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Integrative Studies: Heeding the Lessons of Multicultural Education's Rise and Fall

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Abstract

This paper analyzes how the world-wide rise and fall of multicultural education has highlighted the shortcomings of educational systems largely built around Western pedagogical assumptions that are seriously challenged by the three phenomena defining the world since the 1950s: decolonization, economic globalization, and transnational migration. What has become clear as a consequence is the disconnection between contemporary educational structures, particularly at the college/university level, and the actual pedagogical needs of post-secondary students worldwide. This is especially serious in the United States, where education has long been at the mercy of the interplay between market forces and ideologies of exclusion. A radical educational "re-visioning" has now become urgent. This may require a curriculum aimed at encouraging integration at all levels, but particularly in the psychological and social dimensions. The real value of education, defined as the capacity to transform information into knowledge, and knowledge into wisdom, can only be realized by offering college students the opportunity to understand the place of our species in the fabric of life through the interdisciplinary approach of Integrative Studies, the new and true Liberal Arts.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Cultural Reflexivity, Interdisciplinarity, Integration

The last decade of the 20th century was an exciting time for anthropologists in general and American anthropologists in particular. The anthropological definition of culture, established at the beginning of the century by the "father" of modern American anthropology, Franz Boas, had finally taken a solid foothold in the popular imagination, and was being used with abandon in the rapidly diversifying and broadening media. In particular, "multiculturalism" had become the term of choice to designate the policies best suited for constructively engaging with the world-wide diasporic movements triggered by the ever-expanding capitalist global economy.

The 1998 ICAES, the International Congress of the IUAES--the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences--held in "colonial" Williamsburg, Virginia (USA), projected some of this excitement, enhanced by the approaching turn of the millennium, into the organization of an ambitious series of meetings and events overtly aimed at envisioning the type of contribution our discipline could give toward shaping the 21st century as "the century of anthropology"!

Being the Chairperson of the IUAES Commission on Ethnic Relations (COER), which I had helped establish in 1995 as the first IUAES research section specifically focused on the study of ethnic diversity, I eagerly embraced the scholarly objectives of the 1998 ICAES, and I was able to organize, partly through the support of UNESCO, a large-scale international survey of how multiculturalism was being defined by professional anthropologists, and how it was being applied in the university-level educational policies and practices of various areas of the world.

The conclusions of this survey were somewhat uneven, but through subsequent international exchanges, a pattern started to emerge that I was able to incorporate in reports I submitted first to UNESCO (Cerroni-Long 1999), then to the American Anthropological Association (Cerroni-Long 2000), and finally to the European Society of Educational Sciences (Cerroni-Long 2002). The way multicultural education was being defined--internationally--by the beginning of this century, fell into two clear-cut categories, which I defined as applying the "managerial" and "therapeutic" approach respectively.

The managerial approach, generally adopted in the professional and business world, sees culture as a set of values and beliefs that affect communication. Thus, multicultural education specialists--usually called "diversity trainers" in the settings in which they operate--must help people negotiate their interpersonal differences through a process of linguistic translation.

The "therapeutic" approach, on the other hand, is more complex, and its implementation can follow two different models. The first model is built around the concept of individual rights, and defines multicultural education as a way to provide all members of a society with the same share of "cultural freedom"--defined as the opportunity to express one's personal identity. The second model focuses instead on the importance of group membership, and it proposes to alleviate inter-group conflict by boosting the "cultural prestige" of all groups.

These two models coalesced in the American setting to characterize academic approaches to multicultural education, thus strongly correlating it with issues of equity, consciousness raising, and identity politics. As a consequence, the idea of culture implicit in multiculturalism became increasingly vague and diffuse, and

diversity was seen to apply to a range of issues, from sexual identity and orientation to religious or political affiliation, and from generational differences to economic disadvantage, physical disability, choice of "lifestyle" or occupation, and any other kinds of factors through which individuals can choose to build their social identity.

This diversification of interpretations and applications of multicultural education became further complicated by two seemingly unrelated, but structurally connected, phenomena. At the intellectual level there was the destructive impact of postmodernism on the social sciences in general and on anthropology--as the quintessential "science of culture"--in particular (Sidky 2018). And at the sociopolitical level there was the escalating diasporic movement of world populations triggered by the outcomes of globalized capitalism: environmental degradation, wild economic disparities, ideological extremism, and great political instability (Cerroni-Long 2017).

The general structural correlation between postmodernism and globalized capitalism has been discussed at length (e.g. Jameson 1991), but the international composition of the IUAES research section I chair gave me an opportunity to test whether this was a phenomenon confined to Western societies. Thus, in the last decade, I organized a number of COER Roundtables on the topic of multicultural education that specifically aimed at contrasting and comparing the views of anthropologists in North and South America, Asia, Western and Eastern Europe, and Oceania. In particular, I was interested in finding out whether the idea that multiculturalism-inspired policies have failed and should be abandoned--expressed by various Western political leaders in recent times--is shared evenly across the world.

The results are encouraging at a certain level, but confusing at another. On the one hand, the COER Roundtables documented a continuing, or growing, demand for intercultural competence. And, on the other hand, we also found a general disaffection with the idea of multiculturalism, and even with the use of the term "multicultural education" itself. Viewed cumulatively, though, these results confirmed my growing belief in the necessity for a radical "re-visioning" (by which I mean revising through a different perspective) of educational practices, especially at the post-secondary level.

This re-visioning should be built on a careful analysis of the rise and fall of multicultural education, and it should aim at exploring the best ways to implement the most promising remedy for its failure. I see this remedy to be best encapsulated in the concept of "Integrative Studies"--understood as pedagogical practices that encourage the psychological integration of individuals and, through that, facilitate social integration, both by catalyzing the development of harmonious interpersonal relations, and by favoring the successful incorporation of "cultural outsiders" into the sociocultural fabric of the nation-states in which they aspire to permanently settle..

Reaching this objective is going to be particularly challenging in societies characterized by ideologies of extreme individualism (such as the American one), and in societies affected by the rapid and traumatic influx of large migrant/refugee populations. But I believe that an academic program in Integrative Studies is even more urgent in these societies, which can serve as a testing ground for the general usefulness of such educational innovation.

Liberation Pedagogy

Paulo Freire (1921-1997), the Brazilian philosopher who advocated for education to be the fundamental tool of "humanization" (Freire 1970), clearly indicated the importance of dialog in the practice of teaching. It is only through effective teacher/student interaction that the process of knowing can unfold, as a creative act based on the exchange of "words as praxis" (ibidem, 75). For Freire any true communicative exchange has two dimensions: reflection and action. Thus, we can be "liberated" and achieve self-realization through learning only as long as we become personally involved in the process of knowledge production itself--rather than simply accepting to be its passive recipients.

While Freire's ideas were considered revolutionary at the time they were first expressed and disseminated, and in fact compelled him to spend long stretches of time in exile from Brazil, they are profoundly similar to those at the basis of student-centered Western pedagogical traditions, linking the Socratic method of classical Greece to the "progressive education" of John Dewey (1859-1952). The one element that adds special value to Freire's teaching philosophy is the consciousness he acquired, because of events in his personal life, of "diversity" and of the difference it makes in the educational process.

First by becoming severely impoverished during adolescence--and falling behind in school because of this--and later by having to live abroad as an exile, and often travelling widely as a special education advisor for the World Council of Churches, Freire acquired a keen sense of the impact of social and cultural diversity on learning itself. He also discovered, without having been exposed to any anthropological training, the basic principle of this discipline: cultural relativism. As he says: "One of the first lessons which living in exile taught me, ... was that cultures are not better or worse than one another, ... they are simply different" And, by living abroad, "I came to understand my own country better. ... I came to know myself better. It was by being confronted with another self that I discovered more easily my own identity" (Freire & Faundez 1989:13-17).

Whether or not Freire's discovery of cultural relativism--and of a very anthropological idea of culture as including "the whole range of human activity"--was in fact catalyzed by his experience of travel and exile, it should also be noted that this experience could lead to such useful insights and be the source of a better self-understanding, only because, by the time he left Brazil, he had already acquired a very strong and secure sense of cultural identity. It is in societies in which the individual is not anchored by a sure sense of cultural "belonging" that, paradoxically, there is both less tolerance for diversity and more curiosity about ways to demonstrate personal uniqueness.

Because I have been based in American academia for more than thirty years, and I have been teaching and doing research about intracultural and intercultural diversity, and particularly about US multicultural practices, throughout this period, I know how problematic it is for Americans to identify their cultural background, let alone describe it (see Cerroni-Long 2016). In fact, helping my students develop some "cultural reflexivity"--or the ability to reflect upon one's own cultural background,

sorting out whatever ethnic or subcultural variations it may reveal--has become my major pedagogical objective (see Cerroni-Long 2011). But the US is the major hub of globalized capitalism precisely because the American national ethos of confrontational, competitive, possessive individualism has propelled its growth, so it is quite understandable that Americans are now suffering the most from the fragmentation of the self that makes identity into "an option" (Waters 1990), and thus a commodity.

In discussing the educational practices that liberation pedagogy should replace, Freire uses the term "banking education" which he explains as the process by which teachers "deposit" sets of "valuables" into their students' minds, who should receive, collect, and store these "knowledge tokens" as well as possible (Freire 1970:57-74). Described this way, education is revealed as a process of cultural indoctrination, and it is understandable why Freire's critique of it was seen by some as being subversive. The aim of globalized capitalism is to commodify anything at all, but in a world in which knowledge is treated as a commodity, people end up deprived of the most basic humanizing tool: the ability to think about thinking--through the higher learning process that characterizes our species.

I believe that the globalization of capitalism, combined with the technologies that have facilitated its spread, and with the environmental, social, and political instability it has created, has had such a deleterious impact on this higher learning process that some form of intervention at the educational level has now become urgent. Additionally, the movement of populations that has increasingly affected the world in the last half century has increased a keen awareness of the importance of culture in defining both behavior and identity.

The perceived need for multicultural education emerged from this realization, but attempts at its implementation floundered because of the enormous confusion that still exists about what a culture is, how cultures differ, and how enculturation processes affect our very consciousness. Anthropologists were ideally positioned to clarify these issues, but so many of them have not been able to apply cultural reflexivity to their own personal intellectual experience, thus being unable to evade the influence of the postmodern Zeitgeist on their scholarly practices. As a result, they have responded to multiculturalism in ways that have only added to the confusion (Sidky 1918). At this stage, anthropology itself needs to be revitalized through interdisciplinary integration, and interdisciplinarity might well become the core tool of Integrative Studies.

Human Learning

The great potential of Boasian anthropology for making the 21st century the "century of anthropology"--as the 1998 ICAES advocated--is its commitment to the "four field" approach. This approach is built on the recognition that anthropology is a holistic discipline, studying our species--*Homo sapiens*--at all levels: biological, historical, cultural, and linguistic. Consequently, Boasian anthropologists, and even undergraduate students choosing this "major" in college, get some form of training in each of the four (sub)fields through which our discipline is articulated: biological (or

physical) anthropology, archaeology, and cultural and linguistic anthropology.

The Boasian definition of culture as the major adaptive mechanism of our species, and of cultures (in the plural) as the localized, historically specific products of this mechanism, directly correlates to the four-field approach. And it is the implicit interdisciplinarity of this approach that makes this type of anthropology "the most humanistic of the sciences, and the most scientific of the humanities"[1]. It should be noted, however, that this view of anthropology--and the definition of culture correlated to it--are not accepted worldwide. To date the IUAES, the only international organization of professional anthropologists, continues to use the word "science" in its title, but there have been fierce internal debates about its appropriateness, which offends a majority of the postmodernists in general, and those advocating for the superior value of "nationally-specific anthropologies" in particular.

At the same time, the term culture is still applied to the most varied forms of social behavior on the one hand (as people talk about "the culture of Facebook" or that of fast food), and it also continues to be used in its early meaning of "cultivation of the spirit"--and thus as a synonym of "civilization"--particularly in discussions of cultural heritage and its expressions. To complicate matters further, a whole new scholarly field--"Cultural Studies"--emerged in the UK in the late 1960s specifically to examine "cultural practices" in their relations to power. This perspective, originally inspired by Marxian/Gramscian activism, linked up with some of the ideas of one of the most influential French philosophers of the late 20th century, Michel Foucault (1926-1984), and the result was a very postmodern nihilism inextricably connecting power with knowledge, and thus celebrating anti-intellectualism as a form of "cultural resistance"!

This is all very far from the celebration of universal human connectedness through respect for varied cultural heritage that seems to animate the teaching philosophy of the 2018 recipient of the "Global Teacher" prize, bestowed by the Varkey Foundation to Andria Zafirakou. In several interviews and multimedia presentations, Ms. Zafirakou, who was born and raised in England but is of Greek-Cypriot heritage, explains her success with the multicultural students attending the community school of Alperton, in the north west London area of Brent--where she teaches "arts and textiles"--as a result of the mutual trust she is able to establish specifically by recognizing their cultural diversity and building bridges across it. This she does by using forms of address in their languages of origin--of which more than 35 are represented at her school--by showing an appreciation for the artistic traditions of the countries from which the students come, as well as by taking a personal interest in their individual safety, health, and well-being.

By emphasizing the biological matrix of culture-building, Boasian anthropology highlights precisely the psychic unity of mankind that permits to bridge cultural differences at individual levels. All cultures are affected in their development by localized environmental and historical factors, but they also will always organize in terms of specific subsistence and communication patterns. And these will in turn lead

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[1] This is a definition generally attributed (without a publication source) to Alfred L. Kroeber (1876-1960), who received the first PhD in anthropology from Columbia University, under the supervision of Franz Boas, in 1901, and went on to become one of the major contributors to the establishment of academic anthropology in California.

to the establishment of particular social, economic, and political structures, as well as to the specific psychological configurations reflected in norms, values, beliefs, and creative expressions. These are the universal characteristics of all cultures, anthropologically defined. And perhaps the time has arrived to highlight the specificity of this definition by relating it to the term "holoculture" instead of the all-too-generic culture.

Since we are a species that is completely dependent on interaction with fellow humans for survival, our drive for knowledge acquisition is deeply embedded in our biological make-up and we learn by leaps and bounds all through our early years of life. Learning gets rewarded in the most effective way: it gives us enjoyment. And that is why we have devised a whole range of activities through which we can keep learning, albeit often without even being conscious of it. While we label these activities in many different ways, they could all be simply called play, or perhaps, "deep play", as was done by anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973). The depth of deep play resides not only in the fact that some forms of human play are very risky or even painful (as for example in some types of extreme sports, initiation rites, or "beautifying" practices, such as piercing or tattooing), but also in the many layers of symbolic meaning they embed. Thus, any form of play is built around manipulation of symbols, and it reveals how the process of symbolic encoding and decoding is at the core of human thought.

To better appreciate the centrality of symbolizing for our species it might be useful to briefly review what makes human thought unique. First, our brains have a much thicker top layer--the cortex--than any other mammals, permitting complex neural development. Second, we have language, stimulating a much more sophisticated symbol-manipulation than in any other animals. Third, we are born "unfinished" and without any instincts, so our survival is totally dependent on the great ability we have to learn by interacting with fellow humans and with our environment--which we can continue to do all through our lives.

Because learning is correlated to enjoyment, however, once human groups were pushed by environmental factors into the type of subsistence patterns that ultimately led to the formation of centralized, stratified, hierarchical nation-states, the concept of "work" emerged, and with it a major distinction between ludic and instrumental behavior was established. Linguistically, the term ludic (derived from the Latin verb "ludo" meaning "I play"), came to be so disparaging of playful adult activities, particularly in the Protestant Christian world, that it is now mainly known among native English speakers as the root of the word "ludicrous", meaning absurd or ridiculous. Indeed, the "work ethic", which became the ideological cornerstone of Western capitalism, does equate the value of work with its instrumentality--that is, its serving as an instrument to an end. Consequently, any activities that seem to have no immediate "productivity" are castigated as wasteful or even dangerous--for stirring the body in directions the soul may come to regret!

Understanding the adaptive qualities of play as a vehicle for life-long learning, may help quite considerably in redressing some of the harm done to our species by a faulty interpretation of our most basic characteristics. We do not play in order to enjoy ourselves, we enjoy ourselves through play because playing is crucial to the learning process, which is essential to our survival. In this respect, it is particularly

sad that the way "education" has come to be institutionalized and delivered in all state-organized societies, but especially in the West, has deviated so widely from its ideal central mission--of encouraging the flourishing of individual mental potential--that it now seems to have become instead just a mechanism for indoctrinating the masses about the delights of "wage-slavery" and consumerism, training for the "school-to-work" transition.

Knowledge Integration Training

Learning is at the basis of human survival, then, and since human learning is built around the manipulation of symbols intrinsic to the process of "playful" interaction with fellow humans, we cannot escape becoming shaped by the cultural environment in which we are born and raised in ways so profound that we are often not even aware of them. We can, however, learn to recognize them, and that is where even a limited exposure to anthropology can facilitate the development of the "cultural reflexivity" that, in my view, is an essential tool for high-level intellectual development.

The way anthropologists typically acquire cultural reflexivity is by undergoing long periods of participant-observation research in a foreign setting. This usually triggers culture shock, from which we may emerge, as Freire did from his years of exile, more cognizant of our own identity, culture-specific inclinations, and psychological characteristics. Some may actually realize that the life of an anthropologist--or "professional alien"--is not for them, and that is all for the best. In a way, anthropology is a vocation more than a profession, and it is definitely not an easy discipline to practice or teach. However, the value of some of the insights on human nature it provides seems so high that I believe they should be widely disseminated. In particular, what anthropologists have discovered and documented about human thought, learning, enculturation, the universal characteristics of holocultures, intracultural and intercultural diversity, and the intrinsic interdisciplinarity of all human knowledge, should be incorporated into the field of Integrative Studies--which I consider the most effective new version of the Liberal Arts.

The Liberal Arts--from the Latin "ars liberalis"--have played an interesting role in the history of Western education. After their development in the classical world to provide training in the skills deemed crucial for "free men" (the word "liber" means "free" in Latin), but also to foster mental "freedom from ignorance" and cultivation of the spirit (Archimbault 1965), they went on to constitute the core of humanistic education in Europe ever since the Renaissance. Their canon, established in Medieval times to include the three arts (the *Trivium* in Latin) of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and the four sciences (the *Quadrivium* in Latin) of music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy, became eventually expanded to incorporate the study of classical languages, history, and moral philosophy. This ended up giving the Liberal Arts a prominent role in educating the young in ethics--often religiously defined--as they were imported into American education.

Interestingly, however, the fundamental interest of American educators in

building the moral fiber of their students inevitably competed with the necessity to train the masses for occupations that would contribute to the growth of the American economy. As a result, American colleges and universities came to offer training in an ever more eclectic array of fields of study--ranging from the most theoretical to the most practical--in which students can specialize (or "major" in), once they have fulfilled their "general education" or "basic studies" requirements.

It is in this framework, operating on the principle of competition--both for students and for resources--not only across universities, but also across colleges, departments, programs, and disciplines, that the need for a constructive response to multiculturalism was injected. As a consequence, the way multicultural education was defined, developed, and implemented in American academia was multifarious at best (see Schoem et al. 1995)

In the process of my research on this issue, I also came to realize that the problems related to the development of an effective and well-reasoned program of multicultural education in the US were very similar to the ones encountered in the establishment of interdisciplinarity in general. The core of the problem seems to reside in the fact that the crossing of either disciplinary or cultural boundaries has to be actively "modelled" in the teaching process itself in order to be pedagogically effective. It is this modelling which, for example, I am able to present to students in my anthropology classes, by indicating the culture-specific features of my own behavior, and inviting comparisons with theirs. In a similar way, successful attempts at interdisciplinarity have involved team-teaching, together with a colleague specialized in a different discipline (which in the case in point was history), classes on topics amenable to being addressed from a number of scholarly perspectives. And I believe that the fundamental effectiveness of our approach--which we called "knowledge integration training"--derived from constantly calling the students' attention to the different epistemological assumptions framing our teaching, and to the more complete perspective emerging from their combination (see Cerroni-Long & Long 1995).

In line with these observations, I certainly agree with some of the critics of multiculturalism that there is "an urgent need for a transformation of the vocabulary of multiculturalism into that of 'interculturalism', with a corresponding shift to underpinning premises which highlight the deep historical interconnectedness of cultures" (Rattansi 2011:159). To this I would add that, while anthropology can document the points of connection and divergence across cultures, what is most necessary is to highlight the "positionality" of all intellectual perspectives (i.e. we view all matters in a certain way because of the position from which we view them), and that culture defines the "frame" within which we position ourselves. Thus, the first tool indispensable for reaching intercultural competence (which has the inspiring acronym of IC) is a better knowledge of the self, and of the process of knowledge acquisition itself.

Know Thyself

The ancient Greek aphorism "Know Thyself"--inscribed in the forecourt of the Temple of Apollo, at Delphi--illustrates what is one of the most frequently used concepts in Western philosophy. The necessity for knowing oneself in order to better

understand humanity itself is highlighted by the fact that the Latin form of the aphorism, *Nosce te ipsum*, was often used by Renaissance scientists and anatomists, and is even found in the work of Linnaeus (1707-1778)--the Swedish naturalist who named our species *Homo sapiens*.

Since *Homo sapiens* can be translated as "Man, the knower" it is rather puzzling that Western civilization seems to have ambivalent attitudes about human knowledge, and we still lack a good definition for it. In particular, seeking knowledge may be quite dangerous--so dangerous that the Bible describes it as the cause for being banned from the Garden of Eden (Genesis, 3:22), and it certainly has driven many to their death throughout history.

The crux of the "human knowledge dilemma" may have to do with our fundamental uncertainty about its source (how do we acquire knowledge?), its reliability (how can we make sure that what we know is true?), and its use (who "owns" knowledge, and how can applying it be controlled?). This uncertainty is further magnified whenever we get to know something that clashes either with a cherished belief ("is there *really* no Santa Claus?"), or with the views held by most people in the society in which we live at a certain time ("is the Earth *really* not flat?"). And it is unavoidable that knowing something with inconvenient social repercussions, or with the potential for downright nefarious applications, is profoundly disturbing. The great attention given to epistemology--the philosophical analysis of knowledge--in Western civilization, as well as its impact on both the religion/science clash and the art/science distinction on the one hand, and the academic/applied disciplinary categorization on the other, all seem to derive from this fundamental ambivalence.

Two factors have further complicated the "human knowledge dilemma" in recent times, albeit also offering some pointers for addressing it constructively. First, tremendous advances in our understanding of human mental processes, brought about by disciplines such as psychology, linguistics, neuroscience, and artificial intelligence, have highlighted how our uncertainties about human knowledge may derive from the very same characteristics of the human mind that allow for its acquisition. Second, both through the contributions of anthropology, and because of the dramatic increase in the cross-cultural encounters catalyzed by globalization, we have come to realize that the process by which we acquire knowledge is not only affected by age, gender, education, and material conditions, but also that it is actually molded by our bio-socio-cultural milieu, perhaps from conception (food preferences, for example, seem to be powerfully affected by the aromas perceived in the womb).

Knowledge, then, both in its embodied and conceptual aspects, is at the same time clearly culture-specific and socially situated, but our cognitive mechanisms lack any inbuilt facilities for recognizing this conditioning process. As a consequence, we often "resist" abstract learning, have a strong tendency toward ethnocentrism, and are vulnerable to uncritically embracing a whole range of false beliefs. Above all, we generally lack an effective "mental conductor" to assist us in discovering the connections among diverse types of knowledge, so that we can integrate them, in the process broadening the parameters of our mental perspectives.

While such integrative features are apparently not hard-wired in our brain functions, there have been thinkers throughout history who have addressed the "human knowledge dilemma" successfully analyzing--or representing in fiction--

some of the most puzzling characteristics of our cognitive make-up, describing the skills which can counterbalance its shortcomings, and discussing how such skills can be applied in one's life, through a process Gandhi called "experiments with truth" (1948).

Because of all this, I placed this issue at the basis of a class I developed as a possible core introductory requirement for the curriculum in Integrative Studies I am hoping to establish at my institution. Through this class, students will have the opportunity to reflect on these experiments, and thus will be encouraged to embark upon their own path of knowledge integration. For the purpose of this class, I organized planned course readings and films around four themes, each representing the authors' engagement with the types of knowledge areas that relate to the four fundamental existential questions listed below.

1. Intrapersonal - "Who am I?" is at the core of the "human knowledge dilemma," but this question does not really get conceptually articulated until we acquire a sense of self, which in turn seems to require the acquisition of language. Nonetheless, we start positing this question through our bodies from the moment of birth--fine-tuning our senses and "adapting" to the milieu in which we live. As pedagogist Paulo Freire pointed out, we "read the world" before reading words (1970). The film "Babies" documents this dynamic in great ethnographic depth, and will serve as an ideal introduction to the readings discussing how we "learn" to be human.

2. Interpersonal - "Where am I?" is another question addressed through our bodies in the first few years of our life, but by the time we acquire a sense of self the question brings into focus our profound social embeddedness, and our consequent psychological vulnerability. Since, following philosopher MacIntyre's terse definition, we are "dependent rational animals" (1999), maturing into adults requires realizing that we are profoundly related to others, so that alienation and loneliness may simply derive from our need for love and fellowship. The film to be used to introduce this theme is "28 Up"--a landmark example of longitudinal social studies, and a poignant reflection on human development.

3. Intercultural - "Who are we?" expands upon social embeddedness by focusing attention on the boundaries of group membership created by intracultural and intercultural differences. This is perhaps the most confusing question, because our "natural" ethnocentrism generally leads to either belittle ("we are all the same, really!") or bemoan ("why can't they be like us?") cultural differences. The readings for this theme illustrate the challenges of pursuing intercultural competence, and the film introducing the theme--"Uncle Boonmee, who can recall his past lives"--highlights the difficulties implicit in transcending one's own cultural matrix.

4. Interdisciplinary - "Why am I here?" is listed as the final question because it requires a second-order level of reflexivity which is not reached, or maintained, by everyone. Education seems to be the mechanism both triggering the question and leading toward particular ways to answer it. In so doing, however, education also highlights and contributes to the fragmentation of knowledge, often in the oppositional dyads of art/science; analytic/synthetic; spiritual/material; theoretical/practical. The film introducing this theme--"Mindwalk"--highlights how all of these oppositions emerge from the very same characteristics of the human mind

that also lead us to ask basic existential questions. Understanding their intrinsic correlations may provide the best tools toward a higher-level, integrative perspective, which has to be interdisciplinary.

As this course design indicates, Integrative Studies attempts to go beyond multiculturalism by aiming instead to foster intercultural competence. With this aim, it uses interdisciplinary and multimodal learning materials--incorporating not only readings in a number of genres, but also visits to museums and galleries, concerts and theaters. The course will also highlight the fact that a better knowledge of oneself can assist not only in wisely selecting programs of study, but also in seeing more clearly the connection between academic training and the world of work.

Above all, Integrative Studies can reveal the fundamental unity of knowledge, so well described by biologist E. O. Wilson in his *Consilience* (1998), and it can enhance a reassuring sense of solidarity with all living creatures, and with people from any culture and all walks of life, simply by providing a deeper understanding of human nature, of the place humans occupy in the fabric of planetary existence, and of the way macrocosm and microcosm are enduringly linked by their reciprocal reflection, which catalyzes the "magic of reality" (Dawkins 2011).

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