INTEGRATIVE SOCIALIZATION OF MALE ADOLESCENTS

An interethnic perspective from cultural anthropology

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Introduction

Integrative socialization is a perspective and a process that combines aspects of raising children, educational, coaching and healthcare practices to achieve a more integrative and effective care. Examples of recent attempts of integrative socialization are: the '*midden*' (middle) school, projects for marginalized adolescents, the law on *basiseducatie* (basic education), the law on regional networks in youth healthcare. A combination of fieldwork, literature study and training enabled the author to develop an interpretation of a transcultural integrative perspective between 1983 and 1990, based on cohesive interdisciplinary components. He worked as an occupational therapist with groups of adolescents who were admitted briefly (three to twelve months) to the psychiatric department of a military hospital that also admitted citizen patients. From this location/position he studied, as a cultural anthropologist, the integrating and disintegrating moments in the recent life course of military conscripts, regarding family relations, class, urban, regional and ethnic origin, religion, education, job prospects and so on. The cases in this article are derived from this field research. The sudden change of being military drafted and removed from stabilizing family, neighbourhood, and urban, regional and ethnic environment was for most young men an adventurous event. For a number of them, however this new, foreign military service often contributed to a temporarily mental instability.

Efforts to develop an integrative approach added something important to the 'dominant' medical-psychiatric and psychological approaches to treating/guiding of male adolescents in multicultural situations. During the seven years of ethnographic fieldresearch the use of this 'clinical method' brought about satisfying results to complement diagnosis and therapeutic programs. The reality-bound environment of an 'arts and crafts' workshop offered ample opportunities to facilitate/support a return to the army and society if necessary. In team meetings, the observations gathered from this integrative approach in this the 'vocational' environment improved treatment plans of clients.

The medical-psychiatric, psychological and pedagogic perspectives on adolescent health care and related practices are well-known and have become of age in Western societies. That is to say that they are accredited by many institutions and agencies on a societal level, and carry a collective responsibility for the adolescent health care in their respective fields. Obviously the collaboration between the various practitioners from different disciplines/branches needs improvement. The efforts in this area are extensive and will result in a more pervasive interdisciplinary collaboration of professionals. Yet, this collaboration lacks an anthropological (cross-cultural comparative) dimension. This article provides an impetus to interdisciplinary collaboration between cultural anthropology and psychiatry (Favazza & Oman 1977; Kleinman 1987). Ethnicity and nationality play a key role in all multicultural clinical contexts. In social and medical-psychiatric sciences, though, ethnicity was marginal for a long time, because nationality was regarded as a more important subject in our European societies (Smith, 1981: p.1-7). In this article it is stated that an integrative vision on adolescence has been discovered and is still developing itself through the encounter with non-Western cultures (Rousseau 1755; 1767). With its methods of ethnographic fieldwork, participatory observation and cross-cultural comparison, cultural anthropology has made a valuable contribution to how adolescence can be viewed 'outside of the box'. Hence, it is no coincidence that this article is issued in a book anniversary of an association for interdisciplinary adolescent care.

5.1 The western discovery of adolescence and ethnocentrism

Adolescence was already depicted as an allegory of the life stages on an Arabic fresco in Moorish Spain in the 8th century after Christ. In 1556 adolescence was determined as the period between 14 and 28 years of age, which starts when a person is old enough to have children and which ends with maturity. Until the 18th century the designations 'puberty' and 'adolescence' were used interchangeably. Philippe Ariës believes that a positive and desirable image of adolescence as a period of life emerged around the turn of the century. The music of Wagner's *Siegfried* (1876) 'expressed for the first time that combination of (provisional) purity, physical strength, naturism, spontaneity and 'joie de vivre' which was to make the adolescents the hero of our twentieth century, the century of adolescence. Youth gave the impression of secretly possessing new values capable of reviving an aged and sclerosed society … We now want to come to it early and linger in it as long as possible..." (Ariës, 1962, p. 30).

5.1.1 Rousseau and the 'Natural Man'

The image of concrete developments concerning adolescence in Western societies had already been prepared by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in two publications around the middle of the 18th century. One was an essay on the origin of the inequality between people (1755) and the second book, titled *Emile* (1762), was on the education of boys (Rousseau, 1973, 1974). The book *Emile* has exerted a huge effect on thinking, theory and the practice of coaching boys and young men. It describes in a loose and narrative style the upbringing of the boy Emile according to 'natural principles'. The emphasis in education is on personality formation, learning by doing and observing, physical effort, mastering useful skills and professions, learning to judge and on hard work. Rousseau was the first to propose a systematic and specific pedagogy for each age group instead of a universal pedagogy (that of adults) for all children alike. Rousseau's view of the role of the mother, wife, and girl is still rather patriarchal. They should entertain men and be charming, modest, virtuous and compliant. We will not go into detail about that, but focus instead on the natural principles Rousseau bases his pedagogy upon. And here, the significance of the essay on the inequality of people, that was written seven years earlier, comes into play. Here, Rousseau uses knowledge about non-western tribal cultures that had been gathered in Europe in a way that is astonishingly modern. The central image and concept is the *natural man*. In this 'ideal type' (in terms of Max Weber) Rousseau incorporated much available knowledge of these cultures into a systematic self-reflection on western educational values and parenting patterns from the point of view of the *natural man*, that is, people from tribal cultures. His natural man is not fiction, nor a romantic or utopian image. It is an image of existing people that possess their own civilizations, their own quality, raise their own kids, and have their own care for adolescents. Rousseau used this image of the *natural man* to attack the eighteenth-century belief in progression, according to which the growth in economy, science and art would lead to more happiness.

However, Rousseau believed that these values would deprave humanity and considered 'cultural self-reflection' as a first step to adopting different values, insights and practices from non-Western societies as a way to innovate socialization (Benét, 1974). In other words, he intends to use the diversity in human societies as an enrichment of our own culture. Rousseau processed these concepts in his novel about parenting as 'natural principles'. However, after publication he was attacked and banished from France, because of the unchristian and heretical insights the book contained. Rousseau's *natural man*, in secular voice, meant *'primitive man'* or *'savage man'*. In a religious light, the 'natural man' was a pagan man to be saved and converted. Rousseau had tried to circumvent this scientific, secular (state) and religious taboo by rephrasing *the natural man* positively, displaying him as an example. Unfortunately for Rousseau, the lesson to be learned of the primitive man in *Emile* was too clear and confronting for the prevailing attitudes, for western chauvinism and ethnocentrism. After his exile, Rousseau remained kind of a fugitive for the rest of his life and had a hard time retrieving the connection with his contemporaries.

5.1.2 Europe and America
Stanley Hall's two volume manual on adolescence in 1905 may also be regarded as an attempt to raise an integrative vision on adolescent care (Hall, 1905). It is a very comprehensive, analytical work in which he offered a meticulous inventory of approaches from the scientific disciplines of those days. Stanley Hall formulated adolescence in all its aspects as a second birth but this time within society. Coaching adolescents offered him a unique opportunity to mould the future of our society. By doing this, he created a basis for the political interest of an effective adolescent care and a scientific discipline. Although his views have had much influence, a synthetic and integrative vision is barely visible. This is remarkable, because some contemporaries he was well acquainted with were working hard to develop a more synthetic and integrative view on human behaviour. Naturally, Sigmund Freud was included among them and he was even sent over by Hall to provide guest lectures in the United States. But the Americans Charles S. Peirce (geographer-philosopher), William James (philosopher-psychologist) and Franz Boas (geographer, anthropologist) were also engaged in efforts alike. Their efforts were consistently focused on developing an integrative methodology for human thinking, feeling and acting. All three had extensive travel experience in the Old World and much knowledge of European culture and science. The mutual fertilization of research into adolescence between Europe and the United States has been studied scarcely, but may shed much light on the difficulties with the further development of an integrative socialization. While in Europe the contribution in the field of history and methodology were central themes, the Americans focused more on pragmatic and on personality development. The latter seems to stem from the population composition of the United States at the time. The indigenous ethnic groups consisted of Indians; there were mixed groups, such as the Afro-Americans, Puerto Ricans, the Hispanic and blacks, and aside of that European minorities: Jews, Irish, Polish, Italians and so on. The joint education to a new, American identity required an extensive knowledge of the opportunities a multicultural socialization contained (Dollard, 1951).

5.1.3 Freud and psychoanalysis
Freud and many other psychoanalysts have also supplied a substantial contribution to a western integrative perspective on adolescence. Right from the start Freud was already developing an interdisciplinary perspective between medical science and the young discipline of psychology. His emphasis on early childhood as determining for the quality of later life is now a self-evident matter, but those who are familiar with the history of psychoanalysis know this has not been achieved without conflict (Jaccobi, 1975). Driven by his Jewish background, Freud has been reflecting on western civilization from the very start of psychoanalysis. In 1908 he wrote an article that already manifested his culture reflective dimension and his rejection of the dualism between individual and society. Freud wrote *Die moderne Nervosität und die sexuelle Zwangsmoral*, which reflected his experiences with neurotics having difficulties with their sexuality. His interpretation of the material derived from fieldwork, points to a repressive sexual morality in society. The repression he refers to had severe consequences for the way a large amount of people functioned. In 1913 Freud published *Totem und Tabu, Einige Übereinstimmungen im Seelenleben der Wilden und der Neurotiker.* Although Freud's approach and treatment of the subject deserves a proper amount of criticism, he was the first to compare western behaviour with that of people from tribal cultures on a practical level of coaching in order to learn from it. This aspect still makes the book unique and established a structural link to cultural anthropology. The flow of publications and research that arose in the wake of *Totem und Tabu* was huge and lasted for decades.

Margaret Mead's study of puberty of girls in Samoa fifteen years later was a direct consequence of psychoanalysis in the United States. It yielded a lively exchange between anthropology, psychoanalysis and psychology, focusing on a therapeutic and pedagogic practice (Kluckhohn, 1951). The widely read 'Child and Society' (1954) by Erik Erikson is another example from this tradition. The

anthropologist George Bateson initiated the double-blind theory that gave raise to system and family therapies and to the changing view on schizophrenia (Sluzki, 1976).

5.2 Integrative socialization in a tribal culture
A group that lives under the pressure of the natural environment, such as the traditional Inuit (Eskimo) in Canada, the Kung! in Namibia and the aboriginal Aranda in Australia cannot afford big mistakes in the socialization of a new generation. They need every single individual. In traditional Inuit culture, the death of a spouse entails dependence of the rest of a small community. Not finding a new spouse soon, meant that hunger was just around the corner (Briggs, 1978). Dropping out, addiction, violence and suicide among adolescents will be regarded in such a culture as an immediate threat to the group's survival. A lenient attitude towards this behaviour of young people implied great risks, while repression of the emotionality and over activity which is a key ingredient of adolescence, on the other hand, caused an incomplete contribution to the collective. How then, do parents cope with adolescence in these cultures? Cultural anthropologists have collected and systematized much data on this topic (Van Gennep, 1908) Part of it has already been processed and used in integrative forms of healthcare (Van der Hart, 1978) For integrative forms of adolescent care a wealth of material is still waiting to be put into practice (Obbeyessekere, 1990). For adolescents, ritualization and initiation play a key role.

From my ethnographic research and therapeutic experiences in clinical psychiatry an extensive 'need for initiation' among adolescents emerged. This is to say, a transition ritual that converges, in a realistic way, the personal needs, qualities and questions of young people on one hand, and the future societal worlds of a job related perspective, marriage and family, religion and politics on the other. Issues about an integrative view on adolescence could only develop after Hall's *Adolescence* (1905), after Freud's *Totem und Taboo* (1913) and after the establishment of an anthropological fieldwork tradition concerned with socialization. From an anthropological point of view, the work of Bronisław Malinowski contributed significantly. While Margaret Mead was conducting her field research in Samoa, Malinowski conducted his fieldwork in the twenties of the previous century in the Trobiands in Melanesia. Although was entangled in an intense controversy with psychoanalysis, he was strongly inspired by it and offered beautiful comparisons between the European socialization and that of Trobriand boys. Although from an anthropological position, he echoes Freud stating that:
'...the organization of the emotions within the sentiments of an individual is closely related with the organization or society... .' (1928).

Among the Trobriand Islanders, who are organized in a matriarchal way, Malinowski distinguishes two leading socializing principles: the inheritance of name, prestige, positions and goods accessed by the mother and second, the strict marriage regulations. The first principle is monopolized in the position of the mother's brother. For a boy, he is the prototype of social and public conduct and his sense of honour and responsibility. The foundation for this relationship is unconditional obedience and loyalty. His own father occupies a compliant, friendly, cherishing and supportive role. In the European situation, father has to invent and manage a way to reconcile these two 'selves' or roles in relation with his children. This makes the position of the European father ambivalent, according to Malinowski. Malinowski recognized the distribution of these two father roles, together encompassing important socializing functions, also in the rules concerning marriage.

'..For a Trobriand boy, the world of (socializing) persons is divided into two main categories. The *veyold* to which he belongs, consists of his mother, brothers and sisters, his uncle (mother's brother) and all their relatives. They are of the same 'body' as himself. Here he obeys, participates, is loyal and so on. For the boy, sexual encounters with women of his own clan are strictly forbidden. The other group consists of strangers or *tomakava*. Tomakova is the group of his biological father and all his relatives. These are all non-maternal relatives. His girlfriends, loves, affaires and his future wife come from that group. Situated in our European kinship-relations it offers an impression of the

structural difference between the possible worlds as adolescents experience it. Thus, Trobriand society has a male social identity on one hand, profoundly conditioned with social ambition and pride, but also with self-control and sexual taboos. On the other hand, there is opportunity for free and spontaneous friendship and sexual freedom in the relationship with the father and his relatives. This cultural organization is so different than the European that it raises many questions, when there is a willingness to engage in equivalent comparisons. For example, the never ending authority conflict in Western societies that involve fathers and sons, teachers and pupils, therapists and clients. This presents to an adolescent a pattern extremely difficult to process and doesn't occur in this fashion on the Trobiand Islands (Malinowski, 1927).

The anthropological fieldwork literature is loaded with examples of tribal cultures that offer clues how to deal with aggression, depression, suicide, motivational problems etcetera, among adolescents in a new and alternative way. Much has been converted to a European setting already, but yet unresolved methodological "translation problems" (Hamburg, 1956) leaves much material waiting. In the following case some problems are indicated.

5.2.1 Dreams and voices are deceptions
On a Friday morning in January Feisal, an 18-year-old conscript soldier of Surinam-Hindustan origin, was brought to the psychiatry department. He started behaving awkwardly during military training as he began to talk to imaginary people and reacted interchangeable anxiously and aggressively towards his sergeant when confronted on the behaviour.

 The psychiatry department defined his behaviour as psychotic and prescribed him with anti-psychotic medication. However, he remained restless and did not want to remove his military clothing. At each contact, he behaved defensively and asked when he could leave. After several days he came to craft therapy. During the session, Feisal told his father had died three years prior in Surinam as a muslim. His mother was practicing Hindu religion. He told he still spoke regularly with his father in his dreams at night and during the daytime too when he was awake. His father answered him often. Sometimes it was nice when his father set his mind at ease. Sometimes it was frightening as his father warned him to keep his religious (Muslim) duties. One time his father had ordered him to punish his mother, because she did not obey muslim norms. One of the reasons he was admitted into the psychiatric department was the fact that he had attacked his mother once with a knife. A year after his father passed away, Feisal went from The Hague to Utrecht to live with his mother's brother, because he often had quarrels with his mother. However, with his uncle he no longer felt completely at home anymore. Feisal did not like to talk about his home situation.

 During the period of his admission in the open section, Feisal visited his mother nearly every day, had small meals and then returned to the department. After several sessions Feisal noticed a beaten brass bowl among the exemplary pieces and asked if he was allowed to make a dish for Puja. It is composed of a dish-shaped holder with a lid with holes to burn incense sticks. In a later phase Feisal told about the period before his 14th year when he was still living in Surinam. He missed his grandmother (father's mother) because he had been there often after school, even until late in the evening and he also stayed to sleep there whenever he wanted to. His grandmother also had a little Puja (ritual) bowl in which she burned incense for his deceased grandfather. In the beginning, Feisal´s condition changed a lot and his connection to reality was very thin. In situations that were threatening, he transferred to an incoherent way of speaking, wherein different worlds of home, the period his father was still alive, and craft therapy intermingled. I knew from experience that he would stabilize and it would strengthen the link with reality when I could manage to get him involved with artisanal craft again. I agreed with him that he could take a walk in the large garden, which he liked much. The arrangement was that he would get back to his piece afterwards. It worked out. After a while he proudly

presented his brass Puja bowl during the group discussion. At his departure he told that his puja-dish would get a spot on his night table next to the photo of his father and grandmother.

Because I, as a professional and native Dutch, accepted his voices and dreams as reality, an entry for a ritual and symbolic processing of his inter-ethnic problems was created on craft therapeutic level. Feisal was soon transferred to a chronic psychiatric setting, because his "psychotic experiences" did not disappear. Hence, within the frame of the medical-psychiatric diagnostics and treatment, no other alternative was left. The possibility that his 'chronic psychosis´ might be connected with his interethnic problems was not open for discussion within the treatment team. Interethnic problem means the absence of his father and the abrupt transitions from a stabile Hindustan environment to his time in the army and in the military psychiatric department. This was a very alienating experience for him. Feisal was not the first client who reported to dream about deceased relatives. An Eskimo boy reported to dream about deceased relatives as well. However, the dream of the latter became the topic of the day in the group.

The joint interpretation of the dream conveyed the ancestral message into real life. On the other side, native Dutch urban boys demonstrated much more trouble to talk about their dreams and voices in counselling. In their world this experience was a sign of madness which discouraged them to talk about it. This was not the case for Feisal and even the help of a Hindu priest, a Pandit, would have been available for him on request. The Pandit could have offered Feisal a synthetic explanation with an accompanying healing ritual, if only Feisal had accepted Hinduism. Unfortunately he rejected it, because of the Islamic side of his fathers' family. A native Dutch boy in most cases does not even have this option. The last station in society that attends to voices heard in dreams is psychiatry. But the price to be paid by the boy is high. The western cultural border between normal and disturbed, despite all improvements made, is definitive and paper thin. Regardless of the healing process, the boy would have a hard time to overcome the stigma of his admission and reframe it in a positive way.

The dream and the voices he hears are seen as a symptom of a psychiatric disorder. In Feisal's ethnic group they are seen as a reality that requires the intervention of a *'pandit'*. For the individual Eskimo boy, dreams have a personal meaning that give content to the rest of his life. For the Eskimo group, the dreams serve as a social, spiritual and sense giving guideline. (Birket Smith, 1959).

5.3 Ethnicity and methodology

Ethnicity has always been a 'blind spot' in Western science. Yet, the ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe, the refugee problem and the multiculturalization of society urges to reconsider ethnicity. Next, rethinking ethnicity supplies us with a methodological eye-opener as it enables us to reflect on our own western, ethnic patterns. Cultural anthropology, with tribal cultures as targets of investigation, was forced 'to culturally reflect' on its own Western values and standards from the start. Ethnicity as a phenomenon and as a concept has long been denied in the western science. It is no surprise, when the history of indigenous ethnic groups in Europe is taken into account (Barth 1969, Smith, 1981; Van Bekkum, 1994). In 1978 in the Netherlands, a train was hijacked and hostages were taken. A Minorities Research Advisory Committee was installed and propelled a flow of research and literature (Mullard, 1990). However, a thorough historical and philosophical scientific assessment of the Dutch situation has not occurred to a satisfying level yet. Still, several scientists in the European philosophical tradition have intensively engaged themselves with the ethnic issue (Berlin, 1976).

In the many empirical studies of tribal cultures, anthropological field workers were looking for a common ground that enabled comparisons with our Western societies. For a long time the belief in European superiority fuelled the idea that comparison was impossible, since other cultures were too different (read: 'primitive'). But anthropologists could no longer neglect their personal experience. Although it might sound odd, it yielded so much human recognition and (self-)reflection to stay in a tribal culture for an extensive period that scientific comparison was inevitable. In other words, to learn and work in an interethnic way happens for a significant part in the open encounter with Dutch adolescents with a migrant background, their relatives and friends. The learning process is comprised for

only a small part of reading articles and books. Learning by doing broadens and deepens one's own interethnic work experience in particular.

The above mentioned position of anthropologists in the field counts to an important extent for all 'strangers' in European societies and to a lesser extent also for a Limburger who starts living in Utrecht (Kristeva, 1985). Without a comparison of the behaviour of the 'natives' with behaviour of your own, a 'stranger' (anthropologist and a Dutch immigrant) will not manage to live in two cultures at a time. The Dutch living in the 'Randstad', the most influential urban area in the east of the Netherlands, demonstrate an ethnocentric, monocultural attitude. Although this attitude impedes integration, it has not been acknowledged or discussed yet. The impotence and unwillingness of migrant Dutch to live in two cultures was up for discussion. A truly multicultural attitude requires a coach of adolescents to feel, reflect and denote from several cultural perspectives.

5.3.1 Red-haired Rasta in Groningen

A conscript soldier was admitted in a psychiatric department after he had repeatedly demonstrated aggressive behaviour with depressed mood and suicidal inclinations. When I saw Koen for the first time in the closed section, he was absent minded, scared and defensive. He had short, red hair and an average build. At first, his behaviour and manner of speaking appeared impossible to empathize with. He repeatedly was standing up and started talking with himself. I tried to connect with him through craft work. After a conversation Koen decided to join occupational therapy. After he had attended several times, he asked whether he could bring a music tape into the workplace. I agreed and it turned out to be reggae music. My questions to him where the music came from turned out to be the key to his problem from an integrative perspective. This somewhat timid red-haired boy, from rural Groningen in the far North of the Netherlands, was a serious Rasta devotee. It was this conviction that had lead to his admission. He had been internalizing the spiritual Rasta values for three years and had adjusted his nutrition, haircut, daily structure and future's perspective for two years already. From the perspective of Liberation Theology of the Rasta Movement, he started working in a shelter for runaway children as a red haired Rasta boy. However, unsupported due to his own vulnerable background, he got stuck in this position. When he was called up for military service he had to cut off his hair. The chances that he could uphold his unusual vision of life and daily rhythm of meditation were cut back to zero. His life was, together with a rural naivety and sincerity an inevitable target for his mates. He became the doormat in his room and squad, where the dominant culture of the Randstad reigned. Koen's deep loyalty to the Rasta-conviction had caused an insoluble identity conflict. His background was comprised of a traditional northern 'red' workers environment. This background had fuelled his affinity with the Rasta movement that also emerged from oppression. In military service he was increasingly compelled to hide and let go of the symbols of his way of life. It definitely disrupted the balance between the inner and outer world. He ended in a severe crisis that uncontrollably exposed all cracks in his socialization.

This case illustrates how a client's behaviour can be regarded in a symbolic way from an integrative perspective. You start searching for clues that put the odd and bizarre in a perspective comprehensible in the light from past events in the history of a person. This procedure is similar to the implementation of anthropological field research in a foreign tribal culture that has been known as a scientific tradition for nearly a century (Stocking, 1975). The purpose of my field research in psychiatry was to add to the medical-psychiatric and psychological diagnostic denominations, a record of clusters of adolescent behaviour from the perspective of a cultural anthropological tradition. This resulted in a continuous process of organizing and reorganizing (new) observations of the behaviour of young people. Such research is labour intensive because the process of 'doubling', recognizing patterns along with allocating them in a clear-cut system that can be transferred and understood out of its original context, is a time-consuming process. Interpreting patterns in the contexts of family, social class, region, neighbourhood, education and ethnicity and societal actualities requires the researcher to engage in a process of change to induce and maintain dialectic between personal subjectivity and objectivity.

From a historical perspective living in two or more cultures, which means learning to cope with various roles and selves in ethnic and interethnic situations and structures, seems to be the only realistic vision on integration. Integrative means that in conjunction with socialization, relevant aspects of learning to function in a multicultural society are included in coaching and therapeutic processes. Young people between 16 and 23 years old are not always understood in our society, taken into account their bizarre behaviour, their resistance, provocations, blackness, exuberance, and for some of them, their inability to conquer a place in civil order. In an integrative and interethnic vision on adolescence this behaviour is not only understood as a personal problem, but also as an expression of difficult and irresolvable contradictions between family, societal and ethnic groups on one hand, and Dutch society in general on the other hand.

It was already argued above that, in order to achieve an integrative (and an interdisciplinary) perspective and practice of adolescent care, studying non-Western socialization patterns is indispensable. Of course this is already happening, for cultural anthropology has already been included in the educational package of many teachers and healthcare providers. Many of them will remember the books of Margaret Mead and Erik Erikson. The purpose of this article is to point out the necessity of cultural (self-) reflection on Dutch culture, so it can be used in a more explicit and systematic way in adolescent healthcare.

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