

Chapter 11

Cultural Fusion and the Defense of Difference

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One day the wanderer slammed a door behind himself, stopped in his tracks, and wept. Then he said: “This penchant and passion for what is true, real, nonapparent, certain – how it aggravates me.” Nietzsche, *From the Seventh Solitude*, The Gay Science, Section 309

Spencerian Morality

A Warning: Before we insist on killing ourselves with Reality, pure unmitigated “enlightenment,” there is still time for glorious fantasy. Perhaps the worst thing one can do to another, and by implication oneself, is to prove that their world is false, to eliminate alternatives. With each conversion, each conforming “transformation,” the world “shrinks” and becomes a bit less meaningful.

Anti-metaphysical Preface

“Intercultural adaptation theory” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997), presupposes the old Cartesian metaphysic. According to Ruben (1975), whose definition of adaptation they presuppose, “[...] communication [is] an acting toward the objects and people in one’s milieu. It is a

process by which the individual informationally fits himself into (adapts and adapts to) his environment” (Ruben, quoted in Gudykunst & Kim, 1997: 339). Putting aside the curious term “informationally,” we continue. According to intercultural adaptation theory, the objective world “out there” is “filtered” to the subjective observer “in here,” a kind of little homunculus being. This idea is a simplified version of Francis Bacon’s (1937) theory of the “idols,” which are natural and cultural limitations that distort knowledge. This process of filtering may also include an “internal” process of weighting and inferentially sorting the salient from the irrelevant, but this is not clear in Gudykunst and Kim (their brand of “cognitivism” seems more like mentalism). This metaphysical split is evinced by the authors themselves as William Gudykunst tends to argue that culture is “out there” while Young Yun Kim tends to argue that culture is in one’s brain. The modern emphasis on spatial thinking and distantiation, culture is somewhere, is self-evident. The Cartesian ground is the “I.”

For traditional peoples the universe is alive, finite, and filled with *mana*, *chi*, spirit(s), ether, and so forth. Nature and culture do not exist as dualistic opposites. It is an indivisible whole. As the modern sense of space continues to expand and the universe continues to empty-out, fragment, and die, the result is continued dissociation and distantiating – abstraction. This expresses the birth of the Alexandrian “theoretical Man.” Under the influence of increasing dissociation, everything, including language, becomes arbitrary and reducible to formal rule governance, an objectified thing-in-itself available for dissecting. Correlative with this dissociative process is identity implosion. As space expands, the individual contracts. The clan-identity has shrunk to the extended family, which has shrunk to the nuclear family, and on down to the modern “I.” Now the “I” has become what Friedrich Nietzsche calls the “dishonest” “it” that claims to have no associations, no interests and no values. From this homunculus little “it,” this little Rene, is externalized certain desires, wants and needs which then masquerade as the “whole truth and nothing but.” Here we have the birth of modern competing and mutually excluding metaphysical systems which Edmund Husserl (1970) called “regional ontologies” that form a logically absurd multiplicity of mutually excluding foundations for Western thinking. Everything is really, psychological states, everything is really chemical reactions in the brain, everything is really piles of vibrating particles, everything is really energy, everything is really a social construction, everything is really inferential calculus, and so forth. Even though each metaphysical faith contradicts each other, and fights the politics of reality, grappling for the lowest (or

highest depending on the dualistic valuation at hand) rung on the hierarchy of Reality, they agree on one thing. The one thing they all share is the conviction that there is an indubitable “really,” a final goal like “total adaptation,” a unit that can no longer be measured, subdivided, a perfectly demonstrable truth which affords the most “clarity, depth, scope, [and] balance” (Grotevant, 1993). The optical metaphors and valuation make it clear that this is a very modern Western cultural bias.

By contrast, according to the Nietzschean perspective, the infinite goal of living is to avoid “stock responses,” and to see the world rather than “numbly recognize it.” It is, as Jonathan Culler (1982) says, to be constantly “sawing off the branch on which one is sitting” and without fear of hitting some definitive “ground” (p. 149; also see H. D.¹ Thoreau, *On Walden Pond*, especially chapter sixteen about “Realometers,” and J. Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*). Thoreau tells of the ultimate impracticality of his neighbors’ attempts to measure the depth of Walden Pond, “to fathom their truly immeasurable capacity for marvelousness” (“*Walden Pond*, ch. 16). A world without a bottom, the always unfamiliar and unpredictable is the reason for getting up in the morning, the never complete fulfillment of human curiosity. Defamiliarization is the generator of meaningful, perceivable, existence.

No one “wide awake” has said that this would not, or should not involve loss and discomfort. But for drowsy positivists, the avoidance of uncertainty and suffering by means of planning is their highest aspiration and value, their final goal. They are working night and day like zombies to complete an exact duplicate of reality on disc, lock it away in the librarian’s vault, the jewel of suicidal Man (for it is a patriarchal dream of the ultimate hunting trip) and then sleep forever, satisfied at last. They have discovered that the best way to predict the future is to make it. This grand “should,” is what J. Hillis Miller (1976) has called “happy positivism,” which is very much different from the uncanny fact that meaning has little to do with rationality or only one goal. Without the unfamiliar one is left with one’s self, which as Jean Paul Sartre (1956) argued is the same as nothing, the final end, the tightest hairpin turn of cybernetics, the perfect communication of self-actualization, Hegelian solipsism. We struggle and struggle to erase our limitations, erase ourselves.

Instead of acknowledging that they are inflating their own cultural perspective to hypertrophic proportions, Gudykunst and Kim (1997), and other modern social psychologists maintain that their explanations pertaining to intercultural adaptation/enculturation constitute

transcultural truth, even a referential version of human “nature.” Never fear. I remind you of Gyorgy Lukac’s (1963) observation that “realism” is a genre of fiction. But yet, the power to induce reality, the magic of a big voice attached to the “it,” forms the indivisible nucleus of modern imperialism dressed up in social “scientific” legitimation.

One problem with Cartesian duality that neither Bacon nor Immanuel Kant defeated, and Gudykunst and Kim naïvely repeat, is that unless one claims to have what Nietzsche in *Zarathustra* calls “immaculate perception,” that is, to somehow know the “prefiltered” world “out there,” then the claim that human reality is somehow incomplete, distorted, cognitively weighted, or “filtered” is senseless (Kramer, 1992; 1997; in press).² This has implications for the theory of intercultural adaptation because the theory presumes that perspective can and should be transcended in order to escape subjective distortion, cultural limitations, suffering, and facilitate “greater fitness in our increasingly intercultural world,” to achieve transcendental “species identity” (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997: 364; Boulding, 1990).

A second problem with Cartesian metaphysics as it is presupposed by Gudykunst and Kim, has to do with their conceptualization of adaptation which oversimplifies the implicate quality of lifeworld. The boundary between the “out there” and the “in here,” the system and the subsystem, the sojourner and the host environment, is neither “out there” nor “in here.” It is rather a dynamic constitutive process often erroneously expressed as the “in-between” of “out there” and “in here.” To speak of the “real” opposites which converge to create the epiphenomenon of awareness is pure conjecture, pure metaphysical speculation. Direct awareness, the only kind there is, is always personal “subjective” awareness. So to “overcome” subjective distortion, one must reject conscious awareness, which is exactly what behaviorists do when they reduce “satisfaction” to fitting into predominant behavior patterns. The world is “my” world and I am always at the center of spatial awareness, but of course I do not control the world. It is the only “place” where awareness happens. To speak of some cause “behind” Plato’s cave wall shadows is pure metaphysical speculation.

Like mixing milk with water, once fused hermeneutic horizons, though changeable, cannot be separated. Implicate inter-penetration marks what Eric Kramer (1993) calls the co-constitutional genesis of meaning and identity (see also David Bohem, 1980). The only way to overcome cultural differences is to abandon cultural identities, which is precisely the recipe for “satisfaction” offered by Gudykunst and Kim (1997).

In this chapter, the Cartesian metaphysic is bracketed. What follows is an application of Kramer's (1997) theory of dimensional accrual/dissociation and his related theory of cultural fusion in order to offer an explanation of the major civilizational shift currently occurring on the planet (Kramer and Ikeda, in press). If we wish to understand why phenomena like "survival" cults and religions, new age salvationism (including the Zen based theory of intercultural adaptation itself), and nationalistic fervor around the globe are proliferating, we must understand that as the Western mentality of ever-increasing dissociation spreads, it threatens personal, ethnic, regional, and even national identities. People are struggling against what they perceive to be an advancing "wasteland" of sameness. Not only are they semantically impoverished, the new great system, positivistic science assures them that meaning does not even exist. As a result, communication and identity become issues of major concern. The backlash is manifested in various resurrected discourses of sovereignty and "self-determination." A progressive process of increasing dissociation or abstraction characterizes so-called "development" and "evolution." It is seen by modernists as the "good."

While shifts in the past from the Mesolithic hamlet, to the Neolithic village/town, to the urban city, occurred, it was not until empire that "development" and expansion were self-consciously pursued as such (Mumford, 1961). The goal of empire is to bring more people together under a single yoke, to get them all to pull on the same end of the rope. Of course they resist artificially imposed "team" building. Hegemony means that most believe that it is too late, that they have no choice. Imperial system, with its scales of abstract ordination from clock time to monetary currency, forms a superstructural cage with no doors. There are many forms of rhetoric used to convince people of the futility of resistance from physical torture and spiritual threats of eternal damnation, to the naturalization of randomness and statistical "evidence." But the universe is predictable. The only randomness there is, is in human sampling which has also been systematized. The uniqueness of the human animal, is that in its search for stimulation, it makes randomness, unpredictable art, that "lightening bolt" of haiku, the vibrating colors of Van Gough, the stunningly unbelievable pyramids, the shocking cinema.

The power to impose such drastic changes in the life of a person as imperial ordination is very great. With the vast power differentials that exist today on the globe, which are anything but logical, reality becomes alien, something that the weak have no ownership of. It happens to them rather than them making it. The global economy

imposes on their lives from unseen and unheard distances. There is an insidious allure to sameness. At first, it feels good, comfortable. But it cannot achieve ekstasis. And after a while, the comfortable becomes oppressively boring. Life keeps testing, creating itself in new forms, and risking complexity despite the fantastic success of single celled creatures. Homeostasis is the religion of amoebas. William Greider (1997) in his book One World, Ready or Not: The Manic Logic of Global Capitalism, has chronicled the process of hooking the world on the salvific promise of comfortable certainty. Similarly, David Korten (1995), a doctor from The Stanford Graduate School of Business, has marked the decline of pluralistic trends, especially among workers throughout the world in his book When Corporations Rule the World. Even the guru of capitalistic management practice, Peter Drucker (1993), has noted in his work Post-Capitalist Society, that we are entering into a post-capitalist polity, which involves a transformation from nation-states to “megastates.” The final reduction of uncertainty is captured in the slogan “one world, one people.” People used to be bound together through a common ancestor like the first Emperor of Japan. Today it is another supreme good, efficiency that seeks to bind us. Who can argue with efficiency?

Today we have surpassed the ambitions of feudal fiefdoms to aspire to regionalism, nation-statehood, transnational spheres of influence, and finally totalitarian globalism. What is emerging is not a “global village” but an aggregate of competing individuals. As dissociated massification increases, so too does the shrinking uniqueness of ego identity including the so-called “world citizen,” detached from locale and group. Various reactions against the threat to associated identities, to the loss of local community identity, articulate a major force emerging at the cusp of the postmodern world. At the extreme, “it” finds happiness in the pursuit of mass diversion and massive fame. In such pursuits, to that end, some even, and happily choose to live alone, presumptuous of the automated systems that bring everything to their door step, the fruition of bourgeois mentality and values. An example: one effect of mass society, the celebrity, the “star” is isolated. Loved from afar. Attempts to get close are seen as “stalking.” “It” is more productive that way. “It” is more competitive that way. It is useless to cite countless books and articles about modern isolation and alienation. “It” has no time for frivolous interaction saying, “I’m too busy being me,” maintaining a public persona. Stars, “royalty,” especially in the music business, crash and burn, and the wreck too is entertaining to watch. Dissociation leads to vicarious “living.” The Circus Maximus (including Retalin and Valium) is vital to systems maintenance. Only in

an environment obsessed with self-maintenance, the passivity of equilibrium is activity and energy seen as an illness. As we shall see, being “mentally healthy” is defined in intercultural adaptation theory as the same as escaping difference and equalizing, not energy, but behavior with the larger system, achieving equilibrium, which is the lowest energy state possible, eternal silence. Children should be seen and not heard. The call to “maturity,” which is used as a synonym for adaptation, is a parental perspective.

To Nietzsche’s consternation, he reluctantly admits that, because of the hegemonic influence of Malthus and Spencer, especially among “English psychologists” and “for an uncouth industrious race of machinists and bridge-builders of the future, which has nothing but course work to get through,” this poverty stricken perspective may have become normative (Nietzsche, BGE, Part I, Section 14). Only a few years later in 1899, Thorstein Veblen published his famous Theory of the Leisure Class. In this book, like Nietzsche, Veblen reluctantly acknowledges the powerful inertia of mass thinking. For after critiquing mass culture as “barbaric,” he put forth his central concept of “adaptation,” which meant for him the adjustment to the new social Darwinism, a pathetic surrender to the sphere of mass consumption. Reality *sui generis*, is reduced to resource allocation. Individuals guard the two scalar phenomena that characterize the modern world, money and time most selfishly.

The call to “adaptation” as a universal solution and path to nirvanic happiness can only come from a leisurely and privileged point-of-view, which is especially ironic since such privilege has been earned by those who came before and fought unjust systems in order to gain concessions for minorities, veterans, and women.³ Amnesia is not recommended for consultants. Nietzsche insists to the end that there are infinite perspectives, although one has been created that ambitiously seeks to become total, global. This is a world which, *reductio ad absurdum*, embraces a single perspective as a certain thing-in-itself, a thing its creators, in their missionary zeal, have forgotten they made as a *causa sui*.

The Religion of “Progress” Versus the Celebration of Accents

Adaptation and adjustment to environmental “effects” is reaction, not action. Everything alive, from pollinating honey bees to nest building birds, burrow digging snakes, and dam building beavers do not passively fit “into” pre-established “niches,” but actively change their environments, creating “niches.” There is no dualism. The organism is

the niche. And the organism is more than merely a self-contained discrete entity. The “organism” includes its “signature” (signative traces), its comportment, its implicate interacting as part of the environment, which it helps to form, including other organisms. Ecological symbiosis is but one example. Gudykunst and Kim, manifest thinking in terms of flow-charted, modern Western cultural terms. I call this passive nichism. A sort of layperson’s scientific management.

Contrary to this view, I hold that the universe is not a finished parking lot of formal spaces waiting to be “filled” with uniform, clay-like “content.” Form and content are not separable except in theory, and then almost always in the interest of manipulation to make things “fit” (political ideology).

The theory of intercultural adaptation is social engineering, a utility box of suggestions useful for organizations that want to extend into foreign environments but minimize their foreignness at the same time in order to facilitate further extension. The fetishism of grammar and syntax has colonized Western and westernizing thought as the ancient mysticism of numerology has finally found its stride. Here is the “great liberation” into pure metaphysics – German idealistic philosophizing. This is the realm of the positive scholar who is objective, who sets herself in the position of the interpreter of all our experiences with a knowledge of preconditions and a “standard of ecumenical goals” (Nietzsche, Human All to Human, Section 2). Modern times have no time, only pure progress. To the positive industrialist, history is bunk, tradition an obstacle that must be removed in the name of “progress,” “scientific” management, administrative adjustment. “Our whole modern world is entangled in the net of Alexandrian culture [which] proposes as its ideal the theoretical man” (Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, Section 18). This is the generalizing empire of theory by which the greater the heuristic scope, the greater the epistemic force. Commandments hold for all times and places, total dissociation.

The Alexandrian culture requires a permanent slave class to exist. It is here we find the cheerleaders of the robotic ideal and the “dignity of labor,” the cradle of the G.I., the general issue human marching in sync like never before; the pathetic effect of “the noble cause,” which makes humans into mere effects. The theory of intercultural adaptation does not explain what is happening (cultural fusion) on the globe except insofar as it is helping to justify and make cultural streamlining occur.

Societies too have ecologies that are not predetermined, but instead take shape and change as individuals working together making

community happen. As Nietzsche pointed out in 1887, those who flee from life and action, instead place:

[...]“adaptation” in the foreground, that is to say, an activity of the second rank, a mere reactivity; indeed, life itself has been defined as a more and more efficient inner adaptation to external conditions (Herbert Spencer). Thus the essence of life, its will to power, is ignored; one overlooks the essential priority of the spontaneous, aggressive, expansive, form-giving forces that give new interpretations and directions, although “adaptation” follows only after this; the dominant role of the highest functionaries within the organism itself in which the will to life appears active and form-giving is denied. One should recall what Huxley reproached Spencer with – his “administrative nihilism”: but it is a question of rather more than mere “administration” (Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals, Second Essay, Section 12)

According to the neo-Hegelian Spencerians, Gudykunst and Kim (1997), “What is ultimately required of strangers [if they want to be happy] in the host society is the operational (or behavioral) capacity that enables them to carry out behaviors externally in accordance with the host cultural patterns” (p. 342). This “operational (or behavioral) capacity which enables” a person to mimic normative “external” behavior patterns is, according to Gudykunst and Kim (1997), a “mindset” that is malleable, passive, flexible. This comes down to being user friendly, easily re-programmable; to being able and willing to “deculturize,” “disintegrate,” and “unlearn” one’s “cognitive, affective, and operational” self (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997: 335-353). In modern dialectical parlance, people are defined as either “assets” or “liabilities.”

This is why I argue below, that given these parameters, the true model minority and ultimate ideal for assimilationists is the robot. For even human chattel may offer some unpredicted and disequalibrating resistance to the master. Deviance, by definition, disrupts the equifinality of neo-Hegelian, ideal system. Systems theory was not applied to humans until the Twentieth Century. We must remember the two great feedback control systems of this century, the Left and Right Hegelians, with their feedback loops, the Nazi SS and the Russian KGB. Human beings often give “negative feedback” which, to a monitor, is an “error message” that indicates “deviance,” that requires “correction.” The presumed threat to *status quo* is a “chaos” of unexpected meanings, which positivistic negativism, what Nietzsche calls the authoritarian mind of “No,” was born to save us from (see

Auguste Comte's Catechism, 1891, and Jeremy Bentham's Official Aptitude Maximized, 1993). I believe that Georg Simmel would find intercultural adaptation therapy for the "disease" of culture shock, far worse than its symptoms. One need only read his *magnum opus* Schopenhauer and Nietzsche (with Helmut Loiskandi) to understand this. In short, the ability to mimic normative behavior does not assure happiness, and can even make a person quite depressed because they feel continually compelled to conform, what Leon Festinger calls the "cognitive consequences of forced compliance" (Festinger, 1957; 1959).

I remind the reader that Pandemonium is the capital of Hell, a place where absolute hierarchy is certain and the greatest tyrannical disciplinarian conceivable "lives." It is where madness comes from mind killing redundancy, eternal damnation. Redundancy is frictionless and meaningless. By contrast, life is recognized by the heat it creates. Hell is bone-chilling death, not warmth. For human intelligence it amounts to the solitary confinement of a closed system (see Geertz, 1973 on the social brain). Hell is nihilism, the essence of suicide.

The dumb sort of morality of sameness was born of imperial, in this instance, British imperial thinking. Of this Nietzsche says, "Herbert Spencer espoused that the concept 'good' is essentially identical with the concept 'useful,' 'practical,' so that in the judgments 'good' and 'bad' mankind has summed up and sanctioned...the 'valuable in itself'" (Nietzsche, GM, First Essay, Section 3).

Conformity among molecules and conformity among humans is different. The latter is shot through with moral and ethical issues. It is not just an issue of orders of complexity or numbers of variables (intervening or not). Rather, it is an issue of a different process altogether. Individual humans are not uniform subsystems like identical ping-pong balls or electrical pulses in a random number generator used to calculate probability tables in Monte Carlo studies. People do not randomly spew words and handshakes. The interesting aspect of human cultural behavior does not exhibit mindless uniformity, but significance. When you reach into the bucket, you pull out either a red or white ping-pong ball because that is all that is allowed for. It is a rigged game. But in life, instead of pulling out a red or white ping-pong ball, you might get a pinecone or a snapping turtle.

The ideology of "innate nature" proclaims, from on high, the fundamental equality of everything. But cultural universals are either banal generalities or selective perception expanded to totalitarian proportions in the service of some interest, what Clifford Geertz (1973) has called the attempt to authoritatively create a *consensus genitum* (p.

38; also see Local Knowledge, 1985), and what Martin Heidegger (1962) calls the creation of *das Man* (the mass man). At least the Benthamites understood this.

The attempt to maintain homeostasis is not natural; it is “civilizing” culture. By contrast, life is constantly experimenting and diversifying. Even the simplest algorithmic models prove that evolution comes up with profoundly unexpected, and infinitely diverse solutions to just one problem (Holland, 1975). Life is tricky. Life is abundance. The elimination of “superfluous” messages (“chit chat”) is a sign of the times, which values goal achievement over process, economy and efficiency over all, the blitz of mass clockwork-like “movement.” What is the goal of intercultural adaptation? To achieve a “transcultural” state of universal personhood, a kind of nirvanic Hegelianism, what Nietzsche calls “Buddhism for Europeans” (see below; Gudykunst and Kim, 1997: 364). With a goal, progress may commence. Hence, the triumph of the statistical mean over the deviant, hopelessly unique, fallaciously aimless, individual subject. Globally, parsimonious homogenization is promoted on one hand so that the other may amass riches like never before.

The “Model Minority” and Mental Health

Given their Spencerian approach, it is not surprising that according to Gudykunst and Kim (1997) and others, the ideal type psychological makeup for assimilation (“reintegration”), for “psychic evolution to a higher state,” is also called being “mentally healthy,” “balanced,” “well adjusted,” and even “mature” (pp. 357-366; Heath, 1977; Harris, 1979; Gudykunst, et. al., 1977, 1978; Berry & Kim, 1987; Taft, 1977; Mezirow, 1991; Kao, 1975; Jourard, 1974; Hammer, et. al., 1978, Hurh & Kim, 1988). In their writing, Gudykunst and Kim do not characterize societies as dynamic processes, which they certainly are, especially today. Communities increasingly manifest cultural churning at rates like never before. This is exciting and meaning creating. It is seen as problematic, as a source of “anxiety,” only if one is looking at it strictly from the point-of-view of modern structural functionalism, and behavioral goal attainment, acquiescent compliance gaining.

The process of cultural churning has no final goal. It does indeed tend to frustrate Aristotelian linear “progress.” Cultural churning is not redundant, not predictable, and therefore it does not serve the needs of mass production, of pragmatic and utilitarian values as expressed by globalizing capital accumulation and “evolutionary development.” One could study the entire history of the human species up to 1700, which

would be hundreds of thousands of years of observation, and not predict that humans would fly because they never had. Nothing is random except human ingenuity.

Gudykunst and Kim pride themselves on having created an immanently “practical” theory, which is meant to help get control of intercultural processes. “When we are fully in control of ourselves in a new environment, we possess a high level of host communication competence – cognitive, affective, and operational” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997: 351). This goal is very Hegelian, both conservative and idealistic. “Control,” equals “appropriate” “skill” which is presumably rewarded by the system, thus creating “fit” and happiness. So much for the child who wants to be a poet rather than a computer programmer. No doubt, Plato would agree.

To be mentally “healthy” “well adjusted,” “mature,” and “balanced” means to be in total control and an “asset” to the system. Furthermore, what counts as “practical,” “competent,” and “appropriate” is always already highly structured, ethnocentric, already presumptuous of values, desires, situatedness, and the goals of the establishment.

Accents get in the way of downloading information to “mainstream” students and customers, and multiple languages and lifestyles are huge potholes on the bureaucratic highway. An example of trying to fix the potholes is the modern idea of “official national languages.” A specific example is Communist China’s massive effort to simplify the Chinese language in the interest of accelerating technological and economic achievement. Entire libraries are thus rendered useless, but to a progressive positivist, that is okay since history is bunk anyway. To help things along, increasingly even speech is abbreviated to an alphabet soup of acronyms. This mentality is derived from a larger “temporal anxiety,” unique to Western European culture, discussed below (Jean Gebser, 1985). Amnesia is a value in modernity. Although those living there, and who gave birth to modernity did not know it, all the past is a “Dark Age.” For many academic journals, citations from before 1980 are hopelessly obsolete, and yet positive truth is eternal. Generation gaps proliferate with the dissemination of modern Western culture. Even people, like machines, can become “obsolete.”

Gudykunst and Kim (1997) use the words “technical skills,” “functional fitness,” “adaptation,” “integration,” and “assimilation,” interchangeably, as if they all mean the same thing. As noted above, intercultural adaptation for them is an “operational process,” which means the ability to “carry out behaviors externally in accordance with the host cultural patterns” (Ruben, 1976; Ruben & Kealey; 1979;

Gudykunst & Kim, 1997: 342). These behaviorists assume that good mimicry defined by them as the ability to “act and react appropriately” (adaptation/assimilation), causes, or correlates with, “satisfaction” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997: 342). Of course causation is presumed when discussing behavior modification. As they put it, “appropriate acting” and reacting has much to do with learning “social” and “technical skills,” and successfully mimicking behavior patterns (Taft, 1977; Gudykunst & Kim, 1997: 342). There is no mention of “appropriate” resistance, rebellion, or deviation. To them, being rebellious could never make one joyous, let alone happy!

According to the morality set out in Spencer’s Social Statics: The Conditions Essential for Human Happiness (1850), only pragmatic utility, meaning predictable stability, is “good.” And as Gudykunst and Kim (1997) state by evoking Kurt Lewin, “we believe that ‘there is nothing so practical as a good theory’” (p. xii). Clearly, to them, practicality is the most important criteria for the value of a theory, and perhaps everything else. But what is “practical,” “appropriate,” “competent,” and “enabling” is a matter of perspective, of co-constitutional genetics. What is “practical” is determined only when it has been tried. Furthermore, Gudykunst and Kim (1997) fail to take into account the difference between social engineering and social science, *techne* and *theoria*, and the importance of *phronesis* (Habermas, 1973). *Techne* is the process of acting upon, of engineering change without being changed oneself. Instrumentality lacks self-reflexive prudence and interactive growth. According to hermeneutics, social science does not merely dictate what is the case and offer alternatives, but as part of society, its role and tenor also change. The social thinker is not immune to her own embodied situatedness. *Techne*, unlike *praxis*, lacks an ethical dimension. One can adapt but the more important and intelligent question is should one adapt or innovate.

By contrast, I suggest that the most sophisticated of social skills may be expressed in the process of testing novel ideas and behaviors, finding them to be successful and thus generating new standards of “appropriateness” and “competence.” Understanding that “critical thinking” is largely a redundant phrase, under the conditions promoted by Gudykunst and Kim, critique, and therefore thinking is impossible, or certainly a cause for suffering. One of the roles of criticism is to translate “fiction” including “naturalizing” metonymic techniques into a language that reveals hidden agendas. This is the very purpose of social science; namely to test the common sense, the commonly accepted “natural order of things,” such as the claim that women are

naturally inferior to men, that disease has supernatural causes, that rulers rule by divine right, et cetera. This is what Husserl (1982) meant by testing the “thesis of the natural attitude,” a duty of both science, and we must add, art.⁴

Roland Barthes (1967) argues in *Writing Degree Zero*, that not anxiety only, but *ecstasy* is the result of the unpredicted. The attempt to become mindful of the world has taken many forms including the “defamiliarizing” process which has been equated with the Brechtian notion of “alienation” (*verfremdung*), and *Ostrannie* (“making strange”), by Russian poets. Victor Shklovsky (1970) argues that referentiality (conformity) is redundantly uninformative, “anaesthetizing.” The point is that if there is no difference, then we must make it. Otherwise the world sinks into the murk of nihilism.

The adaptation process, as it is conceived by Gudykunst and Kim (1997), of fitting into the “host” environment, is not a hermeneutical fusion of horizons, not a process of adding and integrating new knowledge with old, thus changing the meaning of the old, including making it “old” as such. Instead, according to them, the adaptation process is offered as a unilateral variable that is a sort of zero-sum game, and ultimately as therapy for the “dis-ease” of difference, of culture “shock” (Adler, 1982). According to the theory of intercultural adaptation the system, or host culture, never learns anything from the newcomer.

The model minority is an ideological valuation that presents an ideal image which immigrants, and all Others, should adapt to. Adaptation is presumed to be in the form of imitation or mimicry and as such it is expected to proceed in a linear fashion. But adaptation as several writers present it, is more than merely an act of copying certain behavior patterns. Genuine “adaptation,” as it has been described by Jourard (1974) and Gudykunst and Kim (1997: 362), involves the very “disintegration” of the original cultural self to allow for a “reintegration” of a new self in accord with the cultural requirements of the “host” environment. Thus, adaptation goes to the core of a psychological restructuring. This amounts to nothing less than the total hegemonic control of identity. According to Gudykunst and Kim, the old principle of “when in Rome, do as the Romans do” does not go far enough. Conforming not just behaviorally but psycho-culturally is defined as “mental health” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997; Berry & U. Kim, 1987; Dyal & Dyal, 1981; Huh & K. Kim, 1988), “happiness” (Y. Kim, 1988; 1995), and “satisfaction” (Y. Kim & Ruben, 1988).

To be mentally healthy, the individual (subsystem) should seek “equilibrium” with the “external world” (Gudykunst & Kim,

1997:360). This means to somehow lose all the vitality of individual creativity, or to give it over to appropriate channels. A failure to achieve identity with the environment equals “maladjustment” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997:358). By contrast, “psychic evolution” is supposed to achieve “optimal communication competence” (Harris, 1979; 1980).

Here we must slow down to appreciate the morality of these social engineers who would help us escape what, to a Nietzschean, is best in life, the motor of change, the tragic worldview. For it is the optimism of science and its claim to universal validity that made of knowledge a panacea. What is the goal of science? In Section 12 of The Gay Science Nietzsche answers:

The ultimate goal of science is to create for man the greatest possible amount of pleasure and the least amount of pain? But suppose pleasure and pain were so linked together that he who wants to have the greatest possible amount of the one must have the greatest possible amount of the other also [...]? And perhaps that is how things are! The Stoics, at any rate, thought so, and were consistent when they desired to have the least possible amount of pleasure in order to have the least possible amount of pain from life. [...] Today, too, you have the choice: either as little pain as possible, in short painlessness [...] or as much pain as possible as the price of an abundance of subtle joys and pleasures hitherto rarely tasted! Nietzsche, GS, Book 1, Section 12, Hollingdale translation)

Nietzsche points out that with the hyper-valuation of a “positive attitude” comes the end of Attic tragedy and lyric poetry, the spirit of spontaneity and music. But yet it is out of the vitality of the Attic dithyramb, that science was born (Nietzsche, TBT, Section 17)! But once born, the scientific perspective becomes institutionalized as an “ism.” The enthusiasm of true music gives way to recitation and replication (the timid copying of success); to rote memory and blind devotion for which we stupidly admire computers and even seek to call ourselves, “cognitive machines.” With the death of tragedy comes the new virtue of *stilo rappresentativo* (representational style) (Nietzsche, BT, Section 19). And what is science? It is the Apollonian defeat of suffering. “Apollo overcomes the suffering of the individual by the radiant glorification of the eternity of the phenomenon: here beauty triumphs over the suffering inherent in life: pain is obliterated by lies from the features of nature” (Nietzsche, BT, Section 16). Thus we have the emerging opposition between static certainty and its champion objective transcendentalism on one hand, and ecstatic art, which can

flourish only in the “experimental life,” on the other. Out of the vital power of Attic mysteries was born a spoiled child that turned against the forces of creative vitality and toward absolute predictability. One can only wonder what, if any, grandchild science will bequeath to its energetic “Dark Age” parents. Perhaps it is sterile. Maybe in its profound arrogance scientific culture cannot even imagine an age beyond itself worthy of existence. The totalitarian ethnocentrism of the “Positive” Age pronounces all solutions to be finally rendered only in its way.

This obsessive craving for death, a predictable “life,” is a pathetic drive toward minimalism, a life alone, toward the self-extermination of the self: the ultimate absurdity, suicide. In the withering march toward automation, consciousness itself is denied existence, for “consciousness has developed only under the pressure of the need for communication” (Nietzsche, GS, Book 5, Section 354). Thus, consciousness does not “belong” to the individual but to the social. By contrast, nirvanic purity is impossible to share. It is essentially antisocial. Knowledge becomes words and knowledge becomes nothing more than making the strange familiar and predictable (Nietzsche, GS, Book 5, Section 335).

Why do we seek nihilism so? On one hand it is the morality of the herd, to find security in numbers, dogmatic slumber without dreams, and on the other the obsession with the care and feeding of the self. Nothing is more certain, more anxiety free and dogmatic than nothingness. This is why religion, as a category of thought, and the scientific promise of answers once and for all are so cherished by those who benefit from the status quo. It is here too, in the archaeology of pragmatism and utilitarianism that we find the motivation for adaptation. For instance, “the two world religions Buddhism and Christianity, may have owed their origin and above all their sudden spread to a tremendous collapse and *disease of the will* (Nietzsche, GS, Book 5, Section 347). We must add the other doctrines like Hinduism and Islam that also promise to stop the great cycle of life, to achieve the paradise beyond time. Eternal life equals death. It is death that makes life meaningful.

Given axioms of pure reaction, a theory of communication beyond stimulus/response is not necessary. Amoeba consciousness will suffice. In fact the ideal “no mind” is best of all. This is the world of the “cheerful Alexandrian,” the imperial citizen. The Alexandrian replaces “metaphysical discomfort” with “an earthly consonance, in fact, a *deus ex machina* of its own, the god of machines and crucibles” (Nietzsche, BT, Section 17). Nietzsche’s distinction between material movement and human behavior or action is thus lost. Human motive is confused

with material cause (Husserl, 1970). What is described here is the “believers and the need to believe.” It is a cowardly flight from the engine of creativity: suffering, which is to say life. It is a regression into the womb of security: an attempt to escape the unknown and bask in the positive “light” of certain knowledge, that all tomorrows will be as today. This is perfect knowledge, total generalization with just the smallest hint of a smile, what one was before one was born, before one was cast out of paradise into this despised realm of differences, inconveniences, uncertainties, and meaning.

The robot is the perfect slave, the perfect “model minority.” Automation and mindless repetition insures predictability: sound sleep. This is why everywhere the highest caste is the priestly caste and why Henri Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte promote the idea of a new priesthood of social scientists, the holders of the Truth. According to Nietzsche:

Actually, what is steaming around all of these positivistic systems is the vapor of a certain pessimistic gloom, something that smells of weariness, fatalism, disappointment, and fear of new disappointments – or else ostentatious wrath, a bad mood, the anarchism of indignation, and whatever other symptoms and masquerades of the feeling of weakness there may be (Nietzsche, GS, Book 5, Section 347)

The first victory of hyper-colonialism was that of religion, which claimed a monopoly on truth, the good, and contemplation (when the *vita contemplativa* belonged only to a *vita religiosa*). The prototypical hyper-colonial thrust came when theism gained its prefix, “mono.” The universe becomes infinitely narrow. There is no escape. Either you are with me or against me. Whenever or wherever this occurs, thinking, interpreting, becomes a deadly sin. Morality shifts from the noble, to an exclusive desire for tranquility. The “virtuous intellects” promote stupidity and act as “stolid metronomes for the slow spirit, to make sure that the faithful of the great shared faith stay together and continue their dance” (Nietzsche, GS, Book 2, Section 76). A better definition of “syncing” has yet to be written.

What could be the cure to this flight into nihilism and this hatred of life? To live dangerously, to build one’s house “on the slopes of Vesuvius,” and to send one’s ship into uncharted seas (Nietzsche, GS, Book 5, Section 282). To say a genuine “tender yes” to life, and to deny false “positivism.”

A Buddhism for Europeans

According to Western cognitivists of adaptation, the host system demands total enculturation, absolute assimilation from the individual before he or she can become "well-adjusted." Being well adjusted means the achievement of "optimal communication competence" (Harris, 1979; 1980), and of an "*increasingly inclusive and transcendental perception and awareness*" (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997: 362). This means no more out-groups, no more Other. From such a height, all difference is smoothed away. Nothing more idealistic can be imagined. The goal is just as Nietzsche noted, a "Buddhism for Europeans." The life-hating goal is nihilism, to escape "emotional defilements and to realize the spiritual world of non-distinction, which involves achieving an absolute point of view" (Suzuki quoted by Gudykunst and Kim, 1997: 365).

So what is the cure for the weariness of living, this ultimate adaptation? According to Hui-neng, the founder of the Southern school of Zen, which inspired Daisetz Suzuki, who in turn inspires Gudykunst and Kim, there are three basic concepts: unconsciousness (*wu-nien*), formlessness (*wu-hsing*), and "non-abiding" (*wu-chu*) (Suzuki, 1956: 188-189). The most adaptable person is the one without care. One who does not contend, who says, "I don't mind." This may be why Japanese Zen masters either actively supported the fascists during World War II, or were ominously silent during the atrocities. Buddhism in Japan has played a dubious role historically in actively helping to control minorities and maintain caste identities including what counted as a full-fledged "Japanese." (Kramer and Ikeda, 1997).

According to new age positivists, what is necessary is a new spiritual order (*geist*, *esprit*, mind set) that would counteract unpredictable, and therefore troublesome, disequilibria of the system. Gudykunst and Kim (1997: 366) wrongly equate integration with holism. To them, the "ideal end state" is the "intercultural person" who "transcends any type of group identity including national, racial, ethnic, gender, professional, or other sociological typifications of people" (Gudykunst and Kim, 1984: 229). This is the Alexandrian dream of global conquest and total control. Their idealistic, Hegelian enthusing continues for the "intercultural person" supposedly approaches, "...the limit of many cultures and ultimately of humanity itself. The process of becoming intercultural, then, is like climbing a high mountain. As we reach the mountaintop, we see that all paths below ultimately lead to the same summit..." (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997: 366). Here we reach the Wagnerian crescendo, the articulation of the ultimate goal of abandoning this world of differences and meaning, and evolving to a

state of comfortable, uniform numbness, the dream of total disembodiment. Thus is launched a very conservative antihumanistic attack on culture: escapism into pure syntax.

Nietzsche sees this as the sort of navel gazing idealism of repetitive chanting that soothes the bite of being alive, bringing the struggle of climbing to an end. To him it amounts to “bad conscience,” to an, “*Instinctive exclusion of all aversion, all enmity, all feeling for limitation and distancing*; consequence of an extreme capacity for suffering and irritation which already feels all resisting, all need for resistance, as an unbearable *displeasure* [...] and know blessedness (pleasure) only in no longer resisting anyone or anything, neither the evil nor the evil-doer” (Nietzsche, A, Section 164).

This is what Nietzsche calls the sickness of the will which results from miserable mortals lamenting their “unstable equilibrium between ‘animal and angel’” (Nietzsche, GM, Third Essay, Section 2). The cure is the unnatural inclination toward the ascetic ideal to escape the “shame of man,” the shame of subjective perspective, by means of the merit of impotent obedience and priestly penance. Thus we have the innumerable and mechanical working of the lips, accounting the thousand names of Vishnu, the ninety-nine names of Allah, prayer mills, rosaries, the anesthesia of the formulaic mantra. The ideal is the extreme conformity of monastic discipline, self-hating sublimation and repression of the passions, what Gudykunst and Kim (1997), quoting Suzuki, call “emotional defilements” (p. 365). Nietzsche refers to this as “chewing the cud” of “‘*om mane padme hum*’ innumerable times or, as in Benares, counting the name of the god off [one’s] fingers, *Ram-Ram-Ram*” (The Gay Science, Book Three, Section 128). Here we find the origin of pleasure in counting the same again and again with the self-hypnotizing effect of sheer quantity over quality, the certitude that each unit is redundantly identical to all others with no end in sight, no here or now. Rather than delight in the passions, they are deemed evil, and repressed at all costs. The passion to create meaning is dashed on the rocks of endless redundancy. It is also manifested in so-called modern “objectivity,” “value-freedom,” and “disinterest.”

This is what Nietzsche means by the recipe offered by “pessimistic philosophers,” like Arthur Schopenhauer, who seek a nothingness and an “alleviation of existence [such that] even the inevitable mosquito bites of the soul and the body seem much too bloody and malignant” to embrace with gusto (GS, Book One, Section 48). The mystical ideal is to not be, to hold the ascetic value that turns the noble upside down so that those who grovel the lowest, who melt into the uniform mass, the most self-deprecating, self-disintegrating are the highest! The goal is to

destroy difference, and arrest time, that criminal (the subject). For the sake of convenience, profits, and the alleviation of suffering, this is now the suggestion offered to the world from the hegemonic source of Western “social science.” To “evolve” is to cease to be, which is the religious contradiction of growth after death. There is a grand interest lurking behind the admonition to deny “subjective interests”: pragmatic hegemony.

Practical Convergence

Difference is a necessary condition for both perception and communication. But, what is suggested herein is that the current state of international hyper-colonialism is leading to a sort of global equilibrium, which means the extermination of difference with the eventual consequence being a secession of communication that does not service instrumental and administrative desire. It is not likely to succeed completely however, because it is counter to nature. While people now spend their lives working in environments where intimacy is strongly discouraged, they have turned the internet into a channel for keeping in touch with those they are allowed to care about. But, of course, organizations see such chit chatting as counterproductive and evoke the modern bifurcation of the private and public selves, in order to justify monitoring and enforcing bans on such “personal” communication.

However, global structuration continues to spread. For example, at an economic summit in Japan, in November 1998, United States President Bill Clinton warned developing countries that they must make the “necessary” behavior modifications, that is, to “face the reality” of an emerging world order, or languish in misery. Notice that “reality” is what is not yet here but “emerging.” But what is emerging is doing so with the inevitability of fatalistic facticity. Presumably, the emergence of this reality is based on nothing less than the natural force of innate law manifested in *laissez-faire*-ism, Western style political and economic institutions, individualistic psycho-morality, and so forth. Reality is described as an advancing wall that hits like a sledgehammer, and which is no one’s fault but is instead a force of nature, an act of god.

The drive for efficiencies is greatly reducing differences. This is global normalization. Semantic complexity is diminishing as cultures and languages disappear and diversity smoothes out, and communication improves. The world is being reduced to a single

“market,” a single conversation, and “developing” countries are being urged to get in, and on, line: marketing uber alles

Under the currently hyperactive conditions, migrating populations, commercialism, and progressivism, are creating niches, changing the faces of nations, lifestyles, and energizing a fusional “in-between” of cultural interaction I call cultural accent. Today, cultural fusion and accent is ubiquitous because of tremendous cultural churning and commercial penetration into mundane imagination. At the beginning of the Twenty-First Century, we are witness to a fantastic explosion of semantic diversity, enabled by preexisting cultural diversity. Ironically, the hyper-colonial process that is bringing cultures together is also destroying them. “Communication” is the watchword, the solver of all problems, the fruition of democratic ideology, an ideology criticized however, for its tendency to promote mass conformity and a general leveling. Such diverse thinkers as Plato, John Adams, Thomas Paine, Goethe, and Nietzsche have made this observation. The current explosion in semantic complexity is only an initial stage in the historical process of building a “new world order,” a motivated process which will eventually supercede diversity, taming it in the name of civilizing prosperity and secure markets, sustained profits, in a word certainty.

Difference has been fore grounded (thematized or problematized) by the advancing forces of cultural streamlining under the aegis, one world one market (Brzezinski, 1970; Gerbner, et. al., 1986; Boulding, 1990; Rostow, 1952; Schramm, 1964; Shome, 1996; Rogers, 1962; Pye, 1962; Mowlana, 1979; Mattelart, 1994; Lerner, 1958; Drucker, 1993; Greider, 1997; Korten, 1995). Like an animal that is overlooked until it is endangered, cultural difference has emerged because it is being threatened. A significant percentage of the world’s languages will become extinct in another fifty years.

Global System: Positivistic Salvation

According to J. Carey and J. Quirk (1973), a clear expression of the redemptive promise of communication, of “communicational millenarianism,” had already been promoted in a book published in 1852, The Silent Revolution; and criticized by H. D. Thoreau in 1854, as he commented on the first transatlantic cable carrying information of dubious value about the Queen of England’s colic in order to titillate and divert Americans from other immediate pursuits. Included in the millenarian promise of communication is the assurance of a new social harmony that should be created thanks to “a perfect network of electric

filaments” (Carey & Quirk, 1973). For others, like Thoreau, social harmony is in no way dependent upon technology and social engineering. In fact many, like R. W. Emerson, have thought quite the opposite.

However, Charles Cooley identified the basis of this technotronic dream, with its promise of being a source of profits, in his book Social Organization (1901), which had been inspired by Saint-Simon’s 1821 book Le systeme industriel (The industrial system). According to Cooley, the utopian hope for global communication is found in its “enlargement of mental perspective,” “mental animation” resulting from “frequent exposure to novelty.” This is similar to ideas promoted by a movement among German intellectuals prior to the Twentieth Century, who resisted the privileging of the then newly vogueish obsession with the statistical mean in “anthropometry.” The movement was called “diversitarianism,” which celebrated heterogeneity and novelty over nihilistic redundancy (it included Goethe, Novalis, F. Schiller, and A. W. Schlegel).

But Cooley failed to understand that what was driving the attainment of technologies that would defeat location (space) and duration (time) was colonial conquest, and the extermination of novelty. Comte had plainly and repeatedly argued in his various works, such as his Catechisme positiviste (The Catechism of Positive Religion), that “progress is the development of order,” and that this is the greatest mission of civilization in its attempt to help peoples not yet capable of governing themselves. Positivism is said to be synonymous with civilization, and in A General View of Positivism (1848), Comte sought nothing less than the reorganization of production and the moral order of society, on a global level.

I hope to convince my readers that positivism is more in accordance with the spontaneous tendencies of the people and of women than Catholicism, and is therefore better qualified to institute a spiritual power...Positivism is the only system which can supersede the various subversive schemes that are growing every day more dangerous to all the relations of domestic and social life. (1957:5)

Positivism proclaims itself to be both the *non plus ultra* of human development, and also the most “natural” of all philosophies (Gebser, Ger. 1949/Eng. 1985; Gudykunst & Kim, 1997: 250-251). Positivistic utilitarianism is the philosophical justification behind Anglo-European imperialism. Its social scientific incarnation is structural (formal) functionalism. It actively seeks to confuse and reverse nature and culture through

the ideology of innatism, thereby attempting to inoculate its statements from the criticism of being relativistically elitist and ethnocentric.

Gudykunst and Kim (1997), and Kim (1988) have borrowed a neo-Hegelian social-psychological model that saw something of a revival in the late 1960's, early 1970's, re-renamed it, and have applied it to communication in the intercultural context. As has happened so many times before, this ancient dialectical wheel was reinvented yet again by K. Dabrowski, in 1968, in his book, Theory of Positive Disintegration, which influenced a few others (Heath, 1977; Kao, 1975; and Jourard, 1974). Growth, just like Hegel's more sophisticated notion of a hierarchy of consciousness (today called cognitive complexity) came to be seen as a "push and pull" process. Jourard (1974) called it a process of "integration-disintegration-reintegration," moving in a Hegelian evolutionary line to "emancipation" and a "higher level of self-understanding" (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997: 362). Jourard's wording was simply changed into the "dialectical spiral" of "stress-adaptation-growth" by Kim (1988).

But how "higher" is measured without already having access to complete self-understanding so that relative progress can be perceived remains a mystery. "Growth," "evolution," "progress," "development," "maturing," all beg the old Cartesian question. Growing toward what? Without a final goal, growth, maturing and the rest cannot be measured. The unspoken assumption, that has in the past been honestly stated openly, is that the world's unwashed masses are evolving into logical positivists (of course) or glory of glories, American style consumers.

Hegel had already made "The good and growth" synonymous with evolutionary adaptation. And Hegel, though fantastical but at least being very bright, clearly stated what the goal is, the end of history, the perfect self-actualization of the Absolute, which is the imploding of closed system into a concentrated Ego smaller than a black hole singularity; a cleansing rationalization of an already pure reason. For anyone willing to read, this can be verified by looking at the Phenomenology of Mind, 1807, especially Part V where he deals with "pleasure and necessity" and "virtue in the course of the word," and Part VI where he addresses "culture" and the "ethical order." And in his Philosophy of Right, 1821, he attempts to portray Hobbes' Leviathan, the state system, as something "inherently rational."

The degree of personal "growth" and psychic progress, or "development," is correlated with the degree to which one has behaviorally conformed or "adapted." The more one adapts behaviorally, the more evolved one is, which is to say, the more one is

becoming one with that which is mimicked (the host). “Emancipation” means escaping life via the denial of this life of “opposites” (meaning), of the self and the Absolute Other. But of course this presumes one huge and antagonistic dualism, the individual versus society, which is a very modern problem. In the style of classic asceticism, the more one hates and denies the self, the more one “grows” (See chapter 4 in this volume). If this sounds like Hegel, it should because it is Hegel, only dumbed down. The consequences are the same however. The goal is the final end: a totally assimilated ego with nothing left to reflect. This, as Sartre noted, would presumably be nothingness (Sartre, 1956). But as Husserl (1982) pointed out, to speak of an empty consciousness is pure metaphysical speculation and of course, Hegel marks the high point in German idealism. So escaping from the “life of opposites,” by become one with the “Host,” which is an expected dualistic metaphysic, coming as it does from modern Western push-pull thinkers, is a “practical” suggestion for how to solve intercultural communication problems? We mere mortal parasites must converge on the godhead of dominant reality or suffer the slings and arrows of being. For Hegel, god too suffers. Being all, it is infinitely lonely and therefore, the need for creation, what many before have described, and Edward T. Hall (1983) renamed “extension transference.” Given the manifest metaphysics involved, it should not be surprising that god is creative while humans are pure conformists (sheep). Human creation is sin. Those who rebel against the system are immediately punished by their sins.

To the Benthamites, “utility” means whatever makes a person happy and eliminates suffering. This of course is already more complex than sheer behavioral conformity, especially when what makes one person happy, makes another unhappy. Hence, the conflict of interests, in the here and now. Utilitarianism combines ethics and emotion with pragmatics. The Benthamites are not so Cartesian as Gudykunst and Kim (1997) who, in many ways are their heirs, but who separate norms, as being based on morality, from rules that have no moral bases (p.17). For Jeremy Bentham, “fecundity” has to do with the “maximization” of “official aptitude,” and the likelihood or certitude that an act will create more of the same result (Bentham, 1993). He makes honest moral claims for his philosophy. He is not a “dishonest it,” one who pretends to turn oneself into a pure instrument, a “disinterested” self-polishing mirror that merely sits and reflects whatever happens by (Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, Section 207). Even the Buddha peeks.

Suffering does not come from uncertainty, but rather the sense of inescapable certitudes, inflexible deadlines like death and taxes. Even

the certainty of a pleasurable stimulus, not yet discharged, like an addict waiting for a “fix” in preparation, leads first to great anxiety and then narcotizing dysfunction. As Nietzsche notes, it is the pagan Epicurus who first understood that “The fear of pain, even of infinitely minute pain – can lead in no other way than to a *religion of love*” (Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, Section 30, author’s translation), or suicide. As many have noted, we in the West are addicted to love, and other painkillers.

Number is Positively Divine

All Aboard Aristotelian Lines

In 1867, at the Universal Exposition, the famous Saint-Simonian, Michel Chevalier declared, “the railway is the symbol of universal association” (quoted in Mattelart, Fr.1991/Eng. 1994). Already, in the 1840’s, the English were operationalizing the Aristotelian linear ideal literally in the formation of railways around the globe, such as the East Indian Railway, and the Madras Rail. Railroads shortened the time of transporting troops to squash insurrection. Thus the great rail boom in India after the Mutiny of 1857 (Mattelart, 1994: 20). The “international connection” of railroads made a qualitative leap in the articulation of imperial expansion. Cecil Rhodes writes that, “The train is an instrument of pacification which costs less than the cannon and carries further” (Rhodes, quoted in Mattelart, 1994: 20). And Marc Ferro (1978) notes that rail networks became the symbol of empire.

In the name of the train, Victoria conquered Africa from Cape to Cairo. In the name of the train, Nicholas and Alexander threatened Asia and would reach Vladivostok...To dominate the empire of the Rising Sun, or at least obtain an audience, Uncle Sam offered the Mikado a small mechanical train...Tseu-Hi’s China offered itself to the great powers in return for an express that would stop at the gates of Canton. Thus humanity in all its colors submitted to the master of the smoking engine. (p. 52)

As Kramer (1997) argues, the two great media created by Western modernism are the dissociated “constants,” space and time. And they are massifying media. Two scales came to express and operationalize the expansion of Western utilitarianism, the train gauge and the clock face. When space and time are combined and interpreted by the positivistic imagination, we have the birth of “speed,” “god’s speed.” Soon after the invention of the mechanical clock the word “speed”

(originally spelled “spede”) appeared in the English language. Robert Levine (1997) notes it was not until the late seventeenth century that the word “punctual” came to describe someone who arrived on schedule. In fact, the word “punctual,” a century earlier originally meant a person who was obsessed with the minutia of conduct, and did not come to be used as it is today until the Eighteenth Century.

What is articulated is the push to accelerate toward ordination and with it, ironically, the utopian dream of the end of change, the fabled “end of history,” the end of the cycles of rebirth, of life.

Paul Virilio has correctly recognized what Gebser described in 1949, in *Ursprung und Gegenwart* (*The Ever-Present Origin*, 1985), which is modernity’s addiction to space and anxiety about time, which when combined, manifests a chronic sense of urgency. The push is to erase location and duration by leaping to the transcendental ideals of space and time. It is correlated with the abolition of the embodied subject with all its distorting vagaries. However, Virilio, in *Speed and Politics* (1986), is only partially correct in arguing that the “rail model” was the model for the administration of time. Actually the train, which was an answer to the desire to conquer space faster, is only one of many phenomena that manifest modern temporal anxiety (Kramer, 1997; Kramer & Ikeda, forthcoming).

Dear Prudence and Time Keeping

Powerful examples of modern prosthetics of the body (trains) and mind are the mechanical clock and the computer. Clocks and computers are everywhere. We wear them on our wrists, necks, and belts, and carry them like briefcases. What marks the so-called post-colonial world is the empire of time. Everywhere, organizational culture and its master, the clock, are ordering the hyper-colonization of the very fabric of life itself. Stress on time has even given birth to the redundant mechanism the “time clock,” described in a 1901 advertisement thus: “Devices for controlling workers, patented in Germany and abroad. Latest novelty! New principle! The fastest, surest simplest way of controlling the comings and goings of workers, while remaining invisible to them” (quoted in Mattelart, 1994: 24). Synchronization is the essence of pragmatic utility. Discontinuity and incoherence are the intolerable enemies of the modern conformist.

No other measure is so pervasive and no other scale is so universally shared as clock time. While we may fight over currencies, Fahrenheit and Celsius, feet and meters, practically no one (until very recently) argues for an alternative hour. The seemingly immanent

rationality of clockworks, the ever-present “y” axis of everything noted with an ironically miniscule “t,” is a central point of globalism, and therefore, conflict between cultures.

The face of the new omnipotent god, has numbers on it. It also has hands, which point at the numbers on its face. Like the comfort of the compass points for a mariner, wellbeing is the “true” and the “certain.” But this presumes that one is going somewhere. We must go deeper to understand the immanence, the hegemonic quality, of hyper-colonialism, of development into a “higher” being. For the very idea of “intelligibility” itself has come to mean the accounting of repetitive, uniform and certain units, what Macbeth meant by the “creeping” hegemony of the “petty pace from day to day” full of a hectic “sound and fury, signifying nothing” (Shakespeare, Macbeth, Act Five, Scene Five). The more dissociated from the vagaries of the actual; that is from the capriciously impure bodily subject, the more standardized and virtuous the units. “Better,” that is, like all “betters,” from a point-of-view, from, in this instance, the point-of-view of the modern idiot ideology of objectivism which makes of life nothing but a “walking shadow.” The more “intelligible,” the more precisely minute the measure, the “better.” The hair is split until precisely nothing is left.

Thus, in 1993, the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Boulder Colorado replaced the atomic clock NIST-6, which could only guarantee to be “true” to the second every 300,000 years, with NIST-7, which promises to not vary by more than a second for a million years. Indeed, keeping one's promise, fidelity, reliability, and invariance are central issues for measurement and predictable *status quo*. Good time keeping was first promoted as a timeless virtue. The goal is to make good people and a good society. “Good” people are reduced to being consistently dependable, “just like clockwork.” The very concept of “integrity” has come to mean being precise, changeless, and predictable. With the advent of modernity, for the first time in history, people could become “backward” because there was invented a positive “forward” type person. People could also become “obsolete” and even their mechanical nervous systems could “break down.”

The promotion of time, as a commodity, a regulator of virtue, and as a necessary instrument for industrial wellbeing, is clearly embodied in the efforts of Samuel Langley and Leonard Waldo. According to the historian Michael O'Malley (1990), in 1860 there were over 70 time zones in the United States. The localization of time was never a problem until mass transit and express freight began to conquer distances rapidly and actualize the sacred ideal of manifest destiny, the

realization of fate by making it happen (pure contradiction). Speed of movement and thought had increased enough to make a discernable difference, even on a global level: lagging, such as jet lag and culture lag, became obvious, and evaluated as "retarded development," "immaturity."

Train schedules were nearly impossible to coordinate. In the interest of efficiency and profit, Langley, who was director of an observatory in Allegheny, Pennsylvania during the latter half of the 1800's, began to sell time signals via telegraph to industrial businesses. He referred to local time as a "fiction" and a "relic of antiquity...which the progress of centralization, and the interchange of commerce and travel" rendered obsolete (quoted by Levine, 1997:66).

This is a manifestation of the larger attack on the situated subject as a fallible source of variance and therefore, a distorting corrupter of the logic of transcendental ordination. The true "reality," as opposed to subjectively embodied "fiction," is depersonalized, objectified. This is achieved via the discursive magic of quantifying operationalization, the generative quality of operational measurement is very well exemplified by the invention of clock time.⁵ As an extra-human standard that can be applied to judge individuals, truth comes to be accepted as a product of transcendental method. Truth is exteriorized and haptified, and then turned back upon those who know it to measure them from the transcendental perspective of a set of disembodied interests, rules, and absolute values. As a consequence of this form of evaluation, new identities have been invented such as "slowpoke" and "speedster." Internationally, this was already observed some decades ago by L. W. Pye (1962), and H. Mowlana (1979).

Waldo, director of the time service at Harvard and Yale during the late Nineteenth Century, and also founder of the lucrative Standard Time Company, argued that time keeping is a moral obligation that should be vested only in the hands of scientists and their "master" clocks to which other "regulating authorities" could subscribe. Indeed, according to the positivist Waldo, it was the moral obligation of such authorities to train disorganized workers in the pious habit of punctuality. "The furnishing of correct time is educational in its nature, for it inculcates in the masses a certain precision in doing the daily work of life which conduces perhaps, to a sounder morality" (Waldo quoted by Levine, 1997: 66). Waldo, like Langley, became a great proselytizer of time standardization as a means to elevate the morality of workers. Furthermore, working by the "time-clock" was seen as a great benefit by imposing a "strict impartiality" regarding wages for time labored.

The first clock manufacturing companies, such as the Electric Signal Clock Company, also espoused the moral value of synchronization. In its 1891 catalog, the Electric Signal Clock Company claims, "If there is one virtue that should be cultivated more than any other by him who would succeed in life, it is punctuality" (quoted in Levine, 1997:76). And the ad copy promoting their top-of-the-line clock, the "Autocrat," claims that it "gives military precision, and teaches practicality, promptness and precision wherever adopted. A school, office or factory installing this system" (quoted in Levine, 1997:67). It is noteworthy that the copywriter saw fit to use the word "precision" twice in one sentence. "Precision" is important for "functional fit."

Order, promptness and regularity came to be held as cardinal virtues. But above all, and a necessary condition for these is conformity. These values were widely espoused in the sales literature of clock companies. As schools began to install centralized bell systems, it is no mere accident that the central authority, and often sole controller of the school's time system, was called "the principle." The identification of knowledge with measurement is expressed by the ancient Greeks who called the first and most primitive instrument of time measurement (a shadow-pole stuck in the ground) a *gnomon* from "to know."

More recently, the Swiss watchmaker Swatch, has proposed a new base ten time keeping standard that would be absolutely dissociative, eliminating all time zones, all difference (Dutton, 1999). The new time standard is called "internet time." Swatch proposes to use Biel, Switzerland, the location of their corporate headquarters, as the new meridian reference point. This eclipsing of nation-state power by corporate power, is yet another example of hyper-dissociation whereby even the representational nature of government is abandoned. Swatch proposes that "netizens" use "beats" instead of seconds. The day would be divided into 1000 beats. Midnight, Biel time, would be 000, and noon would be at 500 Internet Time. The world already has a universal time system called "Universal Coordinated Time," which was established more than twenty-five years ago by the Bureau International des Poids et Mesures in France. But Internet Time would entirely eliminate time zones so that netizens anywhere on the globe would be on the same time and could schedule internet meetings more easily. The problem Swatch has not solved however, is that it cannot dissociate and disembodiment time entirely. Humans are still embodied consciousnesses, which means they tend to sleep when it is dark, which of course, is not at the same time for everyone on the planet.

Consequently, using Internet time to schedule global cyber-meetings would catch some people in bed.

Clock time is an “extension transference” that harnesses its creators, making them into followers of an ideal, to become predictable schedule-keepers (Hall, 1983). The word “perfectionist” says it all.

At the beginning of the Twentieth Century, Sigmund Von Radecki proclaimed the new invention, the wristwatch, the, “handcuff of our time” (quoted by Kahlert, Muhe, and Brunner, 1986). Timepieces have “...penetrated deeper into our personal space” than any other technology (Levine, 1997; Kahlert, Muhe, and Brunner, 1986). But by the time the wristwatch was invented, machine time had already defused through the modern Western psyche.

Utilitarianism, including the conventionalism of synchronized watches, is perhaps the clearest cultural prejudice emerging out of modern colonial Europe. It is expressed as the modern worship of administrative instrumentalism and the numerical average (mass) human: the common denominating sameness that ties the modern mass of aggregate individuals together. Bureaucratic rationality, in the service of utility is manifested as secular ordination on a global scale. Even Darwin had been most attentive to diversity.

The Global City

What is behind the surge toward globalization is the demand for accelerating the accumulation of power, which has produced the pragmatic “cult of efficiency” (Ellul, 1964). Who is most interested in efficient intercultural communications? Governments and corporations. Here is born the handmaiden of social “science” in the form of the urban consultant. The ideology of conformism has a nice veneer of enhancing progress, productivity, wellbeing, and “community.” But progress toward what? And develop into whom? Gudykunst and Kim (1997) tell us the new “transcultural person.” Anyone who maintains their national, ethnic, and/or regional identities are retarded in their psychic evolution.

What we are witness to at the turn of the Twenty-First Century is the instituting of a whole new way of interacting: cybernetics. We live, as Zbigniew Brzezinski (1970) argued, not in a global village, but a global city (Kramer, 1998).

So what is the difference? The modern systemized urban milieu is very different from the Mesolithic hamlet (Mumford, 1961). We must hasten to remind ourselves that much of humanity still lives just such a lifestyle but it is vanishing before our eyes, what Daniel Learner (1958)

has called “the passing of traditional society”; modernization. Extending the work of Patrick Geddes and Mumford, Brzezinski’s description of our technotronic society is more correct than Marshal McLuhan’s (1964) erroneous claim that the world is “retribalizing.” The technotronic society is characterized by fragmentation, isolation, ego-hypertrophy, competition, and other qualities that remind one of Ferdinand Toennies’ (1957) conceptualization of instrumental, *Gesellschaft* culture, not organic *Gemeinschaft* culture, which emerges out of common needs, not competing interests. Brzezinski’s work, when combined with Mumford, Teilhard de Chardin (1959), and Gebser, goes far to explain the qualitative difference between living in a village, among intimate acquaintances (probably kin), and living in a modern city where the vast majority of people one sees everyday are complete strangers, or even more dissociated, disembodied “netizens.”

With the city comes dissociation, abstraction, and alienation. The stranger is a consequence of cosmopolis, that is, the mixing of worlds. As Simmel (1950) following Nietzsche noted, there is an uncanny sense to the stranger who behaves more or less “normally” and shares a common language but harbors a different cosmology, different beliefs and values. Under such conditions everyday interaction is either complicated or ignored in favor of a much less organic, more instrumental, superficial mode of interaction; in a word, a utilitarian mode of being, the reduction of human comportment to physical, “functional” behavior. In the interest of mechanical efficiency, issues like meaning, value, and purpose are devalued and even avoided as inefficient condiments to life.

Like modern architecture’s minimalistic reductionism compared with the superabundant wealth of gothic romanticism that foreshadowed a culture on the verge of explosive creativity, functionalism is formalistically ideal. Syntax takes existential precedence over semantics. To the modern who denigrates history and context and wants “only the facts,” culture, along with the subject, is ignored as merely contingent content within a universal syntax. Hence, the move toward apolitical nihilism -- robotics. Not only are artificial languages created but even artificial (organizational) “cultures” are consciously instituted to serve as mere instruments of efficient production (Deetz, 1992). And discourse too is studied and manipulated as a conscious cold-blooded tool for “compliance gaining.” Marwell and Schmitt (1967) define “compliance” as an exchange for some other resource supplied by the compliance seeker. This is the world of *quid pro quo*, a thoroughly politicized and economized, in Nietzschean terms “ignoble,” world where even “deception” is deceptively defined

as not the same as “lying.” For the actual people who resist the virtual structure, they may very likely be labeled mentally ill, and in need of a medication like Valium or Ritalin in order to contain vitality within pre-established lines of what is “appropriate” and “competent.”⁶

The robot is the perfect model minority. It is absolutely adaptable to the will of the “mainstream.” It has no expectations, values or motives and is thus very compliant, “flexible.” Robots have no interests; they are even better than human chattel for they are incapable of subjective thought and resistance. Hyper-conservative cognitivists are working overtime these days to even convince us that automated calculation is the very essence of intelligence. But the Princeton scholar Robert Jahn (1981) notes that this is as ridiculous as believing that there are actors in one’s television set.

The Machine Makes Strangers, Common

“The machine,” the city, tends to exhibit an emphasis on instrumental relationships, division of labor, an emphasis on interconnectivity (which is a sure sign of dissociation), mobility of all sorts and, due to a decline in collective obligation and “social debt,” a ferocious status struggle among discrete individuals (Gebser, 1985; Morris, 1969; Reisman, 1950). As mentioned above, the “stranger” is a product of the city. Everyone is fragmented into public and private selves and then subdivided further into cognitive, affective and operational selves (Gudykunst and Kim, 351). The prototype for the machine and the logic of gearing oneself to the imperatives of modern life is the clockwork mechanism (Mumford, 1934). Ironically, given McLuhan’s perspective, even the abilities to communicate and travel have become very important criteria for establishing and maintaining status in the modern world. In other words, expensive communication and transportation technologies and rarified skills do as much to divide populations as to bring them together.

While the village is a community, a city is an aggregate of competing worldviews and interests that are “functional.” Fearing a blown engine of chaos, structural functionalism is an attempt to get a grip on, to be the governor for, this overheating dynamo, and to steer within the lines. This strain and fear indicates an impoverished vision, like that expressed in the phrase a “functional addict.” This is why transcending law becomes necessary (Mumford, 1961). Unlike the village milieu, in the city, common values and expectations cannot be assumed. The gap between the haves and have-nots also grows enormously with the development of the city. In the city, tribal identity

gives way to social contract and economic class. Law, both sacred and later split off into the secular, is fixed, written down and used to enforce and legitimize social structures (Mumford, 1961; Cassirer, 1944; Innis, 1950; Ong, 1982). As kinship obligation distantiates into law, everyone is made equal “under” it. A special class of professional enforcers, such as the police, becomes a permanent institution (Morris, 1969). Power differential becomes classified and institutionalized. Here we find not only the birth of the stranger, but also huge differences in power and material wealth as well as super-cruelty and cynicism. Here too we find a self-destructive behavior almost nonexistent in the relatively (materially) poor village milieu: suicide.

The Relentless Drizzle Of Sameness

The difference between a village and a city is profound. Modern hyper-colonialism is not like the old imperial form of colonialism, which amounted to clashing communities. Hyper-colonialism is a manifestation of the global city. It works at the level of “psychic disintegration.” It hegemonically convinces millions that they should abandon the land and old ways and flood toward the megalopolis like moths to a flame. The modern hypertrophic ego longs for a “clean, well lighted place” (Hemingway, 1990). Mechanical functionalism and efficiency is semantically minimalist. It was born in the first permanent, “professional” military culture and then, much later applied to the assembly line. But now modernity, with its stress on nationalistic expansion based on the centralized model of empire, ala Imperial Rome, has been superceded.

Postmodern hyper-colonialism is manifested as a dispersion of interest that has no physical center, but rather a focused desire. This desire is articulated in the idea of development promoted by Walt Rostow (1952) and operationalized by Everett Rogers (1962; 1969), and Wilbur Schramm (1964). But while Rogers (1976; 1978) has abandoned the paradigm of development communication he helped to launch, Gundykunst and Kim continue to cling to an obsolete and ethnocentric vision. For those who read the adaptation theorists, the question that continues to beg is what are the world’s people supposed to “developmentally evolve” into? What is the nature of the impending reality, “the” future that is “here today?” What are “they” supposed to realize when they become “us?” Whose telos is becoming dominant? Only in such a world is “identity crisis” thinkable.

The monotony of meaning and the suppression of subjective ambiguity is the goal. As Plato demanded, in utopia, poets must be

banned. But, in the Twentieth Century we have the monumental failure of *Principia Mathematica* (1967) in which the two great logical positivists Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell tried to create a language that could resist interpretation. Nothing short of what Barnett Pearce calls the “coordinated management of meaning,” which is a straight line to nihilism! (Pearce, 1976). This can amount to what Ernest Bormann (1985; 1986) has called a “symbolic convergence” among people feeling the “force of [shared] fantasy,” monoculture. Another way to see this process toward social equilibrium and self-imposed monotony is to see it as “groupthink” accompanied by peer pressure to silence deviant voices, what John Murphy and Jung Min Choi (1992) call “symbolic violence” (Janis, 1982; Noelle-Neumann, 1984). Walter Fisher (1987) and Lewin (1948) happily call this a rational coalescence around a common “coherent” story with “fidelity,” a kind of “cohesiveness” that business gurus worship as expansive “synergy.” For “neo-liberals” we have Gaia.

Hyper-colonialism is about fantasy, space, mind, and time. It is about the politics of desire, the manipulation of identities, wants and dreams, and acceleration. Manipulation is in the interest of the “new Human,” the new “scientific Human.” This is the propaganda of both the Left and Right Hegelians. While Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* is the creative child at daybreak, the producer, the “new man” of the Hegelians is the final product of system, the *caput mortuum* of creativity, the robot. Expectations have increased exponentially, including the expectation of accomplishment and acquisition. Even progress has become a permanent redundancy. It is its own changeless goal. Left and Right Hegelians alike, await the birth of the new “rational,” enlightened person. It is nothing less than the conquest of the old by a new conceptualization of the human being as an innately and exclusively economic animal. The economy of ratio exchange has been cast as a behavioral synonym for all interaction (Homans, 1954). Life is reducible to a win/lose struggle. For those with strong family resemblances; the social Darwinists, Saint-Simonians, Benthamites, logical positivists, and Spencerians, all interaction, all communication is purely instrumental, and in the final case, combative. Dualism in the form of dialectical logic is Reality. The universe is one vast algorithm (Holland, 1975), one vast ledger book. Only two opposing “values” are permitted in logic. Everything is an experiment, a test to see if one passes and goes to heaven (survives), or fails and goes to hell (oblivion).

Hyper-colonialism means the relentless drive toward homogenization (Kramer, 1992: 46,47). As Pascal said, hell is

singularly defined as the irrational. Alternately, Hans-George Gadamer (1981), in his book Reason in the Age of Science, is careful to de-link the modern concept of technical rationality from classical reason. He also refers to the “advancing fog of sameness.” Similarly, Paul Feyerabend (1987) reflecting on the impending “world culture,” observes that:

By now Western forms of life are found in the most remote corners of the world and have changed the habits of people who only a few decades ago were unaware of their existence. Cultural differences disappear, indigenous crafts, customs, institutions are being replaced by Western objects, customs, organizational forms (Feyerabend, 1987: 2-3)

What is “better” has been clarified. Morris (1969) argues that the combination of the “status struggle” in modern industrialized societies, along with the capitalistic commodification of culture, is leading to the elimination of physical culture and the advent of a “new monotony” of “dreary uniformity” (Morris, 1969: 67). What is occurring is the mass-production of cheap imitations of high-status goods. “High status,” means Western. Western products are “good” goods. This has made indigenous folk art and crafts into low-status artifacts. The consequence is that they are being replaced by cheap reproductions of the “great masters.” Folk music is being eliminated by miniaturized recordings, and peasant craftsmanship by mass-produced plastic imitations of more expensive goods.

Ironically, just as they are being driven into extinction, genuine folk arts like masks from Africa and jewelry from Indonesia are being hyper-commodified to the status of being “priceless treasures” by collectors in the industrial centers of the new world order. “Folklore societies have been rapidly formed to bewail and reverse this trend, but the damage has already been done. At best, all they can achieve is to act as folk-culture taxidermists” (Morris, 1969:67). A new kind of decontextualized gaze and space, where the dead come to their final resting places in static silence and to be displayed as colonial booty, has been invented: the museum (Ikeda & Kramer, 1998). The traditional Other is to be enshrined, preserved in mason jars filled with the formaldehyde of curiosity and pecuniary truth, written off, and written onto official labels and cards placed next to the exhibition of what once was.

Thus, we have the advent of the final dream of all Alexandrian imperialists: one world, one managed meaning, one logic, and one “world citizen” variously celebrated as the “universal person” (Walsh,

1973), the “meta-identity,” the “transcultural identity” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997), and/or “species identity” (Boulding, 1990). Now that we have a definite goal, we can have progress (toward it). As Gudykunst and Kim describe the “psychic evolution” to nirvanic transcendence, “we rise above the hidden forces of culture and discover that there are many ways to be ‘good,’ ‘true,’ and ‘beautiful’” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997: 366). But, culture is precisely what is not hidden. It is the home of the “good,” the “true,” and the “beautiful.”

This has been born out by empirical research conducted among the Asian-Indian community throughout the United States by Archana Pathak (1998) who surveyed 571 Asian-Indian-Americans based on a random sample of over 200,000 Asian-Indian households, and conducted in-depth interviews with 27 individuals in the Los Angeles area. The fusion of cultural forms shows up in every aspect of life including; cuisine, clothing and hairstyles, speech patterns (paralinguistics as well as linguistics), courtship patterns, business practices, and so forth. And there is no goal, no end in sight, and so progressive (positivistic) evolution is senseless. As Jacques Derrida (1981) argues, the dissemination of meanings continues indefinitely. With each new “reading” interpretations shift to yield something new. As Barthes (1974) argues in *S/Z*, and Claude Levi-Strauss came to grudgingly admit, one cannot establish once and for all the absolutely privileged and changeless meaning of any text.

For instance, Asian Indian youth have taken the American practice of forming juvenile gangs and created their own versions with Hindi graffiti, Indian weapons, handsigns, clothing, and even styles of fighting which are unique. This is not simply the formation of a “third culture,” for it involves a great deal of code switching including new rules of appropriate and competent communication. The “third culture” theory is an extension of the linear idea of evolutionary development and reintegrating homogenization, not the integration of discrete cultural forms, which maintain their integrity, but with “accents” added. Nothing is erased or “unlearned.” Instead cultural valences are borrowed, used, discarded, changed. The idea of a “third culture” is a strange sort of politically correct ideology masquerading as social science (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997; Gudykunst, Wiseman & Hammer, 1977). It predicts a new stability that is not essential to cultural churning.

Underlying the theory of a third culture is not a third cultural value system but plain old European utilitarianism defined as communication “effectiveness” (Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978; Gudykunst, Wiseman & Hammer, 1977). The Aristotelian penchant for

enumerating phenomena in sequence holds little to no explanatory value here. Instead, there are no fixed cultures to label “one,” “two,” or whatever.

Platonists fail to appreciate the consequences that follow from the demise of embodied situatedness: the extermination of identity, and meaning, of uncertain spontaneity, the cradle of creativity and discovery. They are, like Plato, promoting the most hidden and powerful of all forces, the most ephemeral of all shimmering thoughts, that imaginal which allows the “mindfully enlightened” to fly above all the rest, all subsistent forces like the good, the true, and the beautiful. All values become the same: all equally contingent under the gaze of the enlightened one. Relativity is elevated to an absolute truth, and situational ethics and aesthetics come to be seen from this absolute height as lost children. This ultimate view, this administrating and organizing super-vision presumes itself to be the absolute “good” of transcendental escapism, total objectivity. All commitments are “released.” The danger of this is that such promoters of the meta-good of being objectively, super humanly “beyond good and evil,” do not seem to realize that identity (meaning) is dependent upon difference, not the mystical transcending of it (Heidegger, 1969).

Hostile Environments and Learning Self-Hate

Humans, unlike other, shall we say, dumb animals, do not reactively adapt to hostile environments, but instead proactively adapt the environment to their wants and needs. To recap, according to adaptation theory however, in order to be happy one must act and think as much like the mainstream culture as possible. In fact, “assimilation” is regarded by Gudykunst and Kim as the “highest degree of adaptation theoretically conceivable” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997:338). They also argue that “assimilation,” which equals “resocialization” via “deculturation” and personal “disintegration” followed by “acculturation” (but they mean enculturation since they are speaking of the individual, but there is ambiguity here) and “reintegration,” leads to “functional fitness” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997:338). They assume, that this is good although it is “for most people...a lifetime goal” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997:338).⁷

But this presents an especially difficult situation if the Romans hate you, or if they expect you to be different. An example of this is when Japanese call non-Japanese who act too Japanese, *henna gaijin* (strange foreigners). Under such conditions, the more you mimic the host the more they think that there is something wrong with you. Natives the

world over, not just Japanese, don't necessarily feel comfortable with strangers "going native" on them. If adaptation has to do with not violating expectations, then one must conform by not conforming. Similarly, what if you are not "mainstream" by their definition, and they hate you categorically? You are a minority. Then in order to be happy, well adjusted and a success at adaptation, one should hate oneself. The stupidity of such a self-contradicting and naïve prescription for fitting in where one is explicitly not wanted, was already powerfully critiqued by W. E. B. DuBois in his theory of double-consciousness 50 years before the theory of intercultural adaptation was published.

There are such things as hostile environments and it would be irrational to expect the victim to be satisfied with such a condition. But, according to Gudykunst and Kim (1997), if one is not satisfied then one is "mentally ill" (p. 351-352). According to this, the so-called "host" cultural system could never be at fault. Nor could the system be breached and its rules modified. The goal of adaptation leads to the most conservative of all social structural ethics, that the status quo, no matter its contents is always right. Any effort at modification is by definition mental illness. If slaves, for instance, are unsatisfied and unhappy with their lot as subhuman and self-hating, then they are mentally ill. No criteria are offered for assessing the justice or humanity of the system.

It is laudable that Kim has acknowledged the hermeneutic fact that "adaptability" is not entirely dependent upon a person's psychological makeup, that at least in some measure adaptability is an interactive phenomenon that includes the receptivity of the host environment operationalized as "conformity pressure" (Kim, 1988). But receptivity itself varies with the number of immigrants that have already entered the environment and changed it. Also receptivity varies according to the many aspects of interactive identity exhibited by the sojourner such as wealth, age, perceived social station, gender, race, and so forth. In short, adaptation is an interactive phenomenon, a fusion of horizons, such that one cannot assign a single receptivity value to a host environment. Just as "niches," exist only as they interactively happen through mutual accommodation between the host and the particular sojourner, so too "receptivity" exists only in the fusional act of contact and not before or after. In short, an environment is not receptive *sui generis*, in and of itself. Receptivity is a boundary condition. It is neither "in my head" nor "out there." It is a relational phenomenon. According to the hermeneutics of cultural fusion, "adaptability" is not a

unilinear, single dimensional sort of variable. Hence, it is unpredictable. Life is a continual experiment.

As Nietzsche consistently argued knowledge, in so far as it is possible at all, is perspectival. This is why, the sense of say Los Angeles for a Maung farmer from Burma is very different from the sense it has for a medical physician from Paris. In so far as either can make sense of and negotiate and learn from the new environment, they must not erase their prior understandings of the world, but rely on them and build on them.

Hermeneutic Circle, Not a Vicious Loop

Organism and environment converge as a single ecological process characterized by both passive and active synthetic properties (Husserl, 1982). All “boundaries” are permeably “fuzzy.” All definitions are ambiguous. Organism and environment are discrete only in theory, and do not exhibit mechanical fit so much as harmonic convergence or sympathy. Like two rooms that share a common wall that defines them, the individual and the environment share a common skin. They form a process of co-constituting interpenetrating fusion. Take for instance the powerful fusional forces that Black slave musical forms have had with European religious ideology, musical instruments, and conventions. Here in the polymorphic churn of cultural uncertainty. And innovation has born many American musical forms including jazz, gospel, rhythm and blues, and rock and roll. Accents are born in the thick boundary condition where fusion happens. Accents continually proliferate.

If intercultural communication theory were taken to its logical conclusion there could be only two paths to the same result. Either, nothing would change because all cultures would be self-adaptive, and status quo would dominate forever. Or, starting with one privileged culture, everything else would change (adapt), until it reached global equifinality. In both cases, the consequence is nihilistic stasis, the Hegelian end of history.

The hermeneutic circle is more complex than the simple feedback loop of cybernetics. In cybernetics, as information, temperature for instance, is fed back to a thermostat it adjusts accordingly turning heat on or off in order to maintain a status quo climate. The thermostat is a closed system which affects its environment but which does not affect itself because it is not part of the environment. Thus, it is a self-monitoring closed surveillance and control system. It does not think about its options because it has none and could not think about them even if it did. However, according to the hermeneutic circle, which is

not a mechanistic explanation but instead attempts to explain human integral intelligence, as information comes to a person they can be fundamentally changed, which will in turn alter their interpretation of future information.

Thus, to stick with the thermostatic example, the hermeneutic circle is not a vicious or dumb circle. Instead, as information is “fed back,” the actual structure of the conscious thermostat itself is altered and so too is its future environment because it is an integral “part” of the environment. In other words, the information fed back to the thermostat would alter how the thermostat “interprets” future temperatures. This is called learning. It involves accrual and growth. It is not a zero sum cybernetic cycle that merely repeats the same over and over.

Hermeneutics involves a morphology of implications whereby the very structure of the system is changed. Opportunities are actively created. Freedom is a consequence of action. Furthermore, the empty space between cause – effect is filled with assessment and valuation. As the very structure of the thermostat changes the control of, and the temperature changes. Thermostat, temperature, how they relate to each other, and their shared boundary (environment) all change. The essential quality of any boundary is that it is shared by at least two phenomena, possibly many more as dimensions accrue. Boundaries are relational phenomena, which means that adjacencies are always mutually implicated and co-constituted. Cultural fusion, being based on hermeneutics rather than cybernetics, takes an ecological, rather than a mechanical approach to communication generally, including communication in intercultural contexts. Cybernetics constitutes a linear loop with discrete and self-sufficient messages passing between receivers and senders. Fusion is based on the theory of a semantic field including subjective interpretation that does not presume that the sender and the receiver share the “same picture” in their two heads (Kramer 1997). Any such presumption is pure metaphysical speculation for even if they did share exactly the same meaning such a state is fundamentally indeterminate.

The classic example of the hermeneutic circle is the self-consciousness of situatedness, which Gadamer (1975) calls *Wirkungsgeschichtliche Bewusstsein*. This nearly “untranslatable” phrase means the awareness of standing within a still operant context, which is constituted of many dimensions including history and social conditions (Hoy, 1978: 63). In other words, this is a condition of being somewhat aware of one’s own limitations, including the limits of knowing the limits, of embracing prejudice as that which enables perception, not as merely “noise” or filtered “distortion.” Such enabling

limits include; culture, gender, age, race, and other influences and dimensions of identity that constitute point-of-view. According to the theory of cultural fusion, such limitations are not entirely perceivable or escapable, nor would such a fate be desirable for it would be tantamount to death. Consciousness presumes perspective. To be aware is to be aware of something, from somewhere (limited perspective). When the subject is eliminated so is the possibility of knowing.

The Narcissism of Adaptation Theory

When Nietzscheans insist that life is suffering, they also insist that this is a necessary condition for the co-constitutional genesis of happiness. All meanings and identities come from difference and there is both pride and prejudice. The theory of cultural fusion attempts to explain what is the case, not offer any suggestions for what ought to be or any sermons for escaping suffering, or mystically transforming oneself to a realm beyond good and evil. Many scholars have declared the model minority to be an idealistic myth and a rather vicious one at that, for it lends itself to political rhetoric that puts up a facade of empirical evidence that supposedly demonstrates what a “good” minority person is like opposed to a “bad” one. The work of Thomas Sowell (1994) is a good example of empirically “demonstrating” that some groups are “better” than others. The problem is that Sowell, like anyone attempting to make a specific argument with the use of data, selects his facts carefully and organizes them in a way that agrees with his pre-established criteria and definition of what “success” is. For him, success is purely economic. Educational attainment is merely a precursor to this arch-criteria. So, as is to be expected, rich groups are “smarter,” more “productive,” and overall “better” than poorer ones. There is no suggestion that structural injustice and the exploitation of one group by another might account for the difference. In fact, Sowell argues that the same groups are “successful” no matter where they go. They bring their wealth building skills with them.

If the model minority is the one that most conforms to the ideal given to it by the mainstream “host” culture, then it is fairly easy to explain why African-Americans tend to be seen as less exemplary than other model minorities. What do Black American intellectuals say about this? Anthony Lemelle points out that:

It is never demonstrated that the masses of black Americans wished for inclusion in U.S. political institutions, though some did...The

logical support for the bias of inclusion is that more inclusion is synonymous with more progress...In the end, there is only an apology for the fact that the election of more blacks has been accompanied by deterioration in the quality of African-American life (Lemelle, 1993: 63)

Joining a country club is very different from starting a different kind of club altogether. Lemelle's defense of difference, of subculture is hardly a novel idea. Ralph Ellison (1966), James Baldwin and Margaret Mead (1971), Oscar Handlin (1966), and others argue that the dream of inclusion is actually a narcissistic projection of white America. White America presumes that everyone wants to become like them, to "develop," which means to develop into them, to rise to a "higher level," like them (see Baldwin's Darwin and the Humanities, 1909). Ellison puts it this way, "I wish that we should dispense with this idea that we are begging to get in somewhere" (Ellison, 1966: 437). Handlin argues that for this reason, "Desegregation will not solve any of the important economic, social, and political problems of American life" (Handlin, 1966: 284). These authors are saying that blacks don't want to be white. In fact, they don't want to be American if that means becoming white, and only white. Besides, white America thus far shows no sign of allowing that to happen even if Blacks wanted it to.

It may be that if one grows up underprivileged and systematically violated by a society, and remains there as an adult, then they will resist that system. Their orientation or attitude towards it will be negative. One might say that they have few delusions about it. But if someone willfully seeks out a new life in a new country, like Korean immigrants in North America, then it is probably safe to say that they want to be there and believe in its promises of opportunity. This may be "delusional," but once again, that tends toward a kind of metaphysical dualism that I have bracketed. The hopes and dreams and expectations may be "far fetched" but they are as real as anything. And, like a placebo, the "delusion," the "false" consciousness, may work wonders. With naïve faith, they may create niches that otherwise would not occur. They will be more likely to strive to "succeed," by their own criteria and expectations, and not by simply mimicking White behavior, which may very well be impossible, but by creating a new path to success, a new niche exploiting skills they have brought with them. The placebo of hope may have self-fulfilling effects. If one keeps in mind that the quality of the relationship "in-between" the organism and the environment is an interactive process where awaring happens, then this makes sense, so long as the environment is somewhat receptive. As

Husserl argued (1982), attitude is a decisive factor in perception, and environmental receptivity.

Those who are disenfranchised may look at the successes of the conformists with *ressentiment* (see chapter 4 in this volume). Hate, hurts the hater as much or more than the hated. Negative feelings can lead to self-defeat. Now keep in mind, I am comparing a group of sojourners with an indigenous minority. And also notice that the sojourners may do better and be more “successful” than the indigenous minority. Intercultural adaptation theory cannot account for this. This reality indicates that the “host” offers many behaviors to mimic and that not many Koreans probably choose to mimic Black American sub-cultural styles and accents. It could be that Black Americans also resent this, that they have not been selected for the honor of imitation. Imitation is, after all, the greatest form of flattery.

Obviously, groups maintain their identities by refusing to imitate other groups. So it only makes sense that many Black Americans resist acting like White Euro-Americans. Given the historical context, their style of life has actually proven to be very resilient but still lagging behind in terms of economic prosperity. If this improves, relative to Euro-Americans, then immigrants can be expected to imitate Black American culture more, because “success” always draws more imitators than “failure.” As for Korean immigrants, by the very act of immigrating they demonstrate their readiness to imitate, and even internalize another culture. Plus, they bring skills and differences with them that can add to the cultural churn, and be marketable, for uniqueness is an important part of a marketable product or skill. Thus, there are literally thousands of Koreans making good livings in North America teaching Tae Kwon Do. If they had stayed in Korea, most probably this would not have proven to be a very lucrative career choice.

But, as research in diasporic phenomena strongly demonstrates, falling leaves do indeed return to the roots. While people immigrate to the United States (for instance), work hard to fit in and succeed, they are often dismayed when the first born generation grows up to be more comfortable, less anxious, “lazy,” in a word “Americanized!” This was, and was not, the goal that the first generation immigrants had intended. It is at such a point that they may reflect and become confused about just what it was that they had intended. Often the diasporic myth emerges here, that they had always intended to come, make money, and then return. But to return after this crisis means taking their American children to a foreign country, which also happens to be their “home.” Suddenly, what “home” is and means becomes very problematic. Very

often, it exists only in their nostalgic imaginations for when they return “home,” it looks like America!

But often they do not discover all of this until they find Americans living under their roof and perhaps marrying an American of a different race. Then the calamity emerges, and their so-called adaptive acumen falters terribly. In this instance, adaptation is the problem. The first generation immigrants may be a great economic success but they see themselves as a parental failure. The children can’t even speak Korean, do not know the folklore, cannot sing the songs, and worst of all, they don’t care, or strongly resist it! They have succeeded so well at “adaptation” that it is a disaster.

Meanwhile, Black Americans typically cannot appreciate this dilemma of being unable to “go home.” Koreans cannot appreciate some Black resistors who hate home. Can this be “fixed” by dialogue, by the millenarian promise of communication? No. It can lead to understanding and the dissemination of meaning perhaps, but it will not eliminate the pain. Cultural fusion theory does not offer such salvific hope as does intercultural adaptation theory. But also, it is suggested that everyone has his or her particular breed of pain to bear and that it is a necessary condition to living.

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Notes

1. This is very Zen-like. While William Gudykunst refers to Zen as his grounding doctrine, one thing in passing, D. T. Suzuki is not the only version of Zen. Nevertheless, if one look at the authorized preface to D. T. Suzuki's classic *Introduction to Zen*, what does one find but a reference to the similarities between phenomenology (specifically Heidegger) and Zen!

2. While this metaphysics has been recognized and sidestepped by the likes of Friedrich Nietzsche, the late Ludwig Wittgenstein, and the late Edmund Husserl, these tend to be literatures that Professors Gudykunst and Kim are unfamiliar with.

3. There is not enough space to take this diversion. But briefly, the story of the American Legion's activist struggle during World War II against conservative forces for the enactment of the 1944 "G.I. Bill," is very instructive. It grew out of the infamous Bonus march and riot, which was a clash between impoverished World War I veterans and the United States Government in Washington, D. C., 1932. The point is that only those enjoying naïve privilege promote passive adaptation, for their own privilege was gained by someone else's brutal struggle. This defines being spoiled.

4. In referential writing for instance, there is a clear passage from the signifier to the signified, reinforcing established, compulsory reality. Roman Jakobson (1971) argues that this nightmare of positivistic dreams is impossible. Perhaps because of his experiment with Levi-Strauss, to structurally, "scientifically," interpret Baud lair's *Les chats*, Jakobson comes to argue "meaning is not a stable, predetermined entity which passes, untrammled, from sender to receiver. The very nature of language prohibits this...the transmission process [is] never in perfect 'balance'" (Hawkes, 1977: 84).

5. See E. Kramer (1997) on the difference between mimetic measurement and generative measurement, a difference expressed by the debate between Karl Mannheim and Karl Popper.

6. It is noteworthy that psychoactive drugs are the most commonly prescribed in the United States.

7. There is confusion in the literature about the meaning of “enculturation” and “acculturation.” Enculturation is sometimes used to mean primary socialization from childhood for instance, and it tends to deal with individual change. Acculturation is used to mean the conformity of an entire group. But it is unclear if acculturation means primary or secondary socialization.

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