security Council resolution 1556, passed in 2004, which demanded, in response to “massive human rights violations” in the Darfur region of Sudan, that the government’s violence against one of its member people cease, with threat of sanctions.¹¹¹ Against skeptics like Archibugi, Orosco writes:

Situations such as those in Sudan remind us that concern and intervention in the affairs of distant sovereign nations need not always be a cover for strategic national interest or blind corporate greed. Intervention can be a tool to protect those global connections and ideals, such as international law and human rights, that underpin the development of a peaceful community of all of humanity.¹¹²

Thus, while Archibugi argues that humanitarian intervention is inevitably a cover for basically egoistic national or capitalistic concerns, humanitarian intervention under the Roycean account is able to avoid this charge since it is concerned with preserving the number of already extant and possible relations among loyalties, rather than with the glorification of any particular loyalty above others. Self-defense against disloyalty was not primarily to be undertaken for immediate self-interest, nor to avenge the dead nor to protect national security, but, as Orosco writes, to “insure the development of a cooperative global order that would prevent future humanitarian disasters.” While there is

¹⁰⁸ Daniele Archibugi, *Debating Cosmopolitics*. 2003, pg. 11.

¹⁰⁹ Orosco.

¹¹⁰ Orosco.

¹¹² Orosco.

indeed a benefit to those who defend cooperation, it is not an exclusive benefit, as it tends to serve as a good to any community that would overcome the finitude of the local nature of its cause by respectfully participating in a community of communities.

And insofar as a fight between factions is merely dyadic, that is, between two sides fighting for possession of some commonly desired object to which each has some plausible claim, there is no right or duty of other nations to intervene. It is only when the fight involves an attack on the triadic relations of the interpretive structures that unite loyal peoples, or on the right of a people to their self-minding loyalty against predatory attack, that the duty to defend loyalty comes into play:

[Royce's demand] that one must act in defense of the universal cause of loyalty, suggest[s] that there are actually two distinct moral elements in regard to defense from predatory causes: 1) one ought to defend one's own cause from a direct attack, as well as 2) one should also defend loyalty itself by directly hindering predatory causes from undermining loyalty in the world.¹¹³

Under this understanding, Orosco writes: "One has a duty not only to one's own cause, then, but also a duty to preserve the conditions in the world that make other people's loyalty possible, even if their causes are not one's own."¹¹⁴ Genocide, by this understanding, clearly violates loyalty to loyalty because, if successful, it would simply eliminate an entire loyalty, and so decrease the actual and possible terms of relation for everyone. To defend an attacked group against genocidal aggression is indeed a sort of self-defense, since the danger of predatory disloyalty, and what makes it a crime against humanity rather than merely a crime against an afflicted people by an aggressive people, is that there are consequences to the common right to hypothesize the value of social relations when individual self-minding loyalists, who are in productive relations with

¹¹³ *Ibid.*,.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*,.

other loyalists, are aggressively attacked. When disloyal nation A attacks a self-minding nation B, the presence of the aggressor amidst the community of nations (A, B, C, D, E, etc.) may decrease the general confidence needed to commit to cooperative risks among them since those agents who have proved themselves to be aggressive, without claim of legitimate self-defense, also indicate a habitual willingness to repeat their aggression against other peoples. As a result of such aggression, other nations may need to divert resources to accommodating war refugees, increasing military spending to defend against attacks, and so forth. This is in addition to the loss (by groups C, D, E, etc.) of an actual or possible trading partner, when nation B must cease from its productive activities in order to turn to defending itself or when it is destroyed. There is, then, a justification from the perspective of the self-defense of loyalties that allows for intervention to prevent genocide, even by loyal peoples who are not directly targeted by the genocide.

Interdisciplinary Standard for War Judgments

Contrary to Davis', Nevins' and Buranelli's charges of *ad hoc* superficiality in regard to one or another of Royce's specific accounts of war ethics, Royce's use of evidence to adjudicate particular issues in war ethics is robust—and in fact, to go hastily to war against the supposed enemy without bothering to collect genuine evidence of unjustified aggression serves especially, in Royce's account, to prove the lie of those who invent excuses to conceal what are merely predatory principles. Recent scholarship has examined Royce's war ethics in connection with questions and methods of political theory (Green, Auxier), legal theory (Orosco), theology (Oppenheim, Raposa), business and statistics (Hall), and history (Starr, Pomeroy—the latter writing that Royce “was the only major American philosopher who before the second quarter of the twentieth century

took much interest in history”). The historian Pomeroy notes that some of Royce’s innovations, like the use of newspaper accounts and personal interviews with figures integral to the California insurrection, far exceeded what his professional colleagues in history departments had accomplished. It took decades before Royce’s conclusions about the California war became generally accepted by professional historians.¹¹⁵ In this chapter I have suggested connections between his war ethics in relation to his psychological and sociological theory of imitation, and to literary theory in his criticism of Romantic understandings of the revolutionary spirit.

For Royce, the Academy and its various disciplines and international resources proves an especially worthy tool of diagnosing disloyal aggression, by virtue of its multiple avenues of evidence gathering and by its self-critical habits. Here it may serve as a model of both loyalty (to the methods within a given discipline, department, or academic institution) and of loyalty to loyalty, as by its critical interaction with other disciplines, departments, institutions, and nations. And by the specific evidences it adduces, these interdisciplinary standards are especially suited to determine the effects on the world of loyalties, in terms of the actual increase or decrease of the conditions and relations of loyalty, of a given conflict. These broadly interpretive processes are indeed among the best ways to counter, by patient and broad analysis, the reactionary danger of mere dyadism, as can be found in Hall’s account of Royce’s philosophy of insurance.

Royce’s Critique of the War of Conquest in California

Having discussed theoretical aspects of Royce’s war ethics, we may now turn to an analysis of his applications of this theory to the criticism of specific wars. Royce’s

¹¹⁵ ‘Josiah Royce, Historian in Quest of Community’, Earl Pomeroy, *The Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Feb., 1971)

first sustained treatment of war ethics occurred in his 1886 book, *California: From the Conquest in 1846 to the Second Vigilance Committee in San Francisco; A Study of American Character*—a book which begins and concludes with studies of war ethics, first with the unjustified revolution against the native Mexicans and second with the justified “Business Man’s Revolution” of the Second Vigilance Committee against criminal politicians.

The main theme of Royce’s history of California is an analysis of the mostly negative consequences, especially in terms of business and political instability as well as massive increases in crime, of the United States’ 1846 “War of Conquest” (as Royce termed it) against the California natives. Royce provoked a major public controversy with this work, especially by his harsh criticism of the behavior of the commander of the fight, John C. Frémont. Indeed Royce could have easily predicted the controversy, because his accusation of Frémont’s treason was leveled against a man who garnered the second-most votes in the United States presidential election of 1856, largely on the strength of his supposed heroism in a defensive struggle against Mexican aggression in California, and who was still a widely admired and influential figure at the time of Royce’s book (and whose name to this day designates many California landmarks). Moreover, Royce criticized a war that was popularly conceived of as a legitimate self-defense against aggression by the native Californians.

Frémont was an opportunist and not a war hero, Royce argued, and indeed a traitor to the orders of his nation that had commanded him to a peaceful surveying mission. Frémont’s claim that his troops fought the Californians in self-defense was demonstrably false according to Royce. Thus the war against the Californians was no

courageous act of self-defense by the Americans against overwhelming odds, as it had been for four decades publicly portrayed prior to Royce's book; instead, it was a cowardly attack against a people who had been minding their own business in peaceful relation with Americans and who had made neither threat of nor preparation for war. Royce proves his case through an extensive analysis of historical documents, including official government records, contemporaneous biographical accounts, and interviews with principal figures, including Frémont himself—an account so thorough that, as we have seen, the historian Pomeroy credits Royce with inventing new methods of historical inquiry, and of being decades ahead of his professional historical colleagues in terms of getting the facts of the conflict right--the historian Starr imports many of Royce's conclusions into his own recent book on California history.

In the wake of the lawlessness that followed from the Conquest, Royce studied two California conflicts. The first was the Sacramento "Squatters Rebellion" of 1850 that wounded the city's mayor and killed the city assessor before it was suppressed, and that threatened a far greater insurrection if it had not been defeated. While the treatment of legitimate ownership claims of the California natives had been bad after the Conquest, due to persistent racism, still most property claims were eventually respected in courts of law (after years of costly and damaging litigation). But things would have been far worse had the plan of the Squatters Rebellion, simply to negate all property rights of the old regime and divide it among squatters, succeeded. But there was a ready audience for the Squatter leaders' speeches among those recent American émigrés, Royce wrote, as they had had bad luck and were poor, and felt a "strong sense of injustice because the native *Rancheros* had much land while the émigrés had little." They believed that the sacrifice

of the “‘best blood’ [of the Americans in the War of Conquest] won for us a right to harass great landowners.”¹¹⁶ Although scarcely any American blood had been spilled, because the Conquest was launched against a people who had not even prepared to defend themselves, nevertheless the Squatters jumped from a false premise to a false conclusion: “What, after all, was a Mexican title worth beside the rights of an American citizen?”¹¹⁷

In the Squatters Rebellion, and in other such conflicts on smaller scales in other cities, the disloyalty of the 1846 War of Conquest proved to have spread, so that soon those attacked were not just the Mexican property owners, but all property owners--the thesis of disrespect for property rights was expanded in ways dangerous to those who had first composed it by the arrival of huge crowds of gold-rush squatters arriving from 1849, who had nothing to do with the initial War of Conquest. These American émigrés found themselves in a strange world that had property, but little respect for it, and suddenly a “dangerous question” became widespread in their ranks—“why is there any ownership at all?” Their answer made them revolutionaries in favor of land redistribution, and their anger at their poverty was no longer directed merely or even principally at the Mexican natives but against whoever had the land they wanted. The issue of victory was, for a while, genuinely in doubt; among the Squatter revolutionaries were able orators and those with military experience. But the citizens of Sacramento rallied to meet the Squatters’ forces, and after a brief but bloody gun battle, the issue was resolved in favor of the respect for established property claims. By and by, the courts got around to respecting

¹¹⁶ California, 472.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 471.

most of the natives' land claims, and the conditions of lawful order, founded upon legitimate respect for land ownership, eventually came to be restored in the state.

Royce viewed the second rebellion, the "Business Man's Revolution"—the people's response to the assassination of a crusading journalist by a corrupt local politician--in far more favorable terms. While some scholars have suggested that this rebellion was a prototype of Fascism, a right-wing business conspiracy that sought to achieve a self-serving union of corporate and political interests by military means, for Royce it was nothing of the sort. Rather, it was an extremely self-limited struggle that resurrected the corrupted and ineffectual law while almost entirely avoiding bloodshed, relying instead on shows of force to push corrupt politicians from power. The Business Man's Revolution voluntarily ended its brief reign once its stated aims were accomplished.

After the massive economic collapses and shocking increases in crime that quickly followed the brief boom times after the War of Conquest, the Second Vigilance Committee, or the "Business Man's Revolution," as Royce terms it, announced its intolerance of both mob rule and of government officials who were at times too corrupt and at other times simply too ineffectual to enforce the law. The Business Man's Revolution, although a formal violation of the law, nevertheless, for Royce, allowed for the genuine establishment of the law mainly by diverting the citizenry's passionate energy into productive channels that would have otherwise been violently wasted in a riot—the usual course of events when mob rule took over in that state. For Royce, "to resist the committee was only to throw the city...into the hands of a furious mob. The

popular passion existed, and was for a time irresistible. The committee's possible service would lie in directing and controlling this passion..."¹¹⁸

The Revolution's task was able to provide a task for the people as well, because its purpose, to "purify municipal politics" became a greater one than just avenging one assassination. But still, Royce writes, the Rebellion was "productive of more good than evil only because...[it] was constantly guided by cautious and conscientious men"¹¹⁹ who had no ambitions for the aggrandizement of their own power—a difference, to be sure, between the Business Man's Revolution and Fascism. When the work of the Committee was accomplished, with crime and political corruption on the wane, and the populace awakened to their civic duty, the Committee disbanded.

Here we see, in one of Royce's earliest writings, a practical instance of a notion of war ethics that he later developed theoretically in his *Philosophy of Loyalty*—war was a last resort that could only be successful where it was limited to the defeat of disloyalty and the resurrection of the general social order, and where it was not regarded as a perpetually valuable force for good itself or for the aggrandizement of a particular sectarian group. Royce's California writings also show the pragmatic nature of Royce's idealism, and his contempt for the sorts of transcendental *a priori* idealisms, as of Manifest Destiny and of some of the leaders of the Squatters' Rebellion, that would simply neglect the real history of already extant ideals, as with the native Californians' property rights.

Royce's Critique of World War I Germany

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 446.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 453.

Royce's arguments against Germany were central to his efforts as a "public intellectual" in the final years of his life. After the 1915 sinking of the Lusitania, prior to America's declaration of war against the German Axis in World War I, and after first having maintained neutrality and resisted attempts by the various factions to garner his support, Royce publicly decided that Germany's repeated attacks against neutral groups, and moreover on the structural relations among peoples, meant that the German nation had temporarily become an enemy of international community and thus humanity itself, rather than merely an enemy of a particular nation. For Royce, it was therefore a moral duty for Americans to ally themselves with the countries standing against Germany.

Scholars have aptly pointed out that Royce's public activism against Germany was precipitated by the sinking of the Lusitania, and Clendenning, Buranelli and Chapman in particular have suggested that Royce's primary motivations for his arguments against German aggression were a sense of personal insult—for among the Lusitania dead were some of Royce's friends. But this was not all there was to Royce's case, as much of his analysis is of Germany's published arguments, in newspaper advertisements published in the United States and in diplomatic notes defending the sinking of the Lusitania, for its perpetual right to sink ships and to attack anyone who might directly or indirectly aid its enemies. Royce in fact argues that the moral case of the Lusitania would have been different if Germany had apologized for the attack, immediately paid reparations, and pledged to avoid such attacks against civilians in the future; just as the case would have been different had the Lusitania sinking been an isolated incident. It was Germany's stated arguments for its right to sink passenger ships, and the right of recurrence of the violence, rather than any single act of violence, that

caused Royce to accuse Germany of disloyalty to loyalty. The Lusitania sinking was merely, for Royce, the third demonstration of Germany's practical willingness to follow through on its arguments that it had the right to pursue any means to secure the end of defeating its enemies, after its invasion of neutral Belgium (to outflank French defenses), and then its sinking of the passenger ship Ancona.

Buranelli takes what he understands to be Royce's general pacifism to represent his sensible moral theory at the height of his mental powers, and is in full sympathy with Royce's criticism of American aggression against the Californians, but he regards Royce's World War I writings in opposition to Germany as an aberration, excusable only because of supposed mental debility caused by old age and an irrational hatred of the German nation. But Royce, even if he held pacifism as a high ethical ideal, consistently allowed war in self-defense against predatory attacks on that ideal. Likewise, his critique of the invasion of California was not premised upon a hatred of all war in general, as Buranelli seems to believe, but instead was premised upon his theoretical opposition to predatory warfare that destroyed the practical structures of cooperation amongst peoples, coupled with evidentiary falsification of the justifications for the invasion: it had been claimed, in support of the American attack and in honoring Frémont for leading the charge that the native Californians were preparing an attack against American settlers and that they were in negotiations with imperialist European powers who sought to establish a foothold on the West Coast of the North American continent. Were either of these true, Royce says, the war would have been plausibly justified as defense against aggression and imperialism, but there was no factual support for either claim. To the contrary, all evidence suggested that the natives had been peacefully minding their own business and

were utterly shocked when their formerly peaceable neighbors suddenly organized armies to attack them.

And in regard to his criticism of German aggression in World War I, Royce's arguments are hardly the work of a mind gone astray, as some authors have suggested. The arguments are laid out in systematic and lawyerly fashion, as careful here near the end of his life as he was in his California critique at the beginning of his career, drawing a connection between German attacks on the neutral nation of Belgium, and on passenger ships at sea, with Germany's stated arguments in American newspaper advertisements and in diplomatic communiqués, holding that they had a right to sink any ships that dared to trade with their enemies. And even then, Royce's opposition to German aggression was measured so that opposition was to be launched against just those activities that were aggressive so as to cause them to cease; he deliberately praised what was great and valuable about the German people (and credits them in these writings for their development of the modern institution of insurance), as he argued that even if they were to be defeated in war, they should be left to mind their own business afterwards, and not subjected to the sort of imperial oversight that tended to destroy the self-minding loyalties of both oppressed and oppressor.

The Right to International Business as a Standard of Critique

We have seen that Royce defended Californian and Belgian sovereignty, and the right of neutral and passenger ships to ply their trade at sea, but interestingly, his defense was cast more in business terms than in political terms, differentiating it from the usual focus of war ethics on the decisions of political leaders.¹²⁰ As we have seen, Royce attributes the cause of much of the crime that riddled the state of California after the

¹²⁰ Attention has been called to this focus in Royce's work especially by Richard Hall's recent work.

Conquest to the fact that the usurpers had violated the spirit of business cooperation that made law and property a sustainable ideal by depriving “foreigners” of the right to work under equitable conditions and disrespecting legitimate native land claims. For Royce, a conqueror gains no right “by virtue of his conquest, either [to] dispossess private land-owners, or [to] deprive the inhabitants of any other of their private rights.”¹²¹ Meanwhile, anti-immigrant laws passed in California after the Conquest prevented hard-working, honest and law-abiding families from traveling to the land, while the notorious sorts of immigrants ignored the law and filled the social vacuum with scandal and mischief. Following from the violation of these rights of the respect for loyalties in California, property ceased to be a commonly supported loyal ideal: “There was often no relief to the quarrelsome life of the persistent squatter, unless indeed his neighbor’s shot-gun could some day cut short his litigious misery.”¹²² And, for Royce, the racist complaints of Hispanic brigandry after the Conquest, and the tax laws that discriminated against “foreign” miners ignored the well-functioning business life that had preceded the Conquest. By placing the blame for the corruption of the laws on the innocent attacked, rather than on the aggressors, the state stultified for a long while in its dysfunction by not understanding the real causes.

A similar focus on the violation of business loyalties as a standard of critique of disloyal war loyalties may be found in his critique of Germany: against Buranelli’s argument that Royce succumbed to a virulent strain of the war spirit in his critique of Germany, because he wished to avenge his dead friends who had been aboard the Lusitania, Royce makes clear that the purpose of the struggle against Germany was to be

¹²¹ California, pg. 473.

¹²² *Ibid.*, pg. 489.

strictly limited to causing that nation to cease its aggression against neutral sovereignty with a trading partner, Belgium, and to cease the policy of U-Boat warfare against peaceful international commerce over the seas. And in case of victory against the German powers, he argues for replacing punishment of or predation upon the defeated people (as by reparations payments, imperial oversight, or destruction of the defeated peoples) with the growth of international insurance.

Royce's respect for the loyal work of non-combatants was so strong that, while he was aware that there were weapons on board the Lusitania that were slated to aid the fight against the Germans,¹²³ he still argued that the sinking was disloyal in that there were many on board who were engaged in other forms of legitimate non-military business. Royce cites a friend who writes of the productive loyalty that was thereby disrupted in the sinking:

...there were some who were there because they were of a type which our country most needs -- men who, when their profession gives them a definite call, are ready to go, if need be, to the ends of the earth, in order to meet that call, even if a foreign prince suddenly threatens them with his wrath, and orders them not to go on their quest, but to behave as if they were subjects of his own.¹²⁴

These workers had purposes of their own, functions to fulfill that were distinct from any warlike purposes. By their self-minding business, Royce's correspondence continued, "...Whatever other passengers of the Lusitania were doing, these men...had accepted professional tasks no one of which had anything whatever to do with the war. These men were going to meet their engagements."¹²⁵ For Royce, the most egregious violation in the attack of the Germans against such neutral workers was not so much on

¹²³ HGC 108.

¹²⁴ HGC 102.

¹²⁵ HGC 104.

the physical bodies of the people attacked and killed, but on the spirit of work that enabled cooperative projects to emerge, and which tended to benefit all people. It was the test of cooperative work among peoples, rather than any quest for vengeance, that motivated Royce's claim for the right to struggle against Germany, a right of self-defense of loyalties that would disappear once the conditions of international business and the community of nations were re-established through the cessation of hostility:

We honor our dead of the *Lusitania* because we know that their works do follow them, and we honor these works. Whoever, knowing the facts, scorns this our reverence, declares himself cut off in spirit from the community of mankind, and can be restored to that community only after he changes his mind and mends his manners...those who scorn us for thus honoring their memory are our enemies as well as enemies of all that makes the common life of humanity a possible ideal.¹²⁶

Further Applications of Royce's War Ethics

I will conclude by suggesting several interpretations of American war ethics after Royce's death using his theories of war ethics in connection with the examples of his practical applications of his theory to questions of war in his own day. An important proviso is that Royce, despite his several forays into practical war ethics, was just as dedicated to neutrality, and remained silent until he found the evidence of aggressive disloyalty to be incontrovertible—as evidenced by the fact that he long resisted attempts from both sides to get him to take their side, in the early years of World War I, before he finally made up his mind. For Royce, as we may recall, a necessitated defense against disloyalty hinged upon a “most unmistakable expression” of aggressive intent that involved clear and repeated violations of neutrality. Such an intent had clearly not been displayed by the Californians who were attacked in the invasion of that state by Americans, nor by the Belgians who had announced their public neutrality in the Great

¹²⁶ HGC 100, 105-106.

War before being invaded by Germany. Although arguments had been made to the contrary by both invading powers, there were no clear facts to back them up; whereas repeated and unmistakably aggressive intent was displayed by the invading powers in both conflicts.

By this standard, it probably goes without saying that Royce would have supported American intervention in World War II against the German/Japanese/Italian Axis given the obvious aggression of those nations against many other self-minding nations and peoples; but I think it is equally clear, given his harsh denunciation of the American attacks on civilians in California, and German attacks on civilians on the high seas, that he would not have acceded to the justice of firebombing German cities or dropping nuclear bombs on Japanese cities in retaliation, attacks that killed hundreds of thousands of civilians. Just as there were enemies of Germany as well as people who were innocently minding their own business on board the Lusitania, so too were there surely many thousands who were minding their own business, with no militant intent, when they were killed in Dresden, Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 by British or American bombs. A commonly advanced argument for the right to attack civilians in that war is that it saved the lives of American soldiers, but Royce had contempt for that line of reasoning when it was used to justify the sinking of the Lusitania: “Perhaps, indirectly, some commercial enterprise in which they were engaged might tend, as Von Jagow said in the most inhuman and insulting of his official replies to President Wilson, ‘to kill some of our brave soldiers.’”¹²⁷ It was better, Royce thought, for soldiers to die in the loyal commission of their duty, than to kill civilians whose duty was entirely distinct from a militant purpose. To do simply anything to win the fight was, as we have seen, forbidden,

¹²⁷ HGC 97.

since a victory that destroyed loyalty left the victors with possession of a damaged good, a world poorer of loyalty.

Second, I believe that it is likely that Green and Auxier are correct that the doctrine of loyalty to loyalty would run counter to America's second invasion of Iraq that began in 2003, on the grounds that Iraq was apparently not just then engaged in the aggressively disloyal behaviors of which it was accused, i.e., aiding *Al Qaeda* attacks on America, and seeking to construct "weapons of mass destruction." But under a broader consideration of evidence the case becomes less clear, and there are other considerations that seem to indicate that the case for self-defense of international community was in fact justified: 500 chemical munitions, forbidden by United Nations Security Council decree, were discovered in Iraq after the 2003 invasion (although they apparently were created before the U.N. decree);¹²⁸ Iraq had also repeatedly indicated predatory tendencies by its invasion of Iran in 1980, during which it used chemical weapons in its attacks against Iranian forces that were strongly proscribed under international law; by its invasion of neutral Kuwait in 1990; its use of ballistic missiles against neutral Israel in 1991; and by evidence that Iraq attempted to assassinate a former American president in 1993.¹²⁹ While the particular justifications given of self-defense against Iraqi aggression prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq were almost entirely incorrect, by a broader test of repeated aggressive disloyalty, I believe that a plausible ethical account from the perspective of

¹²⁸ This is according to an unclassified version of a report by the National Ground Intelligence Center, a military intelligence agency of the United States government, published in June 2006. The weapons were apparently in a degraded condition, but still lethal; and some of these munitions have been used by Iraqi insurgents in attacks against American soldiers in recent years.

¹²⁹ The Federal Bureau of Investigation report alleging an attempt on former president George H.W. Bush's life may be found at: <http://hnn.us/articles/1000.html>; an article critical of the proffered evidence was published by Seymour M. Hersh, "A Case Not Closed," *The New Yorker*, November 1993. The article is published on-line at: <http://www.veteransforcommonsense.org/print.cfm?page=print&ID=29>; a United States Air Force historian, Eduard Mark, has suggested that the Hersh article failed to analyze all the evidence, but he does not list the new evidence: <http://hnn.us/readcomment.php?id=3604#3604>.

loyalty to loyalty can be given to support either perspective. Likewise, as Royce argues, in the case of the American Civil War, there may be genuine loyalty—and loyalty to loyalty—displayed by soldiers on both sides of the conflict; and both may have plausible justification for their actions in the belief that they are defending their loyalty from predatory aggression. Still, the critical loyalist would wonder why legitimate and ongoing efforts within the United Nations to mediate the impasse that provoked war were ignored by the invading powers, since war is truly a last resort in Royce's ethics. There appears to be less loyalty in Iraq right now than before the invasion commenced, at least in part because so many Iraqis have died because of the invasion and moreover because of its aftermath, and so many more have fled to avoid sectarian violence.

Finally, in regard to Orosco's claim that Roycean ethics supports humanitarian intervention in Sudan, the case is, again, complicated—given Royce's public neutrality even after the German invasion of Belgium and sinking of the *Ancona*, it might be likely that Royce would have stayed neutral in the context of the Sudan as well, since he was looking for a triangulation of aggressive instances of attacks against self-minding neighbors before he was quite certain that a nation was being disloyal to loyalty itself rather than engaged in a merely dyadic struggle between loyalists—and as Orosco himself notes, the aggression by the Sudanese state against its member people did not begin until some among that people began a civil war against their government. But the case is complicated by the fact of the United Nations resolution that Orosco discusses. Of course there were no global political bodies that could have written such sanctions in Royce's day, and it is likely that a Roycean war ethics would be influenced by the fact that various nations had joined in a democratic agreement that loyalty itself was being

attacked in the Sudan's civil war. Similar things could be said about the first invasion of Iraq (1991) in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (1990)—unlike the 2003 invasion, it was sanctioned by the United Nations; and to the United Nations intervention in Korea (1950)—in each case, the United Nations action came as a response to just one invasion, and thus no broad habit had been proved by Royce's usual stringent test. But as with the case in Sudan, the international community in the person of the United Nations adjudged the Iraqi attack of Kuwait and the North Korean attack of South Korea to have been predatory, and Royce certainly would have taken the collective deliberations of a whole body of nations seriously given his interest in the advent of the Great Community of cooperating, but autonomous, nations and peoples.

Royce's work anticipates many aspects of later theories of just war; but his approach is especially useful for its broader critical measure, by which the worth of war loyalties is measured by their coherence to the whole world of loyalties, rather than in themselves, in dyadic love of our nation's own cause and hatred of our neighbor's cause. Here, the value of war "in itself" is not the only measure, such that the "war question" can be decided on an *a priori* basis, without reference to the specific facts of the case, meaning that we merely need decide once and for all whether we ought heed or oppose our nation's or our people's call to arms in every instance regardless of the empirical facts of the present war question.

Just as loyalties inevitably seem good to their adherents, but actually are good or evil by organic reference to the broader world of loyalty to loyalty, so too war, for Royce, is necessitated only when the loyalties that are a good in themselves are threatened with annihilation—threatened, that is, with actual and not merely potential aggression--by

disloyal predators. And here Royce's theory is especially useful for bridging the divide between theories of "just war" and theories of "just peace," and for using careful interdisciplinary, provincial and transnational standards in order to determine whether a particular call for war is in fact justified in the broader world of loyalty, or whether it merely seems good or evil merely because of our local prejudices. As a general rule, for Royce, the vast majority of the worthy loyalties are peaceful, and peace-breeding, and thus his theory of just war is best read as a part of his larger theory of a just peace--a rarely but occasionally necessitated function that defends such a just peace, which is a benefit not merely to ourselves, but to the whole world of the rationally loyal.¹³⁰ We will see exemplifications of Royce's interest in peace-breeding loyalties in the following two chapters, on business and environmental ethics.

¹³⁰ My thanks to Richard Hall for this suggestion.

CHAPTER IV

ROYCE'S BUSINESS ETHICS

Despite the centrality of business ethics in Royce's thought, and of its relevance to public philosophy in his own day and to subsequent American philosophers, he has largely been left off the mainstream contemporary business ethics map. While his philosophy of loyalty sometimes is referenced in business ethics textbooks, it is oftentimes not, and the case studies that he offered still have yet to be explored--even as these business ethics readers perform acrobatic feats in order to read a business ethics into the thought of classical philosophers who hardly bothered to consider the topic, and whose major interests were far from business. Perhaps the greater injury, however, is that committed by Rosenthal and Buchholz, whose recent book on pragmatic business ethics, while citing numerous of Royce's students, entirely neglects to mention the original and formative studies written by their teacher.¹³¹

This period of ignoring one of America's foremost business ethicists may be coming to an end. The study of Royce's writings in this area, after a long period in which they were almost entirely ignored both in business ethics texts and by Royce scholars, has undergone a major recent renaissance at least among Royce scholars, and a minor recent renaissance among business ethics scholars more broadly considered, with recent

¹³¹ Sandra B. Rosenthal and Rogene A. Buchholz, *Rethinking Business Ethics: A Pragmatic Approach*, 2000, New York, Oxford University Press.

considerations of various aspects of Royce's business ethics given by: Nahser,¹³² Soles, Mahowald, Trotter, Hall,¹³³ Auxier, and Kegley. These accounts are welcome additions in exploring an area of Royce's thought that had hitherto been neglected, but each has treated only some aspects of his business ethics or its reference to some contemporary problem, with no synoptical viewpoint of the matter yet given.

It is against this background of hitherto unconnected parts of Royce's writings and influence that I hope to give Royce some claims of legitimacy to the modern uncovering of business ethics as relevant to all of society. Moreover, I hope to suggest that there are untapped critical resources here that may help contemporary business ethicists to repeat Royce's pragmatic success in terms of achieving a critical relevance of philosophy to public life. The success of Royce's public business ethics here must be understood as a critical success—it is not merely that Royce was publicly heard, but he was heard advancing a critical principle by which business that supported peaceful cooperation among peoples was praised, while that which precluded such cooperation was condemned.

Business considerations are, more than just an occasional example, key to understanding Royce's ethical thinking. In places where business goes very poorly, it threatened social order and the health of the natural environment. But in other places, business organizations are a central means by which the Beloved Community of loyalty to loyalty—in which loyalists lovingly and critically cooperate among communities in

¹³² F. Byron Nahser has credited Royce, accurately, I believe, with providing the first pragmatic considerations of business ethics. But Nahser tends to act as if Royce is merely applying Peirce's thought, while Royce's interest in the business contexture of California, from his student days in California, precedes any extensive knowledge of Peirce.

¹³³ As Richard Hall especially has discussed, Royce's business ethics was groundbreaking in the history of philosophy, in that it departs from the traditional philosophical habit of attending more centrally to the theological/political forms of human organization and puts business structures as a center of the moral life.

addition to serving local communities--is to be able to come into existence. In fact business can reach to places that religion and politics, the ethical objects to which philosophers were more traditionally devoted, cannot. For Royce:

The present situation of humanity depends upon the fact that for good reasons, which have to do not merely with the sentimental and romantic aspirations of humanity, but also with the most serious business in which men are engaged, the idea of the community of mankind has become more concrete, more closely related to the affairs of daily life, has become more practicable than ever before. At this very moment the material aspect of civilization favors, as never before, the natural conditions upon which the community of mankind, if it were reasonably successful, would depend for its prosperity. The growth of the natural sciences as well as of the technical industries of mankind also makes possible and comprehensive forms and grades of cooperation which men have never before known...Such motives, I say, have been furthered by the arts, the industries, the sciences, and the social developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as thousands of years of previous human activity have never furthered them.¹³⁴

For Royce, business is uniquely able to provide certain efficacious structures that enable cooperation over great spatial and temporal spans, uniting various peoples in common contractual purposes—and hence giving peoples new formal occasions for truthfulness in relations with one another, and an occasion for peaceful anticipation of future cooperative labors to replace violent dyadic reaction in competition for scarce resources in a “zero sum” game. Such success in increasing peaceful relations is not a mere optimistic hope, Royce wrote, but an emergent fact of global business cooperation:

...international business is already approaching a stage wherein, if the spoilers do not indeed too seriously wreck or too deeply impair our progress, we may actively begin to further international unity, without in the least interfering with the free internal development of the social orders of individual nations. It is not at all necessary to look towards the triumph of Socialism or of any other equally revolutionary social tendency, whether political or non-political, in order to foresee possible modes of international unification, which, if they were once tried, if a fair beginning of some such international activity were made, would almost

¹³⁴ BW 1150.

certainly prove to be self-sustaining as well as conducive to a mutual understanding amongst the nations.¹³⁵

Business loyalty contributes to certain types of good that are not discoverable in the service of other types of loyalty: for instance, business of a certain degree of complexity is a necessary condition for certain types of good social functioning, as Royce showed in his early-career book on the history of California. For Royce, the complex social organizations that were wrecked with the Conquest could not be re-created in that state until the disconnected individual pan-miners of the first days of the Gold Rush were replaced by greater aggregations of laborers, whose co-work formed the necessary condition for the development of cooperative social order. So too he made a similar point at the end of his career, in defending international insurance and international shipping as actually creating powerful new bodies of peaceful adjudication among nations, ones that would cease to exist if the business practices that had created them ceased to exist. And in general senses, for Royce, business loyalties provide uniquely valuable social functions. Contracts, for instance, provide organizational structures in which cooperation between disparate people could be achieved, and by which the fear of neighbors as portentous bad omens, in competition for the scarce resources of profit, could be replaced with the practical service of organizations that portend cooperative work and thus with the more consistent possibility for profit.¹³⁶

In these and other case studies, Royce shows how business loyalties can go very well, and how they can go very poorly in terms of the broader world of loyal social relations. This critical decision—in contrast to “fixed” approaches that demand that

¹³⁵ BW 1159.

¹³⁶ The lengthiest discussion of the logical status of these business relations is found in Richard A. Hall’s unpublished work on Royce’s philosophy of insurance.

business loyalty be placed permanently above or below other types of social loyalty-- allows for a pragmatic emphasis on the possibility of the actual increase in the terms of loyalty and in the relations of loyalties in response to the possibilities of growth or danger within specific situations, thereby increasing the sphere of practical individual autonomy by providing more usable keys to fit the demands of the individual's will. That business loyalties and other social types of loyalty are both genuine, but that they must all participate in the common life of society, meant for Royce that a continual critical balancing was required--business loyalty that crushed other types of loyalty, or other types of loyalty that crushed business, were in fact modes of disloyalty that tended to the destruction of any loyalty, first for the oppressed and then eventually for the oppressors.

A first reason to revisit Royce's ethics, then, is to gain a critical ethical perspective on an area of human activity that has become increasingly dominant in the 20th and 21st century. A second reason is to explore the remarkable but still mostly overlooked public success of Royce's business ethics. In an era when philosophers have self-admittedly faced numerous obstacles in finding a public voice, Royce had an easy time of it, gaining widespread public, political and scholarly recognition for his business ethics in his own day, with an influence that continued to grow after his death. Royce's dual relevance to both social/practical and theoretical ethics here may prove instructive to the modern age of business ethics, which has struggled to achieve a public voice—largely because of intentional neglect. Despite the central importance of business to the healthfulness of social and political life, and of good evidence that the activities of business can change, sometimes detrimentally and perhaps permanently, the earth's natural environment, still, as Rosenthal and Buchholz describe the situation, recent

philosophy has tended to ignore business, and whereas pragmatism can “span the entire gamut of human experience,”¹³⁷ even pragmatists, they soon admit, are almost all guilty by this same charge: “...the position of classical American pragmatism is, with a few exceptions, strangely silent in the area of business ethics,”¹³⁸ and the pragmatic vision has had a “long and difficult uphill battle to be heard and understood.”¹³⁹

In terms of addressing the neglect of a genuinely critical business ethics and genuinely public ethics, a study of Royce may prove especially useful, as Royce’s business opinions were widely considered in prominent public forums like the *New York Times*,¹⁴⁰ as in public lectures and the pages of academic journals. And several scholars have recently suggested, accurately I believe, connections between Royce’s broadly publicized interest in the ability of international corporations of a certain type to breed peace among peoples,¹⁴¹ and President Wilson’s advocacy of the largely mercantilist Fourteen Points that followed Allied victory in World War I.¹⁴²

The influence of Royce’s business ethics may be seen in subsequent American philosophy as well: Whitehead, writing from Harvard two decades after Royce’s judgment of German military efforts from the perspective of the threatened values of international trade, made the same style of choice as did Royce, weighing the worth of war loyalties by the measure of the decrease of other types of loyalties--and especially

¹³⁷ Rosenthal and Buchholz, *xii*.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 50

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, *xii*.

¹⁴⁰ Royce published on insurance, for instance, in the July 25, 1915 issue of *The New York Times*.

¹⁴¹ We see here, again, that Royce’s idealism takes the material aspect of reality very seriously, as when he writes that: “If the ideal is approximately realized the kingdom will be in this world, yet its servants will not fight, simply because they will be loyally engrossed in much better business than fighting.” BW 1158.

¹⁴² Woodrow Wilson attended guest lectures of Royce’s at Johns Hopkins University, and wrote admiringly of his teacher’s philosophy. The several scholars mentioned have shown that Royce was among the sources for the Fourteen Points, but the historical work has not yet been done to show how much his account influenced Wilson.

business ones--writing: "Now the intercourse between individuals and between social groups takes one of two forms, force or persuasion. *Commerce* is the great example of intercourse by way of persuasion. *War, slavery,* and governmental compulsion exemplify the reign of force."¹⁴³ And Whitehead's notion that "A great society is a society in which its men of business think greatly of their functions" closely resembles Royce's precept that individual loyalties function most rationally by respectfully considering their relation to the health of the social province, and that society and business are endangered when such thinking does not occur.

According to many appraisals, business considerations form much of what is uniquely distinctive about American philosophy—so much so that it is sometimes difficult to remember that these business considerations were not always widespread. Business ethics, despite some deceptive appearances, was not a common topic of study in Royce's day--while Royce's colleagues Peirce and James used business analogies, and James especially was fond of the business metaphor, Royce was the first one to conduct lengthy "case study" accounts of business ethics, and to consider carefully the ethical effects of business as a unique loyal value, as a genuine form of truth-seeking in relation to a broader social life. By the time Dewey arrived at these questions of business ethics as central concerns, they were already widespread in American philosophy, having been incorporated also by Royce's students G.H. Mead and Alain Locke, sometimes in more academic/theoretical formulations, and sometimes in the terms of the practical creation of and critical melioration of actual business structures.

In more recent ethics, we may see Royce's influence still being carried on at Harvard, as its Business School now officially practices a "case method" approach (one

¹⁴³ Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*.

that has in recent years been taken up by numerous other business schools as well).¹⁴⁴

Royce's case studies, and the contemporary Harvard approach, share in common a focus on "real world" dilemmas, not simply reducible to a binary "yes/no" answer, and focusing on intelligent leadership and teamwork as requisite for addressing them. Similarly, both approaches frequently rely on interdisciplinary inquiry to ascertain the specific facts of a case and both seem to share in common "loyalty to loyalty," in their effort to increase cooperation among uniquely loyal social groups who make up business organizations, and between those business organizations and the broader world of social organizations.

In what follows, I will suggest some of Royce's business foci that I believe especially well-enabled his critical approach. I will first explore his discussions of business technology, then the interdisciplinary nature of his studies, and then his understanding of the "personalizing" and "personal" nature of corporations. I will then discuss Royce's philosophy of loyalty in connection to business ethics and will conclude with some arguments for why the absolute standard of Royce's loyalty to loyalty may meet Rosenthal and Buchholz's pragmatic arguments against absolute principles in business ethics.

Business Technology

While the origin of the modern critical study of business technology is sometimes credited to Heidegger, Royce analyzed such technology extensively and critically in his various forays in business ethics well prior to Heidegger's accounts. These studies of

¹⁴⁴ Harvard's Business School credits the origins of this method to Harvard Business School faculty in the 1920's, but among many of these faculty were those who were well-aware of Royce's case method approach from the previous decades. Royce writes, in the introduction to his book on the philosophy of insurance, of his collaborations with his colleagues in Harvard's Business School. I hope to conduct a fuller study of the connection between these two case study methods in my upcoming research.

business technology spanned his career, from his 1886 study of the specific mining and banking technologies used in California, in terms of the broader social and political cooperation these business technologies precluded or allowed for, to his discussions of insurance and shipping technologies in the last years of his life.

Royce recognized that loyalty, like socialization considered more generally, was in large part dependent upon imitation within a certain localized/provincial scale. Much of Royce's critical philosophy of loyalty, and of his business ethics, is founded upon his psychological study of the empowerment available to those who loyally imitate a loyal group, and his ethical interest in repeating the conditions of such empowerment—so that individuals could continue to exhibit the confidence to imagine and serve these cooperative social causes. But to consider business morality in critical and variable relation to other forms of social life, one must first conceive of these various types of loyalty as being at least psychologically possible—loyalties seem good to their adherents, and in at least short term senses, they are good for their adherents, by enabling them to act consistently on behalf of a plan that unifies their individual interests with a beloved social cause. This in turn allows an individual to avoid listlessness or conflict in his various unharmonized desires. For Royce, this is not only a good, but a necessary good if we are to have any hope of a harmonized life-plan, and much of Royce's criticism is focused on the repeatability of the basic conditions that make loyalty a possibility, so that the imitation that brings us to our first loyal service of causes may later allow us rationally to systematize them as well--allowing us to respect and learn from others who master other loyalties, and criticizing those who are merely selfish in individualistic senses, or in service of narrowly sectarian forms of loyalty. But modern business media

technologies allowed for imitation in vast new ways, and created grave new dangers for the possibility of creative individualization:

...Our modern conditions have greatly favored the increase of the numbers of people who read the same books and newspapers, who repeat the same phrases, who follow the same social fashions, and who thus, in general, imitate one another in constantly more and more ways. The result is a tendency to crush the individual. Furthermore there are modern economic and industrial developments...which lead toward similar results. The independence of the small trader or manufacturer becomes lost in the great commercial or industrial combination. The vast corporation succeeds and displaces the individual. Ingenuity and initiative become subordinated to the discipline of an impersonal social order.¹⁴⁵

Royce was especially worried about technology's ability to fuel mob violence, since business' media technologies have made the problem of mob psychology far more widespread than it had been in ages past, by providing broad channels for violent mob emotions:

The psychological conditions of the mob no longer need include the physical presence of a crowd of people in a given place. It is enough if the newspapers ...[and] the other means of social communication, serve to transmit the waves of emotional enthusiasm. A nation composed of many millions of people may fall rapidly under the hypnotic influence of a few leaders, of a few fatal phrases...¹⁴⁶

But Royce's account, here, too, is critically nuanced, as for Royce it is an error to dismiss the worthwhile social orders that are created by technology, as he makes clear in his disagreement with Le Bon and the "pessimists [who] would have it, [that this evil is] inherent in the very fact of the existence of a social order."¹⁴⁷ Thus part of genuine criticism is praise for those intelligent business organizations that do well, producing socially healthful products and meaningful labor. For Royce, technologies that promote local cooperation, and that allow individuals critically to identify with their province,

¹⁴⁵ BW 1074-1075.

¹⁴⁶ BW 1082.

¹⁴⁷ RQP 95.

promote genuine autonomy and resistance of corrosive totalitarian and mob ideals. For instance, the simple plurality of local media sources, versus the consolidation of ownership of media technologies in just a few hands, is, Royce argued, a good from the perspective of cultivating the distinct critical perspectives necessary for the pursuit of truth. And in California, the shift from the individual technologies of the pan miners to the broad sorts of cooperation required, in terms of amassed capital and labor, for more complicated mining technologies was prerequisite for creating enduring social structures in that state.

Royce's studies of technology here are especially important in the light of Rosenthal and Buchholz's claim that overlooking technology can be disastrous.¹⁴⁸ Here, too, a critical account stands opposed to accounts that only either praise or condemn technology, as if it had a single value, since, as Rosenthal and Buchholz put it:

“Technology can, of course, be liberating and contribute to the well-being of workers in a business setting. It can eliminate some of the hardest, most physically demanding kinds of work and can perform repetitious and boring tasks that would otherwise require human labor. But technology can also be alienating and cut workers off from essential parts of themselves.”¹⁴⁹

Rosenthal and Buchholz and Royce are alike aware that some modes of social success are uniquely possible as a result of the melioration that technological cooperation allowed for, and here business technology serves as a key epistemological tool—since the signs of a particular people's technology are subject to reverse-engineering by other cultures that encounter it, and so the discovery of meaning is quickly sharable amongst

¹⁴⁸ Rosenthal and Buchholz 102.

¹⁴⁹ Rosenthal and Buchholz 106-107.

the broader human community, even when its initial discovery is extremely localized.

The epistemological value of business is not to be lightly dismissed when, as Rosenthal and Buchholz put it:

Advanced technology allows for the expansion of horizons. Just as the manipulation of symbols allows for the development and growth of the self-other interrelation, so advanced modern technology allows for the expanded inclusion of the other through the manipulation of e-mail, web sites, etc. In this way, the absolute other can become incorporated into the self-other relation of community. Technology can allow for ever-creating inclusiveness.¹⁵⁰

Interdisciplinary Methodology

Rosenthal and Buchholz describe a schism in recent business ethics, wherein two types of scholarship consist of either normative or empirical claims, but which hardly ever consider both aspects of business morality in an integrated way:

The social scientist may devalue the philosopher's moral judgments because these judgments cannot be understood in empirical terms and cannot be verified by empirical testing or be used to predict or explain behavior. The social scientist's statements about morality, on the other hand, are seen to be of little value to the philosopher because such statements do not address the essential questions of right and wrong.¹⁵¹

But, as Rosenthal and Buchholz show, questions of value are enmeshed in both the world of ideal and material realities and the scientific study of them, and thus value questions can become, in analyzed case studies, empirical questions as well: "because goods—economic goods—are only as good as their contribution to the enrichment of the fullness of human existence, and this always occurs in specific situations."¹⁵²

The analysis of the achievements of business in regard to the critical good is here discovered, once again, through the use of interdisciplinary methodology that combines

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 99

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 35-36

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 79.

philosophy's traditional quest for a guiding moral standard with various *a posteriori* studies that seek to ascertain whether and how such a goal is achieved in specific instances. Royce's business ethics contains studies from the perspective of psychology and sociology, economics, mathematics, statistics, literature, and history. A similar pragmatic motive calls forth Rosenthal and Buchholz's turn to historical analysis in order to ascertain the particular condition of business ethics in its current moment, as when they utilize scholarship from that discipline so as to comprehend the moral implications of the "Protestant Work Ethic" and of the consequences of its demise as a morally rooted system in later commerce.

Royce's use of interdisciplinary method to aid his business ethics was broad, sustained, and remarkably prescient. Hall, for instance, has noted Royce's extensive use of mathematical and statistical theory in his analysis of the business of insurance, considered together with applications of traditional philosophical studies of logic and ethics. Royce consulted with professors from the business school at Harvard in the development of his insurance arguments, and his use of historical method in his discussion of California social/business practices was both groundbreaking and accurate, according to recent professional assessments within the discipline of history.¹⁵³ Finally, researches from psychology were also key to Royce's analysis of business technology--Trotter especially has looked to the relevance of Royce's psychological study of imitation to the business of medicine, to ascertain reasons for the replacement of idealism in medicine's healing purposes in early medical education with a later focus that tends to abandon these early ideals in favor of a single-minded pursuit of profit.

¹⁵³ See, Earl Pomeroy and Kevin Starr, for assessments from prominent historians. Indeed history has been quicker to recognize Royce's advances in business theory than philosophy has been.

Loyalty and Business

As we have seen, the critical ethical relation of individual loyalties to the broader social world of loyalties is Royce's measure of the real value of individual loyalties, so that business could not be praised or condemned *in toto*, but could be praised or condemned in specific instances as promoting or destroying the broader social world of loyalties, and so too, other types of loyalty could be praised or condemned as promoting or destroying business loyalties. This critical flexibility in considering business as a key social loyalty, but one among others, contrasts with other approaches. First, obviously Royce's view contrasts with the attitude that Rosenthal and Buchholz diagnosed, of the general neglect by philosophers of questions of business. With a dearth of interest in active ongoing criticism at the point of meeting of business and other types of social life, both philosophy and business have come to understand money-making as an uncritical activity. They see it instead as an activity that simply exists, in a non-moral or in a simplistic and uniformly moral sense. Some theoreticians claim that all or nearly all business is good, and ought hardly be interfered with by mere human mortals, since it will instead be automatically regulated by an "Invisible Hand"; others claim that business is essentially destructive, and ought be interfered with at every turn.

Against this notion that one must so hierarchalize which type of loyalties to serve, Royce understands that while loyalties must indeed be rationally systematized if there is to be any hope of a harmonious life, business in specific instances can go well or poorly in relation to the broader values found in the social world, and other types of loyal social values can sometimes go poorly in relation to business values. Different loyal choices are genuine ones, since each may be equally loyal to the world of other loyal relations,

and dilemmas at the point of conflicts among loyalties often admit of numerous possible methods of adjudication—as opposed to just one “right” answer, where business is always above social loyalties, or social loyalties are always above business. Critical rational adjudication does not mean for Royce what it means in some accounts, that sufficient reason will provide the one course of action that is the reasonable one (and in the light of which all other choices are unreasonable), since the various loyalties are real, and further, there are real dilemmas in which the loyalist feels the pull of different but competing loyalties. Morality in ethical choice is not well measured by a narrow conception of rationality.

Rather than a presumptive monistic absolute, or a relativism of values that is unable to provide any possibility of critical decision, for Royce, opposition to the error of assaults upon the relative good that loyalties provide becomes, here, the “absolute” of his criticism as by his condemnation of disloyal loyalties. While the good of loyalty is in many ways relative to our locality, it is universal that the good of loyalty is, for others, relative to their localities and to individuals’ autonomous choices therein, and thus for Royce:

A wise provincialism remembers that it is one thing to seek to make ideal values in some unique sense our own, and it is quite another thing to believe that if they are our own, other people cannot possess such ideal values in their own equally unique fashion. A realm of genuinely spiritual individuality is one where each individual has his own unique significance, so that none could take another’s place. But for just that very reason all the unique individuals of [the] truly spiritual order stand in relation to the same universal light, to the same divine whole in relation to which they win their individuality.¹⁵⁴

The basic good of loyalty is not its sheer immensity, but rather its ability to provide an altruistic scope that is distinct enough to be colorful to the individual servant’s

¹⁵⁴ BW 1085.

imagination. And here, in recognizable senses, loyalty to business is already a dominant presence in the social world, and it is a motivating cause in the life of individuals. This is very commonly found throughout human experience, despite the efforts of some theoreticians, like Soles, who argue that one ought *not* be loyal to one's business, except in a very minimal sense.¹⁵⁵ As Royce describes the situation, business loyalty as manifested in the service of an office is found in the service of various "for profit" offices in some well-known senses, as with: "...The devotion of a ship's captain to the requirements of his office, when, after a disaster, he works steadily for his ship and for the saving of his ship's company until the last possible service is accomplished, so that he is the last man to leave the ship, and is ready if need be to go down with his ship."¹⁵⁶

But most of the works of business loyalty, and their central good for society, rests in more ordinary occasions for fidelity. There are many who would sacrifice their personal interests for their cause were they required to do so, but are never asked; although in the ordinary course of affairs such loyalists may, of course, sacrifice numerous opportunities for illicit or disloyal self-enrichment. Likewise, as Rosenthal and Buchholz point out, while some "rationalistic" models of business theory and business ethics hold that individuals are strictly self-interested, there are numerous instances in which people sacrifice their immediate self-interest for the good of their corporation, or even for the sake of other corporations with which they are in productive relation.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ See David E. Soles, "Four Concepts of Loyalty," in *Honest Work: A Business Ethics Reader*, pp 414-421.

¹⁵⁶ BW 861.

¹⁵⁷ I recently witnessed an exemplification of this type of "loyalty to loyalty" in this shared corporate sense. A severe ice storm eliminated electrical power throughout large sections of Oklahoma City, while leaving power intact in other areas. Two neighborhood coffee shops, only about a mile apart, had divergent fates—one, the more established business, keeping its power, the other, the recent start-up, losing its power, and its clientele, for many days. Remarkably, the community put on a benefit concert for the sake of the afflicted café, and some of the most devoted leaders in that effort were employees at the "rival" café—the one with

Disloyalty to Loyalty and the Absence of Loyalty

Royce warns: "...that total indifference to all forms of loyalty...which occasionally appears as so serious an evil in the conduct of the business of certain great corporations,"¹⁵⁸ and which leads to social and environmental catastrophes, means that business, while in many respects necessary for a well-functioning social life, is not a solely sufficient condition for such a life. Royce bemoans the world of the self-estranged spirit of imperialism and the single-minded focus on profit that nevertheless seeks to make it so. In such a society, which America was in some senses coming to resemble, loyalty becomes a disappearing possibility:

[These] forces of society arouse our curiosity, interest us intensely, must be reckoned with, and may be used more or less wisely to our advantage. But they are the great industrial forces, the aggregations of capital, the combinations of enormous physical power, employed for various social ends. These vast forces are like the forces of nature. They excite our loyalty as little as do the trade-winds or the blizzard.¹⁵⁹

A world estranged from the possibility of distinct and psychologically identifiable loyalties lacks the specific motivations that appeal to individuals, and that are able to motivate their work by giving a stable and meaningful purpose. As Rosenthal and Buchholz likewise show, "to speak of economic development as enhancing quality of life while destroying the multiple social, cultural, or natural environments within which

the resources to weather the storm. According to principles of strict monetary selfishness, of course, the rival café should have eagerly anticipated the increased business that would have been diverted in their direction after their rival's demise. Curious about this seeming violation of the universal law of for-profit capitalism, I asked one of the managers of the benefactor café, also a central member of the benefit concert's organizational committee, about the reason for the benefaction. Although I forget her exact words, she responded to the effect: "Our local community will be better with these two cafes than if there were just one." And there is indeed a sense in which we may understand that while the benefactors are a bit poorer in a monetary sense than they could have been had they acted more selfishly, or even more passively, they are richer in another sense—with more friends, and with a livelier and more personalized community, than if their rival had gone bankrupt.

¹⁵⁸ BW 952.

¹⁵⁹ BW 951.

humans attain meaningful lives shows the abstract and non-relational understanding of quality of life incorporated in the concept of economic development.”¹⁶⁰ Put in Royce’s terms, such an exclusive loyalty to economic development may indeed be a loyalty, but it is disloyal to the broader world of loyalty.

In response, Royce’s business ethics allows for a robust critique of disloyal business practices. One important reason for this has to do with the demand of autonomy that is at the center of loyal service. For Royce, to secure autonomy by loyalty, there needs to be a sufficient and growing set of loyalties from which individuals may choose, and here the others’ right to their own loyal good, even when their causes are not just now our causes, is still, when we are loyal to loyalty, a good for us by helping to contribute to the world of loyal diversity which makes the choice of individual loyalties emotionally and imaginatively appealing. On the other hand, undermining the broad right of people to serve their loyalty is ultimately an attack on our business as well, by reducing our sphere of autonomy-by-cooperation.

The right to criticize disloyalty is here equal in Royce’s business ethics and in his war ethics, and it is a very narrow right in both cases. As he makes clear, people are not disloyal simply because, if we did what they did, then we would be being disloyal to our own cause. Instead, loyalty to loyalty allows everyone his or her business causes, and the necessary materials means to serve them, but in so doing forbids predation upon these rights of others. Our right to criticize others’ loyalty is strictly circumscribed, compared to those approaches which urge that we must be loyal to business above other types, or those which urge that we must not be loyal to any of this grouping of loyalties. And thus, even if we do not choose a personal loyalty to some type of business, still we are

¹⁶⁰ Rosenthal and Buchholz, 135.

obligated to at least respect the loyalty exemplified in others' service of their business causes:

If he is unquestionably loyal to something, to his country or to his profession or to his family, I may criticise his expression of loyalty, in so far as I clearly see that it involves him in unnecessary assault upon the loyalty of others, or upon their means to be loyal. Thus, all unnecessary personal aggression upon what we commonly call the rights of other individuals are excluded by my formula, simply because in case I deprive my fellow of his property, his life, or his physical integrity, I take away from him the only means whereby he can express in a practical way whatever loyalty he has.¹⁶¹

Thus illegal seizure and destruction is forbidden as are officially "legal" but racist policies that forbid peoples the right to labor and own on equal terms. But business loyalists must also make respectful space in which other loyalists may serve their loyalties, and thus Royce forbids the notion that the attainment of maximal profit and the dominance of "market share" is a worthy life's pursuit considered as its sole end. As Royce describes it, a willful narrowing of attention to just one small aspect of business, of dominating the competition or seeking the maximal possible amount of profit in every situation, no matter other social concerns, tempts disaster:

The larger one's powers, the more are the places in which he comes in contact with the world that he would conquer, and the more are the ways in which he feels its force. It is with the seeker after individual power as it has lately been with some of our greater corporations. The vaster the capital of these corporations, and the more widely spread the interests that they control, the more numerous are their enemies, the harder the legislative enactments that they have to fear, the greater their fines if they are convicted of misdoing. Power means increasing opportunities for conflict. Hence the mere seeker for power not only, by the accidents of fortune, may meet his downfall, but also, himself, actively pursues his own destruction... Since nothing is too vast to undertake for the cause, loyalty regards the greatness of its tasks as mere opportunity. But the lust of power, on the contrary, has staked its value not upon the giving up of self-will, but upon the attainment of private possessions, upon the winning of the hopeless fight of the

¹⁶¹ BW 935.

individual with his private fate.... Any financial crisis with its tragedies can serve by way of illustration.¹⁶²

For Royce, the essential danger of disloyalty (or the absence of deeper social loyalty) in each of these cases is that it violates the conditions of trust in society that make single loyalties, and consistent profit, possible (or simply refrains from supporting them). The individual loyalist, in choosing to serve any cause, believes it to be a beloved social cause, with actual or at least possible co-workers; the consistency of the possibility of having such a faith in social organizations serves, for Royce, as the critical measure of the faith of a given loyalist or a given loyalty.

Loyal business causes can, then, repeat the error of the estranged individual, taking themselves to be free of real relations to other individuals and other causes, and able to treat others however it sees fit so long as it persists in pursuing its own aims. Such dangers are found in distinct parts of the business process, as with disloyal labor unions that caused broad social unrest in pursuit of narrow aims:

The labor-unions demand and cultivate the loyalty of their members; but they do so with a far too frequent emphasis upon the thesis that in order to be loyal to his own social class, or, in particular, to his union, the laborer must disregard certain duties to the community at large, and to the nation,--duties which loyalty to loyalty seems obviously to require.¹⁶³

¹⁶² BW 889-891. Similarly, for Rosenthal and Buchholz: "The multipurposes of a corporation are often lost sight of in the quest for profits as an indicator of economic well-being, as managers are encouraged to maximize profits or earn the highest rate of return they can for the shareholders. ... profit, while essential to the ongoing activity of the corporation, is a by-product of corporate activity and may serve as one sign that the corporation is functioning well. A corporation may manifest economic well-being and may make large profits and accumulate wealth for shareholders by ignoring the multiple relationships in which it is embedded, but a corporation cannot grow and thrive in this manner. When the economic purposes of a corporation becomes the be-all and end-all of its existence, this artificially isolates the corporation from the social context which gives it its very being and ... the relationships in which it is embedded, eventually leading to a dysfunctional relationship with society." 175.

¹⁶³ POL 107.

This is also the cause, Royce argues, with purely self-interested owners' groups. And yet to those who would say that loyalty itself or unions in particular are the genuine danger, Royce points out that financial cabals and corporations that merely seek for profit, with no deeper loyal motivations, are equally in danger of destroying the genuine work of cooperation that business allows for:

...[if] ethical individualists, objecting to the mischiefs wrought by the corrupt politicians, or by the more unwise leaders of organized labor, imagine that loyalty is responsible for these evils, such critics have only to turn to the recent history of corporate misdeeds and of the unwise management of corporations in this country, in order to be reminded that what we want, at present, from some of the managers of great corporate interests is more loyalty, and less of individualism of those who seek power.¹⁶⁴

The consequences of the factional or sectarian altruisms of disloyal business, or the mere quest for hedonistic pleasure founded upon monetary profit at any social cost, are all eventually disruptive to the possibility of a genuinely consistent loyalty. While one could be loyal to one's business, to be exclusively concerned with profit, with no regard for the broader world of social loyalties, means for Royce that "Our ideals will grow vaguer and more restless, even while our material activities become more steadily enchained by the powers of evil. We shall end where others have ended, in national disaster, in social dissolution, in humiliation, in the clutches of some domestic or foreign conqueror."¹⁶⁵

But such disloyalty is not, for Royce as for some moral criticism, the inevitable consequence of business or of capitalism; as business had had some genuinely creative success in furthering the conditions of inquiry, considered in terms of the broader health of society, as in the funding of:

¹⁶⁴ BW 946.

¹⁶⁵ BW 1123.

[American higher education, which] has been supported by benefactors who were often tempted by all sorts of more selfish interests to use their wealth otherwise. It has given to great numbers of youth a light and guidance that have meant for them escape from spiritual bondage, and an opportunity to become in their turn benefactors. It has furnished our country a constantly increasing class of cultivated workers, ready to enter practical life with the ardor of a genuine idealism in their ears and minds.¹⁶⁶

For Royce, a community of loyalists who are also loyal to loyalty means that they serve their own local purposes, but these loyalties grew in number and complexity as loyalists displayed loyalty to others' purposes as well—as by engaging in fair trade, and by defending trading partners when they are attacked by disloyal predators, and by respecting other forms of loyalty—as by respecting the beauty and natural health of the local environment. It is not a mere notion of profit, nor of life disconnected from business, but of business that is loyally connected to the rest of a loyal life, that is Royce's ideal. As Rosenthal and Buchholz similarly put it, the relation of "... family, social relationships, meaningful work, and leisure," stands as the real moral ideal against attempts to disconnect the business life from the rest of life. Further, they argue, we must reverse the "severing of the economic system from its moral soil, and the establishment of production and consumption as ends in themselves,"¹⁶⁷ a schism which has left ethics with the insoluble problem of attempting to adjudicate between entirely distinct spheres of human activity.

For Royce, such a consistent relation of business loyalties to other types is not a mere ethical prescription about the way that things ought to be, since international business cooperation was indeed already beginning to enable the growth of loyalty more widely considered:

¹⁶⁶ BW 1117.

¹⁶⁷ Rosenthal and Buchholz, 80-81.

In our day this vision of the salvation of mankind, while indeed far enough away from us to cause constant and grave concern, and to demand endless labor, has been for a long time becoming clearer than ever, while both science and industry have tended to bring men together in new fashions of cooperation, in new opportunities and exercises that involve an expressed charity in its true form, as a devotion not merely to individuals but to the united life of the community.¹⁶⁸

Likewise, for Rosenthal and Buchholz, much of “criticism” of business that simply labels it as an error is not really critical, since such criticism cannot recognize positive values: “Those opting for a ‘moral as opposed to an economic’ relation to the environment often give telling instances of wealth enslaving, but there are also many instances of wealth in its positive mode... multinational corporations have a powerful potential both for furthering and for destroying any drive toward a global community, a community which would bring with it the possibilities for the emergence of truly global corporations.”¹⁶⁹

Likewise, for Royce, recognizing the importance of the community of social relations that loyalty intends and forms, by contractual agreements, and the willingness to regard social reports as having truth values, allows us to recognize how our basic attitudes towards the others we meet in our business dealings are able to transcend quickly, in their power to influence personalizing *relations* among people, the narrowly “real” practical spheres in which we perform them—for better and for worse. Writes Royce:

...in the commercial world, honesty in business is a service, not merely and not mainly to the others who are parties to the single transaction in which at any one time this faithfulness is shown. The single act of business fidelity is an act of loyalty to that general confidence of man in man upon which the whole fabric of business rests. On the contrary, the unfaithful financier whose disloyalty is the final deed that lets loose the avalanche of a panic, has done far more harm to general public confidence than he could possibly do to those whom his act

¹⁶⁸ BW 1151.

¹⁶⁹ Rosenthal and Buchholz, 135.

directly assails. Honesty, then, is owed not merely and not even mainly to those with whom we directly deal when we do honest acts; it is owed to mankind at large, and it benefits the community and the general cause of commercial loyalty.¹⁷⁰

The critically ideal relation of business to social loyalties is not, then, to consist of subsuming one and promoting the other as superior. Rather, it consists of simultaneously serving particular loyalties—specific, local causes—and seeking to systematize them so as to reduce conflicts. This includes defending the general right of people to choose their loyalties, in the universal cause of “loyalty to loyalty,” so that we may profit from others’ truth, and form truthful contractual relations with others. This means, for Royce, that it is fully possible to endeavor to be consistently loyal to loyalty through specific loyalties to one’s office, corporation, ownership shares, and in consumption decisions, while still endeavoring to make sure that these loyalties also do service in the broader world of loyalty. By this measure:

...In case of the ill-advised labor agitations, and of the corrupt party management, the cure, if it ever comes, surely will include cultivating amongst our people the spirit of loyalty to loyalty. Loyalty in itself is never an evil. The arbitrary interference with other men’s loyalties, the disloyalty to the universal cause of loyalty, is what does the mischief here in question. The more the laborer is loyal to his union, if only he learns to conceive this loyalty as an instance of loyalty to loyalty, the more likely is his union to become, in the end, an instrument for social harmony, and not, as is now too often the case, an influence for oppression and for social disorganization.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ BW 911. As Rosenthal and Buchholz similarly put it, individuality is not a mere given, but is found in these working social relations:

From the pragmatic perspective it can be said that what is more natural is not absolute individual rights but contractual rights. However, this view of rights does not mean merely that individuals are born into society which have already been formed, at least in theory, through a social contract of original participants...it does not mean that abstract principles can be substituted for caring attunement to concrete situations and the individuals involved. Rather, what this view of rights is intended to point out is that the ‘natural’ state of being human is to be relationally tied to others and that apart from the dynamics of community there can be no individual rights, since individuals emerge within and develop in the context of community adjustments. Thus, in the very having of rights one has community obligations. (146).

¹⁷¹ BW 947.

By this account, loyalties that are now imperfect members of the broader world of loyalties may become better by criticism and especially self-criticism, and while owners' cabals or unions in present forms may be unpatriotic or disloyal, "we can best foster loyalty in its higher forms, not by destroying the sects or the unions, but by inspiring them with a new loyalty to loyalty."¹⁷²

Corporations as Persons

Loyalty serves, in Royce's account, to personalize social organizations, so that they become beloved sources of self-chosen authority, rather than of merely coercive and imposed authority. And while individual loyalties, as we have often seen, are sometimes good and sometimes evil, for Royce, *some* loyalty is necessary to avoid the dreadful condition of the self-estranged spirit of the imperialistic state (as Royce borrows from Hegel's analysis). When business and social power admits of no possible personalization, there is likewise no possibility for loyalty, as in the self-estranged state of mere profit seeking.¹⁷³

In a set of legal senses, incorporation has well-known personalizing functions in the eyes of the law. But traditional moral theory, as Kegley especially has shown in consideration of Royce's business ethics, has been less willing to consider corporations and communities as morally considerable persons, instead preferring to focus on atomistic individual agents. But these agents are frequently loyal subscribers to these loyal corporate causes; adequately to consider the moral individual, even as autonomous, we must then consider these organizations that people choose and serve. Royce's psychological study of the conditions of loyalty is helpful here. For Royce, business

¹⁷² BW 951.

¹⁷³ BW 950-951.

communities have, at least in their servant's imaginations, actual value, not as a mere figure of speech, but as an actual personal value inhering in the organization as organization—and not reducible to the individual terms of friendship amongst just those who know each other and who have contracted to serve a common purpose. The loyalist intends, Royce argues, the whole good of the cause, which often includes memories of the corporation's history, when the cause was founded by members no longer living, and the future of the cause after an individual's own retirement from its active service. The ideal communal value involved in serving the community as personal may indeed be so latent, as Royce observes, that we typically fail entirely to note it. And sometimes, of course, people are driven by a sole concern for monetary profit. But in other instances, the self-submissive service of a beloved business purpose may be so strong in the service of business that Royce compares these loyalties to religious purposes:

One's cause, in its first intention, appears to him human, concrete, practical. It is *also* an ideal. It is *also* a superhuman entity. It also really *means* the service of the eternal. But this fact may be, to the hard-working, and especially to the unimaginative, and, in a worldly sense, fairly successful man, a latent fact. He then, to be sure, gradually idealizes his cause as he goes; but this idealising in so far becomes no very explicitly emphasized process in his life, although, as we have seen, some tendency to deify the cause is inevitable.¹⁷⁴

We may discern at least two senses in which corporations may be discussed as personal, in Roycean terms. In one sense, business is *personalizing*, in that it often gives individuals the social purpose by which they centralize and dedicate their practical efforts, giving a route by which they may escape the disharmony of desires that inevitably accompanies the estranged individual considered as mere consumer, with legion desires and no consistent possibility of fulfilling all or even many of them. Here, as Royce describes it, business is one form of personalizing plan, but one among other

¹⁷⁴ BW 1008.

possibilities: “Loyalty has its domestic, its religious, its commercial, its professional forms, and many other forms as well. The essence of it, whatever forms it may take, is, as I conceive the matter, this: Since no man can find a plan of life by merely looking within his own chaotic nature, he has to look without, to the world of social conventions, deeds, and causes.”¹⁷⁵

Our choice of these causes provides a crucial foundation of our subsequent personhood, by providing us with an objective, social direction by which we may organize and dedicate our individual efforts, and by which we may subsequently judge the success of these efforts.¹⁷⁶ In this sense, people often gain some measure of their personhood by their business; learning how to act in idea and in practice by consulting the conventions of their field and the predominant behaviors of their self-chosen group of peers. This imitation is not mere rote, since imitation here occurs because the object of the cause is specially valued as being good in itself, and good in comparison to the earlier condition of unharmonized desire. Here, for Royce, business purposes are among the primary means by which we first learn to centralize our plans and actions in pursuit of a valued goal:

...The social activities are the ones that first tend to organize all of our instincts, to give unity to our passions and impulses, to transform our natural chaos of desires into some sort of order—usually, indeed, a very imperfect order. It is our social existence, then, as imitative beings,—it is this that suggests to us the sorts of plans of life which we get when we learn a calling, when we find a business in life, when we discover our place in the social world. And so our actual plans of life, namely, our callings, our more or less settled daily activities, come to us from without. We in so far learn what our will is by first imitating the wills of others.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ BW 872.

¹⁷⁶ For Royce, “The answer to the question, ‘Who are you?’ really begins in earnest when a man mentions his calling, and so actually sets out upon the definition of his purposes and of the way in which these purposes get expressed in his life. “ BW 921.

¹⁷⁷ BW 868.

Thus personhood and personalization, in Royce's sense, is not entirely a simple given, a birthright. Rather, it is gained by imitating a social sphere, and by mastering work within it, as a result both of believing not merely in the existence but also in the value of the social world of shared causes, and acting in practical ways as a result of that belief. Serving business loyalties, in this sense, is a central means by which individuals gain the purposes that allow for their personhood.

In a second sense, business loyalties may be understood as being themselves personal, in the eyes of their servants. In this sense, a business cause, like other types of loyalty, "does not get its value merely from your being pleased with it. You believe, on the contrary, that you love it just because of its own value, which it has by itself, even if you die."¹⁷⁸ This value is not ever wholly impersonal—the cause is, of course, "impersonal" in that it is never reducible to a single biological individual, since it binds many individuals into a unified service. In this sense, Royce writes, "The cause to which loyalty devotes itself has always this union of the personal and the seemingly superindividual about it."¹⁷⁹ This union of biological individuals and the "superindividual" person of the cause is termed by Royce "superpersonal," because it links individual biological persons into what Royce terms a higher social unity—one that is not merely a nominal or incidental collection, but one that is unified by goals and practical activities of service.¹⁸⁰ Such a unity is not merely a nominal collection, but it is "also intensely personal, because the union is indeed an union of selves, and so not a merely artificial abstraction."¹⁸¹ It is not, of course, that *all* business corporations and all

¹⁷⁸ POL 11.

¹⁷⁹ POL 11.

¹⁸⁰ POL 25.

¹⁸¹ POL 26.

service of them are to be considered to be personal in this sense—as clearly demonstrated by those who do their work while bitterly complaining about their employer or the trouble that their work causes them.¹⁸²

Against this depersonalized world, for Auxier, the major advantage of Royce's approach to business ethics is its ability to categorize corporations as moral persons, and as being subject, thus, to the types of criticism that are now used mainly to prohibit and deter the sorts of socially destructive behaviors typical of mere individuals:

...if one were to designate an institution as having the legal status of personhood, such a designation should be so configured as to *strengthen* rather than weaken the level of responsibility borne by its individual servants. Personhood among corporations ought to be *earned* through service to others within and beyond its own membership, and corporate success should be measured in the moral development of its servants, not by its bottom line. Wouldn't it be interesting if the right to move from private to publicly traded corporations were made by the Securities and Exchange Commission based upon the moral rather than the financial development of the company? And what if the privilege of trading on Wall Street depended not upon one's financial resources, but upon one's moral character? To some that may sound crazy, but it is not. If the legal status of personhood among corporations were something corporations could attain by selfless service rather than by mere financial success, the legal standing itself would perhaps be unproblematic, and there would be no temptation to use the "personhood" status as a substitute for individual responsibility among the leaders or workers. Morally developed servants of a genuine business community are prepared to risk their well-being on the destiny of that business, and I see no reason why that risk should be merely financial; it is a moral risk, and failure in the behavior of the institution should carry moral consequences for those who have served it (e.g., loss of individual freedom or incarceration). But as things stand, the goals of these individual servants are purely material in nature, e.g., power and gain, in which case, we cannot be surprised that these individuals are condensations of the corporation, and both corporation and individual servant are likely to behave in sociopathic ways, as for instance Wal-Mart now does, but did not always do. This is avoidable, if difficult to avoid.¹⁸³

¹⁸² POL 39-40.

¹⁸³ From a manuscript form of the book: *Time, Will and Purpose: Living Ideas from the Philosophy of Josiah Royce*, forthcoming from Open Court Press.

Rosenthal and Buchholz likewise describe this contrast between the fixity of the predominant approach as a hierarchalized and permanently fixed abstract relation, and pragmatism's nuanced personalistic account:

[in the dominant account]...individuals have no other connection except this need to be part of the same organization for self-interested reasons. From a pragmatic perspective, however, the corporation is a community, and the individuals are what they are in part because of their membership in a corporate organization, while the organization is what it is because of the people who choose to become part of it.¹⁸⁴

The value of business here is understood as containing—at least possibly--originative and creative personal purposes, as expressing intelligent hopes, and practical efforts, and indeed giving an irreplaceable means by which personhood is attained. Business, then, is not reducible to a single function of profit. The loyalist understands his or her own work to be genuinely creative, but simultaneously recognizes it as a part that gains meaning only by inclusion in broader, but still beloved, social processes. As Rosenthal and Buchholz describe it, these business loyalties can thus easily intend growth in broader social senses than just increasing the supply of money, even while they seek profit:

The market process, like the public policy process, is a social process that expresses the wishes of society for a better life to which material goods and services produced by corporations can contribute. It is an interactive process where corporations and consumers mutually influence each other to reach a satisfactory resolution of what goods and services should be produced. In expressing their needs and wants for certain kinds of goods and services, people are also revealing who they are rather than just their preferences; people are also determining what kind of future they want for themselves and their children through an interactive social process.¹⁸⁵

Ought Business Ethics Contain an Absolute?

¹⁸⁴ Rosenthal and Buchholz 177.

¹⁸⁵ Rosenthal and Buchholz, 117

I have frequently suggested a harmonization between Royce's pioneering account of business ethics, and Rosenthal and Buchholz's more recent pragmatic account, and I have briefly reported the strange fact that Rosenthal and Buchholz ignore Royce's account, even though Royce achieved precisely the type of public critical success that Rosenthal and Buchholz argue should be at the center of the mission of academic business ethics, and even as they cite numerous of Royce's students who did less work in the area of business ethics than did Royce (but whose accounts were nevertheless heavily influenced by their teacher). Although we cannot be certain of the reason why Rosenthal and Buchholz choose to ignore Royce's account, I suspect a central reason is because of Royce's devoted defenses of the idea of a moral absolute—loyalty to loyalty--while Rosenthal and Buchholz's pragmatism ostensibly rejects *any* absolute moral principle as being too stultified and unmoving to account for the processive and evolutionary needs of a genuine critical ethics that is to mediate the evolving relations between different types of communities.

But the difference between these two approaches, both self-labeled as “pragmatic,” is not so stark as it might at first appear. It is indeed easy to see, from the Roycean perspective, what is ill-advised in certain *a priori* conceptions of the eternal absolute, and to see the kind of stultified and atemporal model of the absolute that Rosenthal and Buchholz intend to reject, as when they write:

The history of philosophical speculation as embodied in philosophic systems reveals positions which have systematically denied or rejected the sense of temporality, creativity, novelty, fallibilism, pluralism, perspectivalism, and open-endedness—in short, the key dimensions of pragmatic philosophy—in favor of the eternal, the fixed, the final, the certain, the absolute spectator grasp, the ultimate completion, the perfected whole.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶ Rosenthal and Buchholz, 60.

But they too quickly reject any form of the absolute, as if the absolute could only be conceived on atemporal and uncritical grounds in regard to specific situations. Royce advances a conception of the absolute that is thoroughly evolutionary and critical in character, since it aims for the growth both of individual loyalties and of loyal relations over time. But still this growth is, for Royce, an absolute standard.

We may see something of the absolute and the eternal in Rosenthal and Buchholz's own growth-oriented ethics, even as their pragmatism rejects both the "absolute, and relativism"¹⁸⁷ in its hope to retain the possibility of a critical middle. Royce's loyalty to loyalty retains the critical middle by making an absolute of relativism—of the good of the relative terms of loyalty--centrally concerned with the increase in the terms and the possible conditions of loyal relation, and critical of those relative behaviors that diminish the total world of loyal relations. This conception is seemingly also operative in Rosenthal and Buchholz's account, as when they recognize the rootedness of moral judgment in the existence not of a single moral end, but in the proliferation of them as a growing community of communities, as in their principle that there is to be: "more pluralism, not less." And they admit certain absolute needs, if there is to be any hope of consistent meliorative progress towards this goal. For Rosenthal and Buchholz we *need* critically to respect our group and others as communities of inquiry; this means that we *need* criticize certain groups if they block the road of inquiry in pursuit of some narrow and destructive aim and praise groups when they do their work in a way that simultaneously is their own and a social good as well; we *need* autonomy and intelligence; and we *need* a consistent and growing set of co-inquirers, because "all

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 19-20

human experience is inherently experimental.”¹⁸⁸ Well-conducted experiments require a large set of critical observations in order to be most surely on the real road of inquiry.

But such a principle is just what Royce means by his absolute of loyalty to loyalty.¹⁸⁹ Beloved communities are still individuals, finite in relation to other people’s beloved communities, but a loyalist may cherish the opportunity for loyalty among loyalties—by bringing them into conversation, and exchanging knowledge, expertise and the various fruits of business labor among them.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 40-41

¹⁸⁹ This is well shown by Jacquelyn Ann K. Kegley’s book: *Genuine Individuals and Genuine Communities*.

CHAPTER V

LOYALTY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

A growing consensus amongst various ecological researchers, loyal “environmentalist” groups (including venerable ones like the Sierra Club and many others that have formed in recent years), academic environmental ethicists, and political leaders, has urged that human influence has precipitated various aspects of environmental crisis: the withdrawal or cessation of many cycles of well-functioning nature, and of numerous possibilities for the human appreciation of the sublimity of natural beauty. We are given repeated and widespread proofs, by these groups, that human consumption has, if not always and everywhere, at least often meant the disappearance of natural beauty, and of the extinction or widespread destruction of species, forests and ecosystems, clean air and water, and the ozone layer.

In the place of the departed—we are told by these environmental loyalists of various stripes--we are left with “global warming” that melts polar ice and threatens to drown coastal cities, while elsewhere causing droughts that threaten mass starvation, increases in skin cancer rates due to the disappearance of the atmosphere’s protective ozone layer, technologically created carcinogens in our food that painfully diminish the length and quality of our human life, and massive “dead zones” where our polluted rivers meet the sea, so called because scarcely any aquatic life can live there. And even the most aesthetically sensitive soul would be hard-pressed to find beauty in the landscape that Mark Sagoff describes as surrounding the Military Highway from Buffalo to Lewiston,

even if its hideous ugliness is so immense as to make it something like sublime. Driving through it, describes Sagoff:

... You will pass through a formidable wasteland. Landfills stretch in all directions and enormous trucks—tiny in that landscape—incessantly deposit sludge which great bulldozers then push in the ground. These machines are the only signs of life, for in the miasma that hangs in the air, no birds, not even scavengers, are seen. Along colossal power lines which criss-cross this dismal land, the dynamos at Niagara send electric power south, where factories have fled, leaving their remains to decay. To drive along this road is to feel, oddly, the mystery and awe one experiences in the presence of so much power and decadence.¹⁹⁰

Can Roycean ethics help to address these various aspects of environmental crisis, of the loss of so much that is so valuable and necessary in the well-functioning world of nature? I believe it can. Royce's awareness of environmental destruction was prescient, and his philosophy of loyalty and provincialism gives, I will argue, a consistent and critical basis by which well-functioning nature may be appreciated and protected as a consistently loyal activity, and that which threatens to destroy the more significant of nature's processes may be criticized and opposed as disloyal.

I will discuss, in what follows, Royce's particular accounts as to the worth and defense of what he terms "noble natural beauties," and of our organic and indeed psychological relation to them in the life of the province. But more generally, we may find in his philosophy of loyalty, and its attendant notions of a wise and conservative provincialism, useful theoretical resources for an environmental ethics that can critically oppose overconsumption, waste, and the destructive conversion of valuable and lifeful natural processes into the mere short-term use values of human pleasure. For instance, his principles of the willing self-limitation and self-abnegation of the province's individual

¹⁹⁰ Mark Sagoff, "At the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima or Why Political Questions Are Not All Economic," in *Honest Work: A Business Ethics Reader*, page 474.

members serve to protect the organic whole against hedonistic tendencies that would, if left untutored, destroy the beauty and diversity of the province.¹⁹¹ Indeed, for Royce, provincialism does not become too narrow so long as it is willing to sacrifice its pretensions of superiority in favor of appreciatively attending, among other things, to its “beautiful surroundings,” as expressions “of the worth that the community attaches to its own ideals.”¹⁹²

While Royce denies (mistakenly, I think)¹⁹³ that loyalty itself is to be found in non-human animal life, he does admit that there are “pathetic” hints of such loyalty; moreover he treats non-human natural life, and even the inorganic world, as personal, meaning ends-oriented, processive through time, and valuing and valuable. And Royce repeatedly argues that natural ideas and ends are not to be disvalued merely for the sake of exalting the relative value of human ideas and ends. Lowering nature to the level of unconsciousness so that we can better prove consciousness in ourselves fails to show how our knowledge and nature’s knowledge are identical in certain crucial senses, and how in other crucial senses our knowledge is but a fragmentary part of an organic whole that is greater than it:

...every natural process, if rightly viewed from within, would be the pursuit of an ideal. There would be no dead Nature at all,--nothing really inorganic or unconscious,--only life, striving, onflow, ideality, significance, rationality. Only

¹⁹¹ For a survey of Royce’s position on hedonism, see Peter Fuss, *The Moral Philosophy of Josiah Royce*, pp. 15-18.

¹⁹² RQP 108.

¹⁹³ As Kohák demonstrates by his phenomenological studies of non-human animal life, in his book *The Embers and the Stars*. Kohák’s stated point is not to demonstrate the presence of loyalty, but of personhood—and this he shows by, for instance, pointing to self-sacrificing behaviors on the parts of single animals for others. But it seems to me that the mother bird who attacks my cat, when it gets near her nestlings, has a somewhat ideal or loyal relation to her offspring, and this is in part what constitutes its personhood. These self-sacrificing animal acts are clearly not always reducible to “mere instinct,” especially because they are far from uniform behaviors, as Kohák shows, or because at the least, the mother bird needs to choose to serve the “protect my offspring” instinct, and to inhibit the “flight from cats” instinct.

for [humans] Nature appears to be growing from death to life [a perspective effect], and so more intelligible. But we should have to unlearn that atrocious Philistinism of our whole race which supposes that Nature has no worthier goal than producing a man.¹⁹⁴

There is a crucial sense, Royce allows us to see, in which the major root of environmental crisis is the hedonistic depersonalization, by humans, of the natural world—finally our ancestral animism has been replaced by its opposite, wherein only the accretion of our individual pleasure and the cessation of our individual pain matters, and where the rest of natural life is utterly devoid of personal value, and its pleasures and pains are conceived to be utterly unlike our own. “We” are “conscious,” while “it” is “unconscious, mere mechanism.”

Royce’s contrasting description of the relation of the human to the natural world, and the basis of his environmental ethics, is indeed not animism’s—non-human natural will is not exactly like our own, but likewise it is not, as in a common dualistic account, utterly unlike our own (wherein “we” have consciousness, reflect, and rationalize and thus have ethical value, and “it” does not). Rather, in Royce’s account, nature is rational and valuable in ways analogous to our own, and its value is worth respecting and discovering by devoted interdisciplinary inquiry into the world’s individual processes as by a wider life of appreciation. He is quite explicit that we may not merely assign the presence of conscious, rational life to life that fits within the temporal processes that we humans possess:

Perhaps experiences of longer time-span are far higher in rational type than ours... For every region of this universally conscious world may be, in some sense, a center whence issues new conscious life, for communication to all the worlds... in case of the animals, we may well be dealing not with beings who are rational in our own time-span, nor yet with beings who are irrational. The rational

¹⁹⁴ WIB 231.

being with whom you deal when you observe an animal's dimmer hints of rationality, may be phenomenally represented rather by the race as a whole than by any one individual. In that case, this individual animal is no rational person, but he may well be, so to speak, a temporally brief section of a person, whose time-span of consciousness is far longer than ours.¹⁹⁵

As loyalty to loyalty counseled that we meet a human neighbor's loyal customs with an attitude of respect, even when we did not yet understand the particularities of that loyalty, so too for the life of our neighboring species. And just as war is an extremely conscribed function in Royce's larger ethics of war and peace, so too, for Royce, as for many of the wiser hunter-gatherer traditions, to hunt is a far different moral matter than waging a war of elimination on a species— as against the bison, bears and wolves, as some organized groups in this nation have tried, nearly successfully, to do.

We have thus far, in the previous chapters, seen repeated demonstration of Royce's notion that genuine empowerment proceeds by self-limitation and self-abnegation of our merely hedonistic impulses, and a commensurate increased attention to the powers of our neighbors. In contrast, for Royce, ignoring our limits in a single-minded quest for pleasure leads to the powerlessness of neglecting our genuine borders, and not knowing what we are actually able to accomplish, nor knowing the possible sources of imitation of our fellow individuals by which our genuine empowerment might both be preserved and proceed apace. And so too with our natural neighbors in the world—for Royce, genuinely empowering knowledge is not a matter of seizing and destroying, but observing and imitating. Such learning in turn requires an active self-limitation, the precondition for attentive observation, so as to bring the world as our

¹⁹⁵ WIB 232. See also WIB 233. The notion of variable grades of temporal consciousness in different species is decades later written of in Singer's work, however, I believe that Royce's account remains the more phenomenologically sensitive account; Singer often resorts to *ad hoc*, perhaps even animistic, prioritizations of animal life over human life.

dwelling place to the foreground of our attention, allowing its individuals to shine forth, as species, natural processes, and as natural individuals.

This focus on individuals and individual provinces likewise means that, by Royce's account, an environmental ethics that is "merely" global, that announces crisis without understanding distinctions among localities, fails to understand that some provinces have done much better in their environmental regard than have others, and that some human communities are far more responsible than others in their care for nature. Neglecting the closest provincial studies of well-functioning nature, it neglects too the readiest possibility for environmental improvement: the self-critical preservation and advancement of the stability and beauty observable in our own province. And by demanding as an ethical imperative that mere individuals address the whole world's crisis all at once, it suggests a hopelessly enormous task with no point at which the task may be begun, and so it tends to moral paralysis. Effort by any single individual to address the global crisis all at once is indeed doomed to failure, thereby merely distracting our attention from our own moral backyard and thus from the most effective range of self-criticism.

Ciulla, Martin and Solomon have addressed this error of focus when they write: "Americans use some 60 percent of the world's resources for less than 5 percent of its population. And then we ask the third world to cut back on their pollution and use of resources. Is that fair?"¹⁹⁶ Far from fair, it can indeed even sometimes appear quite racist, off-putting and imperialistic, as Bookchin charges against some American

¹⁹⁶ *Honest Work* 473.

environmentalists,¹⁹⁷ and Hester, *et al.* charge of some recent accounts in mainstream academic environmental ethics,¹⁹⁸ or as when Norton suggests that a robust environmental ethics involves thinking of ways to get people in “developing” countries—in nations other than our own-- to have less children.¹⁹⁹ But so too with the far more common notion of those self-satisfied environmentalists who think that global environmental problems are best solved by merely regulating what is furthest away from their own province while conducting business as usual at home—they suppose we may happily and with few regulations drill for oil where many people live (and where of course many species and local ecosystems reside), like in Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana, but that we have fulfilled our environmental responsibilities when we legislatively forbid oil drilling in places where few people live, like in Alaska and far off our coasts. The “wild worth saving” is defined as that which is nowhere near our own economic self-interests.

Likewise, it is this failure to examine self-critically our own provincial life that allows us so easily to deceive ourselves that our environmental responsibilities are best fulfilled when we urge tribal people, who burn very little energy and travel mostly by foot, that their environmental sin is to reproduce and otherwise to live their own lives. This, meanwhile, when we daily drive our multi-ton automobiles great distances, and heat and cool our immense homes even when we are not in them, thereby producing myriad toxic chemicals that will afflict human people and natural processes worldwide

¹⁹⁷ Bookchin writes: “In America, the rapidly forming Green movement is beset by a macho cowboy tendency that has adopted Malthusianism with its racist implications as a dogma, an anti-humanism that among some of the wilderness oriented ‘campfire’ boys has become a brutalized form of misanthropy...” in “New Social Movements: The Anarchic Dimension,” *For Anarchism: History, Theory, and Practice*, ed. David Goodway (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 273.

¹⁹⁸ Hester, Cheney, McPherson, Booth, “Indigenous Worlds and Callicott’s Land Ethics” *Environmental Ethics* 22 (Fall 2000): 273-290.

¹⁹⁹ Bryan G. Norton, “Integration or Reduction,” in *Environmental Pragmatism*, pp. 131-132.

and long after our own deaths. Would these tribal peoples be likely to listen to us, even if we weren't the 5% percent that consumes 60%?

Royce's self-critical approach, of an active loyal provincialism—concordant with a relatively passive respect for others' provinces-- is far more helpful in giving us a legitimate scope for regulating our own environmentally efficacious activities. Here our efforts are not lost on the merely global, over which we have little control, or on advising our distant neighbors, who have very little motivation to heed our hypocritical advice.

For Royce, "...the problem of the training of our American people as a whole to a larger and richer social loyalty is *the problem of educating the self-estranged spirit of our nation to know itself better*... We need ... a new and wiser provincialism...which makes people want to idealize, to adorn, to ennoble, to educate, their own province..."²⁰⁰ This, as Royce makes clear, involves the creation of public parks, while avoiding defacing "noble natural beauties," and respecting the character of the land and the life that our province supports. Such a respectful life involves both cessation from the overconsumptive hedonistic activities that are indeed likeliest to afflict both provincial ecology and thereby the larger world, and it involves ceasing from the expansive and self-satisfied advice-giving to distant neighbors that most distract us from the harms that we create in the natural world. Both of these activities are, by Royce's account, distractions from the self-criticism and self-limitation that would better enable us to atone for environmental harms that we have created and that do their damage most severely so long as we remain unaware of them, and thereby unable to act to mitigate them.

Additionally, Royce's early philosophical advocacy of an environmental ethics, one with repeated calls for the respect, by humans, of the individuals and total organic

²⁰⁰ POL 114—115.

conditions of the natural world, has important implications for his metaphysics and his overall systematic philosophy, from his very first book, *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy* (1885), through his most prominent public lectures, as with the 1899 Gifford Lectures, published as *The World and the Individual*, and his 1907 Lowell Lectures, published as *The Philosophy of Loyalty*. We may see in these writings, also, Royce's public advocacy of environmental ethics immediately prior to its becoming a national *cause célèbre*, as with the first organization of formal unions of those committed to environmental loyalties, like The Sierra Club in 1892. Philosophy and environmental ethics, as a devoted loyal movement, were linked from the beginning—largely, I think, through Royce's office.

This historical example of this public influence on environmental ethics by an academic environmental ethicist is all the more significance because, according to many recent pragmatic environmental ethicists, the scant attention paid to environmental ethics in recent philosophy, and the scant attention paid by the public to academic environmental ethics, comes nowhere close to addressing or meeting the central problems of environmental crisis. For Andrew Light and Eric Katz, for instance:

It is difficult to see what practical effect the field of environmental ethics has had on the formation of environmental policy. The intramural debates of environmental philosophers, although interesting, provocative and complex, seem to have no real impact on the deliberations of environmental scientists, activists and policy-makers. The ideas within environmental ethics are, apparently, inert...can philosophers contribute *anything*?²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Ep 1.

Likewise, for Brian Norton, environmental ethicists have been unable to “offer useful practical advice by providing clear management directives regarding difficult and controversial problems in environmental planning and management...”²⁰²

Various reasons have been given as to why academic ethics has failed to address or grasp the problems of environmental crisis or to suggest workable solutions to them. For Light and Katz, instead of attending to critical meliorism in reference to specific practical situations, academic environmental ethicists too often “remain mired in long-running theoretic debates in an attempt to achieve philosophical certainty.”²⁰³ Similarly, argues Norton, genuine practical consideration of the various aspects of complicated environmental policy arguments is foregone by typical academic environmental ethicists, who instead favor proliferating descriptions of the right ordering of a narrowly abstract dogmatic decision, for one side or the other of arbitrary binary divisions, as if the right set of such choices was to constitute fully environmental ethics itself—a choice typically consisting of: “non-anthropocentrism, holism, moral monism, and, perhaps, a commitment to some form of intrinsic value.”²⁰⁴

Light suggests that such dogmatism may be the reason the voice of academic environmental ethics is so little heard by academic philosophers considered more generally.²⁰⁵ Genuine practical problems in environmental ethics are complicated matters involving numerous interest groups, and competing interpretations of data (and competing arguments for what constitutes legitimate data)—for instance the question, as Edward Schiappa shows, of “what constitutes ‘wetlands?’” is easy to say, but difficult to

²⁰² Ep 106.

²⁰³ Ep 2.

²⁰⁴ Ep2.

²⁰⁵ Ep 327.

answer, because different groups have very different notions of what constitutes a wetlands.²⁰⁶

In short, the problem, these accounts agree, is that academic environmental ethics has barely even tried to have genuine influence in addressing and solving problems in environmental policy, and so these ethics ignore cooperating in practical work between academic disciplines and between academia and the larger corporate world in order to mitigate an environmental crisis at the actual points where it might be able to make a practical difference. And probably non-pragmatists and non-philosophers alike can agree with this central conclusion of pragmatic environmental ethicists: that academic environmental ethics is not much heard as a voice within public policy discussions, and that the situation of environmental ethics is here closer to business ethics, where philosophy is hardly heard on the public stage, than to medical ethics, where philosophy has taken a far more prominent public role.

Here Royce's environmental ethics and, more broadly, his ecological thinking, can be of important use in addressing these various problems with recent environmental philosophy that the pragmatists have outlined. But while Royce's writings in this area have recently been, after a long period during which they were almost entirely ignored, increasingly noted in recent scholarly inquiry (as with discussions by Kegley, Auxier, Oppenheim, Clendenning, Price, and myself), still they have not yet been described by a synoptical treatment of the idea as it is developed throughout Royce's philosophy. By such a reading, I hope to show that ecological influences probably hold an even more important place in Royce's philosophy than has been previously noted, but additionally I

²⁰⁶ Schiappa, Edward. "Towards a Pragmatic Approach to Definition: Wetlands and the Politics of Meaning. In *Environmental Pragmatism*, pp. 209-230.

am interested in showing how “mainstream” environmental ethics makes a serious error of neglect by almost entirely ignoring Royce’s prescient contributions to this field.

Perhaps the greater slight is committed by the recent book on pragmatic environmental ethics, *Environmental Pragmatism*, which, despite Royce’s status as an originator of the pragmatic movement that was centered around Peirce, and while often discussing numerous of Royce’s students, has no references to Royce’s environmental ethics. These sixteen writers instead look to other pragmatic-era philosophers, some of whom scarcely, if at all, considered ethics in regard to the natural environment; or to accounts which do not merely refuse to speak about nature, but which describe the *ding-an-sich* of the non-human natural world as devoid of values and judgments besides the human-produced versions; or to others who were clearly, or in some cases quite likely, influenced by Royce’s account: Santayana, Mead, Lewis, Whitehead, Leopold and Muir among them.²⁰⁷

But at least that book mentions, several times, Royce as an applied ethicist, even as it neglects the specifically environmental aspects of those writings. Outside of pragmatic literature in environmental ethics, the situation is typically worse, and here Royce’s environmental ethics is scarcely if ever mentioned. Kohák’s 1983 personalist “ecophenomenology,” *The Embers and the Stars*, is here of note—it treads much of the same ground that Royce walked, in some places it indeed goes further, but in other places it makes mistakes that could have been avoided if Kohák had attended to Royce.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ The Muir-Royce connection deserves more attention than I am here able to pay to it. Royce appears to have begun the process of the idealization of the California mountains, in print, and Muir appears closely to have followed. Muir paid Royce a visit during his trip to Boston; and Royce cites from the Sierra Club’s journal—indicating, perhaps, that he was a member?

²⁰⁸ Royce’s phenomenological understanding of Nature deserves its own separate treatment, but important aspects of his discussion may be found at SGE 206 & 227-228, and WIB 226, where he writes that “[both] in Nature in general, as in case of the particular portions of Nature known as our fellow-men, we are

Instead Kohák founds his approach on Royce’s fellow personalists Bowne and Brightman, even though, as he admits late in his book, these two err on precisely the central issue in question—Bowne denies personhood to nature, and Brightman remains bifurcated in his distinctions between human and non-human nature.²⁰⁹ Royce avoids this error, and speaks forcefully on behalf of a personal and organic relation between humans and the non-human natural world.

I believe we can give credit to Royce as a philosopher who met environmental crisis head-on in both his academic and in his public ethics, but further, his account can, I believe, be read as the *first* well-developed critical environmental ethics originating in the post-Kantian period, significantly predating others (like Aldo Leopold and John Muir) to whom the mantle of first environmental ethicist has been given, and it consists of precisely the interdisciplinary approach that has been called for in recent literature. A brief diversion, in discussion of Royce’s interdisciplinary approach to environmental inquiry, is here in order.

Interdisciplinary Foundations of Royce’s Environmental Ethics

Several recent pragmatists have claimed that a major reason for the lack of influence of academic environmental ethics has been the lack of sufficient interdisciplinarity to ground it. Emery N. Castle writes, for instance, that he is “increasingly distressed in recent years by the lack of interdisciplinary communication on problems of natural resources policy”--dialogue which is necessary to allow us to

dealing with phenomenal signs of a vast conscious process, whose relation to Time varies vastly, but whose general characters are throughout the same.”

²⁰⁹ ES 127-128.

“understand the norms and values inherent in particular scientific disciplines.”²¹⁰ Others, like Anthony Weston, further urge that interdisciplinarity should not be thought of merely in terms of communication with the “hard sciences,” a narrowing of focus that often occurs in environmental ethics scholarship, since resources for a workable environmental ethic may be found in such disciplines as literature as well—resources that, as Weston urges, may help prevent environmental ethics from relying on a too-narrow epistemic worldview.

It is not the case that philosophy has always and everywhere turned away from an interdisciplinary approach to environmental ethics. Royce avoided this error, as did many of his students who are notable for the centrality of the organic or natural world in their thinking. Royce’s philosophy indeed provides a superb counter-example of an environmental ethics that is established upon the results and methods of numerous areas of disciplinary research and one that actively references the humanities, the social sciences, and the “hard sciences.” We may recall that Royce was very well-prepared for this kind of work: he was a geology student before he began his studies in philosophy;²¹¹ his logic seminars at Harvard involved the participation of numerous of his colleagues from the sciences; he served as president of the American Psychological Association; he was a professor of English before he was a professor of philosophy; and he was as much a keen student and scholar of Romantic literature as of evolutionary theory. He cited from the results of numerous disciplines in his ecological work, like geology, biology, literature, and meteorology, as he sought to find connections of mutual influence between the particular features of the land and human psychology and sociology.

²¹⁰ See Ep 231. To this we might add, as Royce I believe lets us: “which allow us find *among* disciplines, a norm or value, or a commonly addressed problem, that would be helpful to others.”

²¹¹ HGC 128.

For Royce, indeed, only interdisciplinary methodology could begin to attempt a comprehensive description of the major processes of human and natural life, such as are described in the theory of evolution—a theory which must in turn, for Royce, be understood in a robustly interdisciplinary way, and not merely as reduced to biological formulations (as he charges is often the case in vitalistic metaphysics). And more broadly, against all attempts to reduce ethical or metaphysical speculation to what Royce terms the “book-keeping” results of a single of the sciences, life, for Royce, is discovered by freely comparing among the results of various disciplines. Likewise the processes of evolution, and of natural forms of organization, are best described when “the historians and the geologists, the botanists, the zoologists, the astronomers,—all contribute their various series of facts to be linked together in the larger generalization; and it is a mere historical accident in what order, or by what specialty, the particular series are brought to light.”²¹² Rather than seeking a final monistic reduction to a single special description—nowadays a small but devoted group of environmental ethicists pins its hopes on quantum mechanics—Royce calls attention to the more fundamental fact that the “same” facts may be observed and fit into different serial descriptive orders from the different disciplinary perspectives, and these memberships in different orders often suggest new modes of inquiry to researchers in different fields. Rather than starting, or ending, at the “right” disciplinary starting point, for Royce, one can start investigations from various equally justified points, and the investigations of various disciplines can themselves be taken up in different orders.²¹³

²¹² WIB 100

²¹³ WIB 99-100.

Royce's use of interdisciplinary resources to address problems in environmental ethics is wide, but I will attempt to present a brief survey of it in what follows. Before proceeding to the more predictable places, such as discussions from the empirical sciences, we may begin a survey at some unexpected places as with Royce's use of analogies to math and music to explain the true relation between individuals and the organic whole of Nature-- from math, as in his discussion of individuals as "partial functions" of the whole, without which the whole would be lessened; and in his analogy between Well-Ordered Series in mathematics and in organic life;²¹⁴ and in his prescient attention to the mathematical aspects of meteorological studies, with an emphasis on *climate* as a central study of the future.²¹⁵

From music, Royce very frequently uses the metaphor of the "harmonization" of the rational individual inquirer and the world, where the individual notes of inquiry are genuine and unique in themselves, and yet still part of broader movements.²¹⁶ Royce

²¹⁴ WIB 69-70.

²¹⁵ "...the vast processes which in the course of centuries appear in the changes of civilization due to climate, involve, as it were, tremendously complex mathematical functions. If it were possible for us to state these stupendous functions, we would be possessed of the secret of such changes." Rqp 200-201. One witnesses that nearly a century later, such concepts as "global warming" and "climate change," especially in possible relation to human industrial activities, are at the forefront of public attention in a way that very few other scientific concepts are. Royce's attention here is thus remarkable for its prescience.

²¹⁶ See also his use of the metaphor of harmonization to explain the analogy of the evolutionary process among humans, other organic life, and even inorganic life: "To appreciate even hypothetically the meaning of a process in time, we must in some measure transcend time...An evolution is a series of events that in itself as series is purely physical,--a set of necessary occurrences in the world of space and time. An egg develops into a chick; a poet grows up from infancy; a nation emerges from barbarism; a planet condenses from the fluid state, and develops the life that for millions of years makes it so wondrous a place... look at the whole appreciatively, historically, synthetically, as a musician listens to a symphony, as a spectator watches a drama. Now you seem to have seen, in phenomenal form, a story. Passionate interests will have been realized. The will of the growing animal, the ideals of the poet, the history of the evolving races, these will have passed before you." (SMP 425). Royce sees the principle of harmonization between opposing tendencies in "every organic life" (SGE 98). It is, too, the ground of ethical skepticism--rational criticism requires not a single monistic absolute tone, nor a relativistic cacophony--but rather a harmony, a world of individuals, which excludes certain possibilities--the ground of error. But as Royce constantly remarks, we are not merely falsified by the world's experience, since we often discover aspects of its unity. The goodness of this discovery is once again spoken of in terms of the musical metaphor: "For us the unity of the world is the unity of consciousness. The variety of the world is the internal, but none the less wealthy

consistently applies this musical metaphor to the temporal appearance of the life of finite nature—its frequently observable harmonization and stability over time, exemplifying subtle changes rather than mere unchanging mechanism, analogously indicates that non-human nature contains conscious processes, changing and struggling in time as we are, rather than merely mechanistic or dead processes. Royce’s notion of harmonized rational being suggests an organism and organization to be appreciated, rather than “merely” described in such a way that we take our rather superficial spatio-temporal description actually to be the thing itself.²¹⁷

Royce’s notion of harmonized natural relations here does not, I think, prove him to be naive. That the cat kills the mouse is indeed a real pain to the mouse. But pain itself may be conceived as a part of the harmony, so long as the cycles of natural processes can more broadly be repeated. Mice continue to eat and reproduce, indicating they are willing to take their chances against cats, rather than calling it quits.

Royce well-understood that nature can have its cruel aspects, as he repeatedly describes in his writings against optimism. It is not as if harmonization is to be found everywhere. But yet, atoning work often reduces pain, and nature seems to reward studies of it—a truth valid both for the kitten “passively” observing its prey, to see how it behaves, and in our human empirical researches. And valuable life persists into the future even as all its current mortal members perish and are replaced by others.

and genuine, variety of the purposes and embodiments of purpose present within this unity of the one divine consciousness... The Many must, despite their variety, win harmony and perfection by their cooperation... every distinguishable portion of the divine life, in addition to all the universal ties which link it to the whole, expresses its own meaning.” WIA466. This has implications for a reading of Royce as a process metaphysician, as well, since for him no merely *a priori* deduction of the categories of consciousness can work, because this expression of the One necessarily implies constant creative activity at the level of plural individuals, and the meaningful processes of evolution result in new individual meanings.

²¹⁷ See WJ 278-281 and WIA 426.

For Royce as for James, life is not merely reducible to either an optimistic or a pessimistic worldview. And yet there is reason to believe that the world in which we live allows, in many respects, for our wise efforts to dwell within it. We live in a world where, as Royce puts it, walls do not merely melt away as if they were dreams, and where we find support for our most devoted methods of respectfully cooperative inquiry. And it is a world that allows the harmony of skeptical inquiry by which individuals and communities may discover and atone for the damaging errors committed by humans to their dwelling-place, the world.

Likewise for Royce, these mathematical and musical metaphors of inclusion and harmonization suggest a contrast with traditional dualistic accounts, which urge an absolute substantial division between “mind” and “matter,” and a contrast with traditional realistic accounts, where there is a final discreteness between individuals and a failure to be included in a deeper organic whole, and a contrast with mystical accounts in which individuality is but an illusory part of a single monistic whole. Instead the individual notes of the harmony, as with discrete individual mathematical events, individual species in the natural world, and individual biological organisms, are both really themselves and really members of well-ordered series.²¹⁸

²¹⁸ In the Lifeworld, individuals literally include one another, by their mutual membership in functioning organic communities. In Royce’s organicist conception, and in contrast to Leibniz’s monads, ethical individuals need not be independent, but are instead “linked in the closest fashion with intercommunication, with the mutual interdependence of individuals, and with a genuine identity of meaning and of Being in various individuals. For us... it is perfectly possible that an ethical individual should have, in time, a natural origin, should result from processes that have previously taken place in other individuals, and should exist subject to a constant support received from other individuals....our whole theory presupposes that individuals may be included within other individuals; that one life, despite its unique ethical significance, may form part of a larger life; and that the ties which bind various finite individuals together are but hints of the unity of all individuals in the Absolute Individual.” WIB 238. The various “individual Selves may, and in an infinite number of cases *must*, as the various self-expressions of the same system, interpenetrate in the most manifold ways, sharing in countless instances the same immediate contents of experience...” (WIB 448).

Next, Royce often turns to literature in his environmental writings, as when he analyzes the literature produced by California writers to search for especially sensitive formulations of geographical influences on the psychology and sociology of people who inhabit the land.²¹⁹ And in the *Religious Aspect of Philosophy*, Royce champions a Socratic/Platonic conception of valuable forms of natural life, even to the level of mud, against a Romantic approach, as exemplified in Goethe's *Faust*, wherein passive nature is merely to be controlled by active human consciousness, and indeed that we are to keep the mud out by spending our energies creating dams to keep the water back. More broadly, for Royce, Romanticism's anthropocentric and hierarchical tendencies (which define Nature as a passive witnessing of divine activity, while humanity alone possesses an active understanding of nature) suggest that nature is merely its use-value, and that we have only just begun to live when we have learned to use our conscious powers to subjugate it. But, for Royce, "...Is the great problem after all really solved? For what is the ultimate good of the eternal warfare with nature in which mankind are thus left? Faust leaves behind him a nation of toilers, whose business it will be to build dikes to keep the sea out."²²⁰

Royce's psychology and sociology, as I have suggested in the various chapters of this work, form a crucially important part of his applied ethics, and so too here with his environmental ethics; and Royce again gives a prescient answer to a call that has echoed widely among recent environmental ethicists, as with Norton's call for a "focus on those

²¹⁹ "...the influence of nature upon custom which every civilization depicts, is precisely the kind of influence that from moment to moment expresses itself psychologically in the more typical emotions of sensitive souls. Thus, one may observe that if we are considering the relation between civilization and climate, and are endeavoring to speculate in however vague a manner upon the future of a society in a given environment, we may well turn to the poets, not for a solution of our problem, but for getting significant hints." RQP 200. Also see RQP 191.

²²⁰ RAP 125.

natural dynamics that are causally related to important social values...”²²¹ Indeed, for Royce, the task of relating the land to psychology and sociology is a difficult one, owing to the great variety of personality type, and individual character.²²² But still, there does seem “evidence of certain ways in which the conditions of ... a region must influence the life and, I suppose in the end, the character of the whole community.”²²³

We may describe Royce’s interest in the meeting point of literature, psychology and sociology as more generally phenomenological. He is aiming to learn “how it feels to grow up in such a climate...” and he uses literary analysis, phenomenological reports of his own experience, and others’ published autobiographical accounts to this end.²²⁴ The main case study, for Royce, is California, but his methodology seems well suited to address this subject in other regions as well.²²⁵ These accounts of California are broadly interdisciplinary, but especially interesting in this regard is his notion that agriculture must be suited to local conditions to be successful in sustaining life; he points to a miasmatic period of California history, when settlers merely tried to import the methods of their home states without modifying them to the new land, that preceded more intelligent provincial studies of that state’s agricultural conditions.²²⁶

From the results of astronomy and geometry, Royce sees analogies between the evolving well-ordered series of events occurring over immense temporal spans, and involving the relation of numerous systems and processes, and those plans of human inquirers--although in the latter case the temporal series is comparatively very brief. For

²²¹ Ep 125.

²²² RQP 190.

²²³ RQP 191.

²²⁴ Rqp 191.

²²⁵ See especially, RQP 170, 187, 211-212; and Cal 5-8.

²²⁶ RQP 211-212.

Royce, astronomy recognizes a system of systems, “with broad features repeated in every part,”²²⁷ and which employs, with other sciences, the notion of rules of regularity in the cooling of bodies under definable physical conditions.²²⁸ And Royce argues that links can be made from such empirical data to the human social sciences, as between systems of meteorology and psychology, again referencing the case of California, where Royce looks to “the steadying influence of the vast masses of water that there lie to windward, partly upon the influence of the mountain masses themselves in affecting precipitation...”²²⁹ among other factors, to explain the climatic and agricultural regularity that grounds a “Hellenic” type of thinking in that state.

Royce’s use of scientific disciplines as *parts* of his environmental ethics here must be sharply distinguished from recent accounts, like that described, by Katz and J. Baird Callicott, where environmental ethics is reduced to the “univocality” of a single disciplinary field, like that of quantum mechanics, because: “...owing to the vast extent and to the complexity of these our relatively opaque relations to Nature, no one formula for the fortunes of life can possibly prove adequate to explain to ourselves...the wealth of our experiences of evil and of good, and the detail of these experiences...”²³⁰ The absolute of “loyalty to loyalty,” as we may recall, is a single formula that dictates an attitude of respect, but it is respect for others who are loyally minding their own business while we conduct our own, and it is not one single type of descriptive business that will prove to be superior to all other forms. The latter approach, for Royce, confuses mere

²²⁷ SMP 314.

²²⁸ WIB 73-75.

²²⁹ RQP 175.

²³⁰ WIB 385.

“bookkeeping” with the essence of science.²³¹ And even a better, more inclusively interdisciplinary approach is still, for Royce, but a dim hint of the personal value of the unity of life.²³²

Thus, while applied ethics of various scientific disciplines are possible, Royce argues that it is impossible to adequately base an ethics simply on the results of science, since such results, describing what already must be “dead facts,” do not yet give us the life of obligation to *living* things. Of course there is more to science than mere data, and pragmatism often idealizes the scientific communities that idealize certain methods of inquiry in order to produce such data. But in turn, for Royce, these scientific communities are not mere givens, such that we might distill the ethical life of obligation to life merely from the world of its processes, since it in turn rests on the more fundamental hypothesis that “human experience exists,” the basis for assigning some values-for-ourselves to the phenomenally perceived signs of others’ bodies, as of their experiential reports.

We assign value, that is, by imitating others’ actions—and such imitation, as Royce argues in *The World and the Individual*, is readily observable in signs of education throughout the animal world. Of course, too, we humans imitate more than just humans--for instances, surely our ancestors learned what to eat in part by observing what other animals eat, and various martial arts imitate the fighting techniques of animals. But before we can admit others’ data in our own conceptions, we must first feel ourselves obliged to believe in one another’s embodied experiences or scientific results—we must, that is, already have taken an appreciative stance towards the embodied others whose experiences we believe “count” in defining the world of truth that validates or invalidates

²³¹ WIB 215.

²³² RAP 214.

our claims about the nature of the world's experience. The validity of others' descriptions is not, then, self-evident, or a mere given, or otherwise, absent an act of our co-sponsoring will. Scientific observation, as an interpretive possibility *between* inquirers, is a hint, then, of the organization possible in the world life; science does not give us the only method of describing the world life, or even necessarily the best one, but rather it gives an excellent method that describes parts of the world's order and that hints of even more order. It lives however among other human methods that describe the world, and the "self-representation" of natural systems themselves.

The interdisciplinary nature of Royce's environmental ethics might perhaps be most clearly evidenced in his suggestion of the "future reconciliation of religion and science" at the point of what I am calling environmental ethics—here, religion and science, accompanied by an "office of philosophy," will cultivate a "deeper sense of companionship with the world," and a "deeper comradeship with nature,"²³³ by showing how, in both moral and empirical senses, there are better grounds to assert our organic unity with nature than to assert that our human "consciousness" irrevocably separates us from the rest of the world of nature.

Royce in many senses predicts the discipline of environmental ethics, as by here showing that our human consciousness, and our devoted interdisciplinary inquiry, is indeed a mode of free rational appreciation, but it is a mistake further to assume, as many philosophies do, that therefore humans are the *only* ethically valuable selves in an otherwise valueless world. Instead, for Royce, the world may be valued in a far more central way, one that links the insights of sciences and of religions:

²³³ WIA 418.

... There is a sense... in which all the world may be viewed as centred about the fully expressed inner meaning of any finite rational idea. But then human ideas, as in fact is implied in their very conscious sense of their own meaning, are not the only ideas of which this can be asserted. It is not until man views himself as a member of an universal society, whose temporal estrangements are merely incidental to their final unity of meaning, that man rationally appreciates the actual sense of the conscious ideas that express his longing for oneness with an absolute life. We are related to God through our consciousness of our fellows. And our fellows, in the end, prove to be far more various than ...mere men.²³⁴

Royce's call for an "office of philosophy" of what I am terming an environmental ethics, that will promote interdisciplinary inquiry so as to cultivate a "deeper sense of companionship with the world," is remarkably prescient, especially in this call for a reconciliation at the point of environmental ethics between the disciplines of religious and scientific studies. This has become over the last several years a major area of interdisciplinary dialogue, but Royce's insights are still very useful for their example of how these disciplines may, in turn, be supported by many others. And by this account philosophy is not condemned to public irrelevance, as it can indeed have a crucial and necessary role to play in helping to adjudicate between disciplines at the meeting point of environmental ethics. Royce's example will prove, I believe, a superbly useful practical and historical example for how such work of translation may take pace.

A Challenge to Royce's Environmentalism

I have thus far suggested several senses in which Royce's philosophy constitutes an environmental ethics, and I will consider more senses in what follows. The major objection to this type of reading has been given by Thomas Price, who argues that Royce is not an environmental ethicist.²³⁵ Price's account has contained probably the lengthiest

²³⁴ WIA 417-418.

²³⁵ PF 153-166.

reckoning of environmental aspects of Royce's thinking, and it is worth here considering, even though I believe that it contains several important errors.

For Price, "...Royce offers us a vision of living conscious meaningful nature, whose remove from us, such as it is, is really only an illusion we need not suffer."²³⁶ But, for Price, Royce does not yet give an environmental ethics, since he did not go very far in his idealization of natural meaning and indeed he missed the crisis that constitutes the reason for the existence of environmental ethics: "The obvious and irrevocable destruction of the natural world was just beginning to register in Royce's day, and it is by no means obvious that it was registering with Royce." And thus, Price contends, Royce was not on guard against the detrimental effects of humanity's dangerous powers, and as such he "[promotes] the pragmatic manipulation of nature as a resource for human ends..."²³⁷ Further, for Price, Royce misapplies his own categories, the World of Appreciation and the World of Description, in his study of nature--while Royce ought to have recognized that nature was to be understood according to the category of Appreciation, instead, "When Royce looks to encounter natural beings socially, he invokes not the world of appreciation, which is the world of qualities, values, emotions, and subjectivity, but the world of description, which projects on nature a mere quantum but fails to open to any deeper consideration."²³⁸

Hence, Price argues, the idea that we are "morally accountable to nature" is not well-articulated in *The World and the Individual*,²³⁹ and instead, the possibility of treating natural beings as ends is merely suggested. Price then looks to articulate it better, writing:

²³⁶ PF154.

²³⁷ PF 154.

²³⁸ PF 163-164.

²³⁹ PF 154.

“An open heart to nature will stretch us further than mensural attention to details,” and
“The type of transcendence needed is not that of measure but of affection,”²⁴⁰ and that:

It is sheer presumption to think that our exploration of nature-life has yet shown us limit...No quantitative limit veils our appreciation of nature, for nature is always there, waiting for the one who will question it and open the lines of communication. It is we who fail to extend our emotional, appreciative life to nature. We do not open ourselves to the possibility of sympathy with intelligence.²⁴¹

My primary purpose in the present discussion is to show that Royce is, contrary to Price's argument, an environmental ethicist; but some important aspects of Royce's account may be brought out by way of discussing some of the specifics of Price's claims. First, as to Price's suggestion that Royce, and Royce's day, lacked awareness of environmental crisis, we may do well to credit Royce's era for the modern discovery of the value of conservationist ethics, in terms of the first creation of organizations, like the Sierra Club, in 1892, that have idealized and practically served environmental loyalties. And Royce too was well-aware of the crisis that environmental ethics has been designed to meet, evidenced when he writes in condemnation of the ideals that practically result in the destruction of nature, as with "...the overhasty construction of great railways, that pierce the mountains or invade the deserts..."²⁴² And he warns of the "grosser period," of "mere materialism [and] merciless money-getters..." that brings about the conditions for environmental destruction and the concordant injury or destruction of the human social order. But Royce further suggests a moral/aesthetic aspect of this crisis, in the critical ethical response to it--namely, a noting of the ugly evidence of injury to nature provides the loyally devoted servants of the community an opportunity to combat the ills

²⁴⁰ PF 163.

²⁴¹ PF 166.

²⁴² Rqp 132.

that cause the destruction. Here, even in the midst of ruin: "...the better men learn more thoughtfully to look about them, only to observe, at this stage, what vast opportunities have been lost, what noble natural beauties have been hopelessly defaced...The real struggle with evil herewith begins."²⁴³

Far from advancing a shallow "pragmatic" insistence that humankind ought manipulate nature—as Price believes is the case--Royce instead looks to how we may seek harmonious agreement between our urban planning and the lay of the land, rather than pursuing the injurious path, an imprudent one that blunders because it pays attention only to immediate gratification. For instance, Royce complains that, "We Americans spend far too much of our early strength and time in our newer communities upon injuring our landscapes, and far too little upon endeavoring to beautify our towns and cities."²⁴⁴

Next, we may turn to Price's argument that Royce conflates his categories of the World of Appreciation and the World of Description, since, for Price, Royce maintains that nature is only known as mere quantum that reveals nothing deeper. Actually, as Price argues is the case, such quantum is merely overlaid by our mode of description. But Royce is quite explicit, from early in his career, years before *The World and the Individual*, that while the world is describable by us in certain aspects, still this description is far from the whole of the world, and that appreciation of the world is first in importance—description is, in fact, a mode of appreciation.²⁴⁵ For Royce, mere quantum, devoid of inner appreciation, is clearly not the inner essence of things, as from his argument, in the *Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, that "there is no real process of nature

²⁴³ Rqp 133-134.

²⁴⁴ RQP 107.

²⁴⁵ SMP 405, see also SMP 419.

that must not have, known or unknown to us, its inner, its appreciable aspect. Otherwise it could not be real; since in so far as it is merely describable, it is also merely show, is merely abstract, like the numbers and the geometrical figures, and has no true fullness of being.”²⁴⁶ Far from the inner nature of things being a mirror of our unchanging descriptions of its data, Royce argues, we joyously witness the world’s actual creativity even before we get around to describing it, and: “...we have ... a perfect right ... to say that the world of the stars is, like the brains of our friends, the well-founded show in space and time of an appreciative consciousness, and that the unity of the laws of physical nature is the outer aspect of some deep spiritual unity of will and plan in the world.”²⁴⁷

Appreciation here means, in large part, that we do not merely describe others, but that we *need* others to make up for our limitations, and we need to recognize others to understand our legitimate borders. The other of the world is never mere other, at least for those of us who have consciously sought to imitate its parts so that we could obtain its powers for our own. The fulfillment of this need is felt as a joy—and one that may be reproduced freely whenever its power is needed, and not as a mere momentary pleasure that requires first destroying something or stealing someone else’s right to loyalty. We need to learn, that is to say, but moreover, we *do* learn--by devoted inquiry, often enough (but certainly not always) we do arrive at the goal of inquiry: successful description of the world of experience. We live in a world, then, that supports our ability to inquire collectively, and to overcome our limitations with the joy of success. And even our most humble quantitative descriptions, in this light, are not “mere” descriptions, but they can

²⁴⁶ smp 426-427.

²⁴⁷ smp 421.

be modes of appreciation as well, as when they represent the ideals of an inquiring, and frequently self-sacrificing, community of investigators. But nature, too, is such that these communities are possible, and it too is something to be appreciated, even as our primary mode of appreciation may well be its ongoing description:

There is a sense in which, despite my limitations, I know myself as in a world of appreciation, a world whose facts are hard and fast, are beyond my private life, cannot be expressed in terms of my space and time, and yet must be present and united in the organic universality of the one Self... Our relations with the universe are essentially social... Because we can communicate with each other, therefore we can so far identify our descriptive accounts of our various inner experiences as to know that we have truth in common. But we could not even mean to communicate with each other, did we not presuppose, as an objective fact, such organic spiritual relations as cannot possibly be expressed in any physical terms, but only in terms of the assertion that all the spirits are truly together in one Spirit.

We live in a world such that “possible validity” is actual in it, as the individuals of the natural world often enough meet our queries of it, sometimes with the joy of success, and sometimes with the pain of failure. But inquiring into the world rewards us far oftener than when we fail to inquire into it, as when we rest instead in the passivity of our general, abstract categories, or when we refuse the mental pain of contradiction because it would interfere with our hedonistic enjoyment of always feeling right.

Indeed while much of the above explication is from Royce’s early-career work (1892), it is clear that he did not abandon this stance valorizing the Appreciation of Nature, above its mode of the Description of Nature, during the time of *The World and the Individual*, writing therein: “The world is indeed there in the background. But it is there as embodiment of Life, and not merely as the object of discrimination. It is a world with which we stand in Social Relations. Its life cooperates with ours.”²⁴⁸

²⁴⁸ BW 608-609.

Next we may turn to Price's charge that Royce denies that communication can and does occur with nature. I believe this is a misreading of the word "uncommunicative" in the following passage from *Studies of Good and Evil*—where Royce is indeed denying that our communicative knowledge with nature is perfect or satisfactory in the optimistic sense that Price suggests is possible, but he nevertheless affirms that communication is still actual. The passage reads:

No evidence...can indicate nature's inner reality without also indicating that this reality is, like that of our own experience, conscious, organic, full of clear contrasts, rational, definite. We ought not to speak of dead nature. We have only a right to speak of uncommunicative nature. Natural objects, if they are real at all, are *prima facie* simply other finite beings, who are, so to speak, not in our own social set, and who communicate to us, not their minds, but their presence. For...real being can only mean to me other experience than mine; and other experience does not mean deadness, unconsciousness, disorganization, but presence, life, inner light.²⁴⁹

This passage is clarified by reading it in connection with Royce's frequent turn, in explaining the analogy between human communication and communication in the non-human natural world, to the analogy of the communication difficulties between languages of differentiated human groups.²⁵⁰ Prior to the ability to translate between our language and another, a foreign (human) language appears simply meaningless to us, as will ours to the foreigner. But there is, of course, the discovery of deeper resemblances that typically attend the effort to translate between them--as evidenced, in our relations to the natural world, by ongoing scientific discovery of the more intimate organic connections among various parts of nature that were once thought to be entirely discrete and in no real relation to each other. And that too is like the sense in which our human languages are, as

²⁴⁹ SGE 230.

²⁵⁰ For Royce, "Nature for us is real in precisely the sense in which our fellow-men are real. Only we, of course, maintain that our present experience gives us very imperfect hints as to what the inner life of Nature contains; just as, even in case of men, our social experience of the doings of people whose language is not ours, and whose customs are very remote, leaves us long in ignorance of what they mean." WIB 236-237.

Royce puts it, foreign but not entirely foreign from other of nature's linguistic processes.

Writes Royce:

*...Our human Internal Meanings do indeed possess some reference to a vast finite realm beyond ourselves, within which we men find our place. Out of this realm we ourselves have proceeded through the processes of evolution. Into this realm, at death, we seem to return. This realm is called Nature. It doubtless has its own meaning. This meaning is doubtless in itself deeply linked to ours. And this meaning is such as to permit us with varying, but on the whole, with vastly increasing success, both to develop our human arts, and to work out the relatively successful, but also distinctly human and social, descriptions and predictions of our science.*²⁵¹

And as we have already suggested, for Royce, our consciousness is not a freak product of nature, alone in a meaningless universe, because the life-world is "fluent, full of significant change; governed by goals;... determined by constant communication with processes ...in other regions...[and] tending to the acquisition of definite habits." The vibrations of hydrogen and the wave functions of nature are analogical, for Royce, to human intercommunication, even as the temporal processes in nature are often so brief or so long-lasting that we humans cannot at first (or perhaps ever) understand them. In sum, the notion of Nature as mere monotony is illusory, like that old-fashioned charge against the "barbarians" who speak only gibberish, when of course the language only sounds like guttural monotony to the ear that cannot hear the language's fine distinctions. "Just so," Royce writes, "...our spectroscopes find the hydrogen vibrations monotonous. But our time-span is very short, and our spectroscopes do not interpret to us the foreign tongues of Nature."²⁵² But our lack of understanding of the languages of nature does not mean that they are not there, nor that they can be there only by our later coming to understand them. Thus, by Royce's conception: "There would be no dead Nature at all,--nothing

²⁵¹ WIB 202.

²⁵² WIB 231.

really inorganic or unconscious,—only life, striving, onflow, ideality, significance, rationality. Only for [humans] Nature appears to be growing from death to life [a perspective effect], and so more intelligible.” We may do well to compare the linguistic analogy, the interdisciplinary methodology, and the idealist conclusion with Leopold’s later (1923) analysis: “There is not much discrepancy, except in language, between this conception of a living earth, and the conception of a dead earth, with enormously slow, intricate, and interrelated functions among its parts, as given by physics, chemistry, and geology.”²⁵³

Finally, Price’s own proposed theory of environmental ethics and epistemology paints a picture that is far too optimistic from the Roycean perspective. For Price, as we saw earlier, we simply need to inquire, as individuals, and nature readily answers. Royce’s guarantee is more humble—we question, both individually and collectively, and, with great difficulty, nature *sometimes* warrants the quest. Indeed success comes often enough to warrant the bravery in undertaking the quest, but still there are no guarantees that any secrets will be revealed.²⁵⁴ While our inquiry into nature indicates that we dwell in a world where success often attends devoted inquiry, and which often painfully reveals our errors, this is far from the guarantee that Price hopes for, and far from the one-to-one identity between human and natural emotions that Price implies is possible for the one who appreciates nature. Royce’s attempt, on the contrary, does not announce at the outset

²⁵³ Aldo Leopold, “Some Fundamentals of Conservation in the Southwest,” *Environmental Ethics* 8 (1979) pp 139-140.

²⁵⁴ See WIB 202-203. The issue is not of knowing all of nature at once, as Price suggests is possible, nor of having no communication with it—instead, “Nature, as we empirically know it, just as truly seems to resist our efforts to explain the phenomena, as in certain regions it permits us to win.”

that an individual's inquiry is destined to succeed, or to fail, in describing natural experience, rather:

[My theory] tries to avoid all premature dogmatism as to the inner aspect of the life of nature. But it conceives the possibility of a gradual and, as one may hope, a very significant enlargement, through the slow growth of human experience, of our insight into the inner meaning of nature's life, and into the essentially social constitution of the finite world.²⁵⁵

According to Royce's conception, our relation to nature is not one of full identity, but one of organic membership, as fragmentary or partial individuals within greater wholes—memberships from which derives certain duties of respect for the existence and proliferation of our fellow finite, non-human, natural beings. As fragments within the whole, we undertake long searches in order to attain successful unity of idea and world, but only sometimes do long searches reward us with anything. We may be easily enough delighted to think about the world that has answered various aspects of our inquiry as a collection of our "Eureka!" moments—but when we focus merely on these we are often deceived into thinking that the process of success is so unidirectional that surely we must be superior in intelligence to all our predecessors. In fact, sometimes our human errors are such as to make environmental conditions actually worse than they were before. Royce calls us to remember that nature often "answers" us simply by providing the painful consequences that attend hypothesizing and testing a plan of action that turns out to be badly in error—like the permanent disappearance, due to human interference, of what Royce terms "noble natural beauties."

²⁵⁵ SGE 207.

Royce's Early Conception of the Organic/Ecological Model

The notion of the organic unity of human life and nature's life has made frequent appearances in the foregoing. It is such a notion of the organic, which includes but transcends the biological, and which most essentially is individual, that serves especially to distinguish Royce's account of the human in relation to the non-human world from less embodied versions of idealism, from dualism, from discrete realism, and from monism and mysticism. Indeed this idea of Being as organically embodied experience and consciousness is central, I believe, to understanding Royce's overall philosophy.

While Oppenheim intimated the importance of the organic in his article, "The Middle Royce's Naturalistic Spirituality," he discusses it as a relatively late improvisation in Royce's thought, from 1896 onwards. But this conception is a dominant one in Royce's thinking, and it is present from the beginning of his career, in works like *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy* (1885), in his ecological studies of California, and to the culmination of his career as in such works as *The World and the Individual*.

In *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy*, Royce's first book, his interest is in the organic judge, the Absolute of Nature, that makes errors errors, against the notion of a Thrasymachus that error is reducible to human agreements about what constitutes errors, such that one could only err in reference "to a *possible* critical thought that should undertake afterwards to compare it with its object."²⁵⁶ Such notions are likewise found in common sense definitions, that likewise "dimly [feel] that to some possible (not actual) judge of truth, appeal is made when we say that a thing is false not merely for us, but in very truth."²⁵⁷ But this "merely ideal" definition, which references only human ideals,

²⁵⁶ RAP 426.

²⁵⁷ RAP 427.

makes error impossible to commit or to discover, for reasons that Royce expounds upon at great length both in this book and throughout his career.²⁵⁸ Similarly, such a definition would seemingly make an environmental ethics impossible, reducing the possibility of error to the possibility of our human, conscious discovery of error—so that if we humans willfully remained in ignorance of our errors of environmental destruction, then it would be as if they did not occur; whereas in Royce’s account the world, which includes human inquirers but which also includes more than just these, is the ground of falsification. By describing the world’s experience incorrectly, Royce shows, we can and often do get things very wrong, thereby injuring our organic dwelling-place and ourselves—even though we may remain accidentally or willfully ignorant of our error.

Royce’s position here provides an early exemplar of the modern ecological understanding that human errors, committed by individuals and groups, are experienced in terms of the degradation of broader ecological health. An error, that is, may prove a threat even to those who live in different places than those who committed the fault, or who live long afterwards, and thus, for Royce, against hedonism and imperialistic overconsumption, there must stand the ethical pang or sorrow of skepticism that humiliates the separatist fallacies of mere pleasure-seeking—the mission of philosophy enables me to “[find] out to my sorrow what I am”²⁵⁹—an embodied, limited, and contingent being, in need of devoted cooperation with others even to harmonize my individual desires. Far from the hedonistic position that seeks to avoid pain as its nemesis, critical philosophy actively seeks to cause the mental pains that reveal and prevent our real, material errors that would otherwise, if left critically untutored, injure

²⁵⁸ See for instance RAP 392.

²⁵⁹ SMP 18.

our dwelling place in the world in pursuit of schismatic states of individual satisfaction.²⁶⁰

We may read Royce's lengthy meditations on skepticism as forging an alliance with environmental thinking—what we are seeking, in skepticism, by looking for the falsification of our erroneous human beliefs, is the consciousness of the world that makes our errors errors; and we seek to discover such error because discovering it makes us less likely to commit it and thereby to harm our dwelling place and ourselves. This possibility is evidenced by our past successes, and moreover our past cooperative or socially learned experiences, in the discovery of error. But the continuing fruitfulness of skepticism depends upon our willing the conceived existence of a set of competing intended ends, held before the consciousness as a group all at once. To preserve these plural ends skepticism must resist the conscious life that would consist merely of reducing the richness of the life world to abstract and general conceptions, admitting of few individual distinctions. Skeptical inquiry seeks, that is, to preserve multiple ends, and it shuns idealizations that would reduce out individuals in favor of ill-wrought abstract generalizations.

The possibility of error indeed gives, Royce argues, the first suggestions of an organic thought that is more august and complete than our own human thought and embodied being, but inclusive of it, since as merely finite beings, or merely as finite

²⁶⁰ Royce's conception here to seems to support an environmental ethics by encouraging the self-limitation of the human self, and of the cessation of a destructive hedonism. The worthy "mental pains," are what Royce terms "necessary evils," and include "All those that tend to make the individual feel his own necessary imitations, and thereby to approach the realization of the great world of life about him..." RAP 181. This includes a critically provocative role in the search for error, since "mental pains" can prevent real material pains, and prevent the selfishness that would destroy the organic conditions of individual flourishing. Such criticism is thus a good, writes Royce, "If by showing [a selfish person] his insignificance you can open his eyes...[and] writhe to see his worthlessness. For what we here defend is not that ill-natured criticism whose only aim is to gratify the miserable self of the critic, but the criticism whose edge is turned in earnest against every form of self-satisfaction that hinders insight." RAP 182.

beings collected, we cannot by our thinking, with no adequate counterpart in the world of things, make a truth or falsehood--rather, we can “only find” these errors.²⁶¹ For error actually to exist, rather than as mere possibility, we must postulate the unity²⁶² of a world that contains experiences other than our own human type, but which we are in relation to, and which is related both to my thought and its objects such that it is true that I am sometimes in error.²⁶³

We never directly “prove” organic unity by our merely individual experience. But we assume it when we believe that it is possible to err; and we have good reasons—like the experience of pain—to believe that we err. Likewise we believe in such an organically unified world when we believe that such a thing as “human consciousness” in general is possible in it, and when we take other’s reports of their experiences seriously. And again we have good reasons, the proofs of cooperative success, to hypothesize in such a fashion. But by first admitting such an organic unity that may make both error and cooperation possible, we cannot later genuinely bifurcate the world into free consciousness and determined nature in anything but a merely abstract way.

Nor, for Royce, is consciousness free of embodiment, but it is the world of life,²⁶⁴ and likewise there is no natural embodiment that is so unconscious as to resist time wholly, and that never changes. Royce’s notion of organic unity, with its evolving relations of individuals, is, for him, far from an admission of an unmoving “block

²⁶¹ RAP 431.

²⁶² RAP 379.

²⁶³ RAP 378.

²⁶⁴ Royce writes of the world of life in this specifically organicist sense in his first book, *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy*. But this organism is carefully distinguished from mystical conceptions of it, in which everything is reduced to the one. A genuine environmental ethics must, I believe, consider empirical data and differences between places; Schopenhauer, while significantly preceding Royce in terms of asking us to cease from causing suffering in the non-human natural world, then more or less turns away from rules of respect for the natural environment, and hardly endeavors to show how his principle would be developed as a consistent and broad “environmental ethics.”

universe.” The organic unity of experience is not an “*a priori* account of facts of experience,”—but rather, “a theory of that which makes experience, as a whole, possible.”²⁶⁵ For this experiencing organic whole is not an idea who dreams individuals, or who is a striving power, but it is the relational unity which links and which allows individuals to be linked in rational, organic wholes, and which allows mere finite individuals to communicate their experiences to one another, so that they may in part overcome their painful limits. It is a world wherein, by criticism, we may discover some of our errors—and thus a world that supports the life of truth.

In Royce’s organic conception, individuals actually form parts of one another, by membership in communities in which the various individuals fulfill partial functions, or offices; and we, as finite individuals, find our own individual flourishing assured only by participation in a world of life that contains as much individuality in it as is possible, including our own creative individuality. Thus as a first rule, Royce announces in his first book, we are not to harm a hair of “any living creature” unnecessarily,²⁶⁶ but are rather to preserve the individual sources of our possible enlightenment, the other individuals that we need in order to understand our own dwelling-place in the world. In this sense, for Royce, organic others, as finite individuals, are not mere things, but they are that which may answer our questions, and which may falsify our erroneous claims— without which our questions are not answered, and without which we will remain in error, while being absolutely unable to get out of it.

Rather than a transformative or manipulative idealism that sees in nature mere means and no inner value until it has been activated by our human consciousness,

²⁶⁵ RAP 380

²⁶⁶ RAP 217.

Royce's skepticism involves a kind of "hesitation," a pause, from immediate efforts at self-expression, in the quest to achieve "realization of several opposing ends, and from a simultaneous reproduction of the wills that aimed at them."²⁶⁷ This involves the transcendence of mere world-destroying hedonistic selfishness, since it involves an "effort to harmonize in one moment all the conflicting aims in the world of life," with an aim of reducing actual conflict, so that more of experience can come to be pursued in "absolute harmony."²⁶⁸

Skepticism, and the need to have multiple conflicting wills included in our decision making, means an effort to change the merely general or abstract qualities of consciousness that lead us to conceive that there is only one "rational" or "ethical" choice in each dilemma, discoverable by sufficient use of private reason but valid for everyone once the exercise has been accomplished. To possess a set of multiple possible choices, we must turn to exemplars in the world. To have a sufficient set, we must endeavor generally to preserve the individual members of the world, even when we do not yet otherwise understand their purpose or meaning considered in relation to our own interests. We know, at the least, that we may choose among these possible ends only if the others who would suggest them continue to exist, and if they are not so unnecessarily pained by us that they cannot do their own work.

Moral education here involves a repetition of the moral insight that we seek to teach children, to show them how they injure others, so that they might stop. The moral lesson is that to injure others is self-injury because we need the plurality of the other to overcome our limited insignificance. And this is no project of mere sympathy, but "the

²⁶⁷ RAP 138.

²⁶⁸ RAP 140.

great producer of insight”²⁶⁹ that we need others to expand our knowledge. For Royce, continuing to conceive of the other as being creatively able to inform our actions is the key to our own growing reality. Acknowledging the identity of pain in ourselves and others, and seeking to avoid it in ourselves by avoiding causing it in others, and by cooperating in the remediation of pain, are in turn key to being able consistently to conceive of the other’s instruction. Absent such a conception, and with mere hedonistic selfishness in its place, or with mere sympathy that can be granted or withheld depending on that day’s mood, Royce writes, others become ghosts to us, rather than continuing as the real embodied sources of possible and actual empowerment, at the same moment that our own future becomes a mere ghost to us. Real and lasting embodiment strictly depends on forming a well-ordered system of cooperative relations with others.²⁷⁰

The above reflection on Royce’s conception of the organic is from his career’s earliest work. But Royce continues to explore, in subsequent books like *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, the organic nature of knowledge, and its bridging function between the human and the non-human natural world that points beyond the notion of irremediable discreteness between idea and material reality.²⁷¹ And in *The World and the Individual*, Royce offers an organicist revision of the Cartesian *cogito* that points to the consciousness of the World Life, and of our human inclusion as members in this organic whole:

²⁶⁹ RAP 155.

²⁷⁰ RAP 155-159.

²⁷¹ See SMP 370. Similarly, he writes: “...Whoever believes, whether truly or falsely, about objects beyond the moment of his belief, is an organic part of a reflective and conscious larger self that has those objects immediately present to itself, and has them in organic relation with the erring or truthful momentary self that believes...To doubt about objects beyond my momentary self is to admit the ‘possibility of error’ as to such objects. Error would involve my inclusion in a larger self that has directly present to it the object meant by me as I doubt. Truth would involve the same inclusion.” SMP 378.

Destroy the organic and appreciable unity of the world of appreciative beings, and the describable objects all vanish; atoms, brains, ‘suns and milky ways’ are naught. On the other hand, if you destroy our describing kind of intercommunication, you can at least conceive of beings, as we did before, whose communications were of a direct and appreciative sort, as those of mother bird and nestlings now often seem to be as we look at them.

Far from being able to conceive of consciousness apart from embodiment in a metaphysical sense (or in anything other than a merely abstract sense) as some argue that the *cogito* allows us to do, Royce argues, “...remove [the Self] from the support of the world, and it instantly becomes nothing.”²⁷² And on the other side of the supposed dualistic divide, Royce devotedly criticizes the realistic notion that our consciousness makes “no difference” to the supposed lifeless and utterly regular mechanism of nature. Far from it, Royce urges, “the Self is in the most intimate relation of dependence upon both natural and social conditions...”²⁷³

Loyalty as Critical Environmental Ethics

In the previous two sections I first suggested the legitimacy of considering Royce as an environmental ethicist, and then that Royce has an organicist systematic philosophy to ground these ethics. I wish now to develop the connection between these two areas of his thought, by showing how Royce’s demand for an adequate counterpart to our thinking demands respectful appreciation of the organic world in which we live as members, as it calls for the cessation of human activities that unnecessarily destroy a valuable and valuing world.

We may infer the general value of Nature when Royce addresses the total environmental world life that includes but transcends our own individual selves, that

²⁷² WIB 291.

²⁷³ WIB 290

allows our truths and makes our errors errors--as if it were a living organism, a conscious person, a valuer and a measure of value, and as worthy of ethical respect:

... We perish, but thou endurest... But in thy eternity we would be remembered, not as rebels against the good, but as doers of the good; not as blots on the face of this part of thy infinite reality, but as healthy leaves that flourished for a time on the branches of the eternal tree of life, and that have fallen, though not into forgetfulness. For to thee nothing is forgotten.²⁷⁴

Here we may see evidence of a critical perspective as well. A main advantage of Royce's environmental ethics based on harmonization, or of "loyalty to loyalty," or of a healthy skepticism, is that it is *critical*—able to adjudicate at the point of the evolving cooperation and conflict between environmental loyalties and other types of loyalty, without simply implementing a hierarchy between the types, as if, (as was discussed at more length in the previous chapter), business loyalty could once and for all be chosen over environmental loyalties, or vice-versa.

For Royce, individual loyalties are psychologically necessary, but for a skeptical loyalty, able critically to hold multiple ends in a single view and to choose rationally among them, we must preserve choice among the various courses of action, including looking for multiple suggestions of life-plans. Here our fellow species, and even inorganic life, by their adaptation to changing conditions and by evidence of their own struggle for survival, may give us clues to our own intelligent adaptability—if they still exist, that is.

And here Royce offers important starting points for normative environmental ethics, as in his urging that we choose the "... Will to direct my acts *towards* the attainment of universal Harmony. It requires me to consider all the conflicting aims that will be affected by each one of my acts, and to dispose my act with reference to them

²⁷⁴ RAP 440.

all... its choice depends on the general realization of all the conflicting aims of the world of life.”²⁷⁵ Modern environmental ethics often has struggled to distinguish the healthful life of humanity within nature, the organism worth preserving and cherishing, from the willfully diseased life, that worth opposing and being rid of. But it has been at a loss to provide a widely agreed-upon standard for such a critical perspective. For instance, monistic environmental ethics that seems to exalt a particular cultural perspective over all other types seems, to some critics, fascistic.²⁷⁶ In contrast, to monists like Katz and Callicott the pluralism of their opponents seems willfully to turn away from *the* environmental crisis that threatens our only world--turning instead to the boundless plurality of finite human suggestions about what we ought to do, but never deciding upon anything because each competing suggestion seems as good as another, and there is no stable principle by which we may choose among them. Environmental crisis is then left untreated by the pluralists, these monists argue.

Similarly, Hickman, Buchholz and Rosenthal²⁷⁷ bring the question of the conflict of biocentric versus anthropocentric loyalties to a head, asking, against their opponents the anti-anthropocentric biocentrists: do you seriously expect us to take the “rights” of the AIDs and smallpox viruses to be equal to that of humans? But of course the biocentrists could pose the question, in an inverse but quite similar way: if on the one side are the humans and their nuclear weapons and global warming, and on the other side are all the other species, which then do we choose? For if choosing the humans means unleashing a

²⁷⁵ RAP 141.

²⁷⁶ See Norton’s article, “Integration or Reduction: Two Approaches to Environmental Values,” especially pages 112-115, in EP.

²⁷⁷ Larry A. Hickman, “Nature as Culture: John Dewey’s Pragmatic Naturalism” and Sandra B. Rosenthal and Rogene A. Buchholz, “How Pragmatism *Is* An Environmental Ethic.” Both in EP.

war of total annihilation, or environmental consequences that amount to the same, then we humans are not long possible at all.

But is there a rational principle that might allow us a critical basis for rationally choosing, in response to specific evidence, between loyalties, rather than merely and blindly pledging our loyalty simply to the “biocentric” or the “anthropocentric” and acting, without truth, as if the one can really be subsumed to the other’s center? I believe that Royce’s philosophy of loyalty to loyalty, and his various discussions of the philosophy of nature throughout his writings, provides a critical standard by which our biocentric and anthropocentric loyalties may be harmoniously united in a critically rational ethics. By his account, neither isolated biocentrism nor isolated anthropocentrism can be sufficient; arbitrary distinctions between human consciousness and “Wild” non-human nature, whether offered by anthropocentric critics or biocentric ones, are only ever just arbitrary, with no deeper basis in the organic reality of things, wherein there is mutual codependence rather than rigid hierarchy.

Royce’s loyalty to loyalty here again provides a critical solution between these extremes, with his principle of the absolute of the respect for loyalty, which involves criticism of those individualists and groups of loyalists who are parasitic upon loyalty or whose actions tend to destroy the material conditions of loyalty, and which on the positive side calls for a respect for the rest of the world of life. From this perspective we can criticize (and in practical senses, too) viruses that threaten to annihilate us; just as we can criticize human activities that would destroy viruses that posed no threat, or that warred against more visible but equally benign forms of life, like the bison, just for the

sport of it²⁷⁸--or human activities that threaten numerous other of the world's organic and inorganic processes in quest of mere hedonistic enjoyment.

Royce's absolute of respect for loyalty and its conditions here involves at minimum, first, a respect for the plurality of suggestions and activities that are loyal, in human senses; second, a respect for the plurality of suggestions of the conscious, valuable and personal non-human world that make our loyalty possible, even if they are not strictly loyal in human senses; and third, an opposition of those contrary processes that destroy the conditions of loyalty. We may make critical ethical use of such a principle in contemporary environmental ethics, between anthropocentrism and biocentrism, by urging that humans may indeed work to defeat parasitic organizations that would threaten the health or existence of humans, or of valued ecosystems, so as to protect loyalties. On the same basis we might even occasionally intervene to save a valued fellow-species from some virus or other plague. Likewise, humans may be criticized when their loyalties threaten the possibility and actuality of loyalties in the natural world.

For Royce, as we have seen, we are certainly not *above* nature, nor are we separated from it, nor are we below it (as is the case in some "biocentric" systems that pretend to be anti-anthropocentric). Rather, we are an organic part of an organic whole, a fragmentary member of a larger world of life. Truth-seeking is thus not best described, as it is in Romanticism, as consisting essentially of the active human genius contrasted with the passive witness of nature; nor is it the "mere materialism" that seeks endlessly to manipulate nature for its own comfort, nor is it the "mere idealism" that destroys natural

²⁷⁸ Or for the sake of some other disloyal end, like nineteenth century attempts to destroy the bison to eliminate Native American communities.

beings just to see what happens, as if the “mere material” had no value. Rather, for Royce, truth-seeking is an active acknowledgment of a relationship and a quest to discover our dwelling-place²⁷⁹ within a larger organic whole, where, when we assert a truth, “[we seek to know] what the whole individual Being called the World is.” And there we seek to know our place in it by discovering its individual members, so as to replace, by particular understanding, our merely abstract or general (and frequently self-injurious) conceptions about nature. Such an education is a movement away from vague general ideas about nature,²⁸⁰ and toward specific relations with the various other beings and systems of the world²⁸¹--a repetition, in epistemology and metaphysics, of Royce’s ethical ideal of loyalty to loyalty and its concordant respect for the individual terms of relationships.

A minimal ontological, epistemological, or ethical formula includes for Royce what we may term in a modern sense a critical “environmental ethics.” For rational criticism contains neither just the monistic and unchanging “World,” nor merely the plural individuals who cannot get into any real relations, but a fertile world that is unified as an organic ground and its individual lives. Such a world is better and more harmoniously unified with a greater plurality of individual suggestions and more poorly organized when it is so bereft of individuals that only the merely general and abstract concept is possible within it, i.e., when there is an ignorance of specific individual entities and of processes of the natural world that would lead us carelessly to destroy them. A wealthy ontology funds a healthy skepticism, and here the ethical respect for the reports

²⁷⁹ As Kohák likewise observes, the idea of dwelling or home may be seen both in human sociology and in the organic world.

²⁸⁰ WIA 39.

²⁸¹ Wia337: “Mere generality always means practical defect.”

of others' experience seems to well-exemplify the fertility of the World Life itself, which, for Royce:

...is content to be no one of us, but shows in our social life the community of our endlessly various aims...it is one will in us all; yet ...this does not deprive us of individuality. It needs our variety and our freedom. And we need its unity and its inexhaustible fertility of suggestion. We read the symbols of this inexhaustible fertility when we study nature and when we commune with man.²⁸²

There are indeed better and worse ways to read these symbols, but the truth of them, in the organic whole, is not merely equivalent to what we human inquirers can agree about in the terms of possible validity—as Royce charges is the case for anthropocentric Kantian formulations that hold that the final meaning of validity is reducible to strictly *human* validity, such that fixed categories of human consciousness are the only ones there are. For Royce, the lack of any conscious regard for the organization of life does not make such organization go entirely away, but such ignorance destroys *our* possibility of seeking our own instrumental harmonization with the world life, and it may indeed destroy certain varieties of organization outside of ourselves as well.

When we rebel in such a manner, when we exalt the miserable condition of our present selves as if there could be no possible error contained therein, then the possibility of harmonized natural relationships, from our own perspective, and from those who have the misfortune to be in proximity to us, departs to a certain distance away. As Royce's doctrine of error shows, it is not *nothing* that is left in the place of departed nature when we thus blunder, but our miserable suffering, as with the fate of the Californians of the first years after the Conquest (as discussed at greater length in earlier chapters), who had

²⁸² WJ 284

rejected both human alliances and natural alliances and who suffered extremely dire consequences for the oversight.

To the contrary, greater attention to the symbols of the consciousness of the organic real world reveals that our inquiry into the world's meaning is met by more of the world's individuals, and greater knowledge of what to do in relation to them. We, like the educated cats of Royce's description in *The World and the Individual*, self-submissively attend to observing the world's processes because our selective attention grows more definite as it proceeds, and it "is the law of conscious growth in ourselves, that greater determination of purpose, and greater wealth of presented contents, are the correlative aspects of any gradual fulfillment of meaning. The more we know and the more richly we find our will fulfilled, the more exclusive and determinate becomes our purpose."²⁸³

This latter statement is from Royce's "mature" period, from *The World and the Individual*. But at the outset of his career, in his *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy*, he likewise issued the call of the one demand, to "Organize all Life."²⁸⁴ This is primarily a knowing function, as opposed to a causal function—its purpose is to discover individuals, to describe them, and to seek their relations to other individuals, and it is an appreciation of this process. But it is an ethical function as well, since this approach to nature is made, above all, with an attitude of respectful appreciation, preservation and conservation, and not of imperialistic conquest, for what we ought to seek is not dead nature, nor a world "rent in twain by our arbitrary distinction of object and subject" but something meaningful, willed, lifeful, "one united world."²⁸⁵

²⁸³ Wia448

²⁸⁴ RAP 211.

²⁸⁵ See RAP 463, Wia340-341.

At this point, we may see the close unification of Royce's metaphysics and epistemology with his ethics and epistemology through his environmental phenomenology. The world is there as background, but how are we to bring its details to the foreground and leave off our sometimes false, sometimes inaccurate, and sometimes destructive generalizations about it? Mistakes and ignorance about the background often mar our ability to focus upon what we need to deal with in the foreground.²⁸⁶ It is, then, as much an ontological as an epistemological and ethical question that Royce poses when he asks the phenomenological question: what is to be our relation to the Other that forms the vague background of our consciousness, and what shall form the objects of attention?²⁸⁷

A simple solution to this problem is the dualistic and anthropocentric one that retains valuing and ultimately valuable consciousness for human inquirers and eliminates it for the rest of the world, so that humans are the only proper foci of our ethical, epistemological and metaphysical attention. But there is certainly no empirical proof, Royce urges, to support such an exclusive claim. Rather, the evidence of interdisciplinarity science, and of the well-known ability of different specialized research disciplines to use one another's methods and evidences, indicates a world that is far more than finally dualistic, and one that contains far more conscious value than anthropocentrism can account for. And in this sense, in looking for the Other that is the

²⁸⁶ The "background" of consciousness, for Royce, is far more immense than the foreground, and we are always in ignorance of far more than we know, as he writes that we lose most of the field "in a dim haze" RAP 309.

²⁸⁷ WIB 58-61.

background of our consciousness, we are looking for “Whatever life pulsates anywhere...all such lives and meanings form the object of our metaphysical inquiry.”²⁸⁸

Our sphere of inquiry is lessened when the individuals and the individual communities of the world are sacrificed to a hedonism that cannot long sustain its pleasures. For Royce, destroying the individual others that form the background of our consciousness, unnecessarily, is an attack on our own purposes in the foreground of our consciousness, destroying partial functions of the world of social relations and thereby hindering our ability to get individuals, and their relations, to the foreground of our attention. We cannot then successfully imitate the individual other because our attention has grown too brief and erratic. But because our attention is at first so brief and erratic, and since we painfully feel this limitation when we are children, we first willingly submit to socialization and to belief in the reality of embodied others in a world that lets us have relations to them. This is also indeed the reason that we finite individuals need to seek the organic other at all—we have more relations than we understand, and need to understand more of them if we are to get any control of our own life and find an enduring dwelling-place in the world.

Thus discovery of the world’s individuals is not a “dead” or “mere” correspondence between idea and reality, but the joy of the discovery of truthful agreement. In this ethical sense, for Royce, the world of nature is our Other, as surely as are our human fellows, and thus it is related, as a sustaining condition, to our own contingently autonomous personhood. Such a worldview implies the necessity of anthropocentric *and* biocentric loyalties, since: “...*I ought to acknowledge* humanity and the universe, together with all that infinite wealth of meaning which my present thought

²⁸⁸ WIA 394.

of these objects even now hints to me...as that complete expression of my will which at every moment I am seeking.”²⁸⁹

An attack on the richness of the meanings of the world, as the clear-cutting of the forested hill to reveal its secrets, contains no such acknowledgement—and thus Royce protests against the “...pioneer idealism that burns the forests merely to see what they hide. Let the forests grow. They are better than the empty hillsides.”²⁹⁰ Royce here represents the real danger of insensitivity to the conditions of loyalty: it is not merely, of course, an attack on the person of the trees, or the forest—they, after all, are dead once they have been burnt—but it is an attack on the living, who are permanently impoverished by their lack of relation to it. And worse still, all those who were in productive organic relation with the destroyed thing are lessened in their relations and have less thenceforth to offer others.

The aforementioned complaint of the pragmatists was that much of environmental ethics is merely theoretical, giving no plan of action that might actually meet and address environmental crisis in the public sphere. But Royce’s doctrine of atonement, of self-abnegation and self-limitation, and of provincialism, along with his specific criticisms of environmental destruction and his calls for respect for the beauty of local conditions, conspire to produce a doctrine which gives a full-bodied environmental ethics: one that demands increasing respect for non-human natural beings, and for the cessation of a mere hedonism that seeks pleasure at the expense of causing pain in the world and, in ourselves, blindness to our real natural borders and relations, and thus to our real possible powers.

²⁸⁹ WIB 52.

²⁹⁰ RQP 152.

Centrally, for Royce, the recognition of the pain that we cause in a world that is not discretely separated from us, but is in shared organic relationship to us, is the key to the moral insight of atonement that accompanies this attitude of respect:

The truth is that all this world of life about thee is as real as thou art... pain is pain, joy is joy, everywhere even as in thee... the illusion vanishing, the glorious prospect opens before thy vision. Seeing the oneness of this life everywhere, the equal reality of all its moments, thou wilt be ready to treat it all with the reverence that prudence would have thee show to thy own little bit of future life.²⁹¹

What Royce terms the cowardly sympathy that maintains its hedonistic illusions by simply ignoring the suffering that it causes in the world is replaced with a focus on the kinship of our human pragmatism with natural pragmatism, and it:

...Leads thee out of the mists of blind self-adoration, and shows thee, in all the life of nature about thee, the one omnipresent, conscious struggle for the getting of the desired. In all the songs of the forest birds; in all the cries of the wounded and dying, struggling in the captor's power; in the boundless sea, where the myriads of water-creatures strive and die... everywhere from the lowest to the noblest creatures and experiences on our earth, the same conscious, burning, willful life is found, endlessly manifold as the forms of the living creatures... real as these impulses that even now throb in thy own little selfish heart.²⁹²

"Behold that life," Royce writes, and "thou hast begun to know thy duty". Again we may see here, contrary to Price's charge, that Royce carefully avoids reducing nature to its mere use-value. The rest of the world is indeed useful, so long as we attend to it, but usefulness is not merely the busily practical activity that Price supposes it to be, of *converting* "natural resources" into human use-values. Rather, in looking for the world, according to Royce's account, we are looking for our genuine limits, so that by finding

²⁹¹ RAP 160.

²⁹² RAP 161-162.

them, and only then, we may discover our dwelling place and our genuine power.²⁹³ For Royce, the more facts that I successfully recognize as limiting me, the more I am able to attend to my own real powers.²⁹⁴ The ethics of respect for nature is here also reflected in Royce's organicist ontology and epistemology, as for Royce, "The Theory of Being requires us to view every fact of nature, and of man's life, as a fragmentary glimpse of the Absolute life, as a revelation...of the unity of the perfect Whole."²⁹⁵

Royce's Contemporary Relevance in Environmental Ethics

Royce's attitude of respect for the individuals of the non-human natural world, and the world of life itself, and his criticism of human activities that destroy nature is, I have argued, an environmental ethics, and a remarkably prescient one. Royce points in a sustained way to environmental destruction long before many of his colleagues in philosophy attended to this problem, and he even asks us, in *The World and the Individual*, to think like a mountain (by abstracting from our particular span of human temporal attention, so that we can appreciatively attend to more august temporal forms of consciousness like geological ones), long before Leopold and subsequent environmental ethicists echoed the call.

Royce repeats in his environmental ethics a success common in his applied ethics more generally, showing how we may treat loyalty in critical dialogue with other loyalties--it is nearly a meaningless abstraction to say, as Friedman seems to do, that businesses *ought* ignore whatever environmental destruction they wreak, so long as it is legal and profitable and in their own "best interests"—where the "best interests" seems to

²⁹³ This is "a *Grenzbegriffe*", a concept of limits, "namely of that limit to which the internal meaning or purpose of an idea tends as it grows consciously determinate." WIA 37.

²⁹⁴ WIB 30-31.

²⁹⁵ WIB 8-9.

precisely mean legal profitability;²⁹⁶ or, with legion “biocentrists,” to say that the love of nature means that we ought war against any human influence in “Wild” Nature, as if we can really conceive of Nature as if it did not create and include humans.

Royce’s interdisciplinary efforts further suggest a unique and well-justified role for the Academy and the discipline of philosophy in the promotion of intelligently critical environmental ethics, especially by its ability to bring the efforts of many different disciplinary specialties to bear on common ecological problems. Royce’s writings support efforts that are now well underway in this domain: in recent years, the Academy has broadly throughout our society adopted the “Green” (or “sustainable,” or “True Cost”) movement for its own, with numerous forthcoming benefits. Among other things, its training of architects in sustainable development has provided the growing possibility for ecologically sustainable social design; building “green buildings” on campuses has created an initial economic impetus for “green jobs,” while improving environmental conditions that effect health; and academic criticism itself can prove to be a corrective “embarrassment,” so to speak, to selfish, environmentally destructive acts. But such a stick, as Royce’s example well shows, is most forcefully wielded when it is used

²⁹⁶See: “The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits,” in *Honest Work: A Business Ethics Reader*, pp 241-245. Friedman writes that businessmen who talk of eliminating discrimination, “avoiding pollution and whatever else may be the catchword of the contemporary crop of reformers,” are “preaching pure and unadulterated socialism. Businessmen who talk this way are unwitting puppets of the intellectual forces that have been undermining the basis of a free society these past decades.” (241) Likewise it is an attack on free society for a corporate executive to “make expenditures on reducing pollution beyond the amount that is in the best interests of the corporation or that is required by law in order to contribute to the social objective of improving the environment.” (242). An obvious objection is that legislation to forbid some environmental harm typically comes only after plentiful evidence is adduced of the harm. Legislatures are not in the business of actively surveying the scientific literature to uncover toxicity, to the effect that such evidence may become inconvertible long before legislatures are persuaded to consider it. For a business corporation to ignore such evidence of its harm merely because it has not been officially announced as illegal means that real harm will continue to be done, even if it is not yet “illegal” harm. But to respect the legality of the law or the integrity of others’ bodies, as by in either case acting to refuse the right to harm others for profit, isn’t economic “socialism,” even as in either case it indeed represents a loyalty to society.

occasionally, to chastise specific ills, and not swung constantly at anyone who moves—the point is not merely to condemn so frequently that soon all human activities look evil, but to promote healthful ones as well. And here Royce's environmental ethics is as effective for its positive vision of a conservative provincialism that carefully preserves its local beauty, and the diversity of local life, as it is for its standard of criticism of selfish and disloyal activities that threaten the joyful life, as of environmentally destructive human hedonism.

Finally we may observe, in the midst of the recent burgeoning of these questions of ecological loyalty in environmental philosophy and in popular environmentalism, that the situation for academic environmental ethics in terms of its public role is perhaps not quite so dire as it was discussed early in this chapter: Royce's work, at least, shows how academic philosophy can intelligently, publicly and pragmatically address crucial problems of social life; and indeed I believe that Royce's influence in promoting these environmental questions as academic theory and as public ethics were not forgotten, even if his name was, for decades, little credited. We often take ethical crises to be perfectly self-evident after they have been first recognized; but we must recall that most philosophers, in common with non-philosophers, had ignored these environmental problems before Royce called attention to them.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We may recap what has been accomplished in this work, and perhaps point to some aspects of what is still left to be accomplished in future studies. After first surveying some aspects of Royce's relevance to questions of applied ethics in his day and in ours, we turned to a critical reflection on the questions, "What is loyalty?" and "How may loyalty be ethically criticized?" Loyalty appears, as by Royce's analysis, to be very common in our human experience, but still it is left unconsidered by most philosophers who are more interested in reducing ultimate ethical considerability, not to groups in their interaction with one another nor to individuals in interaction with these groups, but instead to individuals considered as discrete liberal bundles of rights, or alternatively to a monistic whole, The State.

But we hardly meet anyone who is a mere individual, or a mere functionary—instead, people typically have their self-chosen loyalties, to their political party, family, nation, business, or to other special types of social-ethical causes, like environmental or aesthetic ones. These loyalties sometimes are harmful, and sometimes helpful. For the simple reason of the commonality of loyalty and for its social efficacy, then, it is worth criticizing so as to improve loyalty's social effects, and effects on individual autonomy. But how to criticize? Other recent ethicists have responded to the need to discuss loyalty by quickly setting up hierarchies of loyalties: business must be chosen over other loyalties, some wrote, while others wrote the opposite; some said that humans must be

chosen over non-human natural life, others argued the opposite. But this substitutes an *a priori* decision of a relatively foreign theoretician for the actual autonomy at stake in the loyalist who more immediately feels the real (and oftentimes novel) conflict between purposes, each of which is valued, but which nevertheless must be critically adjudicated. Royce's account here proves superior, where loyalty to loyalty means an ongoing critical balancing that seeks in an evolving world for the most harmonious systematic whole. This critical balancing, in turn, is not a mere relativism, since it is fixed to an absolute of critical respect—yet not a monistic absolute, since there is a need for a plurality of self-minding and respectful loyalties from which to choose, a need, that is, for a harmonious plurality of loyalties that must be fulfilled if we are to have a chance at meaningful autonomy.

Next, we moved to consider Royce's interdisciplinarity. I have mentioned Royce's use of resources from numerous disciplines, and recent scholarship has reflected this aspect of his thinking--Royce conferences at Vanderbilt (2005), Oklahoma City and Oklahoma State (2006) Harvard (2007), and Opolo Universities (2008) have hosted scholars from the disciplines of mathematics, philosophy, religion, literature, and history. But still there is much work left to do in the immediate future: Royce's psychological and sociological writings, despite his historical prominence in those fields, have hardly been explored in recent literature; his writings on science have likewise been comparatively ignored, once again despite his prominence in creating interdisciplinary opportunities for critical discourse between different scientific specialties, united by logical method—efforts perhaps unequalled in efficacy in 20th and 21st century American philosophy; his

efforts in literature and literary criticism have been left almost entirely ignored, despite the fact that they are quite extensive.

We then moved to a consideration of Royce's applied ethics in three specific areas: war and peace, business, and environmental ethics. Rather than wearying the reader by summarizing each of them, I will venture to say that reading these three accounts together will show how Royce's philosophy of loyalty enabled him to avoid a narrow and publicly irrelevant specialization in a single type of applied ethics, and instead to move easily between different types of applied ethics, and to systematic epistemological, metaphysical, moral and logical considerations to ground them; but it also enabled him to move easily between what are now termed analytic, phenomenological, and pragmatic approaches to applied ethics. Versus making a career as, say, "just" a business ethicist in the analytic tradition *or* environmental ethicist in the phenomenological tradition—and thereby reducing the audience who might understand the lectures to a vanishingly small sample—and instead of using historical philosophical resources from one narrow geographic or temporal region to support his arguments, Royce reaches broadly across traditions to acquire the necessary philosophical and interdisciplinary support for a publicly efficacious and rationally consistent applied ethics.

Royce's efficacy, put another way, has to do with the critical flexibility that it allows at the point of ethical decision-making, precisely by arguing for the absolute proliferation of the relative terms of actual and possible loyal lives--we need to be loyal in specific ways in our own province, but we also need loyal neighbors who can suggest new causes and new ways of being loyal to us, and who can do the work that we will

never ourselves get around to doing. Thus, given the real novelty and creativity in our evolving world, ongoing criticism (and its need to include multiple possible ends) is never rendered obsolete as if we could, in an *a priori* way, once and for all hierarchically balance the “right” order of loyalties in the world—for Royce, it is not the case, as it is for many contemporary applied ethicists, that “sufficient reason” inevitably produces *the* right answer to any given dilemma, or *the* right hierarchical ordering of loyalties. Nor does Royce forego criticism by announcing that individuals are merely discrete, so that any decision is as relatively valid as any other. Royce’s principle of loyalty to loyalty allows for the robust possibility of criticism in applied ethics—by advocating for a proliferation of the terms of loyalty so as to best suit the needs of a growing autonomy, it is able to criticize, as disloyal, predatory loyalties, and the destructively hedonistic desires of individuals whose quest for pleasures injures or destroys the social world.

Occasionally, loyalties do come into conflict, and mere monism and “realistic” individual relativism have little counsel to offer when they do. A major reason for the relevance of Royce’s ethics to his own day and to our own is that Royce’s concept of the absolute right of peoples to their loyalty, and the right of unified defense of all loyal peoples against disloyal attacks against that right, gives flexibly critical mediation at the point of conflict between loyalties: some possibilities are disallowed as “disloyal,” or as otherwise inconsistent with a harmonious Well-Ordered Series of loyalties, but these forbidden types are few, limited just to those that are predatory in their destruction of loyalties and the necessary condition for loyalties. This allowed Royce a genuinely self-critical philosophy, able to criticize his own home state and nation on the grounds of their errant war, business, and environmental ethics, and to criticize his beloved teacher of

philosophy, Germany, for its war ethics in World War I—especially in terms of its disloyal effects on business ethics. And it allowed Royce to predict important new areas of public applied ethics, like in environmental ethics.

We have seen, in the foregoing, evidence of Royce's significant success as a public proponent of critical ethics, and evidence of Royce as an interdisciplinary interpreter *par excellence*. Philosophy and the modern Academy have increasingly come to understand that devoted efforts must be made in both areas—but this isn't work that needs be constructed without foundations or historical exemplars in American philosophy. Royce gives a clear example of how philosophy may help the Academy to unite the efforts of its various disciplines so as to collectively address pressing social needs, in a way that may enable it to be heard more clearly than it typically is now.

Royce's success in these areas will suggest, I hope, further forays into Royce's, and Roycean, applied ethics, that will join with excellent exemplars of this style of approach that have been pioneered by such scholars as I have discussed in the foregoing: Kegley, Mahowald, West, Trotter, Oppenheim, Raposa, Orosco, Auxier, Hall, Nahser, Green and Fiala among them. And I hope this confluence of Royce scholarship will continue to grow in disciplinary inclusivity, so as to represent and further one of Royce's own most important loyal causes—and as key to making philosophical applied ethics, and the Academy, more relevant to the problems of the contemporary world.

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