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CULTURAL FUSION

An alternative to assimilation

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This chapter reviews cultural fusion theory (CFT) as an explanation for the process of intercultural communication. This chapter first addresses limitations and inconsistencies in current theories of intercultural communication, including those in the theory of cross-cultural adaptation and the diffusion of innovations theory. This chapter then proceeds to compare and contrast these with CFT as an alternative approach. Concepts essential to CFT, such as a critique of the metaphysics of dualism, and discussions of co-evolution, pan-evolution, assimilation, integration, systems theory, entry valence, and entry trajectory are discussed. According to CFT, communication is conceived as a polysemic conversational process with countless messages and origins. Other theories tend to be dualistic.

Cultural fusion theory was first introduced by Eric Mark Kramer (1992). Subsequently, several master's theses, dissertations, books, book chapters, and journal articles have appeared testing the theory in several countries and contexts. Ongoing research by major intercultural experts such as Todd Sandel and his colleagues in Asia and Stephen Croucher and his colleagues in Europe and beyond have demonstrated the value of CFT, especially as compared to cross-cultural adaptation theory (Croucher, 2008; Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2011; Croucher & Harris, 2012; Croucher & Kramer, 2017; Sandel & Chung-Hui, 2010). The paradigm is shifting from a predominantly Parsonian 1960s mechanistic structural functionalism that postulates teleological final solutions to human evolution that do not exist, to a systems approach that stresses reciprocity of influences and co- and pan-evolutionary dynamics within a globalized communication ecology. The difference is fundamental, and while some claim that their structural functionalist approach is the same as systems theory, this will be debunked below as the difference is clarified.

Fusion presumes a multiplicity of resources, including competencies that can be combined. Fusion is integration. Integration means both mixing and addition. Assimilation is not integration despite how the words have been misused. Assimilation is the elimination of differences and therefore identities and meanings. Assimilation can end. Assimilation is complete when there is nothing left to mix. Assimilation means the termination of integration. Homogeneity leads to high context communication because everything can presumably be assumed. There is little new left to talk about. Energy levels are low. Mindfulness and vigilance are reduced. This may appear soothing, but it is not only nihilistically monotonous but ultimately makes individuals and systems inflexible and as such unable to respond to unforeseen challenges.

Monocultures have few responses to unexpected threats. Their repertoire for success is limited. By comparison, multicultural systems are adaptable and robust, offering multiple channels for expression (different forms of music and dance, genre of literature, fashion, and so forth), and answers for challenges such as multiple pharmacological cures, architectural solutions, philosophical traditions, and multiple strategies for innovation. Multicultural systems not only have choices but internal exchange (competitive and complimentary) among options also offers fusional innovations. Unexpected combinations can provide solutions when monocultures cannot. In short, two heads are better than one.

Multicultural systems have thriving internal dialogs that are fertile grounds for fusional improvisation and invention. For instance, during the Second World War the fact that the United States Marine Corps could call on Navajo Indians to develop codes based on their language proved extremely valuable during the struggle for survival in the South Pacific theater. A system comprised of many cultures, including minority worldviews, harbors multiple options to handle challenges. Only one, or a single fusional combination, such as combining Navajo with modern military operations and technical apparatuses (radios), need succeed for the overall system to endure.

We cannot know when, or which option, or fusional combination of options will be effective until and unless a need arises to test the person or system. It is dangerous to eliminate options or narrow solutions without being able to foresee what the future may bring. What we do know is that the fewer resources, strategies or options a person or system has the less agile their responses and thus the more vulnerable they are. A lack of options is boring and inflexible. A multilingual individual has more resources (competencies) than a monolingual individual. Despite the fact that some lifeforms such as single-celled protozoa have proven very successful, enduring unchanged for millions of years, life continues to proliferate forms. Evolving variance does not stop. Life does not put all its eggs in one basket. Systems with complex and varied responses to challenges are the most successful.

The duality (dialectic) of sender–receiver leads to an us/them dichotomy, which often takes the form of my intent, my voice and my agenda–your compliance. It is linear and often literally portrayed in books as an arrow from a sender to a receiver, and in cybernetics, a feedback arrow is added from the receiver back to the sender. This is highly reductionistic and so simplistic as to be misleading in terms of explaining actual human interaction. Nevertheless, most communication theories are linear and sequential, with intent implied. Concepts of hybridization and third-culture syntheses also presume a model of communication involving only two interlocutors.

Cultural fusion theory builds on a different model, one that proposes that humans live within a semantic field filled with information from multiple sources, varying salience, interpretive-based understandings and participatory/reciprocal converse expressions. This approach is based in hermeneutics and systems theory. This principle of endless variance and interpretation without a transcendental authority (including a single coercive majority culture) that is presumed by CFT is a basic tenet of hermeneutic systems theory as first articulated by Nicolai Hartmann ([1938] 2013) and Alfred North Whitehead (1929), later adopted by Hans-Georg Gadamer, Niklas Luhmann, Anthony Giddens and others. Structure itself is a process – structuration. Established senses are knowable as such if, and only if, there are alternative senses present.

According to CFT, we live in semantic fields with countless messages and information flows. As we make sense of them, they interact in unpredictable ways, sometimes leading to true innovation and insight. Someone watching a movie about plants may get an idea they

apply to architecture or clothing design. Contact, exposure to difference, involves risking one's sense of the lifeworld, including one's sense of self-identity and, more basically, how one will receive future information. The risk is not of elimination but of reinterpretation. The process of reinterpretation cannot be avoided so long as lifetime is operant. Only in death do we stop changing.

The linear model is deeply rooted in a Western modality traceable to Plato. It is dialectical, postulating two resolute positions – for/against, us/them, defense/prosecution. One might say that the older linear model is axiomatically (definitively) Euclidian, while the newer fusional field theory is more elastically Gaussian. The linear model was conceived by Plato as a method for adjudicating the exclusive and singular truth-value of claims. After Aristotle, this model came to be seen as depicting all communication, not just argumentation. But human interaction (participatory ecology) involves much more than simply seeking a final solution, a last definitive word. It is a self-sustaining generative source of meaning, a churning plenum – our semantic habitus. Efforts to vitiate voices and restrict participation need to be interrogated.

The need for conceptual precision

When I originally read the theory of cross-cultural "adaptation," several things struck me. First, the use of terms such as adaptation, integration, assimilation, evolution, and equilibrium were inconsistent internally and inconsistent with their usage in the scientific literature with which I was familiar. For instance, Gudykunst and Kim (2003) state: "the cross-cultural adaptation process involves a continuous interplay of deculturation and acculturation that brings about change in strangers in the direction of assimilation, the highest degree of adaptation theoretically conceivable" (p. 360). But adaptation is not the same thing as assimilation, which is not the same thing exactly as conformity (as assimilative blending can affect all ingredients). Because of the confusion, the word adaptation has been put into quotation marks herein as it pertains to the theory of cross-cultural adaptation.

As one reads the theory of cross-cultural "adaptation," it is made abundantly clear and reinforced by Gudykunst and Kim that what they mean by adaptation is an "upward-forward progress" (p. 382)

> toward assimilation, that is, a state of a high degree of acculturation into the host milieu and a high degree of deculturation of the original culture. It is a state that reflects a maximum convergence of [a] stranger's internal conditions with those of the natives and of a minimum maintenance of the original cultural habits theoretically conceivable.

(p. 360)

Manifesting classic dualistic metaphysics, Gudykunst and Kim set up a conflict between internal subjective and external objective poles of reality, stating that culture is "internal to the individual" (p. 272) but that "objective" reality is "external" (p. 378). The primitive spatial metaphysics is self-evident. In this way of conceptualizing communication, the minority, the newcomer is separated from the semantic field. They are not part of the system. In order to avoid "mental disturbance" (disequilibrium; p. 377) there needs to be a "balance" of inside with outside the immigrant's head. The goal is convergence to a single worldview. The cross-cultural adaptation model encourages the elimination of diversity.

Furthermore, the fundamental conceptual confusion is that adaptation and conformity to an already extant culture are *two completely different processes*. Gudykunst and Kim use the word

adaptation but describe a process of conformity. Mutation, the formation of a new successful lifestyle or form, does not mean repetition of the same or a blending away of all ethnic and cultural differences. It is in fact *the opposite of conformity*. To avoid competition with itself, life endlessly diversifies forms and in the process *the environment changes – diversifies*. Strategies for success continually emerge and multiply. Life flourishes in an abundance of solutions. Healthy systems keep writing new songs, using new instruments, and devising new architectures, arts, sciences, literatures, and lifestyles.

Evolution presents diversity and diversity enhances survival

In communication, diversity of positions generates dialog and meaning and alters the discourse. This process, including brainstorming, generates alternative solutions. This is more than diffusion, dissemination, or grafting (Derrida, [1972] 1981; Rogers, 1962). Positions and genres proliferate. Art and science require originality. *Originality, not repetition of the same, is the motor of progress of all cultural forms from farming to art to medicine.* Dialog and diversity constitute the artistic and scientific environment, the ecology of these living discursive traditions.

New art and new research do not fit pre-established reality but rather change reality. Change, evolutionary, progressive, whatever form, manifests the contribution that is divergence. Science evolves because new and different theories are proposed, new instruments are devised, new perspectives are created. We play in the invisible, in the dark, pushing perception outward by creating ways to see frequencies that we presume are there but cannot yet detect (Merleau-Ponty, [1964] 1968). There is no final goal that would signal "the end" because the unknown stretches endlessly before us. Each scientific research finding **is science** *sui generis*. This is the gift of uncertainty. It is the playground of curiosity and creativity. The Other is not always repulsive but often beckoning us to look, listen, taste, touch, and smell something enticingly unfamiliar. But it does take a bit of courage to try the new. Conservatism lacks courage. It fears what it does not already know. It seeks permanence, equilibrium, death.

The newness newcomers bring to a society changes it and as such they are active participants in it. Their difference is their contribution. This is what integrality means. Innovation defines the direction of the future, not past successes. This is the fundamental law of communication – identity and meaning (be it appreciated or shunned) depends on and is a measure of difference. Progress and regress are difference. The final and utterly ironic contradiction to the theory of cross-cultural adaptation is that, after the making of mainstream culture, a monolith of conformity pressure to which submission is the very definition of realism and rationality, the Gudykunst and Kim (2003)conclude with a call to change the culture and offer one "by design" (p. 395). This new culture will be comprised of a new kind of psychically evolved "universal person" with a "special kind of personal orientation" (p. 383) and attributes. All of us are encouraged to be passively malleable and to conform while creative vision and audacious, even prescriptive, ambition is reserved for the authors of the theory of cross-cultural adaptation.

Instrumental talk and effective communication

The dialectically-based models of communication, including intercultural communication, tend to presuppose the purpose of talk to be instrumental – argumentation and compliance-gaining. Compliance in different theories presumes this dualistic modality, described in

various ways such as a spiraling toward final conformity/agreement, to describe a good, correct sort of person who exhibits "appropriate" ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003; Kim, 2017). Conformity is equated with competence so that often cross-cultural adaptation is also referred to as intercultural competence. You are competent, right, healthy, in line with the natural order, when you agree with me, the person seeking compliance. The model of cross-cultural adaptation theory reduces communication to a unidirectional, narrow intention.

Power and ego-agency are fundamental. The new kind of "virtuous person" (Gudy-kunst & Kim, 2003, p. 385) who is pious and loyal (p. 396) will be carefully programmed by major institutions of socialization controlled presumably by those who follow the list of transcultural, universal, moral, and ethical precepts supplied by Gudykunst and Kim. They call for "a monumental task of projecting and cultivating a new direction for human character formation" (p. 388). By contrast, CFT does not aspire to moralize, but the context for its formation includes reflection on other theories that in fact do seek to engineer a world with no anxiety or tension, no inefficiencies or "incompetence." To gain such a utopia one must acknowledge that much would be lost – namely, innovative adaptability itself. According to the theory of cross-cultural "adaptation," the contribution of difference that is defined by the newcomer is *a priori* denied as unhealthy. Only conformity is good.

However, one source of difference is not only allowed but promoted by Gudykunst and Kim (2003), and that is their plan for engineering a new type of person and society. The contradiction is stark, especially given that one of them is an immigrant. On one hand, the theory of cross-cultural adaptation calls for complete conformity. Those who do not completely conform, such as the authors themselves, who call for a major overhaul of our culture, are "maladapted." On the other hand, the overhaul in culture so prescribed is intended to generate a whole new post-human being. The confusion, born of metaphysical thinking (dualism), is sorted out here.

Stage 1: the goal of cross-cultural adaptation theory is total conformity

According to the theory of cross-cultural "adaptation," "psychological health" is a measure of conformity. The major prescription for a newcomer, such as any minority in an unequal power relationship, including an immigrant, to maintain "psychological health" and avoid anxiety and "maladaptation" (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p. 372), is to encourage the subaltern to do everything they can to "unlearn" their indigenous "ethnic identity" (p. 372). As stated, "psychological health, reflected in the Newcomers' smooth and effective dealings with the host environment ... a healthy personality is able to perceive the world and himself *correctly*" (p. 373). What is "correct" perception? It is the host society's "expectations that strangers conform to its existing cultural norms and values" (p. 371). This is further clarified by Gudykunst and Kim:

> Differences in physical appearance, language, verbal and nonverbal behaviors, rules and norms of social engagement, and economic and political ideology, as well as religious beliefs, ceremonies, and rituals, are some of the major ethnicity gaps to be overcome in the adaptation process.
>
> *(p. 368)*

"Ethnicity gaps" and difference must be eliminated and overcome for society and its members to achieve "psychic equilibrium" and for minorities to "be fit to live in the company of

others" (p. 358). The minority is fit to live only insofar as they cease to be as a minority. Total transformation in the direction of mainstream ways is the only path to salvation. "Communication competence" is equated with compliance behaviorally, emotionally, and cognitively. The theory of cross-cultural adaptation never suggests that a contrary view may be very competently communicated. "Competence" itself is reduced to conformity to all forms of socio-cultural life in the goal of eliminating "ethnic gaps." The value is "functional fitness" and efficiency of replicating and maintaining the status quo. Failing to agree substantively or using an innovative message-form is defined by the theory of cross-cultural adaptation as incompetence and "miscommunication" (p. 361) at best and as irrational hostility at worst. When applied to intercultural communication, the cross-cultural adaptation model describes that what is appropriate is to be identical with what is dictated by a dominant mainstream culture. Meaning/intent, reality, is transmitted from a dominant pole, an active speaker, to a passive hearer. One teaches while the other "learns." Anything other than reception and agreement on the part of the subaltern receiver is seen from the dominant position as problematic, as a failure to communicate or, worse, as overt insubordination. Strategic intent is presumed in the old linear model and compliance equated with "learning" is the goal. So, according to the linear model, to become a member of the club, so to speak, the immigrant must not merely mimic the behaviors of the "mainstream" but also somehow "unlearn" (p. 360) and "disintegrate" (p. 381) themselves while internalizing the sense (the feelings and meanings) presented by the dominant members. Consequently, co-existence is not merely confounded and must be abandoned, but the newcomer's or minority reality is deemed by this metaphysical scheme to be "unrealistic" and as such mentally "unbalanced" (p. 383). External objective reality cannot be unjust or in any other way wrong. The ways, norms, and values of the dominant class are the only real ones.

According to Gudykunst and Kim, the old adage of when in Rome, do as the Romans do, is not enough. According to cross-cultural adaptation theory, acting like the locals does not equate with the fundamental "need to conform" (p. 373), to undergo basic "psychic transformation" (p. 376) to become a different person, which requires "reprogramming" (p. 358) of one's "operational skills together with cognitive and affective orientations" (p. 364). The prescription offered by cross-cultural adaptation theory is that the newcomer erase her mind, as it were, and reprogram it "cognitively, affectively, and behaviourally" (p. 367). The moral justification is efficiency, efficiency to the point of no longer needing to communicate at all once the singularity of total identification with the mainstream enables "telepathic and intuition sensitivity" (p. 273).

‑Exactly how one allows the mainstream beliefs, values, norms, and habits to displace one's self is unanswered except through disintegration of the original self and unlearning the past. How this is to be accomplished is not explained. We are told that so long as unlearning does not occur, then the adoption of a new self in consonance with the dominant mainstream culture cannot occur. Beyond this, if we cede to Gudykunst and Kim that one can somehow willfully unlearn and deculturize oneself by avoiding ethnic media and association with other expatriates, friends and family, and increasingly come to inhabit the worldview of the dominant culture, other issues arise that would not enhance mental stability but actually threaten it. Such erasure and reprogramming of the internal self presents a special challenge which W. E. B. Dubois (1995) already recognized in 1903 as the problem of double-consciousness. What is one to do if the more one successfully internalizes the dominant "objective" reality, the more one should hate oneself? This occurs when the majority worldview perceives your race, gender or status as an immigrant to be

inherently inferior, even malevolent. As stated in the theory of cross-cultural "adaptation," "ethnicity gaps," and ethnic markers need to be eliminated. So, the more one internalizes the mainstream perspective, the more one must see one's self as the essential problem for stability and balance. Or what if the more a newcomer acts like locals, the more they find her to be bizarre, as when Japanese call foreigners who think they are Japanese *henna gaijin* (strange strangers)? Typically, and especially in multicultural environments such as cosmopolitan "world cities," people expect foreigners to be different, and *that* is what is okay.

According to the assimilationist model, the path to "successful assimilation" ironically requires that one accept not equality but a subaltern status to an absolute degree thus manifesting the complete erasure of one's original self. Assimilation thus is not to become the same as the dominant group, or equal with them, but quite the contrary, to erase oneself in ways they never do. The effort to become the same constitutes a process that they will never comprehend. The immigrant experience can never be "the same" as the local indigenous experience. This is not a problem, however, unless becoming the same (total assimilation) via deculturation and unlearning the self is the one and only goal, which is precisely the prescription of many advocates for social engineering a monoculture, including cross-cultural adaptation theory (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003).[1] Nevertheless, countless examples exist in everyday life that prove "success" is not identical to simple repetition of the same, of assimilation. According to cross-cultural adaptation theory, however, being different can never lead to success. But being "original" is often the key to satisfaction, recognition and reward.

Paradigmatic shift away from metaphysics (dualism)

Metaphysical dualism that separates components from identification with the system is a fundamental misunderstanding. It is vital to understand that everything is *always already* communicating, as Gadamer ([1960] 2004) put it. To misunderstand this aspect of a systemic process is to fail to grasp the fundamental principle of systems theory; namely, interconnectivity and the fact that one "cannot not communicate" (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967, p. 49). Such changes that are beyond anyone's control (the blind watchmaker hypothesis), such as the famed "butterfly effect," are viewed with fear and trepidation only from the perspective of the status quo. According to CFT, there is no right or wrong.

One does not "enter" a finished and fixed culture. This is object bias. Rather, one begins to participate in culturing. For "better" or "worse," even tourism affects economies, healthcare systems, transportation systems, and legal systems; in short: culture. Participation includes unavoidable involvement in the ongoing authorship of norms, rules, beliefs, expectations, motivations, behavior patterns, values, and laws. Immigrants and newcomers do not merely conform or fail. They also change the society they join, and this fact fuels much of the xenophobia we see in the world. According to Gudykunst and Kim's (2003) prescriptive ideology, only one type of person need be flexible – the newcomer. Apparently, once assimilated, they should cease to be open-minded or mindful at all and expect subsequent newcomers to get with the plan. All responsibility for smooth, efficient communication is placed on the minority while the indigenous or dominant mainstream person can run on autopilot, presuming a style of naturalness and rightness of the system. Gudykunst and Kim exclude minorities (immigrants, refugees, visitors … all newcomers) from the act of cultural production because, as they very "clearly" state, the

reason for the essentially one-sided change is the difference between the size of the population sharing a given stranger's original culture and that of the population sharing the host culture ... the dominant power presents ... a coercive pressure on them to adapt.

(p. 360)

There is no doubt that power inequality exists, but CFT is not an ideology critique. It also recognizes that power is not measured simply by numbers in a group. As for the reduction of influence to sheer numbers, a single foreign family moving into a neighborhood or school district has a greater impact on the culture than the simple addition of more of the same. It is important to remember that numeric quantity does not necessarily correlate with influence. Minorities often have an impact greater than their numbers as they often serve as the change agents of a presumably stable, static host society. Terrorists understand this all too well. One or two attacks that actually kill and injure far fewer people than car accidents on the same day provoke all sorts of reactions.

The power of one

At the end of summer 1911, on 29 August to be exact, local folk in Oroville, California noticed a malnourished old man walking down the middle of Main Street. The sheriff took the starving man into custody. All that he carried with him was a bow, five arrows, a basket of acorn meal, some shell bead money, and a few obsidian flakes. His name was Ishi. He was the last of the Yahi group of the Yana Indians. His story diffused through the telegraph wires and newspapers. Across the US and then around the world he was proclaimed the last "wild Indian" in America. After smallpox and measles, massacres, attacks by cattlemen and surveyors, Ishi was the last survivor, and starving he gave up and walked into "another world." He was a boon to anthropology. He was taken to the University of California, Berkeley, where Alfred Kroeber and Edward Sapir worked with him and made their careers off him. In "captivity," Ishi succumbed to tuberculosis just five years later.

One of Kroeber's students, and eventually his wife, Theodora wrote a famous account of Ishi, *Ishi in Two Worlds* ([1961] 2002). Ishi, a lone figure, walking into an American town when he did, changed social science and the popular sentiment about centuries of cultural expansion, diffusion, and destruction. He raised consciousness about culture and its fragility, especially in the face of racist hubris, powerful ambition, and greed. One person, without intent or understanding, affected the world.

In 1980, German missionaries moved to a remote area in Papua New Guinea. Intrepid, one might say, they took their five-year-old daughter Sabine (Kuegler, 2005). For the next 12 years, she lived "among" an "untouched," "lost" tribe, the Fayu, who were "discovered" in the 1970s. When her Fayu "brother" died, she decided to leave. At age 17 she enrolled in a boarding school in Switzerland. She was never able to totally acculturate to Europe, and in her autobiography, she writes that she learned fear in the modern world. Despite intertribal violence and other hardships, she was happy in the "lost tribe," but lost herself in the modern world. The Fayu had more time and were more welcoming. Kuegler's lesson for us is the experience of transformation that she has never forgotten and which continues. Neither she nor Ishi could "unlearn" who they were and who they became and the profound difference that made their journey memorable, even of interest, to millions. Nor perhaps should they. They had much to teach us. Lessons forgotten or unlearned are missed opportunities.

Difference as community

When immigrants first come to new countries they tend to enclave, to not abandon their communities but establish small outposts that enable them to become functional. For example, a newcomer arrives and looks for a job. They go to the local Eastern Orthodox Church or Asian community center where they find other immigrants who can help them to integrate. The continued association with one's original culture can greatly improve integration. Today, people do this with social media. The social support enables newcomers to succeed. Much of what they already know, such as how to drive, how to parent, how to cook, how to program computers or weld or do landscaping, is still operant. In fact, they may have things to teach the locals. They just need help with local interpretations and norms. They may always have accents – phonetically, behaviorally, and affectively – but those can make them interesting.

Stage 2: the end of the spiral toward total assimilation is "intercultural personhood" – the transcending of all culture via assimilation

Much writing about human immigration and migration presents a mechanistic structural functional model reducing explanations for human behavior to trait psychology (Kim, 2008; Kim & McKay-Semmler, 2012). Under such metaphysical biases, culture does not exist except, and this is absurd, as a "parochial" hindrance to "effective," "competent" communication. Indeed, being human, all too human, meaning perspectival, is the ultimate problem according to the theory of cross-cultural adaptation. Culture too is held as a "defilement" (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p. 385). But this calamity can be overcome with designed reprogramming on a mass scale in accordance with cross-cultural adaptation prescriptions, which will produce the "universal person," achieving "intercultural personhood." However, there is confusion as to whether this victory over culture will result from natural "evolution" among those with the appropriate personality traits or if it must be engineered. In any case, change in a very specific direction is valuated, with planning to avoid free communication and random innovation. The goal, the final solution, is to de-humanize mortal human beings, for to be human is to have a point of view, to be an enculturated person.

To assimilate or to "rise above" all culture?

A basic contradiction and a major self-privileging irony common to engineers

The entire argument made by Gudykunst and Kim (2003) is that the more a person deculturizes and unlearns their home culture and the more they internalize the host culture's ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving, the better will be their overall psychological health and wellbeing. But then, Gudykunst and Kim veer off on a contradictory tangent and argue that, as this process of sinking deeper and deeper into a single culture progresses, the person will suddenly become enlightened and achieve "intercultural personhood" so becoming a "universal person," a status so virtuous that they argue:

> If intercultural personhood is deemed a valid educational goal, and we believe that it is[,] an extensive search for ways to articulate and implement intercultural human development must be undertaken. The propagation of the goal must go beyond the educational process directly to the political processes and the mass media. Media, in

particular, can play a pivotal role in the spread of interculturalness as a human social value and thus produce a gradual change in the mindset of the general public.

(p. 389)

The theory of cross-cultural adaptation sees misunderstandings and resistance to coercion in intercultural communication and intercultural settings as a problem in need of a solution. The solution is the elimination of culture and communication as "intercultural person-hood" aspires to "rise above the hidden forces of culture," the "defilements" that are culture (p. 385). The goal is to help immigrants rise beyond the "limits of many [curious to know which ones are not limited] cultures and ultimately of humanity itself" (p. 385). So we are to rise above culture but, if possible, how is this a good thing? The engineered "by design" new "universal person" and monoculture will reprogram us all and redefine through enculturation and acculturation "what is real, what is true, what is right, what is beautiful, and what is good," and how to "think, feel, and behave" (p. 376). What exactly is the true, beautiful, and good is never defined. But we are assured that the authors know the best direction of 'internal growth' for everyone (p. 380) and what we will need to respond to future challenges.

Gudykunst and Kim present no lack of confidence as they launch their proposed overhaul of culture itself and engineer a new kind of "virtuous" (p. 385) person. The intensely negative evaluation of cultural difference as "defilement" and the universal scope of the culture critique that is cross-cultural adaptation theory is extraordinary. It inflates to a critique of humanness itself proposing a new post-human being that exists without culture. How do we solve problems of miscommunication based on cultural differences? We eliminate culture entirely. No more defilements of cultural parochialism, no more chances for intercultural communication at all. Problem solved. But this is not realistic or even desirable (Kramer, 1992, 1993, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2011, 2014, 2016a, 2016b; Kramer & Ikeda, 2001; Kramer, Callahan, & Zuckerman, 2012).

Very differently, CFT accepts the tenet that communication always includes miscommu-nication (Budick & Iser, 1996; Fish, 1982). This is a fact of life and to deny that is to deny life. The desire to eliminate "parochial" worldviews because they engender inefficiency and uncertainty involves what Nietzsche ([1887] 1974) called the great exhaustion that can no longer handle the mundane vagueness or the "mosquito bites" of reality, namely, the reality of negotiating reality, *qua* relationships. Life struggles.

We find a fundamental contradiction here for the minority person trying to understand the prescription offered by the theory of cross-cultural adaptation. Literally from one page to the next the minority person suffering from poor "functional fitness" (p. 376) and "psychological health" (p. 376) due to "conformity pressure" (p. 371) is told that the solution, the "need to conform" may be "blocked" (p. 373) by their own personalities, by innate "predispositional factors" (p. 368) such as "physical appearance" and personality traits and attributes that determine one's "adaptive potential" (p. 369). But a few pages later we are told that "programming," – that is, the "cultural imprinting [that] governs our personalities and behavior" (p. 376) – can be changed, producing via socialization a different kind of person. But what kind? A totally assimilated perspectival human or a post-human being beyond all culture?

That question is not answered by the theory that proposes the contradictory path of correct evolution. So we will focus on the more mundane argument of assimilation. If our "adaptive potential" is based on innate pre-dispositional factors including "basic personality dispositions" (p. 368), attributes and traits such as "gregariousness" and "extroversion," as

Gudykunst and Kim (p. 369) claim, then the only solution to the problem of "'maladaptation" is to eliminate those personalities that may resist being "emancipated" from their indigenous cultures and identities, who may be "unrealistic" and "counterproductive" (p. 380), who fail to exhibit "upward-forward progression accompanying an increased level of functional fitness (greater adaptation) and psychological health" (p. 382). Ironically, social critique from the minority is characterized by Gudykunst and Kim as a form of maladaptive mental illness and possibly worthy of criminalization as they characterize "dissatisfaction with life in the host society" as "hostility and aggression toward the host environment" (p. 372).

According to the theory of cross-cultural "adaptation," ethnic pride, recognition, or even simple continuance of contact with one's community manifest incompetence and immaturity. It is "aggressive self-assertion and promotion of identity," marked by "ethnolinguistic vitality and intergroup behavior [and] strong ethnic group" relations. Though this attitude of having some residual ethnic identification is "not necessarily a disease for which adaptation is the cure, it is at the very heart" of the need to deculturize and unlearn the self. Unlearning the self and deculturization, in a zero-sum sense, is necessary, according to Gudykunst and Kim (2003), to make room for "self-understanding" and personal evolution toward assimilation that promises mental health and peace. "Human development" (p. 376), then, is to not grow a repertoire of competencies and understandings but to unlearn one set to make room for another, correct, set that is the dominant mainstream culture, no matter where or when.

CFT: a more consistent and conceptually precise explanation

Domination versus choice

In their discussion of power and coercion, what Gudykunst and Kim (2003) are clearly describing is not adaptation, which would be the emergence of a new lifeform/lifestyle, but rather pressure to conform to a pre-existing culture, conceived as something finished and something one enters like a stone edifice. The theory of cross-cultural adaptation rejects the ability to evaluate the status quo (except for their own claim for a need to re-engineer everyone) because all such evaluation must assume a position outside the dominant way of thinking in order to judge it, a position, ironically defined as mental illness by them. According to this model, suggested improvements from "outsiders" can never be entertained. Enrichment from intercultural interaction is discouraged. But clearly, the concern about immigrants is precisely that they do bring change. Yet, in reality, many corporations, universities and other organizations seek out and hire minorities, including immigrants, precisely because they hope that they will bring innovative ideas and differing perspectives to the organizational culture. The point here is that everyone is always already part of the system no matter their influence. Boundary conditions for a system are also in flux with exogenous as well as endogenous forces of change.

We clarify points: first, in terms of survival and power, the dominant culture is not necessarily the majority culture. In fact, it almost never is. Either an economic elite tends to dictate cultural trends, or an even smaller minority of rulers, such as a political party or a royal establishment, controls resources and institutions from courts to police and military operations. Second, might literally makes right for the theory of cross-cultural adaptation. Anyone who resists conformity or offers alternatives is deemed "maladjusted" and in "need of psychotherapy" (p. 382). Beyond being simple-minded (lacking "cognitive complexity" according to Gudykunst and Kim; pp. 382–383), the nonconformist is "unbalanced"

(p. 383), "immature" (p. 381), "self-deceiving," "cynical" (p. 380), "hostile" (p. 380), and, worst of all, "counterproductive" to the effort to maintain the status quo, which Gudykunst and Kim call "the accepted modes of experience" that constitute "external, objective circumstances" (p. 378).

The old structural functional dualistic mode of thinking emerges once again. According to cross-cultural "adaptation," the newcomer's perspective is subjective and unrealistic while the dominant ideology is objective and realistic. This is the basic "violence of metaphysics," as Derrida ([1967] 1978) put it. According to Gudykunst and Kim (2003), the majority is literally right because they are the majority. Everyone but a handful of people say the Earth is flat, therefore it is "objectively" flat and you best memorize and repeat this for your own good. Hence, my identification of this theory with Confucianism.

While the rhetoric about "personality traits" being the source of adaptable or unadaptable people would suggest an immutable genetic source, reminiscent of Victorian ideas, as a scientific theory, CFT harbors no such valuations or human engineering ambitions. Such ambitions are hardly new, however, as they repeat Herbert Spencer's nineteenth-century essays in Victorian England, exploiting even the same rhetoric that he used about social adaptation and evolution to convince new subjects of the British Empire to accept their colonial "reality."

According to CFT, social systems cannot avoid change as their memberships change. This can be an endogenous process; for instance, in Japan the fertility rate continues to drop and so Japanese society is undergoing some dramatic changes. Systems also change due to exogenous forces. The influx of immigrants in many societies (welcomed or not) is changing the atmospherics, the semantic field of many nations. The direction of change is not "essentially one-sided." The immigrant community and the host society share a common skin. Semantic and cultural "spaces," like physical space, are functions of structure. A single wall creates two rooms and, as it changes, the shape and size of the rooms also change. This is integral, as understood in CFT.

Cultural fusion theory makes a different assumption about communication and about the multicultural world. First, there is no final goal to be engineered, no singular utopian society or particularly ideal-type person. Second, without a final goal there is no intent (to be thwarted) manifested in the agency of a sender targeting a receiver. I encounter countless "messages" daily and most are not intended for me as a target. I may listen to music (read literature, play games, watch movies, read news...) from around the world and either I choose to repeatedly attend to it and perhaps incorporate some sounds and phrases into my own compositions or I do not. They remain in the world as semantic field. Influence and effect is a matter of exposure (intentional or not) as well as perceived use and gratification as much as any strategic intent of the sender. What the music I listen to means to me is not dictated by the source. Indeed, the source may have no clue I even exist. Much of the semantic field is anonymous. Meaning and sense are produced via interaction (random and planned). Even in a master/slave relationship, the master cannot control what things mean to the slave or how the slave feels. Behavioral compliance is not the same as attitudinal change. It has been well established and repeatedly replicated since the work of Leon Festinger and James Carlsmith (1959) that forced compliance, such as mainstream coercion, leads to psychological instability in the form of cognitive dissonance and often behavioral resistance along with negative opinion formation.

Change, including "progress," requires deviance

The consequence of exposure to huge amounts of information is a semi-coherent lifeworld that is not a noun but a verb. Meanings come in and out of focus, relationships fluctuate, new

information constantly arises as sense mutates. The human lifeworld is a communicative process without a teleological resolution or an omniscient and omnipotent authority – no ultimate plan or design. It is a constantly changing assortment, a massive bricolage of shared and divergent meanings with no final goal or end that would bring monolithic structure (an end to entropy), and absolute silence (a final solution, a final equilibrium). From memory to imagination, current observation to logical conjecture, the world is not just a mixture of meanings but of media, which media theorists, at least since Lewis Mumford (1934), have noted, have semantic import. Even the way in which meanings may be "negotiated" varies. The marginal voice is the origin of progress. Even intrapersonal doubt is the origin of modified thinking. Redundancy, including isolation, is uninformative and static. Consequently, communication may confirm our biases and beliefs, that our way is the "best" way, our cuisine and music is the "best," or we may find alternatives challenging and even appealing, that is, having value. Either way, exposure has consequences and that is a fusional process that changes the meaning of "our way" and "their way," and as judged as "better," "worse," or simply different.

The limits of diffusion theory

Diffusion is unilinear and does not incorporate feedback or integration of information by means of interpretation. According to the notion of communication as diffusion, information moves as a finished objective message from source to receiver like transferring packets of information (informatics as opposed to communication). The impact is on the receiver as a target audience. Diffusion of innovations theory (Rogers, 1962) was born of the same academic context as direct effects media theory. Diffusion of innovations theory spawned the notion of development communication and the neo-Hegelian model of economic evolution, with the "take-off stage" in cultural and economic history promoted by Walter Rostow in his *Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960).

With the help of US foreign aid funding, telecommunication infrastructures were built in developing countries to facilitate the diffusion of innovations that it was presumed would naturally, logically, lead to the goal of re-engineering entire societies en masse from agrarian and possibly socialistic cultures into the better industrialized consumer-based capitalist variety. Other means were also implemented, such as the establishment of US institutions such as the East-West Center in Hawaii, peculiarly founded by Congressional mandate in 1960, to combat the spread of socialist and communist ideologies in Asia. The School of the Americas had a similar origin and purpose, but with a more military academy approach, for the development of Central and South America. To that end, handpicked students from authoritarian nations such as Suharto's Indonesia, Marco's Philippines, Generalissimo Chek's Republic of China, Generalissimo Park's South Korea, Generalissimo Nhu's Republic of Vietnam, and so forth, were brought to the United States to learn the doctrine of inevitable progress via neo-Hegelian social Darwinian imposed "evolution" upward and forward toward Westernization. Rostow's philosophy of imposed economic development and the "New Man" fused well with Confucianism, an ideology Confucius himself might well have disliked as it imposed rote memorization and staunch conservatism that hampered intellectual growth and innovation across cultural, economic, and political forms for centuries. Authority to determine the "correct" future was thus instituted.

While diffusion of innovations and nation-building went hand-in-hand, history has shown that people are not blank slates or robots to be reprogrammed at will. It is a common view that intercultural interaction leads to cultural imperialism and/or cultural appropriation, but

diffusion as a simple transfer and holistic adoption did not occur. One cannot mistake Japan or Vietnam for California or France. Centuries of cultural inertia imbedded in language and ritual itself has proved quite resilient. Instead, we see pockets of tradition and fusion.

According to diffusion, transactional processing is not considered. No doubt the quantity of unequal flow can lead to an asymmetrical conversation. But even powerful empires, such as the Roman and British Empires, were profoundly influenced by the cultures they invaded and imported. CFT recognizes the diffusional aspect of communication but also recognizes the reciprocal aspect of communication. Even initiating and interrogating another still poses risks to the interrogator's worldview. The process itself influences all involved. Conversation is not a private property. Even in relationships with great power disparities, no one is immune to change. Slavery is corrosive to a master's humanity, and history has not interpreted that powerful position kindly. No meta-authority controls the interpretation of things. Even Michel Foucault (1964) had to concede to Sartre that he was able to somehow escape his own all-encompassing episteme to describe and critique it. The freedom of the world is in our open horizon toward it. Freedom is manifested in how we respond to what has happened to us, including colonizing forces and assimilative coercion.

The iron clamps of historical reason (including "natural" economic forces and genetically predisposed biological traits) hold only so long as people fail to see the power of assembly and resistance. Authority does not fear history but people. No one person, as the Martinique-born Francophone poet/philosopher Aimé Césaire (1957) wrote in his resignation letter to the French Communist Party, has the right to claim the sole interpretation of history, or as Nietzsche ([1887] 1974) put it, the right to deny all other interpretations but the one from one's own little corner. Elites present their worldview as objective truth and cast the subaltern worldview as nothing but subjective fallacy – uninformed or even childish nonsense. Imperialism typically justifies itself with its own metaphysical, meaning "objective" and "self-evident," version of natural superiority and historical rationality. However, this is self-serving rhetoric. It is not self-evident that just because a group may tend to dominate some aspects of a society that, therefore, economic success, cognitive complexity, and even sanity correlate with how much one attempts to identify with them, as argued in the theory of cross-cultural adaptation. This is a sort of meta-justification or handmaiden to ideological coercion as such academic writing itself is not the words of a privileged elite but, rather, supports and justifies their inherent right to impose their worldview regardless of time, place, or content. This justifies efforts to generate and maintain false consciousness, the internalization of the ideology privileged elites promote whereby they dominate because they innately deserve to. Rhetorical essays and handbooks arguing for institutionalized propaganda to justify and promote efforts in social engineering to protect the status quo manifest such ideological efforts. Imbedded within the rhetoric is sanitized tribalism; the justification for coercion as being natural, inevitable, rational, because this is my land and other humans who move onto it do not belong until and unless they become me, until they fit my criteria of humanhood (think, feel and behave as I say). It is very spatial, very ethnocentric, ultimately demanding of human beings to agree to become "deculturized," to "unlearn" themselves.

Evolution properly understood as non-teleological, non-ideological

Though one cannot erase oneself, perspective is mutable. However, to use the current metaphysical lingo, the "direction of change" is not toward some final "evolutionary" goal of perfect assimilative conformity as life has no final absolute ideal form, nor does

change occur on only one side of an encounter. Life does not converge on one perfect form. Rather – and despite of the existence of very successful forms – life continually proliferates new forms, experimenting and expanding. Cultural life is the same; only through total isolation could one avoid all change (and, even then, sheer boredom would motivate deviation). The notion that life and culture are evolving in a particular direction implicating particular values is not Darwinian but rather the product of Charles Darwin's half-cousin and founder of eugenics, Francis Galton (along with his protégé Carl, but later spelled with a K, as he changed the spelling to be more Germanic-like, Pearson). Only Galton's ideology of social Darwinism, a moniker Charles disliked profoundly, suggests that evolution could and should be guided in ways that would reinforce the imperial power and wealth of England. Galton's version of evolution is Hegelian not Darwinian and it cynically exploited scientific terms and statistical methods to appear as mainstream science.

Cultural fusion theory is based on the observation that cultures are changed by the introduction of new elements and that even arrogant empires expend great effort to access foreign things and ways because they perceive them as desirable, even "precious" (such as gems, minerals, food stuffs, including coffee, tea, spices, and also philosophies); all manner of things that end up fundamentally enriching and changing the very cultures (beliefs, values, expectations, motivations, and behaviors) of imperial power centers such as London. With today's globalized communications, the old spatial metaphysics of center versus periphery has become even more outdated. The richer countries are in some ways measurable by their ability to access the Internet and thus to expose themselves to alternative styles, arts, and ways of living. But, as demonstrated by the International Telecommunication Union's technology and connectivity (ICT) measures, access to the Internet is expanding rapidly, skipping wired delivery entirely in much of the world (ITU, 2018). Reciprocity is increasing. On a global scale, the "periphery" is increasingly gaining the "floor" and talking back. It has taken what the West has given it – electricity, harmonic music and instruments, telecommunications technologies, and so forth – and is now responding so that we are seeing exciting new cinemas emerging, new musical forms, new forms of sport and comedy, pedagogy and healthcare, attitudes toward aging, family, friendship, time, space, and so forth.

Multicultural environments – human ecologies with multiple cultural dimensions consti-tuting most modern societies, especially with increasing globalization – are deemed by Gudykunst and Kim (2003) to be a form of social failure. Those who personify multi-cultural and co-cultural complexities (persons who are multilingual and multicultural) fair little better according to Gudykunst and Kim's judgments, as they state: "co-ethnics are themselves poorly adapted" (p. 366).

Dualistic co-evolution compared to the pan-evolutionary lifeword field

Cultural fusion theory differs. Co-evolution is a major component of CFT, but CFT also expands the principle to recognize the complexity of the global semantic field we inhabit. This is the recognition of the pan-evolutionary multi-directional process that is the semantic field. In today's information environment, we observe a pan-evolutionary churning involving far more than just one centralized (alternative) source of information diffusing into virgin fields of scarce ideas and cultural practices, uncivilized types in need of "development" into civilized mainstream people, as it has been described in development communication and diffusion of innovation literatures.

Time presents an open horizon. The attempt to control human evolution itself has proven to be enormously arrogant and dangerous. The inclusion of the concept of evolution generally and co-evolution more specifically within CFT has been expanded to what is called pan-evolution. Co-evolution is similar to the notion of hybridity. It limits our understanding of cultural interchange to only two cultures synthesizing into a third culture. According to cultural fusion however, this does not adequately recognize the fact that, within the semantic field of human experience, especially in today's world with so many channels of information available from all over the globe, each human has become a node of convergence of far more than just two cultures.

Pan-evolution involves the sometimes, but not always, reciprocal nature of direct and indirect communication from multiple sources. Intent is not necessary for influence to occur. Also, messaging often passes through several nodes and relays before a person receives the information that has been thusly modified. Channels of cultural inspiration and influence have exploded in quantity. Origin has become less privileged. As messages are conveyed and shared, they change. Noise in the signal and interpretation are inevitable. How something is received is a function of interpretation that is the sum-total of one's prejudices, both enabling and limiting (Gadamer, [1960] 2004). Importantly, such change includes how individuals and societies perceive and handle difference (en-counters) in the future. Societies and individuals change their receptivity of newcomers based on many factors, including past experience with newcomers, economic and political contingencies, perceived motive for migration, and so forth. For instance, a host society may change policies and practices based on past waves of migrants so that future waves encounter a different set of boundary conditions and receptivity valences.

Cultural fusion theory recognizes that integration is a temporal phenomenon and involves archival processing (accrual of experience) as a compiling memorial activity. Integration is not a zero-sum process, as Gudykunst and Kim (2003) argue, which requires that a person must first unlearn and deculturize themselves in order to learn anything new. This is demonstrably false. The mind is not a finite container. Rather, experience accrues and with each new experience, old experiences are reinterpreted. This is a fundamental law of hermeneutic definition of interpretation/integration. Integration is a pan-evolutionary process. Furthermore, integration is a continually churning process whereby my next experience will alter how I understand my past experiences. I read a novel as a teen, a college student, then as an adult. With each reading the novel changes because I have changed, and I reflect on my previous readings and can see how limited they were. With experience, life becomes more complex.

We communicate; we talk in order to do something other than to exchange programmed information like computers. We talk to maintain community – to participate – in a shared process. Alterity, including slight differences in perspective (accent), is the essence of dialog and the ever-present source of the human lifeworld (Gebser, [1949] 1986; Levinas, [1947] 1987). Community is not always easy but it has been found by countless versions and generations to be "worth it." Worth it to engage in, tolerate, negotiate, and take on obligations of reciprocity (Buber, [1937] 1971). Community demands attention and effort, but it gives much back in return. One of the things it gives back is ourselves as meaningful members (Levinas, [1968] 2005). Hence, the point of Derrida's ([2009], 2011) and Ben-Tovim's (2008) analyses of *Robinson Crusoe*. A world of permanent sameness would be completely predictable and utterly unbearable (Deleuze, [1968] 1994). The Other saves me from the solitary confinement of total equilibrium, a zero energy state. Psychological "balance" is a dangerous metaphor. I get up in the morning because I don't know what will happen today.

The gift of uncertainty and a healthy system

The gift of uncertainty is not only "anxiety" but hope. It is the open horizon where our projects and agency, invention and innovation thrive. Ishi, tragically, was certain he was the last one.

For a *system* to be healthy it must be able to truly evolve – change – not just repeat "the same" (Deleuze, [1968] 1994). This is not a prescription but an observation. Moreover, this claim is applicable to, and can be demonstrably verified by, cases of large organizations and even nation-states. According to CFT, systems are permeable and living. Otherwise, they are history. Even the global system relies on energy from the sun and has been changed by extraterrestrial forces such as meteor strikes. Compared to natural history, social systems change very rapidly and they are very permeable.

Forces of change are both endogenous and exogenous. A major volcanic eruption in Asia may well have caused a "mini ice age" that affected the wheat harvest in Europe leading to the "Age of Revolution" and massive social changes. But a major endogenous force also helped propel this great cultural change. A rebirth had been building so that the decade of bad harvests were the final straw. Indeed, as Galileo was put on trial for claiming the Earth moves and is not the center of all, his simple observation about the geometry of a revolving object in space would change the meaning of the word "revolution" itself to connote reversals of power structures all over the (ironically named) globe, a tidal wave of change that evolved into the Western European "Enlightenment," an identifiable movement that continues to expand, inspiring many actions and reactions. The cultural precursor to the European Enlightenment involved the Renaissance rehabilitation of the pagan Greco-Romans. Change can come from history. Heroes are often selected to legitimize movements.

Attempts to close systems and force them to reproduce without access to innovation and deviance renders systems stagnant, without options to respond to ecological changes from within and without. The "Great Hunger," the Irish famine, was not a natural but a human-produced disaster. It demonstrated that rigid conformity to a pre-established and single scheme; to one set of beliefs about human nature, agriculture, centralized imperial control, and ethnicity; to one type of potato that presented only one solution to disease – all this established reality rendered an entire population profoundly vulnerable. Everything was interconnected with the humble potato. The real problem was that the logic, the schema of interconnections, was inflexible. It imposed itself with "coercive force," compelling the population to conform to an artificial, ideal ideology. The potato is not indigenous to Europe. It was imported to Ireland as part of a larger centralized plan. This arrogance (to utterly fail to appreciate the complexity of natural and social systems such as food production and reproduction) produced the problem because the Irish were literally forced to abandon other crops they had cultivated for hundreds of years. The fact that only one type of potato was instituted is the problem of monoculture.

The point here is that, when a single culture is enforced, solutions to unforeseen threats become drastically limited. The one type of potato could resist some diseases but not all. It presented a limited set of traits, limited defenses. In a more complex and divergent agri-culture with several kinds of potato, the famine would have been averted. But only one was used. Monoculture is inherently weak, un-adaptive, static, limited in its responses. This is the argument against cross-cultural adaptation theory, which claims that the solution to all problems is conformity to a single mainstream culture. Encouraging monoculture actually subverts adaptability. When a system is stressed, what at other times may be recessive qualities may become operational and dominant. We may not like people who are capable of violence

or who are "class clowns," unless and until we need warriors and we crave comedians. There is a season for all things, but we don't know how many seasons there can be. As the old adage goes, "it [life] takes all kinds." Artificially eliminating diversity by design can prove fatal. Some vision is shortsighted.

Entry valence and entry trajectory

Cultural fusion theory also introduces the notion of entry valence, which takes into account how a person fuses with a social environment – the interplay of prejudices. The process, in hermeneutic terms, involves more than the level of receptivity or "interaction potential" of a host environment. Different people manifest differing valences or trajectories of fusion not in terms of "adaptive predisposition", which for Gudykunst and Kim (2003, p. 370) means how willing and able a newcomer is to conform to a host culture and which they argue is largely a matter of innate personality traits "internal" to the newcomer. Rather, entry valence has to do with the process of fusion and typical factors such as cultural proximity and linguistic commonality but also the identity of the Newcomer as a social construct at the moment of entry. A "well"-educated and "wealthy" physician coming to the United States will have an experience different to that of an illiterate farmer or laborer. They may even have differing legal statuses. The French physician may be very comfortable with US urban environments while a Maung refugee from the deep mountain forests of Burma may not.

Given variation in hermeneutic horizons, individuals adjust differently. There is no single way to be "successful," "adaptable," or even "psychologically healthy," "mature," "competent," and "open minded" (values and judgments Gudykunst and Kim use to describe the "well-adjusted" sojourner). Assimilative conformity suggests only one right way, but this belies the fantastic variety of solutions readily observable that people present to the process of cultural fusion and adjustment. The *wonder* of biology and social systems is the diversity of forms and solutions life presents. Uncertainty provokes much more than just anxiety. Uncertainty, which is essential to curiosity, motivates experimentation.

Entry valence also involves the motivation for migration/immigration. Am I entering the country under my own free will? Am I entering as a tourist for a short stay with the expectation of fun, or am I a refugee who has been assigned a country that is willing to take me as I am forced to flee my home and as such am an unwilling sojourner? Or is this a trip that is ambivalent in terms of duration? As an exchange student, I enter expecting to stay only long enough to complete my college degree, but I realize I may also stay longer if career opportunities present themselves. Am I compelled by my career trajectory to come to your country as a multi-year transfer salaried employee of a multinational corporation or non-governmental organization? Am I a diplomat or soldier, a missionary, or seeking to extract resources?

The point here is that the experience of my entry valence will involve my *motives, expectations* and *willingness* to migrate or immigrate as well as various and sundry reception factors. Why I am moving is vital to how the experience will be understood by both indigenous persons and me, the newcomer. Attributions will also differ as to understanding my behaviors. As per hermeneutic principles, as I gain experience and information, attributions shift along with my understanding of things.

Entry trajectory is like the splash of me diving into water. The splash does not belong to me and I do not entirely control it but partially. The splash does not belong to the pool. The splash is an integral phenomenon that does not exist independent of the host society or the newcomer but only happens as a common moment in time when they come together. The newcomer

may enter a nation that has policies hostile to immigrants but yet find individuals who are very welcoming. Entry trajectory is a complex combination of factors, many of which cannot be preplanned or controlled. We may also be aware of them or unconscious of their influences. Entry trajectory affects how I will feel about *joining* a new environment. There is no single set of communication strategies and tactics or appropriate attitudes that fit all newcomer experiences.

Fusional accrual and horizonal complexity

Growing a repertoire of cultural skills

Fusion is not an object or behavior. Rather, it is a process of churning experience involving a constant integration of incoming information that has profound consequences for understanding, sense-making and behavior. Sense and meaning are two different things. Meaning is specific and involves disambiguation. Meaning tends to be intimately associated with linguistic articulation and cultural norms. Sense is more amorphous – atmospheric. I may have a feeling or mood about a room, person, city, and so on that is hard to define and specify and which I may not share with others. Sense often impacts expectations, motivations, and behaviors. It can influence communication but, unlike the effort to share meanings, sense is often unshared.

Fusion involves both sense and meaning. Fusion has the reflexive nature that, with experience, future perception, including sense and meaning, is altered. For example, initially I may not be able to recognize a pattern in chess that constitutes a coordinated attack, but with experience, I become familiar with various patterns and can readily recognize a particular pattern as willful, purposeful, and threatening. The pattern can be recognized by many as an "attack." It has that meaning. It is a gambit for assaulting my positions. Differently, the sense of being threatened may not be reducible to my pattern acuity. I was in peril all along and did not even see it. Or I think I am "in trouble" when no one else "sees" it. Sense can coalesce into focused meaning. Seeing is not recognition. I may be fully capable of seeing the chessboard and pieces but be unable to recognize a pattern. Recognizing relationships is essential to understanding. Cultural variance is often experienced as having differing senses about a place, event, prospect, opportunity, person, risk. Different cultures see different patterns. We have the stars but many zodiacs and sharing the different patterns can be enriching.

Fusion is the process of synthesizing perceptions into shifting patterns. Patterns are often transitory. Fusion is a process of learning and appropriation. It involves integration, which means interpretation and modification in the act of appropriation. When I "take in" some new knowledge and "make it mine," I am changed. The same occurs when newcomers join a community. Newcomers enrich communities. Vital communities "learn" and increase in complexity; "grow." Their vitality attracts energy-giving change. Dying, stagnant communities are not attractive. Equilibrium is an inert state. Conservatives fear movement lest the "balance" is lost and things change. Demonstrably, the world's populations are on the move and seeking vitality and stimulation: "development" (Skeldon, 2018; UN Population Division, 2018). "International migration is a global phenomenon that is growing in scope, complexity and impact" (UN Population Division, 2018, p. 1). Because there are more migrants in the world today than ever before, more than 230 million international immigrants according to the United Nations (2013), the twenty-first century has been called "the age of migration" (Castles & Miller, 2009). While the "goodness" of this, and opinions about the

"best" direction can be debated, the fact that it is happening cannot. Thus, the need and impetus for improved theories to help us understand our existential condition.

Expansion of horizon through encountering differences

Horizon is something like a measure of perspective. Heidegger ([1949] 2005) discussed the nature of horizon as a process of *Gestell*, enframing (and well before framing theory in journalism). It has to do with how my horizon constitutes my attitude. Attitude here is used in the phenomenological sense that encompasses what determines the relationship of contact, as for example when an airplane is approaching contact with the ground and how its axis references the horizon. I may take "to hand" a baseball bat as a weapon, as equipment for play, as an heirloom to be autographed and displayed, as a source of wood for a fire, as a gift to bestow. What a thing "is," what it means and its sense depends on the attitude of its appropriation; the nature of how it relates to context. This is contingent. Difference is always available.[2]

Other cultures teach us our limitations and open us to new vistas. They even teach us to reconsider what communication itself is. John Carrington (1949), a Christian missionary who arrived in the Belgian Congo in 1938, personifies an example of "the West" discovering the intricacies, sophistication, and elegance of other ways of communicating. He had assumed only Europeans had accomplished the ability to communicate nearly instantly beyond the horizon with wired and wireless telegraphy and telephony. Messenger pigeons and chains of fire towers built by ancients conveyed information only so far and fast as they could carry physical media or by line-of-sight. But he discovered that sans wired and wireless electro-magnetic devices, African villagers knew of his travel plans and arrival times well before he had physically started. He learned that Africans, often across tribal boundaries and transcending spoken language, shared at least two distinct and complex codes of drumming and could relay information beyond horizons and through the night, bad weather and densest forests with little effort. Carrington published an account of Lokele tribe drumming in 1944 and later published his famous work, *The Talking Drums of Africa*, in 1949, in which he fully introduced to non-Africans the astounding complexity of these codes and their ability to translate spoken languages even as encroaching modernity was silencing them. He himself dedicated much time to becoming a drum speaker and this willingness to take seriously and respect the drum led Africans to claim that he was actually a black person reincarnated as a white man. Carrington becoming a drum speaker, even a "black man," is an example of cultural fusion. It highlights one of the ways in which colonialism affected not just the colonized but also the colonizer in a pan-evolutionary (not merely co-evolutionary) process of fusion. While Europeans primitively used the drum primarily to keep a monotonous beat to music, Africans and others around the globe, such as the layered simultaneous multi-rhythmic and "breakneck speed" of Papua New Guinea tribal drums first described by Arthur Wichmann in 1890 and later by the ornithologist Jared Diamond (1992), had been conveying complex messages in "real time" for centuries.

As the number of cultures dwindles, the chance for encountering dramatic difference also dwindles. Convergence on a similar world culture may prove efficient in some ways but is profoundly impoverishing in others as the opportunity of growth through difference fades. However, it seems that the human craving for stimulation is such that the rather spontaneous emergence of subcultural trends will continue and perhaps even accelerate, as we see in places like Tokyo. This endless source of innovation and deviation is what Kramer (1997) means by the "Jazziness" of human cultural formation. Experimentation and improvisation are what

humans do. We are never threatened by the "prison-house" of language because here, too, we are constantly inventing new phrases, ways of using old words, and new words to express new experiences; difference is liberating.

To be adaptable, alternative perspectives are necessary and should be valued. This is what Kramer means by "appreciating validities" (p. 183). A nurse writes a description of the First World War, a soldier does "the same," a general, a child living near the front, even a horse. All may be very valid, empirically verifiable, but all are different. Each adds to my understanding of the phenomenon, the "First World War." The mosaic expands. Avoiding complexity is de-meaning.

Beyond duality: the parts are the system

Let us look at an example of the newcomer not merely fitting in to the establishment but altering it fundamentally, integrally. In the biological world, life expands by means of diversification of forms. Such forms do not fit pre-established niches or a pre-given environment. They do not so much fit in as they alter the game. They are the niche. If they become extinct no "empty niche" exists. The universe is not a huge parking lot waiting for forms to fit into pre-established spaces. This divine-like plan is an unnecessary metaphysical speculation. Organizations may present "slots" to be filled but the dynamic organization has members who invent new activities calling for new skills, new competencies. Life forms and their connectivity constitute the ecology and as they change so too does "the" environment, which is the entanglement of all participants exhibiting multidirectional causes and effects – direct and indirect interdependent changes. An example is the Great Oxygenation Event (GOE, also called the Oxygen Catastrophe, Oxygen Holocaust, the Great Oxidation, and so forth), about 2.2 billion years ago, which saw the appearance of a build-up of free oxygen (dioxygen O_2) in the Earth's atmosphere causing a mass extinction of obligate anaerobic organisms. The global event was generated by oceanic cyanobacteria and other terrestrial photosynthetic organisms such as multicellular plants that produced oxygen as a metabolic by-product while also fixing nitrogen. The point is that life does not fit into an ecology. *It is the ecology.* When new forms arise, they change the environment. The change then creates opportunities for life to do what it does – diversify. The movements of people change neighborhoods, cities, countries, the overall geographic pattern and distributions of the human world.

In this example, thanks to the rise of anaerobic organisms producing oxygen, aerobic organisms that consume oxygen emerged. With a new ecology, new relationships of symbiosis, parasitism, mutualism, competition, and so forth emerged. This is a pan-evolutionary, dynamic process whereby every form has direct or indirect consequences for every other form. While free oxygen formed a "toxin" to much life, it also created an opportunity for a whole new class of life to emerge and a stunning diversity of new forms and relationships – a new world.

Co-evolution theory is now regarded as state-of-the art in biology. It is a primitive form of integration theory. It attempts to explain a set of observed facts (as any decent theory should); in this case, symbiosis – the inter-activity between species such as ectosymbiosis (mistletoe is a popular example) and endosymbiosis (where one species lives within another). The quality of the relationships varies and has been broadly categorized. Some are parasitic in quality, some mutualistic, others commensalistic. The most interesting and thriving communities are complex ones exhibiting great variation of forms (i.e. New York City, the Great Barrier Reef). Redundancy is uninteresting (literally uninformative in

information theory) – pure quantity. Symbiosis is what biologists call an obligate relationship. It is a quality of relationship.

The key is mutualism. It is not a matter of psychological health or satisfaction or being civil with one another. It is a matter of non- or pre-cognitive ordination and structuration on a complex scale. A cognitive approach would be artificial selection as opposed to natural selection. Such an approach presumes one knows what is best (usually presuming all sorts of unstated criteria such as sin, wealth attainment, longevity or other amorphous ideas of "the good in itself" or "success"). But, in fact, molecules do not reason that since flowering plants do not exist they should reorganize themselves to become the first flowering plants. Rather, randomness happens. However, in the human habitat, which is largely artificial by definition, the issues of randomness and purpose interact, and stress and conflict occur not just as an instinct but as a matter of taste. Most basically, styles emerge and are either efficient (reproduce themselves) or deficient (fail to endure). A form of efficiency can be to endure by being integrated into another form (endosymbiosis) such as using a banjo in world jazz via adoption by a Japanese artist to contrast with the sound of the Japanese shamisen. This involves culture in terms of expectations, beliefs (appropriate goals), taste, willful experimentation, randomness (accident), and so forth. Fear of altering traditional forms (be it ways of doing finance, playing basketball, worship practices, funerary practices, whatever) is quite common but almost never prevails. Change will not be denied. Conservatives almost always end up on the "wrong side of history" because they have no history; they prefer permanence (Whitehead, 1929). But, even ways of exhibiting conservatism evolve.

Conclusion

This chapter presented a summation of the theory of cultural fusion. Fusion is not simple hybridity or other dualistic notions of co-cultural mixing. It is far more complex. World music, cuisine, even ways of educating the young, manufacturing things, providing health care, making war and peace – everything has multiple channels of semiosis (in the communicative realm). Human relationships, even those involving unequal power distribution, present multiple qualities such as symbiotic, communalistic, mutualistic, and so forth. Many who are parasitic are at the same time hosts. Influences and dependencies shift and reciprocate.

Fusion, the entanglement of individuals and communities, and the consequences of entanglement are expanding rapidly. Due to international and intercultural communication, isolated, monolithic "mainstream" cultures have not existed for decades. The US, arguably the greatest colony and the origin of the post-colonial movement, has never presented a "mainstream culture" but instead a churning multicultural plenum with permeable borders. It has always exhibited turbulence (even among the myriad of Native Nations), which conservatives, who prefer "equilibrium," find disturbing. What is turbulence? It is difference. It results from movement. As one component moves, others react.

Fusion has many qualities, including mutuality, a form of co-evolution. But, today, this churning ecology is characterized by pan-evolution, meaning that influences are more than two cultures bridged by a third. In this global communication ecology, 'appropriateness' is transient given that multiple frames of reference do not host a single cultural dominance. When I watch music videos from Nigeria or Siberia, I am hosting cultural forms that may well influence my own musical compositions and/or video production practices. Fusion is a form of entanglement at the personal and organizational level. We are increasingly colonizing each other. Globalization has reciprocity. We are experiencing cultural echoes across the

globe. There is no avoiding the fact that one's perspective, one's "hermeneutic horizon" is threatened each time one communicates with another. This may cause anxiety, conflict, and dissonance and there are theories that exploit fear of these things to win converts, but communication is also the opening of ourselves to others, and without this we cannot grow and enjoy the novelty of alternative ideas, cuisines, arts, legal systems, entertainments, philosophies, literatures, sciences, histories, and so forth.

Notes

1　Cross-cultural adaptation theory is also occasionally, and less commonly, called intercultural adapta-
tion theory by the same authors. While I will stick with the most common moniker used by Young
Yun Kim, cross-cultural adaptation, this is actually problematic. Cross-cultural communication does
not occur. There is theorizing about commonalities 'across' cultures presented as scholarly compila-
tions of literatures, surveys of cultural artifacts and practices found in social scientific, historic and
comparative compendia. Cross-cultural analyses are comparative and presume knowledge of cate-
gories of activities and artifacts (such as tools), such as commonly observed propensities toward
supernatural beliefs, ritual behavior, artistic expression, economic activity, and so forth; forms of
expression identified in two or more cultures. Cross-culturalness is comparative, and in order to do
meaningful comparisons such work must first establish common categorical bases so that one is
comparing art with art and not art with craft, for instance. But even the process of categorizing
phenomena involves a cultural bias. Intercultural communication is different from the study of
common categories of phenomena across cultures. Intercultural communication occurs when two
people from two different cultural backgrounds meet and talk. It is a subset of interpersonal
communication. This is what we seek to understand with CFT. In short, not many people spend
their time, often in solitary study, compiling and comparing philosophies, religions, arts, economic
systems, psychological predispositions, styles of talking (high versus low context for instance), child-
rearing practices... This level of abstraction is not pursued by many outside Western-style academe.
2　It is essential to note that, while there may be many perspectives about a person or event, validity is
still important. Relativism is limited by the fact that if I too face a burglar in the night and seize upon
a baseball bat for protection, under those same circumstances it is a weapon for me too. This is
demonstrable and replicable. A court of law would understand the categorical claim that the baseball
bat constituted a weapon even as it was removed from its display case where it lay at hand, as
Heidegger would say, as an heirloom.

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