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## 深層對話：課程研究國際化下的知識突破時機

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### 摘 要

學校課程及課程研究與發展乃植基於個別國家文化與政治情境，因此，針對各國文化所進行的課程研究，將能激發更多對課程的自覺與反思，讓研究者敏覺地、批判地看待在地或外來的學術影響來源。課程研究的國際化試圖以一些可以含納國家、國際課程問題的語言與議題，促成「超越國家」的課程理解。這樣的國際化研究，在縱貫層面上，要探究各個國家的課程史；在水平層面上，要了解學校課程中文化、社會、政治的內涵，並促成各國學者之間、不同概念之間的深層對話。

深層對話的促成有賴三個時機：個人的批判分析與自我反思、藉由學術會議所引發的社群磋商、對學術會議中研究報告的再研究以獲得心得。在這些時機中，由於參與課程研究的學者得以暫時遠離熟悉的在地情境與規範，可以像個「陌生人」般，去質疑、評論本國或他國的課程事件與問題，因而可以促成在地化與全球化的協商。因此，課程研究的國際化可以創造超越國家的課程對話空間，並引發知識上的突破。

關鍵詞：國際化、知識突破、深層對話

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## **Complicated Conversation: Occasions for “Intellectual Breakthrough” in the Internationalization of Curriculum Studies**

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### **Abstract**

Studying the academic field of curriculum studies locally and globally (as each is imbricated in the other) might enable scholars to make more sophisticated their critical and intellectual distance from their respective national cultures and from those standardizing processes of globalization against which numerous national cultures are now reacting so strongly. Such study will enable a more sophisticated, self-conscious, judicious participation in the accelerating internationalization of curriculum studies. Through the study I propose here, curriculum studies scholars will be supported in their efforts to understand their local and global circumstances. Such efforts and our support of them will enable scholars to study and thereby participate the emergence of a worldwide curriculum studies field, with a vocabulary and intellectual agenda that incorporates and expresses both national and international curriculum questions. Can intellectual advancement? In nationally-distinctive academic fields of curriculum studies, as individual scholars participating in an academic community? Be supported through three occasions of study: 1) of nationally-distinctive fields of curriculum study, 2) through dialogical encounter with scholar-participants and with international consultants, and 3) resulting in academic culture creation, both local and global?

**Keywords:** internationalization, intellectual breakthrough, complicated conversation

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Like the humanities and the arts, the academic field of curriculum studies is embedded in national culture, a fact underscored in the first international handbook of curriculum research (Pinar, 2003a). Because school curriculum and curriculum research and development are embedded in their respective national cultures, in the political present (a different “present” in different nations and regions), in cultural questions represented in various curricula as well as in curriculum research and development, and in those public debates and policies surrounding those curricula and research and development, studying the academic field of curriculum studies locally and globally (as each is imbricated in the other) might enable scholars to strengthen and make more sophisticated their critical and intellectual distance from their respective local cultures and from those standardizing processes of globalization against which numerous national cultures are now reacting so strongly. Such study might enable a more sophisticated, self-conscious, judicious participation in the accelerating internationalization of curriculum studies.

Several issues are at stake in the internationalization of nationally and/or regionally distinctive fields. In his review of Brazilian curriculum studies, for instance, Antonio Moreira (2003: 171) concludes that the importation of “foreign material” involves “interactions and resistances, whose intensity and whose potential subversiveness vary according to international and local circumstances.” Despite concerns over the national appropriateness of imported scholarly material, the internationalization of curriculum studies proceeds. This fact requires scholars worldwide to become more knowledgeable, more critical, more self-conscious and selective regarding the appropriation of scholarship from sources outside and inside one’s homeland. Through the study I propose here, I will work to support this increasing sophistication of curriculum studies scholars, so that, for instance, “domestically” produced North American scholarship is not assumed to be superior (or inferior) to scholarship produced elsewhere, nor scholarship from the “North” automatically dismissed as “hegemonic” or, alternately, uncritically incorporated. Finally, I will look for the emergence of a worldwide curriculum studies field, with a vocabulary and intellectual agenda that incorporates both national and international curriculum questions.

Such a field, Noel Gough (2004) points out, requires new languages and new

publics. He argues that “new transnational publics might produce more defensible metanarratives for curriculum work than nationalism”. These publics he envisions as “democratic, multicultural, and transnational citizenries” (2004: 4). The emphasis on a “new transnational public” reminds us, as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000: 49) do, that “there was a time, not so long ago, when internationalism was a key component of proletarian struggles and progressive politics in general.” I hope this study will support the formation of progressive politics and solidarity within and across national borders, as public education is, for me, inseparable from broad processes of democratization and social and economic justice.

It is Gough’s employment of the term “citizen” that reminds us that an academic field of study is also a “form of collective belonging” (Eribon, 2004: 123), a “public” in which we are “citizens,” loyal even when in disagreement. In such a conception, our solidarity derives from both “shared identity” and “shared responsibility” (Fraser, 1993: 22; quoted in Gough, 2004: 4). (In the case of curriculum studies scholars, I suspect the former derives from the latter.) What constitutes those nationally-distinctive “identities” and “responsibilities” we will learn during the course of this study. What possibilities exist for transnational solidarity should also become clear.

## A Brief History

*How can we account for intellectual breakthrough?*

—Charles David Axelrod (1979: 67)

Because curriculum research and development tends to be explicitly situated within the nations in which they are conducted, I choose the word “internationalization”—rather than “globalization” or simply “worldwide”—to depict the field’s efforts to extend its scholarly conversation beyond the national borders in which it is practiced. Admittedly, “nationalism” has proven a problematical historical and political formation; by employing the term “internationalization” I intend no uncritical acceptance of the phenomenon. But given the national distinctiveness of curriculum research and development and the pervasive fears of cultural standardization and weakened national

sovereignty “globalization” portends, “internationalization” depicts more precisely the phenomenon I propose to study and support.

In contrast to the question I have quoted to open this section, my question is how we – as individuals, as members of scholarly communities – might support intellectual breakthrough, in our academic fields, in ourselves as individual scholars participating in an academic community, and in the school curricula studied by children in the nations where we work. This question quickly leads to broader questions concerning individuality, community, and thinking, concepts I use as they appear in the work on intellectual breakthrough by the Canadian sociologist Charles David Axelrod. I will discuss these terms in the next section.

While the internationalization of the academic field of curriculum studies has been underway in many countries for decades, its institutionalization – in the establishment of an international association ([www.iaacs.org](http://www.iaacs.org)) - and theorization (see Overly, 2003; Pinar, 2003b; Trueit et al., 2003) are relatively recent. Through external funding, I seek to study this process by commissioning intellectual histories of nationally-distinctive fields of curriculum studies. Such scholarship will contribute to what I term the “verticality” of the field. These “vertical” lines of inquiry will provide historical knowledge, enabling understanding of nationally and/or regionally distinctive fields’ present circumstances and, perhaps, glimpses of their possible futures.

Given the problem of “proximity” between curriculum studies scholars and governmental-mandated school reform (see, for example, Palamidessi & Felman, 2003: 119; Sabar & Mathias, 2003: 381), and given the ahistorical, presentistic character of much school reform worldwide (Pinar, 2004a; Smith, 2003a, 2003b), basic research into the intellectual histories of nationally-distinctive academic fields of curriculum studies is urgently needed. Such scholarship will portray the fields’ histories of engagement with schools, with government, and with society and culture more generally, as well as their relationships to related fields of academic study in the university. Such scholarship will produce the historical knowledge and, perhaps, the critical intellectual distance necessary for scholar-participants to provide their various constituencies – first among them schoolteachers – understanding of their present circumstances.

In addition to curriculum history, I seek to support the cultivation of curriculum

theory in nationally-distinctive fields of curriculum studies. “Theory” I understand in those distinctive senses in which it is employed in the arts and humanities, that is, as providing interpretative schemes for understanding the present circumstances of the field, what I term the “horizontality” of the field. Complementing historical studies, theory enables scholars to understand the present relations among culture, society, and politics in the intellectual structuration of school curriculum, curriculum research, and in the interpellation of curriculum studies specialists (Pinar, 2004a). Suggestive here are studies in the history of science (Kuhn, 1962); studies in the deployment of Kuhn’s scholarship in understanding U.S. curriculum studies (Brown, 1988; Pinar, 1980), in the “representations of the intellectual” (Said, 1996), studies in “intellectual breakthrough” (Axelrod, 1979), in the reconceptualization of U.S. curriculum studies; (see Brown, 1988; Pinar, 1980) and, most recently, its internationalization (Gough, 2004; Pinar, 2003a). In Noel Gough’s terms, these studies invite us “to think about curriculum inquiry in terms of continuities and changes in both the sociotechnical systems that produce understandings of curriculum and in the publics for which such knowledge is produced” (2004: 10). Such an ambition structures the study I propose here.

I propose to study and support the internationalization of curriculum studies as it occurs through “complicated conversation” (Pinar et al., 1995: 848) among scholar-participants in a series of externally-funded invitational conferences organized by nation, region, or, on occasion, by continent, to be held on a North American university campus. Concluding the decade-long study will be a culminating conference on the state of curriculum studies worldwide, its institutionalization in universities, its infrastructure (learned societies, journals, conferences), and its complex relations to schools and to governmental agencies. This final and culminating conference will represent an important occasion for consolidation, summarizing the study’s intellectual and institutional findings, concluding with recommendations for next steps. I intend these annual events to provide occasions for “intellectual breakthrough” first in the various local fields and, later, worldwide, as the conferences contribute to the initiation of a transnational conversation (Gough, 2004).

At the conclusion of each national or regional conference, and employing what the U.S. intellectual historian Martin Jay (1988; see Pinar, 2004b) terms “synoptic content

analysis,” the North American research group will study the research presented and the conferences as educational events, employing the concepts sketched in the following sections. The group will then formulate recommendations—in consultation with those invited scholar-participants and with other consultants—for that nationally-distinctive field’s intellectual development and its participation in the worldwide field now emerging. The “final word,” however, will reside with the nationally or regionally distinctive scholar-participants themselves.

It is important to acknowledge the concepts employed in the study as not only particular to the project I am proposing; they are particular to cultural traditions in the West, traditions of individuality, community, and thinking, among others. To support an authentically<sup>1</sup> international – and, later, “transnational” (a concept also in the title of the journal of the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies: [www.iaacs.org](http://www.iaacs.org)) conversation – the very terms of the study may become objects of study, and not only by those working in North America. The scholar-participants and consultants will be invited to critique the concepts structuring the study, revising or even replacing them, should the scholar-participants choose, with concepts indigenous to and, in their judgement, more appropriate for, their nationally or regionally-distinctive academic fields. What is at stake here is the democratic negotiation of internationalization and globalization. To contest cultural imperialism and neo-colonialism, the very concepts and occasions structuring the study can themselves become objects of critique, even contestation; curricular language itself becomes negotiable in the complicated conversation that is the internationalization of curriculum studies.

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<sup>1</sup> Few curriculum studies scholars appreciated the complexity of “authentic” conversation across national borders more than the Canadian curriculum theorist Ted Aoki. “If East-West conversation in curriculum is to be authentically East-West dialogue,” Aoki (2005a: 227) wrote, “if North-South conversation is to be authentically North-South dialogue, such conversation must be guided by an interest in understanding more fully what is not said by going beyond what is said.” Without such “going beyond,” those engaged in conversation will not be able to take into account “unspoken” and “taken-for-granted” assumptions, including “ideology,” what Aoki characterizes as that “the cultural crucible and context that make possible what is said by each in the conversational situation.”

## Thinking, Individuality, and Community: Intellectual Breakthrough through Study and Complicated Conversation

*[T]he individual is the source of the highest intellectual standard.*

—Charles David Axelrod (1979: 42)

Within that brief history, the more specific concepts structuring the study are named in the above section title. While each is worthy of scholarship in itself (and, in fact, has inspired considerable scholarship, of course, not only within North American curriculum studies but also elsewhere: see Pinar et al., 1995), my interest in them is as locational markers of the intellectual processes of the scholar-participants within their academic communities. Scholarship occurs, of course, as the solitary labor of the studying individual; it occurs, as well, intersubjectively, in collaborative investigation with colleagues and students. Thinking itself may be said to occur in those “in-between” spaces between the individual and his or her community.

The individuality of which I speak is not, I emphasize, the U.S. cult of individualism in which subjective struggles for individuation are often expressed as struggles for self-aggrandizement at the expense of community. Instead, the individuality I endorse is reminiscent of that evident in the work of George Simmel, who, Axelrod (1979: 48) notes, “makes no attempt to violate the individuality of his audience.” Self-conscious concern for individuality within community expressed in movements between solitude (individual study) and complicated conversation (here understood as collaborative investigation and consultation with others as well as that dialogical encounter occasioned by the conferences) might support nationally and/or regionally distinctive academic fields of curriculum studies to traverse lines between the local and global, as each is embedded in the other. Such self-conscious and scholarly transversal might enable these fields to breakthrough local and global intellectual barriers and advance intellectually. This is one “hypothesis” this study tests.

While the resources for conceptualizing these issues are numerous, I focus here on



the social history and theory of intellectual breakthrough composed by Charles David Axelrod. His remarkable study concentrates on Freud, Simmel, and Buber. Here I will borrow key concepts – such as the individual, the community, and thinking – and adapt them to my purposes, purposes I trust do not betray his. Supplementing this reliance on Axelrod will be reference to the notion of the intellectual in exile as articulated by Edward Said, and to the creation of culture as elaborated by Didier Eribon in his study inspired by Michel Foucault. The conceptual structure of the study I propose is deliberately minimal, enabling scholar-participants to more readily revise it, as they deem appropriate, given their own cultural, political, intellectual circumstances and aspirations. To repeat: the internationalization of curriculum studies requires negotiation of the very concepts by which the complicated conversation proceeds.

The concepts structuring Axelrod’s (1979: 2) study of “intellectual breakthrough” are thinking, individuality, and community. That these are nouns does not distort Axelrod’s emphasis upon social processes of research and inquiry. As the notion of “breaking through” makes vivid, the term refers not only to the finished products of inquiry, but to that accompanying “discursive tension” (1979: 2) individual scholars can experience within and on the edges of intellectual disciplines. Axelrod (1979: 2-3) points out that “ideas do not float freely among people; they become rooted in commitments, ossified and sustained within intellectual communities; they are cradled among avid sponsors and defenders whose work relies on their stability.” The curriculum studies field is, then, not only a self-disinterested labyrinth of concepts. The curriculum studies field is, as well, a lived conceptual structure which participants not only study but by means of which conduct their lives, lives organized around the field’s traditions, agendas, and imagined possibilities.

I propose to study how three occasions of critical analysis and scholarly self-reflection—“thinking” in Axelrod’s schema—provide opportunities for “complicated conversation” and, in particular, “intellectual breakthrough,” as these terms are defined not only by Axelrod but by the scholar-participants themselves and by consultants and members of the North American research group. Preceding and following these events will be months of inquiry; the individual’s experience of this process will be studied through interviews conducted with individual participants during the conference event.<sup>2</sup>

As Axelrod (1979: 1) observes: “To report a discourse by segregating it from its process is to constrict its nature and diminish its potential.”

The conferences—held in North America, away from the national and regional settings where the commissioned papers have their most immediate cultural and political meaning—support scholars’ sense of “distance” from their homelands, recalling Edward Said’s (1996) depiction of the intellectual in exile. Such an intellectual position is, Said suggests, not easily seduced by scholarly success (or failure), by the solidarity of colleagues, by the authority of those institutions which employ us, or by the nations in which we are citizens or to regions to which we are loyal. In his *Representations of the Intellectual*, Said (1996: 82-83) argues that:

The intellectual today ought to be an amateur, someone who considers that to be a thinking and concerned member of a society one is entitled to raise moral issues at the heart of even the most technical and professionalized activity.... [T]he intellectual’s spirit as an amateur can enter and transform the merely professional routine most of us go through into something more lively and radical; instead of doing what one is supposed to do one can ask why one does it, who benefits from it, how can it reconnect with a personal project and original thoughts.

Said’s statement specifies the significance of academic knowledge to subjectivity and to social reconstruction, a reiteration of Western progressive and democratic traditions. In Axelrod’s (1979: 2) terms, Said’s conception underscores the complex, ambivalent, and shifting thinking of the individual as she/he engages his or her community. In this study, I propose to support “lively” and “radical”<sup>3</sup> thinking in the

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<sup>2</sup> I hope to secure funding to create an archive to store the interviews as well as other materials (such as the recordings of the conferences). Like the “queer archives” theorized by Ann Cvetkovich (2003: 268), the CSICS archive “can be viewed as the material instantiation of Derrida’s deconstructed archive; they are composed of material practices that challenge traditional conceptions of history and understand the quest for history as a psychic need rather than a science.” It is, perhaps, a psychic need both local and global, enabling us as individual to work through psychologically as well intellectually moments of internationalization.

<sup>3</sup> I intend “radical” not as its revolutionary definition but in its focus upon “origin” or “foundations,”

various national and regional fields of curriculum studies, studying how these fields respond to three specific occasions of “complicated conversation.”

While the concept of “complicated conversation” is here a curricular idea and not an instructional one, pedagogical considerations are hardly irrelevant, as curriculum understood as complicated conversation is structured, in part, by teaching. We will look for pedagogical moments not only in the analytic structure of the commissioned papers but, especially, in the questions and comments offered during the conference event. These may well not be self-evident, of course, as “dialogue as a form of pedagogy,” Elizabeth Ellsworth (1997: 48) has pointed out, is a “historically and cultural embedded practice.”

At least as important as pedagogy (teaching or instruction) in this conceptualization of curriculum, is the notion of study. It is “students’ [I would add scholars’] active studying [that] is the essential educative power,” Robert McClintock reminds us. One’s truths – academic knowledge grounded in lived, that is, subjective and social experience – cannot be taught, McClintock underscores: “they [can] be learned only through the pains of uncertain, unconditioned, open study, for which every [person has] the capacity but not necessarily the will.” (Or the circumstances, I might add.) We trust that remuneration and the cooperation of scholars’ host institutions will support both.

In the subjective and social spheres—too often split off from each other in state-directed bureaucratizations of curriculum research and development—the labor of curriculum scholarship becomes political and psychological as well as intellectual. Akin to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s characterization of philosophy, curriculum research may involve the creation of “untimely” concepts in Friedrich Nietzsche’s sense of this term, by “acting counter to our time, and thereby acting on our time and, let us hope, for the benefit of a time to come” (1983a; quoted in Patton, 2000: 3). It is for the sake of the world our and others’ children inhabit that we undertake this study of the internationalization of curriculum studies.

The intellectual labor of curriculum studies can also be understood by invoking

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i.e. the historical emphasis of the papers commissioned. “lively” and “radical” (in this historical sense) are interrelated and may well support intellectual advancement, itself rapid and profound enough to warrant the adjective “revolutionary.”

Deleuze's conception of theory as a relay of practice, a conception, as Paul Patton points out, that is closer to the distinction Nietzsche made between academic philosophers in uncritical service to the State, and those "true" philosophers who must remain "private thinkers" (see Nietzsche, 1983b; Patton, 2000: 5). To remain a "private thinker" means that one's scholarship, one's thinking, teaching, and writing, are engaged in self-overcoming, the surpassing of the historical, sedimented "self" one has been conditioned and, perhaps, required to be. In working to overcome the "self" conceived by others, one "works from within," from one's interiority, which is a specific configuration of the *socius* and therefore, by definition, a public project as well. This is, too, a project of intellectual breakthrough.

This apparent paradox—that one's private self is necessarily public—is clarified in Patton's characterization of Jean-Paul Sartre, for many the preeminent private-and-public intellectual of the twentieth century in the West. Patton (2000: 5) describes Sartre "as a modern paradigm of the private thinker who spoke and acted on his own behalf rather than as the representative of a political party or social class." Such thinkers "seek to align themselves with the unrepresentable forces that introduce disorder and a dose of permanent revolution into political and social life" (Patton, 2000: 6). Such thinkers I designate, then, as private and public intellectuals. They are private in Nietzsche's sense of self-overcoming while publicly declining to employ their intellectual labor in unquestioning service to the State and in uncritical complicity with the political status quo. They work from "within" (Pinar, 1972).

"Private" can imply isolation from historical forces and social movements. Such an implication would be mistaken here, as I am suggesting that historical forces and social movements are both the sources of interiority and the provocations of scholarship, teaching, and study. But a certain solitude—a "room of one's own" in Virginia Woolf's famous phrase—is a prerequisite for that "complicated conversation" with oneself without which one disappears onto the social surface, into the maelstrom that is the public world. Without a private life, without an ongoing project of autobiographical understanding, one's intellectual "practice" too often tends toward the miming of what is fashionable or profitable.

A public intellectual who is not also a private intellectual risks the convoluted

expression of private emotion projected onto the social surface, as interiority not self-reflexively grasped can disappear into, and be misrecognized as, “the world.” An “organic” intellectual’s relation to the “multitude” (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 61) necessarily includes one’s relationship with one’s self, one’s self-reflexive articulation of one’s subjectivity. It is through subjectivity that one experiences history and society, and through which history and society speak.

One specific sense of “complicated conversation” to be supported by this study occurs during the invitational conferences, in which dialogical encounter (Freire, 1968) will structure conversation. Speaking of Martin Buber, Axelrod (1979: 55) emphasizes that “dialogue resides in a situation of concrete, mutual relation between speakers.” That fact of physical presence provides a lived foundation to speech, so much so that for Buber, Axelrod (1979: 55) suggests, the “force” of dialogue “emerges as this concreteness, as its exclusive presence within the moment of speech. Dialogue cannot outlive its moment or escape its participants without losing its force and transforming its nature.” According to Axelrod’s (1979: 55) reading of Buber, dialogue occurs “between” its participants, preserving both the solitude of the individual and the collectivity of community. We shall see.

## The Stranger: The Individual Thinking Dislocated within Communities

*The group member is always a fragment of the individual.*

—Charles David Axelrod (1979: 41)

One potential function of “internationalization”—being called by a foreigner to reflect upon one’s own nationally and/or regionally-distinctive field, including one’s own situatedness (Simpson, 2002) within it—is the dislocation of the native scholar-participant from his or her embeddedness in his or her local or domestic field.<sup>4</sup> This

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<sup>4</sup> Studies by non-native, indeed diasporic, intellectuals will afford another opportunity to study “internationalization.” I envision a separate conference for diasporic scholars whose senses of

opportunity for dislocation is occasioned by the call to study one's locality in conversation with foreigners in a foreign setting. Such dislocation functions to interpellate the individual scholar as a "stranger," certainly to foreigners and, to a lesser and relative extent, to one's fellow citizens. In his study of "intellectual breakthrough," Charles David Axelrod underlines the generative potential occasioned by the dislocation of the "stranger."

"The stranger," Axelrod (1979: 4) points out, is simultaneously "near the group (in the sense that he participates in group life), and distant (in the sense that he has not participated in it from the beginning)." "This unity of nearness and distance," Axelrod (1979: 4) suggests, "maps out the formal position of the stranger." The stranger, Axelrod (1979: 4) continues, becomes legible "as a construct of difference." Employing the history of science as the reference for his analysis, Thomas Kuhn, Axelrod (1979: 10) reminds, "portrays the history of intellectual communities as a series of reawakenings, and each reawakening as a leap of irreducible difference." Such "irreducible difference" may be constructed by that construct of "difference," the stranger, a figure at once familiar and unfamiliar. Axelrod (1979: 5) notes that the German sociologist-philosopher George Simmel regarded the stranger as "one who has a heightened potential for rendering impartial judgements." Impartial I understand here not as "neutral," but as "fair" or "just," enabled by dislocation.

Axelrod reminds us that our very positionality in an academic field—already extant at the moment of our entrance—positions us as a stranger. Because we cannot know, except intellectually, through their work, our predecessors, we are cast into positions of intersubjective distance; because we are drawn to participate in the intellectual traditions our predecessors created, we become intimate with their concepts as we rework them as our own. In this study of the internationalization of curriculum studies, this sense of the individual scholar as stranger—rendered inevitable by the virtue of the very fact of participation in an intellectual field—is supplemented by the sense of stranger that the call from a stranger (Wang, 2004) occasioned, a call answered by reflecting on the

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national or regional embeddedness are necessarily at variance with those of who have remained in the country or region of our birth. My thanks to Professor Fazal Rizvi for making this suggestion.

individual’s field historically and at present, reflections presented at a site away from one’s homeland, amidst both local and international colleagues.

From Axelrod’s analysis, it becomes clear that the role of the individual in intellectual breakthrough is simultaneously key and fragile. She/he must enjoy sufficient distance from the field (e.g. community) to be (on occasion) a “stranger,” an intellectual in “exile.” These positions are, of course, not absolute, but relative, shifting, circumstantial. As Axelrod (1979: 18) suggests, the “ego, as one’s political identity, finds its direction and support from the community.” Discussing George Simmel, Axelrod (see 1979: 45) explains that “thinking”—and, specifically, its enactment in writing—can comprise the medium through which the scholar experiences—and, I would add, reconfigures—the tension between oneself and one’s community. In this sense, scholarship becomes the medium through which one struggles for one’s individuality within community.

Especially during the informality of coffee breaks, dinners and other occasions of informal exchanges at the conference, one’s “distance” (especially from colleagues from home) can shift, at times shrink, at other times increase. It is the subjective solidarity that informal exchanges invite that worries Axelrod. “Ordinary conversation humbles itself to, and thus reinforces,” Axelrod (1979: 18) cautions, “the solidarity of the political organization.” Moreover, Axelrod (1979: 19) continues: “Ordinary conversation cannot be authentic speech, for what is merely a fragment is presented as the whole.” Distance is required for “thinking.”

That acknowledged, spontaneous speech is potentially helpful in processes of intellectual breakthrough as it can help recover the “lived” social ground of theoretical formulations. Axelrod (1979: 23) notes, in this regard, that Freud believed memory resides hidden within speech. Studying scholar-participants’ reading of papers, all participants’ (including consultants’ and observers’) responses to the papers, including questions and comments, as well as informal exchanges after paper events, may enable scholar-participants to discern the lived sources of their investigations. While an academic discipline may progress by obscuring its origins—in the formulation of abstract theories or, in scientific fields, nomological laws—it may be re-energized by redressing its sources (see Axelrod, 1979: 22). By engaging in historical curriculum research as well

as inquiry into the present circumstances of curriculum studies fields, the lived origins of contemporary curriculum studies may surface, enabling scholar-participants to break through intellectual barriers to a more vital understanding of curriculum, and not only in their national or regional settings.

At this point I envision three occasions for complicated conversation in support of “intellectual breakthrough.” The first occasion is the commissioning of papers, funded by sources outside one’s place of employment. This represents a “call from the stranger” (Wang, 2004). Resonating with the rich traditions of psychoanalytic theory, this “call” comes from an “other,” foreign but hospitable, inviting scholarly self-reflection and critical analysis not necessarily supported by the press of daily life in one’s home institution. The origin of this “call” from outside one’s homeland complicates the sense of audience of the commissioned papers; while the primary audience remains one’s national and regional colleagues (they will hear and, at some point, read the papers), the fact of the papers’ genesis and destination (presentation at a conference in North America) insists on a certain distance from one’s local subject. One cannot assume that the listeners and questioners in North America—not all of whom will be North Americans—will grasp what is taken for granted in one’s indigenous field. Explanations will be necessary. Distance—becoming, in some sense, a stranger—is required, not only to grasp the history and present circumstances of one’s field, but to explain these to those probably unfamiliar with them.

## The Conference as Escape, Encounter, and Adventure

*[A]dventure is characterized by its integration with chance, danger, and risk, and these are precisely what constitute its excitement.*

—Charles David Axelrod (1979: 42)

The conference itself provides the second occasion of “complicated conversation.” Held at a North American site away from the national or regional home of the participating scholars, in the presence of other participants not only from North America but from around the world, the conference occasions additional distance from the



submergence in daily life. In this respect the conference<sup>5</sup> represents an “escape from the much more serious looming danger of the rigors of the norm and of the totality of a ‘disciplinary’ society” (Eribon, 2004: 328). The reference here is to Michel Foucault, who is speaking of the West. Within the realities of globalization, its pertinence may not be hemispherically limited. Like all concepts employed in this study, however, the notion of a “disciplinary society” may also come under the critical scrutiny of conference participants.

At the conference participants will read and discuss their papers in their native language(s). Translations will be provided for other participants, who will record this experience of the event, an event that will provide opportunities for questions, comments, and revisions. These will be studied by the scholar-participants themselves, by consultants, and by members of the North American research group. In public forum and in solitude, thinking—focused on the field’s intellectual past and its present circumstances but presented in an international setting—may well enact the imbrication of locality and globality, self-reflexively negotiated and articulated as “internationalization.”

Admittedly, solitude is unusual during a conference event. Opportunities for solitude will be scheduled, but these will have to be chosen, as the pull of the conference tends toward the social. Focus on the individual’s experience will occur through interviews with each conference participant, conducted by an individual member of the research group and, later, stored in the archives of the Center. (Participating scholars will, of

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<sup>5</sup> Seriously than the Canadian curriculum scholar Ted Aoki. In taking seriously the scholarly conference and, thereby, construing our coming together as an educational event, Aoki always acknowledged the centrality of the social in intellectual—and academic—life. In a time in which careerist self-interest and self-promotion animate and, for many, define professional practice, Aoki’s generosity in acknowledging the presence of others discloses not only his utter intellectual honesty, but his profound sense of the ethical as well. “There are new curriculum researchers,” he told his fellow conference goers in 1973, “with whose ventures I can strike a vibrant and resonant chord. Although not too long ago this chord sounded strange deep inside me, that strangeness is fading. I think it is partly because in being at a conference such as this, I feel a sense of emergent becoming” (Aoki, 2005b: 110). Note here the reference to “strangeness,” suggesting distance from past points of view, and “emergent becoming,” a term underscoring the potential of the conference for intellectual advancement.

course, be provided a copy of the interview.) Open-ended questions will invite reflection on the intellectual life histories and present (including the conference) experience of the participants, underlining issues of individuality and community pertinent to “thinking.” In so doing, we hope to create an archive not only of individuals’ thinking in curriculum studies, but of feeling (see Cvetkovich, 2003).

The conference can be an occasion for “adventure,” in the sense Axelrod (1979: 42) discusses that concept. For George Simmel, Axelrod notes, an adventure is “an experience of special quality, quite distinct from our other experiences and thus separated from the continuity of our lives. The adventure is an extracted fragment, tied to our lives with ‘fewer threads’ than are ordinary experiences” (Simmel, 1965: 244; quoted in Axelrod, 1979: 42-43). This extraction is accomplished, in part, by travel, a chosen and temporary exile from one’s everyday life, transported to a strange setting, if among colleagues who and concepts that are familiar. The conference as an “adventure” depends, in part, on its isolation (see Axelrod, 1979: 43) – the conference site, away from one’s homeland – and upon the self-enclosure of the conference experience. “Its beginning and end,” Axelrod (1979: 43) notes, “are functions of its own character.”

Stimulated by its physical isolation, the conference becomes a boundaried event in which intellectual risks can be taken. Axelrod (1979: 43) makes explicit this opportunity: “While adventure holds the possibility of failure and destruction, it also holds the possibility of the ‘highest gain’” (this last phrase is Simmel’s; see 1965: 248). So understood, “gain” implies intellectual “advancement,” even as “intellectual breakthrough.” But conceptual advancement does not occur isolated from emotion, as Axelrod (1979: 43) makes clear: “Gain, in this sense, comes not only from the passion that centers within the experience, but also from experiencing the contents of the adventure in their naked form, uninhibited and unaltered by the motives of everyday life.” Such is the potential of the conference.

This profoundly individual experience is hardly, of course, exclusively individual. It is socially stimulated and socially shared. “Given the notion that the adventure forms its own unity,” Axelrod (1979: 44) explains, “we may say that each adventure constitutes a beginning in the sense that beginnings are the product and the achievement of a new experienced unity.” Such “unity” is tantamount to the creation of community and, more

broadly, of culture, in our instance, of that academic culture that is the curriculum studies field. Such culture creation may be stimulated by the conference experience, but if it occurs, it will occur after the conference, back home. We will seek reports from “home.”

After the conference concludes, scholar-participants return there - home - to integrate the conference experience with daily life in the institution where s/he is employed. Further reflection concerning the event, concerning one’s own and others’ papers, is, one trusts, likely. I invite scholar-participants to record and return these, along with final revisions to the conference papers, to the North American research group (see appendix). Employing an abbreviated version of the synoptic method (Pinar, 2004b), the group will study the final papers and reflections, as well as translated summaries of conference-site questions, comments and the individual interviews, providing commentary of their own.

During this period, scholar-participants will create local infrastructure, e.g. associations and journals, where it does not exist. This is, in effect, the creation of academic culture, possibly the re-creation of the academic culture of the local discipline of curriculum studies, in those institutional structures and intellectual processes where the life of the field are established and/or elaborated. The constitution of community was, for Foucault, “an important, even a fundamental stage of the struggle to invent new forms of existence and to invent new styles of life” (Eribon, 2004: 328). While the invention invited here is more modest, more focused—it is intellectual invention within nationally and/or regionally distinctive academic fields of curriculum studies—in some circumstances struggle may well be involved.

Even if the commissioned research and/or the conference event itself seem to the scholar-participants and/or to the consultants and North American research group to represent an “intellectual breakthrough,” such achievement is always fragile. One danger lurks in the very process of the institutionalization of those gains made at the conference, as Axelrod (1979: 10) observes: “Intellectual breakthrough represents works whose relation to the community changes and can actually betray itself in the process of its own institutionalization.” Too simply (but not inaccurately), the product threatens to replace the process. In Axelrod’s (1979: 10) more adequate words, “the community hides the dialectical momentum of founding works and celebrates their concrete reproduction. Thus the community obscures the difference between the original and the copy, between

the critical and the obedient.” In the post-conference institutionalization and, possibly, even in a post-conference reconceptualization of the field, there could be, then, a tendency to restate the intellectual gains made at the conference as institutional structures and abstract narratives that then retard continued intellectual advancement of the local (domestic) field. The research group will await the “final word” from local scholars in order to study these dynamics of this post-conference period of academic culture creation.

## The Final Word

*There can be no paradigm for individuality.*

—Charles David Axelrod (1979: 48)

The third occasion for complicated conversation occurs over a final three-month period, during which time the local scholar-participants will study the research group’s conference report. (This final report will include commentary by research group members and by the consultants as well as the revised papers.) Local scholar-participants then compose an individual and/or collective “a final word,” after which the conference proceedings will be published in English and in the native language of the conference scholar-participants and distributed worldwide. Concluding the sequence of three occasions will be, I hope, a conference in the home nation or region integrating the experience in the elaboration of next steps for the national or regional field.

There may be, of course, no agreement concerning “next steps.” Intellectual breakthrough, Axelrod (see 1979: 48) points out, is not necessarily conceivable in terms of Kuhn’s notion of a paradigm shift.<sup>6</sup> Especially (but, of course, not only) in non-

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<sup>6</sup> No one took the professional conference as an educational event more seriously than the Canadian curriculum scholar. Noel Gough points out that Kuhn’s notion of “paradigm” may not be helpful in conceptualizing intellectual breakthroughs, as “paradigms are just more narratives, not metanarratives.... There’s probably not much ‘wrong’ with Kuhn’s explanation if we treat it as descriptive history, but the problems arise when starting talking about ‘paradigm shifts’ as though we can actually effect shifts at that level of abstraction.” In individual scholars’ expression of “collective

scientific fields like curriculum studies, colleagues may not agree on how to proceed. Intellectual breakthrough may be achieved variably and individually (if at all), and not necessarily resulting in a “paradigm shift.” Nonetheless, individual intellectual breakthrough may well influence individuals within that scholarly community. The advancement of a field may, Axelrod implies, may be synonymous with individuals’ refusal to manage the research procedure and intellectual direction of their intellectual communities. To emphasize this point, Axelrod quotes Simmel: “I know that I shall die without intellectual heirs, and that is as it should be. My legacy will be like cash, distributed to many heirs, each transforming his part into use according to his nature – a use which will no longer reveal its indebtedness to this heritage.” (Simmel, 1971: xiii; quoted in Axelrod, 1979: 48).

Consonant with Western traditions of the arts and humanities, the “final word” may not, then, be paradigmatic. Like the work of George Simmel, individual scholars may decline paradigmatic work altogether. As Axelrod (1979: 51) suggests, “the underlying theme of his [Simmel’s] corpus is the struggle for individuality.” It is individuality within community, Axelrod makes clear, in scholarly terms, a struggle through language, often in “complicated conversation,” with intellectual traditions, with colleagues, with students, with oneself. To think about what is at stake in such conversation, Axelrod turned to the work of Martin Buber, for whom, Axelrod (1979: 51) points out, “there can be no paradigm for dialogue.” There can be, however, occasions for it, and this study aspires to provide them.

Axelrod concludes his important study by pointing to what I would call the problem of institutionalization. He alleges that “intellectual institutions (like the university)” – I would point specifically to academic fields of curriculum studies – which institutionalize intellectual traditions “have often lost the very spirit of that tradition because of their self-limiting orientations” (1979: 68). As I interpret Axelrod twenty-five years after the publication of the book (itself, I would argue, an intellectual breakthrough), it is the very

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intelligence” (Gough, 2003b: 7), “particularity, location, and positioning” (Gough, 2003b: 10) disclose the ethical, political, and epistemological convictions animating “paradigm shifts.” To understand intellectual breakthrough, then, study of the individual scholar-participants is no mere supplement to the study of the fields in which s/he labors; it is central.

institutionalization – paradigmatic institutionalization – of thought that effaces its dynamism, its specificity, its groundedness in lived experience. With forceful simplicity, Axelrod (1979: 68) concludes: Their [institutions'] structuring of thought has made it inconsistent with thinking itself. Members of these institutions, who have submitted to institutional rule, have become merely its instruments.

Institutionalization threatens the intellectual subordination of the individual, whether that institutionalization occurs through government, state bureaucracies (such as ministries of education), or by paradigmatic formations and stipulations within academic fields of study. In so doing, institutionalization, Axelrod (1979: 68) continues, “violate[s] the tradition from which [it] pretend[s] to speak. The monumental moments of that tradition were certainly not moments of mimesis. They were ones of reflection, critique, and discourse.” In my terms, they are moments occasioned by study, by complicated conversation, moments of dialogical encounter with ideas, colleagues, and students.

## Conclusion

*[I]nternationalizing curriculum inquiry might best be understood as a process of creating transnational “spaces” in which scholars from different localities collaborate in reframing and decentering their own knowledge traditions and negotiate trust in each other’s contributions to their collective work.*

—Noel Gough (2003a: 68)

In its tendencies toward standardization, globalization threatens the obliteration of indigenous cultures and national histories. In this study, I propose to support the intellectual structuration of national and regional curriculum studies fields around the indigenous, self-consciously encountering the global through three occasions of solitary study, dialogical encounter, and collaborative academic culture creation. By commissioning research focused on intellectual delineation and elaboration of national and/or regional fields – both their histories and accounts of their present circumstances – but addressed to both local and global audiences, I hope to support the institutionalization of self-reflexive, historically-grounded, intellectually vibrant academic fields of

curriculum studies. In such fields’ commitment to advancing their understanding of the curriculum, they do not obscure processes of their institutionalization and intellectual formation, thereby betraying their origins and sources. Rather, through the institutionalization of verticality and horizontality, the internationalization of curriculum studies invites deepened understanding of the local and the individual through encounter with the global and the collective.

From these local formations of intellectual strength and cultural distinctiveness, we can undertake the creation of a transnational curriculum studies field, a global public space for scholarship, for dissension, debate, and, on occasion, solidarity. “With new publics comes new languages,” Noel Gough (2004: 8) points out, “and a need to rethink the metaphorical languages of curriculum work.” In the construction of a “transnational” curriculum conversation, I am suggesting, the very concepts by which scholars converse become topics of critical engagement and negotiation. This is the last phase of this project, a phase inaugurated and structured by the three occasions for intellectual breakthrough.

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