



# Cultural Differences in a Globalizing World



Michael Minkov

Foreword by Geert Hofstede

**CULTURAL DIFFERENCES  
IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD**



# **CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD**

**BY**

**MICHAEL MINKOV**

**FOREWORD BY**

**GEERT HOFSTEDE**



United Kingdom • North America • Japan  
India • Malaysia • China

Emerald Group Publishing Limited  
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2011

Copyright © 2011 Emerald Group Publishing Limited

**Reprints and permission service**

Contact: [booksandseries@emeraldinsight.com](mailto:booksandseries@emeraldinsight.com)

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. No responsibility is accepted for the accuracy of information contained in the text, illustrations or advertisements. The opinions expressed in these chapters are not necessarily those of the Editor or the publisher.

**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-0-85724-613-4



Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Howard House, Environmental Management System has been certified by ISOQAR to ISO 14001:2004 standards



Awarded in recognition of Emerald's production department's adherence to quality systems and processes when preparing scholarly journals for print



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

# Contents

Quotes	vii
Acknowledgements	ix
Foreword	xi
Introduction	xv
1. The Study of Culture and its Origins	1
2. Major Cross-Cultural Studies	45
3. Industry versus Indulgence	51
4. Monumentalism versus Flexumility	93
5. Hypometropia versus Prudence	137
6. Exclusionism versus Universalism	179
7. A Cultural Map of the World	225
8. Conclusions and Final Remarks	237
Research Notes	241
References	257
About the Author	281
Author Index	283
Subject Index	291



Studying culture is asking for trouble.

Geert Hofstede  
Dutch organizational psychologist and  
cultural anthropologist

It has been the office of others to reassure;  
ours to unsettle.

Clifford Geertz  
American cultural anthropologist

If you can't annoy somebody with what  
you write, I think there's little point in writing.

Sir Kingsley William Amis  
English novelist, poet, and critic



# Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my illustrious mentor and personal friend, Geert Hofstede, the father of modern cross-cultural research. He guided my academic development for a decade, served as an official reviewer of my PhD dissertation in social anthropology, and recommended my work for publication by leading international publishing houses. I have found Geert to be not only a great academic but also a remarkable person.

For this book and for my academic work in general, I am also indebted to a number of other scholars:

Vesselin Blagoev, Vice-rector of International University College, Sofia, Bulgaria, for supporting my academic endeavors.

Ronald Inglehart, Chairman of the World Values Survey, for generously sharing the results of the World Values Survey with the whole world, providing me personally with some of his research findings and allowing me to reproduce copyrighted material.

Romie Littrell of the Auckland University of Technology, Mark Peterson of the Florida Atlantic University, Peter Smith of the University of Sussex (emeritus), and Evert van de Vliert of the University of Groningen (emeritus), for writing positive reviews of my work and helping me with constructive suggestions for improvement.

Melvin Ember, the late editor of *Cross-Cultural Research*, where I published my first peer-reviewed cross-cultural studies. Melvin believed in my work and supported it despite the novel and bold elements in it.



## Foreword

This book is the breakthrough in cross-cultural research that we have been waiting for. It was inspired by Michael Minkov's linguistic and anthropological scholarship and our long academic collaboration and personal friendship. It also draws on a substantial international experience. Minkov, known to his friends as Misho, has studied and worked in his native Bulgaria, Tunisia, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Slovenia, and other exotic places, including the United States. His studies and publications include ancient languages, anthropology, and management science.

Our acquaintance started on December 7, 1999, when my son Gert Jan Hofstede forwarded me an email "from a Bulgarian disciple and admirer." It was the beginning of an exchange of ideas continuing to the present day. After Misho arranged for the Bulgarian translation and publication of my 1991 book *Cultures and Organizations; Software of the Mind*, we met in Sofia in 2001 during its presentation, on the occasion of which the New Bulgarian University granted me an honorary doctorate.

My own comparisons of national cultures were first published as a book called *Culture's Consequences* in 1980. They were based on both intense personal experience and the statistical analysis of survey data. By exceptionally good luck, I had access to an international file with the answers of similar people in different countries to the same questions about their values. As far as I know, at that time my matched samples of IBM employees across more than 40 countries formed the largest cross-cultural survey database available anywhere.

In the years following my book's publication, more and more researchers and organizations around the world produced and published comparative cross-national data sets. Some followed my method of clustering the answers into cross-national dimensions. Although the names, numbers, and contents of the resulting dimensions varied between studies, the dimension approach itself developed into a true new paradigm for cross-cultural research. Country scores on dimensions from different studies were often significantly correlated.

In 2001, I published an entirely rewritten second edition of *Culture's Consequences*, trying to integrate all new studies that meaningfully related to mine and contributed to the interpretation of the dimensions I had found. I often remarked to colleagues that if I had to start all over again, I would have a much larger choice of data to work with. I would probably have begun with the World Values Survey, which covered a

broader range of respondents, more value domains and more countries. Also, it repeated itself about every five years, showing developments over time.

To my excitement, Misho Minkov was doing exactly what I said I would have done if I had to start all over. He had thoroughly investigated all large cross-cultural databases in the constantly growing World Wide Web, looking for dimensions of culture that are meaningful from an anthropological and practical point of view. And, as I would have done, he had started with the World Values Survey.

What I also found enriching is that Misho is Bulgarian while I am Dutch. National cultural differences are reflected in the minds of researchers and authors as much as in those of their respondents. The majority of cross-cultural researchers are Americans who rarely read anything non-American, so their cultural bias is seldom exposed. Misho brings a new cultural perspective and sheds new light on the cultures of the world.

In 2007, Misho Minkov wrote an English-language book on cultural differences — the first edition of the present one. After reading it, I felt that some of his discoveries could be used to enrich and expand the Hofstede model of cultural differences. An academic collaboration arose between Minkov and the two Hofstedes (myself and my eldest son Gert Jan) that has continued to the present time. Most importantly, in 2010 Misho and Gert Jan became my co-authors for the third edition of *Cultures and Organizations; Software of the Mind*, first published in 1991 and by now translated into 17 other languages. They both contributed significantly to the enrichment and expansion of the Hofstede doctrine that we discuss there. But the full picture of Misho's original ideas can only be obtained from the book now in front of you. It is with great pleasure that I recommend it as I believe that it represents a substantial contribution to the existing body of knowledge on cultural differences. Misho tackles a number of important global issues in a new way. He discusses societal differences in speed of economic growth, thrift, and saving, attitudes toward work, leisure, freedom of speech and deviations from norms, happiness, educational achievement, religiousness and national pride, suicide rates, lethal violence, HIV and adolescent fertility, corruption, road death tolls, and various aspects of the rule of law (to name only a few of the important indicators analyzed in this book) and finds that they form convincing cultural structures that shed light on the national cultures of all major regions of the world and help us understand their peculiarities. His analysis represents a blend of established theories and novel interpretations that will certainly intrigue most readers.

As some reviewers of previous books by Minkov noted, when he feels that he has to choose between Western political correctness and what he considers a scientifically justifiable statement, he prefers the latter. He is bold enough to reject the view that any discussion of a potential link between culture and biology is a mortal sin. Although he realizes that the exposure of some cultural differences — as those involving economic growth, educational achievement, or murder rates — may create an unpalatable taste in some mouths, he devotes specific attention to these phenomena, his philosophy being that a spade must be called a spade. Minkov's

native Bulgaria does not receive a privileged treatment either. His cultural portraits are motivated by a strong desire for objectivity. His statistical analyses suggest that he has reached his goal. It is naturally up to the readers to decide how they feel about the interpretations of those analyses.

Geert Hofstede  
Velp, the Netherlands, September 2010



# Introduction

## Why I Have Written This Book

Globalization seems pervasive. So, one might think that the world's cultures must be converging into one homogenized global value system. But they aren't ... We not only find no evidence of convergence—we actually find that the gap between the value systems of rich and poor countries has been growing, not shrinking, during the past 20 years.

Ronald Inglehart, Chairman of the World Values Survey ([Inglehart, 2005](#))

And of course, the approach was to practice multiculturalism and live side by side and be happy with each other. But this approach has failed. It has absolutely failed.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, addressing representatives of the Christian Democratic Union on October 16, 2010, in Potsdam,<sup>1</sup> speaking of Germany's problems with the difficult cultural integration of many of its immigrants.

The Western world has coined the expression “celebration of cultural diversity.” Until recently, most people who live in rich countries in Europe and North America seemed to view cultural differences in a positive light as they perceived them as amusing, skin-deep trivialities. If some groups of people like to dress differently, eat strange foods, or celebrate exotic holidays, that is fine because variety is the spice of life. Let us try their strange dishes and join their colorful festivities! That can only make life more fun.

But what if cultural differences are not only about what people put on their heads or in their mouths? What if they sometimes reflect incompatible values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors?

On July 30, 2004, the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera* published a chilling story.<sup>2</sup> A few kilometers from the Turkish city of Izmir, five 16-year-old girls from a

---

1. This is my own translation of the corresponding excerpt from Merkel's speech. Right after the event, the original video footage and diverse English language translations were available in countless websites.

2. [Ferrari \(2004\)](#). The event was covered in other Italian newspapers as well as the Turkish media.

Koranic school took a dip in the sea fully clothed. Not knowing how to swim, they started drowning. Some men tried to dive in to their rescue, yet they were stopped by the other girls and their religion instructors. In their strict interpretation of the religious tenets, a woman may not be touched by a man who is not her husband or a very close relative. The men had to let the girls drown. The girls' families accepted their deaths and considered them an act of God.

People have been shocked by the values and beliefs of other societies since time immemorial. And they have not always been able to reconcile their differences. Westerners pride themselves on their professed tolerance of cultural diversity. In fact, they tend to be quite intolerant of anyone who does not share some basic Western values or transgresses a number of sacred norms. Tell an American or Dane that women should be subservient to men or that some races or ethnic groups are inferior to others. Proclaim publicly in Sweden that there is nothing wrong with giving bribes or — better yet — offer a present to a police officer who is issuing you with a speeding ticket. Attempt to sell the idea that a Western country needs to be ruled with an iron hand because that is the only way to sort out problems like drug addiction and crime or fix the ailing pension system. It would be like telling Arabs that their nations are too religious and need more secularism. The most likely reply that you would get is that you should take your wonderful ideas back to your country and never return with them.

But are Western values and norms not good for everybody? What normal person likes to be forced into an arranged marriage? Would anybody be happy after being beaten and imprisoned for making a political speech or discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, or gender?

It is true that all over the world people cherish some basic human rights and freedoms and would be very upset if they were deprived of them. But there are substantial differences in the degree to which individuals in different societies are ready to grant these rights and freedoms to *others*. Desiring something for yourself and wishing it for your neighbor is not one and the same thing.

The drowning of the five Turkish girls, and the international reaction to it, is a vivid illustration of clashing cultural norms: the behaviors that are considered appropriate for others are not the same in all countries, or even in all subsocieties of one and the same nation, and the observed differences can cause serious cultural conflicts. The described incident is a marginal and atypical phenomenon, even in Turkey. But there are other, more serious causes for concern. Relatively few people in the West seem to be familiar with the findings of a nationally representative opinion survey by the trustworthy Pew Research Center soon after the September 11 attacks in the United States ([Pew Research Center, 2003](#)):

Solid majorities in the Palestinian Authority, Indonesia, and Jordan — and nearly half of those in Morocco and Pakistan — say they have at least some confidence in Osama bin Laden to do the right thing regarding world affairs.

Do these statements simply mean that most respondents in those countries are so uneducated that they do not know what they are talking about? Perhaps. But sheer

ignorance of what Osama bin Laden stands for cannot fully explain all their statements. According to the same source, a representative cross-national survey in 2002 demonstrated that “suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilian targets” were considered “often justified” or “sometimes justified in order to defend Islam from its enemies” by 73 percent of respondents in Lebanon, 56 percent in Ivory Coast, 47 percent in Nigeria, 43 percent in Jordan, 42 percent in Bangladesh, 33 percent in Pakistan, and 32 percent in Mali (Pew Research Center, 2002). There are sizeable percentages of respondents who share this opinion in other developing countries as well. In 2002, at least half a billion people worldwide believed that indiscriminate killing of innocent people could be justified in some circumstances.

Fortunately, most cultural differences do not involve irreconcilable beliefs, values, and norms. They are often amusing, sometimes slightly irritating. An entertaining story is told by Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner, two renowned international management consultants (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1999, pp. 111–112). It is about a British general manager of a Thai firm who wished his company car to be a Suzuki and wondered why the delivery was taking so long. After a lot of evasive action, the Thai employees finally explained to him that if he drove such a low-status car, they would have to ride bicycles — hardly a good idea in Bangkok.

What the Thai managers had in fact told their British boss was that Thai society is highly hierarchical. In a normal situation, leaders give orders and followers execute them without daring to challenge the wisdom of the order. But there is a paradox here: the leader cannot strip himself of the hierarchical symbols that he is entitled to because that would turn society upside down. The general manager must have a more prestigious vehicle than everybody else. If he chooses a Suzuki, the only means of transportation that is more modest and therefore appropriate for his subordinates is a bicycle.

The British manager probably laughed off this incident. But cultural clashes in business can be much more serious. According to some estimates, they probably account for up to one-third of all failures in international business initiatives. And their negative effect in politics is unfathomable. A lack of understanding of cultural realities generates extremely dangerous ideas, such as the view that people from Morocco to Pakistan are yearning for American democracy and social order and what stands between them and a full embracement of Western civilization is only a benighted local dictator and his cronies.

In Western countries, it has become fashionable to say that cultural diversity in the workplace is a good thing. The results of the available research call for much more guarded opinions. Culturally heterogeneous groups may produce a greater number of ideas, but they have been found to perform less well on complex, unstructured tasks. The negative effect has been attributed to difficulties in communication and different perceptions about how the group should function.<sup>3</sup>

---

3. Thomas (1999). This article reviews studies of the performance of culturally homogeneous and culturally heterogeneous groups and presents the results of new experiments.

This does not mean that companies should practice cultural segregation when they form teams. But it is food for thought: how can diverse groups reconcile their cultural differences so that they perform effectively?

**The Increased Importance of Sensitivity to Cross-Cultural Awareness in International Business<sup>4</sup>**

Globalization opens many opportunities for business, but it also creates major challenges. One of the most important challenges is acknowledging and appreciating cultural values, practices, and subtleties in different parts of the world. All experts in international business agree that to succeed in global business, managers need the flexibility to respond positively and effectively to practices and values that may be drastically different from what they are accustomed to. This requires the ability to be open to others' ideas and opinions. Being global is not just about where you do business. It is also about how you do it.

Cultural reconciliation may be hard if many people believe that their own culture is superior to that of other nations. But that is exactly what most citizens of some 50 surveyed countries think: at least 50 percent in each country mostly agree or strongly agree that their cultures are superior. Even if we look only at the percentages of those who express *strong* agreement with that statement, we would see impressive figures in some countries. Below, I present data from the [Pew Research Center \(2003, 2007\)](#), which asked this question twice: in 2003 and in 2007. The data are average percentages for each country that was studied in both surveys.

**Percentages of People Who Agree Strongly That Their National Cultures Are Superior to Those of Other Nations**

India	69.0
Bangladesh	55.0
Pakistan	53.0
Tanzania	52.5
Turkey	51.0
Indonesia	41.5
Mali	41.0
Egypt	38.0
Bulgaria	36.0

---

4. Excerpt from [House \(2004, p. 5\)](#).

Nigeria, Uganda	35.0
Senegal	34.5
South Africa	34.0
Kenya	33.0
Lebanon	31.5
Mexico, Peru	31.0
Bolivia	30.0
Venezuela	29.5
Ghana	28.5
Ivory Coast	27.5
Russia	25.0
Brazil, Japan	23.5
China, United States	20.5
Ukraine	20.0
Poland	18.5
Argentina	18.0
Jordan	17.5
Italy	17.0
Czech Republic	16.0
Canada	15.5
Slovakia	14.0
France	9.5
United Kingdom	8.5
Germany	8.0

We see a fairly clear picture. Countries whose citizens are mostly poor, travel infrequently abroad, and are not knowledgeable about foreign cultures have the highest percentages of people who are strongly convinced that their national culture is superior. Exposure to foreign cultures and cultural differences reduces this strong feeling of cultural superiority.

A better knowledge of cultural differences can also be beneficial to many sciences. Psychology is often called the study of the minds of American undergraduate students. All too often, general conclusions about human psychology are drawn from studies of the only samples that the world's most published psychologists can afford: their own bachelor students at their own American universities. These highly unrepresentative studies are then publicized through popular magazines and presented as if their findings were universally valid.

The goal of this book is to present a scientific account of the existing main cultural differences across the globe, albeit in a reductionist manner. Cross-cultural diversity is a mind-boggling phenomenon, and any discussion of it must reduce the available information to something that the human mind can grasp more or less easily. A somewhat similar book, which I wrote five years ago, was evaluated as an "eye-opener" by some of its readers. It received positive academic reviews in international academic journals (Littrell, 2008; Smith, 2008) and inspired Geert Hofstede, the world's most quoted author in the cross-cultural field, to expand and

enrich his classic model with some of the dimensions that I proposed (See Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). However, my book was published in Bulgaria and was not commercially distributed abroad. As the present version comes from one of the world's largest and best-known publishers, it will reach far more readers. Since I have already presented some of my essential findings to international audiences during various international events, I can more or less predict the readers' reactions. Some will appreciate the knowledge that they will obtain. Others will be upset. Most probably, few will remain completely indifferent.

Apart from providing the reader with essential cross-cultural awareness in an increasingly globalized world, my aim is to shake some myths that seem deeply entrenched in various quarters, in the West as well as in parts of the developing world. My main list includes 12 popularly held beliefs, some of which are shared also by quite a few academics. Although some of them may contain kernels of truth, they are all essentially untenable, or at least unproven, in the form in which they are enunciated below.

1. Religious denominations and current political regimes are the main generators of cultural differences.
2. Biological differences between human populations cannot have anything to do with any cultural differences.
3. Many poor countries are not achieving satisfactory economic growth simply because they have bad governments or inadequate resources; cultural values have nothing to do with economic achievement.
4. Many human populations — nations, ethnicities, or ethnic minorities — demonstrate an unsatisfactory average educational performance only or mostly because they are poor or discriminated against.
5. Some nations and ethnic groups have high violent crime rates simply or mostly because they live in countries with high socioeconomic inequality.
6. Corruption is just a function of bad government. It could easily be rooted out, even in a poor country, if there were enough political will and good governance.
7. In principle, corruption leads to slow national economic growth.
8. Societal happiness is mostly a function of wealth and democracy. If a country is poor and does not have a Western social order, it cannot have a high percentage of very happy people.
9. All nations wish to implement Western democracy and allow Western civil rights and freedoms in their environment.
10. Even if people in some societies are not excited about cultural change, globalization is soon going to make us culturally similar.
11. Cultural diversity is always a cause for celebration and does not normally have undesirable consequences.
12. Cultural integration of all immigrants is in principle easy to achieve. All it takes is a lack of discrimination, equal opportunities, access to education and respect for their cultures.

Because I have not envisaged this book as an argumentative treatise, I do not launch focused attacks on these 12 myths. But the facts that I provide address them

all, sometimes directly, sometimes in a more roundabout way. By the end of their perusal of this book, most readers should realize why I consider these beliefs false or at least highly doubtful. Whether they will agree or not is a different question.

This book may be useless to people who are absolutely closed to the idea of cultural relativity. I am afraid that there are many such individuals. No matter what hard facts and explanations are presented to them, they will cling to the idea that the values and beliefs that were drummed into them during their childhood are universally good and right. Yet, I believe that many other individuals are capable of understanding the culture-specific logic of a strange value or behavior that they observe in an unfamiliar society and grasp its implications. This book is for them.

**Geert Hofstede's Experience with Discussions of Cross-Cultural Differences (Hofstede, 2001, p. xv)**

Highlighting culture-dependent differences in thinking and acting is not always a welcome intervention. My general experience in discussing the topics of this book ("Culture's Consequences") with various audiences is that the amount of international exposure within the group strongly affects the way the subject is received. Internationally experienced audiences have little trouble seeing its importance and tolerating a certain amount of introspection into their own cultural constraints. Internationally naive audiences have difficulty seeing the points, and some members even feel insulted when their own culture is discussed.

The main text of this book is written in a language that does not require any knowledge of anthropology or cross-cultural psychology. The footnotes below the text and the research notes chapter at the end of the book follow the academic format of scientific journals. They are for experts or university students who have a basic knowledge of statistical analysis and quantitative methods. Those who lack that knowledge, but wish to read the notes to estimate how reliable the claims of this book are, are invited to browse through the following chapter. Among other things, it provides a very rudimentary introduction to basic analytical methods in cross-cultural analysis. Some of these can be used not only to study culture but also to do research in any positivist science as opposed to pure interpretivism, impressionism, and imagination.

The main chapters of this book introduce four dimensions of national and ethnic culture. Two of them are derived from my statistical analysis of a series of nationally representative studies of values, beliefs, norms, and various self-perceptions, collected by the World Values Survey mostly between 1998 and 2008. Because these cultural indicators change little over a decade, their average scores provide a reliable cultural picture of the globe at the beginning of the third millennium. The other two dimensions are based on national statistics from international organizations such as the United Nations and the World Health Organization. They span approximately

the same period: the first decade of this century. As these cultural indicators are also quite stable, they paint another reliable cultural picture viewed from a different angle. Together, the four dimensions are associated with, and explain, most important cross-cultural differences between modern nations that are a cause of serious concern in this particular period of human history.

## Chapter 1

# The Study of Culture and its Origins

Culture is arguably the most elusive term in the generally rather fluid vocabulary of the social sciences. The number of books devoted to the topic would fill many library shelves, and thus it takes some courage to try again.

Gustav Jahoda, Austrian cultural psychologist (Jahoda, 1984, p. 140)

### Introduction

Readers whose main interest is the acquisition of specific practical knowledge may find this chapter somewhat abstract and academic. They may choose to skip it, as well as the next one, and go straight to Chapter 3, which is the first one devoted to practical matters. However, I would advise the readers of any book that claims some scientific reliability, including this one, to be skeptical and always ask what makes the presented findings trustworthy. Unfortunately, without any knowledge of how scholars study culture, or any other complex system for that matter, it is impossible to form an educated opinion on how reliable their claims are. How do we know that they are not just providing us with their impressionistic views that are not supported by hard scientific evidence? And what exactly constitutes scientific support for the claims of a cross-cultural researcher in the field of anthropology, sociology, or psychology?

There are heaps of books on cultural differences that are not based on objective evidence derived from scientific research. What they contain is nothing more than sheer impressionism: the writers' subjective perceptions. Many of these are written amateurishly by business consultants or other practitioners who are not scholars versed in the principles of scientific inquiry. But experienced scholars have also relied on impressionism. One of the best examples is *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928) by Margaret Mead, a renowned classic anthropologist. In that book, Mead argued that adolescence among Samoans was not at all as stressful as in the Western world. But this impressionistic conclusion was rejected by other researchers of Samoan society (Brown, 1991, pp. 9–10).

A more recent example is provided by the 1990 edition of *Cultural Anthropology*, a handbook by William Haviland, a prominent American cultural anthropologist. He stated that Americans respected a number of values "in the abstract," such as "thrift," "hard work," and "independence" (Haviland, 1990, p. 34). Data from 1990, collected by the nationally representative World Values Survey (WVS) (2006),

## 2 *Cultural Differences in a Globalizing World*

revealed that only 28.7 percent of American respondents considered thrift an important value for their children. Those who would like them to be hard-working were 48.5 percent — very unimpressive by international standards. Independence for children was espoused by 52.3 percent of Americans versus 64.5 percent of Japanese, 69.7 percent of Hungarians, 70.8 percent of Germans, 81.2 percent of Danes, and 84 percent of Chinese. By international standards, “independence” is clearly not a prominent American value, at least not “in the abstract” as Haviland put it.

The past few decades have seen many serious scientific comparisons of differences between societies. Unfortunately, they are mostly academic, written for advanced scholars. Those that are readable by nonexperts are relatively rare. There is an obvious need for more books that target a wider audience while respecting the principles of modern scientific research.

This chapter provides a very basic introduction to the scientific study of cross-cultural differences. It should help any educated reader understand at least a little how scholars who do research and write about culture cook the dishes that they serve up to their readers. Armed with this knowledge, the reader will be in a somewhat better position to form a critical opinion of the reliability of popular treatises on culture and cultural differences.

### **The Notion of Culture**

Culture, just like intelligence, seems to be one of those wonderfully easy topics on which nearly everybody feels qualified to express a competent view. Few people would venture an opinion on adrenal hyperplasia, unless they are physicians, or on the left-handed chirality of neutrinos, if they are not nuclear physicists, but mention culture or intelligence and opinions will start pouring from all sides. As a result, one might end up concluding that the study of social science and psychology is a waste of time because so many people have become experts in those areas without any training.

One of the reasons for this is that we do not normally observe much hyperplasia in our lives and do not see many neutrinos, but we are immersed in culture and many of us are keenly aware that different societies often have different cultures. As a result, we feel tempted to form our own opinion (quite often entirely wrong) about nearly everything that has to do with culture.

Since the dawn of time, humans have been aware that different people have different values, beliefs, and ways of doing things. Some of the earliest testimonials to that are descriptions of Egyptians by the Greek historian Herodotus, who found that in many cases their behavior seemed unusual to a Greek. Then, Julius Caesar and Tacitus described Celtic and Germanic tribes in terms of the peculiarities that they perceived through their Roman eyes and minds. Later, after the great geographic discoveries of the 15th and 16th centuries, Europeans came in contact with human populations that lived in very different historical ages and had extremely diverse civilizations. The concept of culture and cultural differences was beginning to emerge although it was not yet an object of scientific study.

In the 19th century, a new science appeared that studied cultures and cultural differences. It was called social or cultural anthropology. During most of its existence, this science focused on what Europeans and Americans considered exotic tribes in forlorn places. As a Harvard-educated anthropologist, whom I met years ago, once put it jokingly (or cynically), classic anthropology can be described as “the study of dark people.” Anthropologists realized that to understand mankind properly, including people who live in modern societies, it is necessary to study populations that have remained almost untouched by modernity. Although this is correct, a focus on preindustrial ethnic groups that excludes modern nations is not the best way to understand the latter.

In the second half of the 20th century, and particularly during its last decades, it became increasingly clear that significant cultural differences could be found not only between White Americans and tribes in Papua New Guinea but also between Americans and Japanese and even between English and Germans. There has been a growing interest in comparisons of modern societies and their populations, shared by cultural anthropologists, cross-cultural psychologists, experts in international management, and others. This new interest has been fueled by the expanding globalization and the intensifying contacts of Americans and Europeans with citizens of developing nations. Intuitively, the interacting parties conclude that they are dealing with very different cultures on the other side. This intuition is shared also in academic circles as it seems to be confirmed by many studies. A team of North American cultural psychologists recently concluded that because Americans and West Europeans live in western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic societies, they are what the resulting acronym suggests: a WEIRD sample of humanity that is absolutely not representative of everybody else’s culture (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010). But what exactly does “culture” mean?

Many scholars have the habit of proposing definitions of popularly known concepts, such as “intelligence” and “culture,” in an empirical vacuum. Their formulations are not always derived from the results of objective research but are often based on their own, very subjective views of what words like “intelligence,” “culture,” or “individualism” versus “collectivism” should mean. The inevitable result of this is discord and cacophony. The phenomenon is quite old. A good illustration of it is a 1921 symposium at which the editors of the *Journal of Educational Psychology* asked 17 leading theorists how they would define intelligence and what tests would best measure it. The diversity of their views and absence of agreement was remarkable (Richardson, 2002). Today, the situation is not much different from what it was 90 years ago.

Because it seems impossible to get experts to align their subjective views on how we should understand terms like “culture” or “intelligence,” one proposed solution is to accept a purely empirical approach, known as “operationalism.” From this perspective, intelligence is what intelligence tests measure. This solution has been defined as a “half-joking, half-exasperated claim.”<sup>1</sup> In fact, it should be considered

---

1. Richardson (2002, p. 284), quoting Boring (1923, p. 35).

#### 4 *Cultural Differences in a Globalizing World*

very seriously. “Intelligence,” “culture,” “individualism versus collectivism,” “extraversion,” and all similar scientific constructs are best defined precisely by the tools that measure them and the various external phenomena that are statistically associated with them.<sup>2</sup> This is the only way to describe them objectively. The opposite — defining a complex concept or construct without basing the definition on an analysis of empirical measures — risks being scientific nonsense. It contradicts the principles of positivist science, in which the world is described in terms of observed relationships between measurable phenomena. Science is concerned only with what can be measured and the predictions that can be made and verified on the basis of those measurements.

This implies that good scholars would normally attempt to clean their minds of the popular constructs that they have acquired in their nonscientific lives through hearsay and work with what can be measured properly and analyzed statistically. Ordinary people who believe in science can also be advised to respect this principle.

Just like intelligence, culture has been defined in countless ways, and whole theoretical treatises have been written on the subject, which most ordinary readers would hardly find stimulating. Theories sound hollow when they do not have an empirical foundation. The fact of the matter is that “culture” is best understood as a complex term for a wide range of phenomena studied by scholars with diverse interests. Unlike what is revealed by IQ tests, culture is not a single dimension but something far more diffuse. This is all the more reason to look at what cultural researchers study. That is the only objective way to understand the meaning of “culture” in the academic literature.

### **The Main Elements of Measurable Culture**

Different concepts of culture lead to different approaches to its study. Some scholars view culture as a system of shared meanings that may be unique to a particular society or a group of societies. For example, black is a symbol of death in some countries, but not in others. Calling your superiors by their first names would not have a significant meaning in a Scandinavian country but it would be a sign of utmost disrespect in Asia.

The study of meanings is an interesting branch of cultural research. But those who practice it often seem to prefer to look for qualitative and culturally unique aspects of meanings, rather than attempt to find quantifiable components and compare them across societies. A lack of quantification compromises the scientific nature of any human inquiry. It also makes large-scale cross-cultural comparisons difficult.

---

2. In the academic literature, the philosophy that constructs are completely bounded by the methods by which they are measured is known as “operationalism” (House & Hanges, 2004). I do not subscribe to extreme versions of this philosophy, according to which “a construct is nothing more than a set of operations” (thus, Nobel prize winner Bridgman, quoted by House & Hanges, 2004, p. 100). A construct reflects objectively existing phenomena, but it is ultimately their subjective mental organization in a human mind. No abstract construct in social science or psychology can be well understood without a precise knowledge of how it is measured and what it predicts.

Customs, rituals, symbols, ornamentations, and other artifacts may also be viewed as elements of culture that are not easy to quantify. Again, many anthropologists will prefer descriptive and interpretivist analyses in that case. Some of them admit that this approach makes their discipline a humanity, not a science.

Fortunately — at least for those who believe in scientific methods — there are many measurable phenomena that can be associated with the notion of culture and measured across human populations: religiousness, educational achievement, suicide rates, or road death tolls, to name just a few. As I belong to a school that emphasizes quantification for the sake of scientific objectivity, I always prefer to focus on measurable cultural elements. The main groups that they form are explained in the next sections through the corresponding measurement technique. The proposed classification is not strict. Sometimes, it is impossible to draw a clear line between some of the measurable elements of culture.

### *Values*

Values are studied by asking people what is important to them in their own lives.<sup>3</sup> In that sense, a practical definition of a value could be “whatever people describe as personally important.” A value list can include items such as “religion,” “work,” “leisure,” “fame,” and so forth. Studies of values have revealed striking differences

---

3. Even when values or other elements of culture are defined by leading researchers with strong empirical experience, but the definition is outside the context of any measurement, there is a potential for a blurring of the boundaries between those elements. For example, values have been defined as “desirable, transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people’s lives” (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001, p. 269). But consider this definition of personality traits, which are a very different domain of study: “dimensions of individual differences in the tendencies to show consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions” (McCrae, 2009). Do these definitions provide a clear distinction between values and personality traits? Imagine that a group of people have told us that power and dominance are very important to them. Researchers would conventionally interpret this as an indication that the group scores high on power and dominance as a value: their guiding principle in life is to strive to dominate others. Now suppose that the respondents have described themselves as “assertive” and “dominant.” This format would be interpreted by psychologists as a self-description that reflects a personality trait. In both cases, researchers are studying one and the same reality. But they construe it differently based on their subjective views of how values should be distinguished from personality traits. In this particular case, the only real difference is in the wording of the questionnaire items; nothing else distinguishes dominance as a value from dominance as a personality trait.

Schwartz et al. (2001) admit that the same term can refer to a value or goal and a trait but argue that the two are distinguishable: one may value creativity without being creative. It is also possible to speculate that, from a theoretical perspective, a person is dominant by nature (a personality trait) without striving to achieve dominance (there is no such guiding principle in that person’s life). But then, it would turn out that personality traits are merely statements that people make about themselves without any outward expression. If this were so, personality psychologists would not waste much time studying traits. If some values were completely detached from the corresponding traits, the result could be an absurd situation. Suppose that somebody says, “I strongly value honesty and one of my important guiding principles in life is to be honest; however I am a crook.”

## 6 Cultural Differences in a Globalizing World

between nations. For example, the percentage of people who say that religion is very important to them ranges from less than 15 percent in East Asia and parts of Eastern and Northern Europe to over 95 percent in much of the Arab world.<sup>4</sup>

### *Norms*

Norms are studied by asking respondents what people should or should not do. For example, “one should not drink alcohol during the holy month of Ramadan” is a Muslim norm. The available data show very significant national differences in the acceptance of many norms. The percentage of respondents who say that children should always love their parents, regardless of any potential parental deficiencies, varies approximately between 30 and 50 percent in Northwestern Europe but reaches 95 percent in China and Egypt.<sup>5</sup>

Norms are not necessarily the same as values. The available evidence suggests that when respondents are asked what people should or should not do, their answers often reflect the values that they wish to see *in others*, not necessarily their own personal values. That makes sense. If a person values power and strives for it, he would be mad to wish for others to participate in that contest. His preferred norm for others would be submissiveness. Similarly, a man who is pursuing sexual relationships with many women would not gain anything if he prescribed the same value to other men. His norm for them would be sexual restraint. The conclusion is that, using the available research evidence, norms can be defined as values that people prescribe to others.

This is an extremely important point. Until recently, it was not well understood in the cross-cultural literature and the result was confusion and misinterpretation of research findings.<sup>6</sup> By now, the matter is elucidated and it is clear that one does not necessarily get the same results when respondents are asked what they value for themselves or in others. If double standards are a well-known fact of life, it is remarkable that this issue has received very little attention in cross-cultural studies.

### *Beliefs*

Beliefs are most often studied by asking respondents whether they agree with various statements, such as “men make better leaders than women.”<sup>7</sup> Technically, this is the same as saying “I believe that men are better leaders.” Thus, beliefs can be defined as

---

4. Data from *World Values Survey (2006)*.

5. Data from *World Values Survey (2006)*.

6. A good example of a failure to see the difference between personal values and norms for others is the highly controversial Project GLOBE, described further in this book. GLOBE’s confusion of values and what I call norms was first noted by *Smith (2006)*.

7. The technical difference between a norm and a belief can simply be the presence or absence of a modal verb like “should” or “must.” Agreement that a woman cannot be happy without children would normally be considered a belief, whereas a statement such as “Women should have children to be fulfilled” could be interpreted as a norm because it sounds like “It is desirable for women/I would like women to have children.”

any statement about what people consider true or false, although the format of the statement may vary.<sup>8</sup> Studies of beliefs have also revealed stark cross-cultural differences. The percentages of respondents who agree strongly that leadership is a man's quality varies from less than 5 percent in some European countries to 70 percent in some Arab countries.<sup>9</sup>

Some beliefs can be extremely strong and nearly immutable within a person's lifetime or a generation. Religious beliefs are not the only example that comes to mind. Various superstitions can persist even after they have been falsified scientifically. Bulgarian language, just like English, uses popular words and expressions to denote medical conditions such as "common cold" and "to catch a cold," suggesting an association between cold temperature and disease. This association is believed to be direct; thus, the presence or absence of pathogenic microorganisms is not involved in it in any way. From this perspective, a good way to avoid a cold-related disease, including a flu or a tonsillitis (an infection of the tonsils usually experienced as a pain in the throat), is to put on many layers of clothes or avoid drinking cold liquids, not to avoid contagion. Many East Europeans, including highly educated ones, share this myth and references to scientific studies or web sites of American medical associations do nothing to allay fears that an ice cube in a glass of Coke is very likely to cause a sore throat or a bad cough.

### *Attitudes*

Attitudes are studied by asking respondents what or whom they like or dislike. The format of the questions can be diverse. Still, the answers that they elicit always represent statements about what is good or bad, and this can be used as a definition of attitudes.<sup>10</sup> Another possible name for attitudes is judgments.

A good technique to study some attitudes was used by the WVS — the world's largest cross-cultural research project that will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter and referred to throughout this book. The respondents were given a list of various types of people that they would not wish to have as neighbors. The percentages of those who do not wish to have people of another race near their homes ranges from about 2 percent in some European countries to 70 percent in various places in Asia.

---

8. Beliefs were studied and called "social axioms" by Leung et al. (2002) and defined as "basic premises that people endorse and use to guide their behavior in different situations." The authors add that "these beliefs are axiomatic because they are often assumed to be true as a result of personal experience and socialization but not as a result of scientific validation" (p. 288).

9. Data from *World Values Survey* (2006).

10. A very similar definition of attitudes is proposed by Robbins (1998): "evaluative statements — either favorable or unfavorable — concerning objects, people, or events" (p. 140).

### ***Self-Perceptions***

Self-perceptions are measured by asking respondents to describe themselves with adjectives or verbs: for example how happy they are<sup>11</sup> or to what extent they control their own lives. In that sense, self-perceptions can be defined as descriptions of one's self in adjectives or verbs. Nouns can also be used when people assign themselves to categories ("I am a Muslim") but, unlike adjectives, nouns cannot be graded (one cannot be more Muslim than another person). For that reason, they are less often used in cross-cultural research.

The results of self-perception studies have also demonstrated very significant differences across the world. The percentages of self-described very happy people consistently vary from 10 percent or less in Eastern Europe and some Asian countries to 50 percent or more in northern Latin America and parts of West Africa.<sup>12</sup>

### ***Cognitive Ability***

Cognitive ability is measured through IQ tests and school tests of mathematics, science, and reading. In that sense, cognitive ability is what those tests measure.

The results of cognitive tests are always strongly correlated at the national level: countries that score high on one such test usually score high on all the other ones. Vice versa, a poor average national performance on one test means a poor performance on all the rest.

As in the case of the IQ debate, one could argue that what school tests of mathematics, science, and reading measure is not general cognitive ability but specific knowledge. But the label is not important. What matters is that the results of these tests demonstrate how well a particular nation is prepared to cope with the challenges of modernity and globalization.

### ***Behaviors***

Differences in behaviors can be analyzed by comparing various national statistics: murder rates, suicide rates, road death tolls, adolescent fertility, alcohol and tobacco consumption, and many more. These can provide very interesting cross-cultural information and will be used throughout this book.

---

11. When self-perceptions are measured with adjectives, the resulting answers may be interpreted as personality traits, such as those in the Big Five model.

12. Data from [World Values Survey \(2006\)](#) and [World Values Survey Association \(2008\)](#).

## ***Stereotypes***

A controversial question in cross-cultural research is what we can learn from analyzing national stereotypes. These can be studied by asking respondents to provide a collective description of a group of people — either their own or one that they are supposedly familiar with. The results can reveal useful information, even if the answers are detached from reality. At the very least, we can learn that people in a particular society have wrong opinions about their own culture or about other nations or ethnic and religious groups, and may need education to avoid conflicts.

But do generalized descriptions of societies and the people in them contain any truth? When respondents are asked to describe themselves, the aggregated results are usually meaningful because they can be used to make predictions that come true. Is that also the case when respondents are requested to summarize the values of their fellow citizens or the prevalent personality types in their nations?

This is a question of utmost practical significance. When people end up in a foreign environment, they often ask the locals for such executive summaries of their culture and psychology. And even if nobody has prompted them, many individuals like to share unsolicited opinions such as “people in my country are nice but lazy” or “they are hard-working but not very kind.” How reliable are these generalized descriptions of others?

Several publications have addressed this issue (Hofstede, 2006; McCrae, Terracciano, Realo, & Allik, 2007, 2008; Smith, 2006; Terracciano et al., 2005). The totality of the evidence demonstrates that when the respondents hear simple questions about salient features of their cultures, which they are familiar with, such as family-related issues or degree of religiousness, they might provide answers that make sense. The results create meaningful cultural clusters that correspond to geographic area and can be validated through associations with various objective phenomena. When the questions refer to issues that laymen cannot be expected to be knowledgeable about — such as the prevalence of various abstract values or personality traits in their society — it is likely that the answers will not be valid. The country clusters that they create will be scrambled geographically. Also, rich countries will end up in the company of poor ones. In brief, the nations’ positions would not be closely associated with any other country rankings. This means that stereotypical descriptions of cultures, based on generalized impressions, often cannot be corroborated by any external evidence.

The important lesson from this is that using local people as informants about their culture is quite tricky. They would be knowledgeable about some well-known practices in their environment: what is appropriate as a birthday present and whether birthdays are celebrated at all, how much nudity is permissible on the beach, and whether it is acceptable and advisable to kiss a woman’s hand. They would also know whether their fellow countrymen and women are very religious or not. But it does not make any sense to ask them if, as a whole, the people of their country are nice and kind, lazy or hard-working, ambitious or indifferent to success, serious and responsible, or reliable and dependable. Paraphrasing these questions as values, and asking about the importance that others attach to success, power, or order, is not likely

to give you anything meaningful either, in the sense that it cannot be corroborated through statistical associations with other phenomena. The results of such studies are called “national stereotypes” in the academic literature and, as such, are often completely unrelated to any reality (McCrae et al., 2007; Terracciano et al., 2005).

It may be equally unproductive to ask lay people to explain obvious features of their own cultures. Muslims are likely to tell you that they do not eat pork because the pig is a dirty animal. This cannot be a plausible explanation because cattle and chickens are just as messy as pigs, yet they are considered edible. Some modern Islamic web sites mention health concerns: consumption of pork has been linked to cardiovascular disease and may even cause cancer. But beef is not much healthier than pork; yet, Muslims are allowed to slaughter cows and eat them. The only way to provide a scientific explanation of the pork ban is to carry out a good study, following a sound methodology. This could be done by comparing the societies that invented the pork ban, which are those of the ancient Middle East, with societies where pigs have been raised since antiquity. American anthropologist Marvin Harris did just that and arrived at the conclusion that pigs could not be easily raised in the arid habitat of Israel or Saudi Arabia. Although they are omnivorous, their best weight gain is from foods also eaten by humans, especially grain. This makes pigs very different from cattle, sheep, or goats: they are direct competitors of man (Harris, 1992). Raising them in a habitat where they would be too costly is not a good survival strategy and is best banned. Although this theory, like any other, could be challenged on various grounds, it is more logical than naive popular explanations.

Scholars who have not studied a particular trait of their own culture with scientific tools are not in a much better position than their lay brethren to provide a correct description of the values, beliefs, norms, and self-perceptions in their society. At the beginning of this chapter, we saw that even well-known anthropologists can go amiss when they try to estimate the key values of their fellow countrymen and women.

What about people’s stereotypes of other nations? The authors of an interesting study on this issue asked randomly chosen Europeans in 15 cities to describe the traits of 30 nations on all continents (Boster & Maltseva, 2006). The descriptions, reported for 25 of the nations, painted a surprisingly coherent picture, at least at first glance. It yielded two cultural dimensions that have partial analogues in research that rely on self-descriptions and produced country rankings like in that research. For example, Iranians and Egyptians were viewed as the least “modern” of all nations in the sample, whereas Swedes, Germans, and other Westerners were placed at the opposite extreme. However, a closer examination reveals that some elements of the “modernity” dimension, as construed by the respondents, represent an upside-down image of reality. They believed that the most modern nations share a belief that they are superior to other groups. In fact, they are least likely to believe that their cultures are superior to others.

## **Definition of Culture**

If culture, as a scientific construct, is measured in terms of values, norms, beliefs, self-perceptions, cognitive ability, and behaviors, the simplest way to describe that

construct is to say that it is a system consisting of all of those elements. This very broad and crude definition needs a lot of elaboration, provided in the next sections of this chapter.

## **Culture is Shared**

Culture is a group-level construct. Individuals are usually studied in terms of what is called “personality,” not individual culture. The term “culture” applies to groups, such as tribes, ethnicities, nations, or national subsocieties. Once the group is defined, it is possible to measure to what extent a particular cultural element — value, norm, or other — is shared by the group’s members. Naturally, no single cultural trait is shared by absolutely all members of any culture. Within any society, there are important individual differences that one needs to take into account.

When some unshared traits are found in only a very small percentage of individuals, they may be considered deviations or even pathologies. They would not necessarily tell us anything about the group in which their carriers live. Still, if there is a recognizable pattern in some abnormality, it can probably inform us about the culture of the nations where it is more likely to occur. For example, in a 2007 nationally representative study by the Pew Research Center, respondents from 47 nations were asked whether there was an area within a kilometer of their homes where they were afraid to walk after dark. The percentages of respondents who answered affirmatively ranged from 8 in Jordan to 84 in Venezuela and are highly correlated with national murder rates — a seemingly marginal societal phenomenon (Minkov, 2009c). Those who kill or get killed are a very small fraction of most human populations, but a high occurrence of murder can create a culture of fear. This justifies the study of marginal phenomena: they can sometimes be viewed as a sort of a cultural backdrop that affects the play and the actors on the stage in front of it.

Serial killings are also a good example. They are performed by psychopaths and are extremely rare all over the world, but they are less rare in some societies than in others. Why? This is an interesting question that cross-cultural analysts should be interested in.

An important implication of this is that seemingly marginal phenomena can be quite instructive. If analyzed properly, they reveal interesting general aspects of culture, despite their relatively rare occurrence. For that reason, it is not possible to calculate something like a degree of sharedness, below which a particular phenomenon is disqualified as a candidate for a scientific study by cultural experts.

Many Westerners are suspicious of the notion of “shared culture” and may even hate the idea that they have many traits in common with a large percentage of their fellow countrymen and women. During his visit to the United States, Bulgarian writer Marko Semov asked quite a few Americans whether they were “typical” representatives of their nation and what is “typical” of US culture. His questions invariably caused consternation. People told him that in America everybody is different and there is nothing typical (Semov, 1991, pp. 64–65).

That is how Americans like to view themselves. Little do they know how similar many of them look when they come to Eastern Europe, how much they stand out,

and what amazement they cause with their values and behaviors, most of which are typical of large percentages of American Anglos, as well as many of their fellow citizens who have a different historical heritage.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, when cultural characteristics of groups of people are discussed, one should always remember that the sharedness of those characteristics at the individual level is only relative. There is very significant individual variation within any group; therefore, it is incorrect to put all of its members over a single denominator. Descriptions of cultures involve tendencies and probabilities, not absolutes that make all members of one group of people categorically different from another group.

## **Culture is Stable**

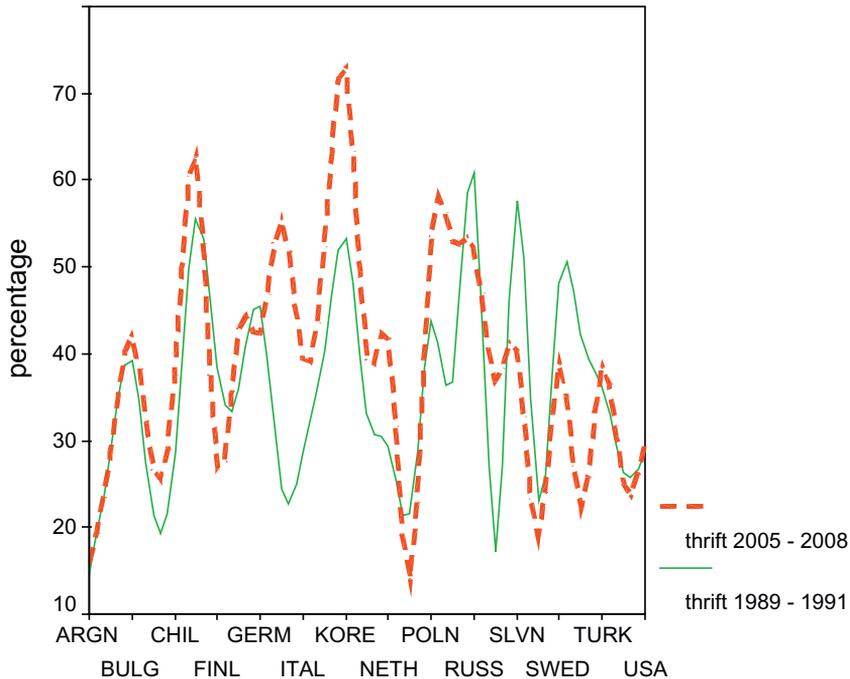
By convention, cultural traits are viewed as relatively durable. Shifting political attitudes, such as confidence in a particular government, or calls for its resignation, would not normally be considered elements of a nation's culture. On the contrary, the fact that the Anglo nations believe in free-market policies and have never been excited by the idea of socialism reflects a durable pattern in their thinking that can be called a cultural trait.

There is no consensus on the question of how long a particular trait should endure to be considered a cultural characteristic. Further in this book, I show that at least some traits of modern Arab culture can be traced back to the 7th century or earlier, whereas East Asian culture may owe some of its elements to wet rice cultivation, which started thousands of years ago. On the contrary, rapid economic development can trigger significant cultural change and partly alter some cultural values and beliefs over a couple of decades. However, most experts would still consider those values part of a nation's culture.

As an illustration, let us look at a visual representation of the change in two values that were measured by the nationally representative WVS in 1989–1991 and in 2005–2008 in countries for which data are available from both periods. **Graph 1.1** visualizes the change in the percentages of respondents from various countries that chose “thrift, saving money and things” as an important value for children in 1891–1991 and then in 2005–2009. We see stability in some countries and shifts in others. People's attitude to saving is certainly determined by their cultural programming,

---

13. In Eastern Europe, Americans make an impression of very clean, casually dressed people who smile a lot, drink a lot of cold liquids without being afraid that they can catch cold, and do not mind sitting in a draft. They come across as patriotic, optimistic, happy, religious, punctual, sociable, generous, and excessively polite. None of these traits are typical of East Europeans, which explains why Americans look so alien in our part of the world. As we will see, most of these perceptions are confirmed in reliable cross-cultural studies. Although it may be hard to find a single American who possesses all of these traits, it is very easy to run across many Americans who have most of them.



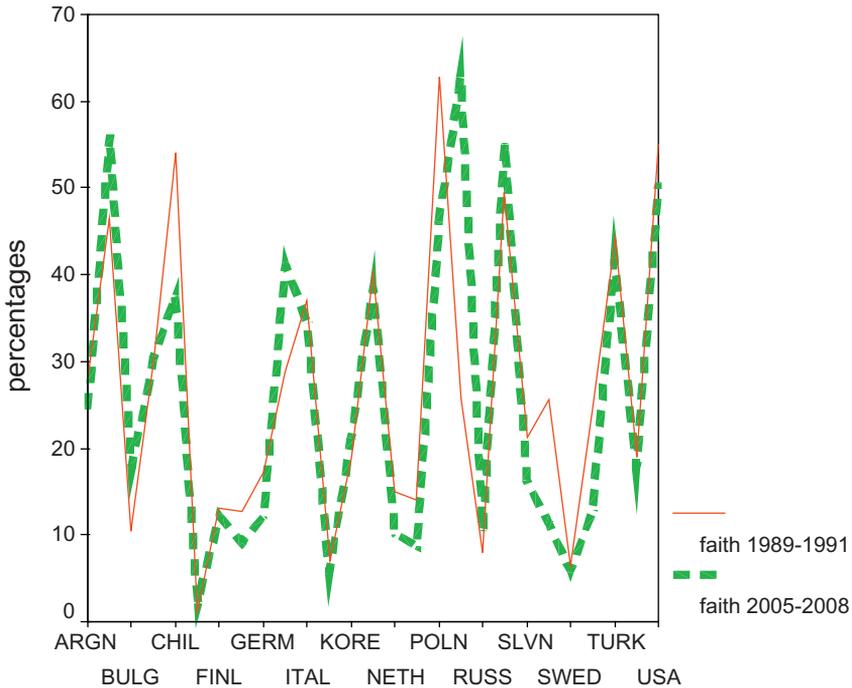
Graph 1.1: Importance of thrift (saving money and things) in 1989–1991 and in 2005–2008. *Note:* The straight line connects the percentages of people in various countries studied by the WVS that chose thrift (saving money and things) as an important value for children in 1989–1991. The dashed line does the same for 2005–2008. The names of some countries are not shown. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

but there are also significant situational factors: a dramatic change in a country’s economic situation can swing their attitude one way or another.

Graph 1.2 presents another visualization: the importance of “religious faith” as a value for children in 1989–1991 and then in 2005–2008. There is very little change here, which leads to the conclusion that faith is a more stable value than thrift. It is not immutable to change, but compared to most other values, it is considerably more resistant to external influences.

The conclusion is that some elements of culture change faster than others. Also, some societies have experienced much more profound cultural change in the past century than others. The situation is similar to that observed by linguists: some languages have evolved faster, others have not. Modern Italians, Icelanders, and Greeks can read 13th-century texts in their respective languages without much effort, whereas English speakers may think that they are asked to decipher an incomprehensible German dialect.

14 Cultural Differences in a Globalizing World



Graph 1.2: Importance of religious faith in 1989–1991 and in 2005–2008. *Note:* The straight line connects the percentages of people in various countries studied by the WVS that chose religious faith as an important value for children in 1989–1991. The dashed line does the same for 2005–2008. The names of some countries are not shown. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

Comparisons of management practices across the world have also evidenced some fluctuation and even conversion, as well as significant stability. Two influential cross-cultural management experts, Peter Dorfman and Robert House, indicate that although some convergence of management practices may be taking place across the world, there is also a considerable degree of stability: some studies produce similar results over periods of 20 years (Dorfman & House, 2004, p. 54).

Those who speak of cultural integration usually point to superficial convergence, in terms of the spreading of similar foods and clothing. Even in that respect, there remain important differences. America may have given its blue jeans to the whole world but has not managed to create a uniform clothing style across the globe. Americans are shocked by the way young women dress in Eastern Europe, not to mention the Middle East where the opposite extreme is observed. The members of a group of young American graduates who participated in an educational project in Bulgaria in the early 1990s proclaimed that the main fashion principle that young Bulgarian females adhered to was “tighter, blacker, shorter.” A couple of those

Americans admitted that the attire they often saw in Bulgarian streets would be considered the trademark of a prostitute in America.

The convergence in food consumption is also partial. Spreading throughout the globe are mostly foods and beverages containing certain psychotropic substances, primarily caffeine, alcohol, and cocoa. Fast food also seems to be an expanding industry, although in many non-Western countries the overwhelming majority of the population have never set foot in a McDonald's restaurant. There is considerable divergence as well in all of these categories: consider the appearance of Mecca Cola for Muslims and the local diversification of fast-food menus. Staple foods have not converged appreciably. Many Scandinavians eat boiled potatoes with almost every lunch, but such fare is considered bland, and even repugnant, in the Balkans. Bread, cheese, and yogurt are staples in Bulgaria, but all three seem exotic east of India. The average British food store carries a good selection of Indian foods, but go to a Kaufhof in Munich or a Billa in Vienna and you will see nothing of the sort. After briefly experimenting with a wide variety of Chinese and other Asian sauces, Bulgarian food stores abandoned the idea; these days, the only Chinese food that you can buy in Sofia, outside a specialized shop, is soy sauce. A Bulgarian magazine recently wrote that Chinese food is "too obtrusive."

#### **Breakfast in a Four-Star Hotel in Datong**

Datong is a Chinese mining town, a five-hour bus ride from Beijing. It would be unknown to the international tourist if it were not for its UNESCO site: the nearby Yungang caves that house some 20 giant Buddha statues from the 5th century AD and thousands of smaller ones. As a result, tourism seems to be growing in Datong and the town has a number of inexpensive four-star hotels. My family and I spent a night at one of those in 2009. We had a more or less uneventful dinner in the hotel restaurant, apart from the fact that the "Datong chicken" that we had was served with its head, beak and crest included, on the plate. But the breakfast next morning was quite a cultural experience. There was nothing that we could identify with our idea of a breakfast menu. There was no sign of bread, butter, pastries, oatmeal, sausage, ham, eggs, cheese, milk, coffee, or tea. We had traveled in Southeast Asia and were used to Asian food, which I personally enjoy even for breakfast. But this time we did not recognize anything that our taste buds classified as edible. There was a selection of dishes that looked and smelled like hot pickles in syrup, sauerkraut in tomato sauce, and deep-fried vegetables with vinegar and curry. The only drink that we were served was steaming hot water in a glass. Having seen people in some societies dip their fingers in water after a meal, we thought that the same custom existed in Datong. However, the Chinese patrons of the restaurant drank the plain hot water as if it were tea or coffee. This was one of the few occasions in our lives when we could not consume anything from the buffet of a decently looking restaurant.

## **Culture Consists of Integrated Elements**

Anthropologists view culture as a system consisting of interrelated elements: single features are always related to other features and cannot exist for their own sake. When one element of a culture changes or disappears, this is associated with change in other components of the system as well. As a result of this view of culture, a lot of effort in cultural anthropology has been devoted to explanations of particular cultural traits by means of other traits. For example, it has been proposed that intercommunal violence can be a function of polygyny because when men can have more than one wife, they will compete for them and the competition will turn violent. Vice versa, lethal violence reduces the number of men in society and makes it easier for the survivors to acquire multiple wives (Haviland, 1990, p. 39).

## **Do Cultural Characteristics Allow Predictions About Individuals?**

The cross-cultural literature is replete with warnings against using cultural measures, such as a national index, for making predictions about individuals. If Germany has a particular score on a dimension of national culture, such as Geert Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance, that does not tell us anything about a randomly chosen German. Measuring and comparing cultures is not the same as measuring and comparing individuals. Is that right?

It depends. Cultural dimensions like uncertainty avoidance are meaningless at the individual level. The abstract concepts that they consist of can be assembled so that they produce a coherent representation of whole nations, but try putting them together in order to depict an individual and they will fall apart. The reason for this is simple: phenomena that are associated at the level of nations may not be associated across individuals (and vice versa). If you find that countries with a lot of tobacco consumption also have a lot of alcohol consumption, that does not mean that individuals who smoke a lot also drink a lot. It may be that the individuals who account for the high tobacco consumption of a particular country are not the same group as those who account for its high alcohol consumption. There may be a common national factor in some countries that produces a strong inclination towards chain smoking and excessive drinking, but these effects are not necessarily seen in one and the same individual because they materialize only when they combine with different genes that individuals do not carry at the same time. In other countries, this national factor is weak; therefore, those countries have lower tobacco and alcohol consumption, but again, the two are not associated at the individual level. Thus, if we calculated a national tobacco-alcohol consumption index, that research technique might not make any sense for individuals. Unfortunately, many fail to understand this. Meaningless attempts to use complex measures that make sense only at the national level have been made to predict things about individuals. Some of these have even been reported in academic publications.<sup>14</sup>

---

14. See, for instance, Taras, Kirkman, and Steel (2010) who attempted to use Hofstede's national dimensions to predict individual variables, such as job performance — a completely meaningless exercise.

However, this does not mean that no national measure can ever be used to make predictions about individuals. Some simple indicators, expressed as simple percentages, *can* be used for that purpose. For example, knowing that over 95 percent of respondents in a particular Arab country state that religion is very important to them allows us to predict that there is a 95 percent chance that a randomly chosen person from that country will make that statement and is consequently very religious. As far as a randomly chosen Chinese is concerned, that chance is less than 10 percent. Thus, contrary to what is often claimed, national indicators sometimes *can* be used for predictions about individuals. However, these are probabilistic prediction, not categorical. Consequently, this is a dangerous exercise for people who have no knowledge of statistics and the theory of probability. Even scholars who lack sufficient experience, yet dabble with cross-cultural analyses, sometimes produce incongruities as they attempt to use group-level indicators to characterize individuals.

This book discusses four national dimensions of culture, each of which is useful for describing national cultures, not individuals. Perhaps, the most drastic example is the cultural dimension that I call hypometropia, discussed in Chapter 5. Some of the national indicators that define it are homicide rates, HIV rates, and adolescent fertility rates. Nations in Africa and Latin America score high on these indicators and on the composite measure (hypometropia) that they form. Yet, it would be sheer madness to assume that knowing a nation's hypometropia score allows us to guess how many people a randomly chosen Nigerian has killed in his life. In fact, some of the phenomena that define this dimension — for instance, homicide — are marginal in any nation and are mostly confined to some of its subcultures, such as the ghetto dwellers of the large cities. However, a high or low national hypometropia index, suggesting high homicide rates, can be used to predict something else about individuals: fear of victimization. As already mentioned, a randomly chosen northern Latin American is far more likely to be afraid of walking around his home after dark than a randomly chosen Arab. Therefore, even when a national dimension of culture is partly derived from statistically marginal phenomena, it can sometimes explain important social phenomena that affect high percentages of the individuals in a particular population.

According to some Western authors,<sup>15</sup> the fact that a given nation has a particular score on a particular dimension of national culture does not justify statements about that nation's members. For instance, if the United States has a high score on the national dimension called individualism, that does not allow us to state that Americans are highly individualistic. Whether this is so or not depends on what exactly we mean when we say "Americans." Of course, if we mean "a randomly chosen American," we cannot use a nation-level dimension to characterize that individual. But "Americans" can also mean "the American nation." In this book, the reader may find statements to the effect that Arabs, Chinese, Indians, Russians, or

---

15. For instance, Bond (2002).

others have high or low scores, or rank high or low, on a particular dimension of national culture. Naturally, what I always have in mind in such cases is the nation and its culture, not a randomly chosen individual Arab, Chinese, Indian, or Russian.

### **Does it Make Sense to Speak of National Culture?**

Modern nations are not ethnically homogeneous. Is it logical to study national cultures? Suppose that we decide to compare India and Brazil. Would that not be like comparing the weight of two sacks, one full of apples and radio batteries, the other one containing potatoes, pencils, soup cans, and watches? What would be the practical utility of that exercise?

It is true that many nations have ethnic groups that are not well integrated and do not resemble the main population. Think of the still uncontacted tribes in Brazil. Would it occur to anybody to study them together with Sao Paulo accountants, merge the results, and compare them with those from homogeneous Iceland? Despite such cases, it seems that the bulk of the population that makes up a typical modern nation, and this includes Brazil, is not so heterogeneous as to preclude the calculation of average national scores on the basis of the individual data. Marginal cases, like the Amazon tribes, the East European nomadic or ghetto-dwelling Gypsies, or the Amish in the United States, are just atypical examples that can be studied separately from the cultural mainstream.

This simplistic solution may be challenged in some countries, particularly in Africa where the ethnic and cultural diversity within some nations can be spectacular, so much so that it is unclear if anything is mainstream. Studies by US cross-cultural management professor Mark Peterson and his associates show that different Nigerian ethnic groups sometimes diverge widely on some WVS measures (Peterson, Fanimokun, Mogaji, & Smith, 2006; Peterson & Fanimokun, 2008).

Large countries, such as China, may also represent a problem. A classic study of the values of school teachers and university students by Israeli cross-cultural psychologist Shalom Schwartz (1994) shows that when countries and in-country regions are ranked on some groups of values, respondents from Shanghai in northwestern China and Guangzhou in southern China are wider apart in the ranking than are respondents from the United States and Japan. On other groups of values, Shanghai and Guangzhou are farther apart in the rankings than Hungary and New Zealand or than Brazil and Turkey.

Nevertheless, the available WVS data show that national culture is not a meaningless concept. When representative samples of respondents from different in-country regions are compared on the 10 essential values for children that the Survey measures, Chinese regions form a clear-cut and tight cluster, different from the clusters of other large Asian countries such as India and Indonesia. African countries produce the same results; their regions form more or less distinct clusters along

national lines. There are exceptions to be sure: some African countries are more culturally homogeneous than others.

## **Universal Culture**

Although most efforts in the field of cross-cultural study seem to be devoted to the discovery of differences, some anthropologists have studied the opposite: what cultural traits all, or nearly all, human societies have in common. American anthropologist Donald Brown has provided a fairly long list of such universals. Some of them sound trivial, such as the observation that all peoples have special forms of speech for special occasions or that they recognize individuals by their faces. Others may not be so obvious or uncontroversial. An example is the observation that men are universally dominant in the public and political sphere, whereas women and children are “submissive or acquiescent, particularly, again, in the political sphere...”<sup>16</sup>

As Brown admits, cultural anthropologists have traditionally seen differences between societies, not universals. Perhaps, the reason for that is that similarity does not cause as many problems as differences do. The present book also focuses on what is different, in the hope that it will provide the readers with realistic expectations about other societies and prepare them for some of the potential problems in cross-cultural encounters.

## **Validation of Cross-Cultural Studies and Their Findings**

Most large cross-cultural studies have used questionnaires. But a study of what people say about themselves or others would be of little value if the findings could not be validated. It would be like believing people’s statements about their own honesty without any real knowledge of whether they do not in fact lie and steal. Fortunately, the results of any well-designed large-scale cross-cultural study can be checked almost as easily as weather forecasts. In both cases, a prediction is made and then verified. This is the basis of all positivist science in any domain of human inquiry.

When elements of culture are measured, the findings make sense only if they can predict something real. In Chapter 3, we will see that some measures of national values during a certain period predicted which nations’ economies developed fast in that same period. This validates the values and makes their measurement credible. This book provides many similar examples. It also discusses some false predictors: measures that are expected to relate to something but fail to fulfill that prophesy.

---

16. For this, and other human universals, see Brown (1991, chapter 6).

There is also another test of the meaningfulness of any cross-cultural study. The results should group the countries into clusters that more or less correspond to geographic and economic regions.<sup>17</sup> The Baltic countries should have similar scores; Germany, Switzerland, and Austria should not be too wide apart; and Venezuela must not be too distant from Colombia. Exceptions are possible, but if there are too many of them, the results of the study should be treated with suspicion. This rule is not a whimsical requirement. It is simply based on the fact that all serious large-scale cross-cultural studies of basic values, beliefs, norms, and national statistics so far have grouped the countries in their samples into recognizable geographic and economic clusters. Any substantial deviation from this empirical rule needs to be viewed with concern.

## **Response Style**

Many scholars have observed that when respondents are asked to choose from the positions of a scale — such as “very important,” “quite important,” “not very important,” and “not at all important” — some nations have a tendency to prefer one of the two extremes of the scale, most often the positive one. Other nations gravitate towards the middle (Johnson, Kulesa, Lic, Cho, & Shavitt, 2005; Hofstede, 2001; Marin, Gamba, & Marin, 1992; Smith, 2004; van Herk, Poortinga, & Verhallen, 2004; Welkenhuysen-Gybels, Billiet, & Cambre, 2003). Such tendencies may occur regardless of the exact content of the question and are viewed by some scholars as a matter of concern. If people in some countries tend to say that almost everything is very important to them, or strongly agree with nearly all statements, how can their answers be meaningful? There must be some kind of hidden noise that distorts the real information. Researchers need to find the source of the noise and its intensity and, if possible, eliminate it.

This is a very complex issue with no easy solution. As the debates that are associated with it are highly academic, I will sidetrack them and simply share some of my practical observations from my own research and that of other scholars.

If the issues that the respondents address are simple and make good sense to them, there is no reason to believe that the answers are somehow distorted even if there is a distinct pattern in the answers. Latin Americans may have a tendency to state that values such as “religion,” “family,” “leisure,” “service to others,” and many more are very important to them but that can simply be interpreted as meaning that Latin Americans have strong values. Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese normally refrain from extreme statements about their values but that could be a genuine indication that their values are not as strongly felt as those of Latin Americans.

---

17. This test has been proposed by several authors, for instance, McCrae et al. (2007).

Besides, the existing cross-cultural surveys have not tested enough values to conclude that Latin Americans tend to choose the “very important” extreme regardless of the nature of the value. As far as I know, nobody has conducted a survey in Latin American countries, asking about the importance of “rudeness,” “hypocrisy,” or “disrespect for one’s parents.” It is very doubtful that the scores on these negative values would be high in any Latin American country.

Moreover, I found that when Latin Americans are asked to express attitudes or judgments about their governments or other important issues in their countries, their answers are as balanced as those of Europeans (Minkov, 2009b). There is no support for the view that Latin Americans have a generalized tendency to approach questionnaire items mindlessly and automatically choose an extreme answer.

There is also another important reason not to be afraid of noise from response style when the items are intelligible to the respondents. Consider the item that asks WVS respondents how important religion is in their own lives.<sup>18</sup> It is the national percentages of people who have chosen the extreme positive answer (“very important”) that are most closely associated with most important measures of whatever is statistically connected with religiousness: national differences in educational achievement, illiteracy, percentage women in the adult labor force, or suicide rates. The percentages of people who have chosen other positions on the religiousness scale (“somewhat important,” “not very important,” or “not at all important”), and the average national scores, yield weaker associations. The lesson from this is that the positive extreme (“religion is very important to me”) not only does not contain any undesirable noise from response bias but also is the most meaningful of all positions and more informative than the average national score. The best way to measure a country’s religiousness on a four-point scale is to count the percentages of people who have stated that religion is very important to them.

Importance of religion is not the only item for which this is true. I have shown that measures of happiness evidence the same phenomenon. When the happiness scale has four points, the best way to estimate a country’s average happiness is to count the percentages of respondents who have stated that they are very happy (Minkov, 2009a). Various measures of other self-perceptions or values exhibit the same tendency.

This does not mean that all extreme answers are always the best indicator of a cultural phenomenon. It is quite possible that many respondents in some nations do not understand the issue well because they lack the necessary education. Then, for various cultural or other reasons, they choose an extreme. The only corrective to that is not to ask questions at a high level of abstraction, for instance, about the importance of environment protection, the quality of democracy in a particular country, or the desirability of free markets. To be nationally representative, the samples of respondents from Africa, northern Latin America, and the poorest parts

---

18. This is item A006 in the World Values Survey waves until 2004 and item v5 in the 2005–2008 wave.

of Asia should contain a lot of poorly educated individuals, because that is the reality in that part of the world. Those individuals might tend to answer the questions without realizing what they mean. It is only natural that the answers will not be valid and will not predict anything. Several cross-cultural studies have demonstrated problems with poorly educated respondents<sup>19</sup> from nations where the general level of education is low.

As an illustration, consider item v163 in the latest study of the nationally representative WVS ([World Values Survey Association, 2008](#)). It asks the respondents how democratically their countries are governed. According to the results, Jordan, Ghana, Mali, Thailand, and Vietnam are more democratic than Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States. According to the same study of the WVS, 29 percent of the respondents in the nationally representative Indian sample do not know what a computer is.<sup>20</sup> This is enough to estimate how much sense it makes to ask such people how democratic their countries are or other abstract questions of that kind.

## Data Reduction

Imagine that you have to describe a close friend to somebody. You know your friend very well and could speak for days. But nobody has much time to listen to you. Can

---

19. See [Schwartz et al. \(2001\)](#) who found “common and extreme deviations” in samples from “sub-Saharan Africa, India, Malaysia, and rural areas of less developed nations” (p. 519). The Malaysian sample in their study must have consisted of particularly uneducated people because Malaysia does not have a low average educational level.

[McCrae and Terracciano \(2005\)](#) studied personality profiles of various cultures. They calculated a quality of responses index, which correlates with average national IQs ([Lynn & Vanhanen, 2002](#)) at .65\*\* ( $n = 49$ ). Better educated nations (having higher scores on IQ tests) had a higher score on the quality of responses index.

[Schmitt and Allik \(2005\)](#) administered Rosenberg’s self-esteem scale to respondents from 53 nations. That scale is supposed to measure self-esteem through positively and negatively worded items that should mean more or less the same thing with the opposite mathematical sign, such as “I feel that I have a number of good qualities” and “I do not have much to be proud of.” The scoring of the positive items is the reverse of the scoring of the negative items. In that way, you get the same number of points for agreeing that you have a number of good qualities as for disagreeing with the statement that you do not have much to be proud of. Consequently, the positive and the negative items should be positively correlated across individuals in one and the same country. Indeed they are, but the correlations (provided by Schmitt and Allik) are strongest in societies with educated populations such as Europe, the United States, and East Asia. In some African and Latin American countries, as well as in Bangladesh and Fiji, these correlations are positive but weak. Tanzania is the only country with a negative correlation. These intranational correlations correlate with average national IQs ([Lynn & Vanhanen, 2002](#)) at .75\*\* ( $n = 53$ ). This demonstrates that respondents in countries with a low average IQ, indicative of poor education, are less capable of mentally transforming the negatively worded items into positively worded ones. For quite a few uneducated people, the equation “I agree that I am a person of worth = I disagree that I am worthless” is hard to grasp.

20. Item v230 in [World Values Survey Association \(2008\)](#).

you provide a brief description of your friend's most salient characteristics? Your description would be an example of reductionism — a lot of data will be lost in the process. But that is inevitable. The bits of information that the world contains are infinite and, to make sense of what we see, hear, smell, or touch, we need to sort out our perceptions. What stands out as useful and important will be retained. The rest will probably be partly forgotten for a lack of brain processing power and storage capacity.

The available information about the world's cultures is extremely rich by now. It cannot be fathomed in its raw form by a human brain unless it is somehow reduced to something mentally manageable. The data should be arranged in a way that is relatively easy to grasp and remember. It is like having a few drawers, one for each type of clothing, rather than hundreds of drawers, one for each necktie, piece of underwear, or pair of socks or nylons.

The usual approach to rich cross-cultural information is to use some sort of data reduction technique: grouping cultural phenomena on the basis of similarity and co-occurrence.

### ***Merging Similar Characteristics into a Single Dimension***

Suppose that we have found that if a particular country has high alcohol consumption per inhabitant, it usually has high tobacco consumption as well, plus a high suicide rate. As there is a statistical relationship (called “correlation”) between these measurable phenomena (called “variables”), we can say that national tobacco consumption, alcohol consumption, and suicide rates can be merged into a single dimension, more or less like physical beauty, attractiveness, and good looks, which are different aspects of one and the same general physical characteristic of a person. These three variables are all bound by a single factor that holds them together, like a bouquet with a ribbon around the flowers. For instance, one might speculate that high alcohol and tobacco consumption and high suicide rates all indicate something like high neuroticism at the national level. Countries with more neurotic individuals have more of each of these three phenomena.<sup>21</sup>

Table 1.1 provides a simplified visualization of how one can start from three correlated variables and arrive at the dimension that they define. In the first three columns are statistics from the World Health Organization (<http://www.who.int/en/>). Because the rankings in the three columns are similar, they can be merged into one single column: the fourth. That column contains average scores, based on the data in the first three columns.<sup>22</sup> It reflects an index for a national dimension extracted from

---

21. Some personality psychologists may disagree with this interpretation because the notion of national neuroticism is still novel in the academic literature and somewhat controversial. My example is given for purely didactic purposes.

22. There are various techniques for the calculation of the average scores. In all of them, the initial variable scores must first be transformed in such a way that they are plotted on one and the same scale. For Table 1.1, I used factor scores multiplied by 100.

Table 1.1: Three national indicators that form a single nation-level dimension, tentatively called “national neuroticism”.

<b>Recorded consumption of pure alcohol annually, liters per person</b>	<b>Suicide rates per 100,000 people annually</b>	<b>Tobacco consumption: Cigarettes per person annually</b>	<b>National neuroticism index (factor scores of the three variables × 100)</b>
France 13.54	Estonia 42.8	Bulgaria 2574	France 163
Estonia 9.85	France 34.5	United States 2255	Estonia 146
United States 8.51	Bulgaria 26.4	France 2058	Bulgaria 101
Bulgaria 7.13	Sweden 26.4	Estonia 1983	United States 86
Sweden 6.86	United States 22.2	Egypt 1275	Sweden 29
Colombia 5.92	Belize 15	Sweden 1202	Belize -34
Brazil 5.32	Colombia 9.9	Belize 1092	Brazil -58
Mexico 4.62	Uzbekistan 9.3	Uzbekistan 1104	Colombia -64
Belize 4.50	Brazil 9.2	Brazil 858	Mexico -70
Jamaica 3.37	Mexico 8.1	Mexico 754	Uzbekistan -81
Uzbekistan 1.52	Jamaica .3	Jamaica 735	Jamaica -107
Egypt .10	Egypt .10	Colombia 521	Egypt -113

national statistics: alcohol consumption, tobacco consumption, and suicide rates. The dimension can be tentatively called “national neuroticism.” Looking at the dimension index saves us time and mental effort. It is enough to see that France is high on the national neuroticism index to conclude that it scores high on all of the three characteristics that underpin this dimension. Vice versa, Belize occupies a middle position on all of them, whereas Jamaica always has a low score.

### *Visualizing Relationships between National Characteristics*

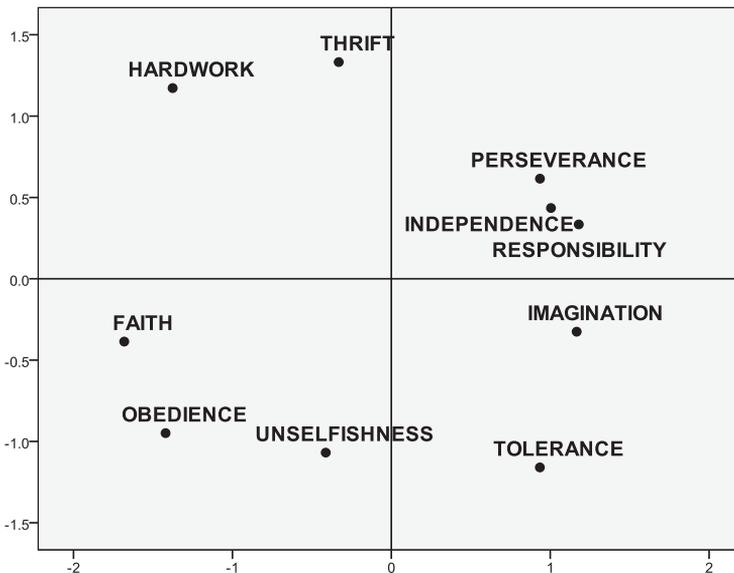
When we have to analyze only a few statistics, it may be easy to see at a glance if they are similar enough to form a single dimension. But when we have a high number of variables, the task becomes more complex. How do we sort them out?

One way to do that is to start with a technique called “multidimensional scaling” or MDS, available in popular statistical software packages, such as SPSS. If we have enough items to analyze, and if they are sufficiently diverse, we can obtain a good visualization of the relationships between them in the form of a circle, ellipse, or horseshoe. Items that are close together are usually statistically similar: countries that score high on one of them score high on the nearest ones as well. Items that are diametrically opposed most often yield a negative

correlation: if a particular country has a high score on a given item, it has a low score on what is right across the circle or ellipse. Items that form a 90-degree angle (e.g., one is in the 9 o'clock position, whereas the other is at 12 o'clock) are most often unrelated.

Graph 1.3 provides an example of this. It is an MDS visualization of the relationships between national scores on values that children should learn, according to over 40,000 respondents from 43 countries. Each of these countries has been studied at least twice in the latest studies of the WVS: once between 2005 and 2008 and once between 1994 and 2004. The visualized relationships in Graph 1.3 are based on average national scores from those two periods and are therefore highly reliable.

The graph tells us that societies that value independence for children also value responsibility and perseverance, but are not very interested in religious faith and obedience. Vice versa, those that consider faith and obedience important do not teach much independence, responsibility, and perseverance. These values form a single cultural dimension that can be represented through a diametrical line, running approximately from obedience (and faith, which is close to it) to independence



Graph 1.3: A map of the relationships between important values for children: data based on national scores from 43 countries. *Note:* The map reflects Euclidean distances between important values for children, average country scores from 1994 to 2004 and 2005 to 2008. The map was created by means of multidimensional scaling, using Z scores.

(as well as perseverance and responsibility, which are nearby). This would be a dimension with two opposite poles, defined in the following way:

faith	_____versus_____	independence
obedience		perseverance responsibility

Cultures that score high on the values on either of the two poles score low on those on the opposite pole, and vice versa.

We also see on [Graph 1.3](#) that societies that value hard work seem to value thrift because these two items are relatively close together, although not as close as responsibility and independence. Nevertheless, they do produce an acceptable positive statistical correlation, meaning that the country rankings on these items are somewhat similar. Also, they are negatively correlated with tolerance, which is at the opposite end of the ellipse. This means that societies that greatly value hard work and thrift in children do not attach much importance to tolerance, whereas more tolerant societies downplay the importance of hard work and thrift. These values give us another bipolar cultural dimension that can be represented by another diametrical line across the ellipse, running from tolerance to the position between hard work and thrift. The two poles of this dimension would be defined in the following way:

tolerance	_____versus_____	hard work
		thrift

Because the two diameters that define these two dimensions form a right angle, we know that they are independent of each other, just like health and intelligence in a person, or honesty and good looks, or any other pair of phenomena that have nothing to do with one another. We can predict that societies that value faith also value obedience, but this does not tell us anything about how much they value tolerance or hard work.

The negative association between independence and obedience is common sense. But not all observed relationships between values or other items are so easy to grasp. Why is perseverance considered unimportant in societies that value religious faith? Why should thrifty and hard-working populations be intolerant? Questions of this kind cannot be answered on the basis of popular logic. If that were possible, there would be no need for social science. Puzzling relationships between observed phenomena can be explained only after sophisticated scientific analyses.

Looking at [Graph 1.3](#), we might wonder how many dimensions we have there. What is the number of diameters that we can draw across the ellipse and from where to where? Are the two dimensions that we just spoke about the best way to sort out the data that we have? The construction of dimensions is a complex academic topic, and because there is no one best approach to it, it regularly triggers debates. There

are various statistical tools that may seem to reduce subjectivity because they are based on mathematics. However, there is no such thing as a flawless method. Constructing dimensions is a form of subjective art as much as it is objective science.<sup>23</sup> The most important criterion is the practical utility of the dimension that a researcher proposes to the public. It should capture and explain important phenomena in a way that is easily understood.

In this book, I use a practical approach. I present dimensions that explain, and are associated with, crucially important social phenomena such as national differences in economic growth, educational achievement, violence, and corruption. These dimensions are constructed on the basis of clues provided in existing theories by leading scholars. How well they perform as explanations of the targeted phenomena is a question that the readers should answer for themselves.

## **Cultural Distances between Countries**

One of the questions that I often hear from researchers in the field of international business and management is, “How can one calculate the cultural distance between two given countries?” I am told that this question has high practical relevance, because investors and business managers often decide whether to go to a particular country or not on the basis of its similarity to their own. Many think that they would not be able to handle the situation in a dramatically different and unfamiliar culture and would prefer to stay out of it.

---

23. Because the number of diameters that one can draw across a circle is infinite, so is the number of bipolar cultural dimensions that one can speak of, provided we have a circle that is heavily saturated with items, like the countless rocks that form the ring around Saturn. If we had such a very thick ring with many values, beliefs, norms, attitudes, and self-perceptions, it would be obvious that diameters could be drawn any which way, and each would capture something at one of the poles and something at the other.

However, working with too many dimensions is impractical. First, the whole idea of data reduction is compromised. Second, dimensions that are very close together — for example, the angle between them is only a few minutes wide, or even an hour — are quite similar, and it does not make much sense to discuss them as separate phenomena. Ideally, we want statistically unrelated dimensions, meaning that they should be perpendicular (the usual academic term is “orthogonal”); the angle between them being three hours wide. Unfortunately, working with only unrelated dimensions is a good way to miss something that is in between them and is weakly related to both, but not strongly related to either.

Most widely used techniques for data reduction use the principle of “variance explained” to position dimensions. The first dimension is drawn in such a way that it runs through the thickest cluster of variables or the two thickest diametrically opposed clusters. In that way, the first dimension explains the highest percentage of variance, whereas each successive dimension explains less and less. Figuratively, the dimension is like a beam of light that runs through a cluster of planets and, by illuminating them, makes it easier for the observer to understand the planets’ characteristics. One of the many problems with the principle of drawing dimensions in such a way that they explain the greatest amount of variance (illuminating as many planets and making them as bright as possible) is that the obtained dimensions are not necessarily the most interesting and practically useful. Also, in this way, it is quite possible to obtain a dimension that is defined by weakly correlated items.

My answer to this would be that an astute business person can learn how to make money in any culture, no matter how strange it looks the first few months or even years. But because the calculation of cultural distances is an exercise that so many individuals are interested in, I must address it briefly.

It all depends on what criteria we choose to compare the countries that we are interested in. Different criteria will give us different distances. Bulgaria and Russia have equally unhappy and unreligious nations and are culturally similar in terms of a number of other characteristics. However, Bulgaria has only slightly more violent crime than Western Europe, whereas Russia has a murder rate that is surpassed only by some African and northern Latin American countries — the highest in the world. If we chose violent crime as a criterion, Russia would seem culturally more similar to Mexico than to Bulgaria.

Although there is no one single best and fully objective way to decide on what criteria to compare countries, it is possible to select some traits that would probably be deemed relevant by most analysts. Geert Hofstede's dimensions are one such example as they are the best known in the literature and sound familiar to many. The cultural dimensions discussed in this book are also good candidates because they address social phenomena that most modern people would probably view as important. Is it possible to create a cultural map of the world on the basis of these indicators and calculate how far any two given countries are?

It is. The map would not be perfect, and — just like in geodesy and cartography — a number of different projections are possible. But they would all produce more or less similar pictures. One tool for such a map is the multidimensional scaling technique. Instead of visualizing similarities between country statistics, as in [Graph 1.3](#), it is possible to request a visualization of the countries that are compared on those statistics. The result may not be a nice geometric shape, but it would certainly give us a visual estimate of how countries cluster and how far they are culturally from each other. Numerical distances between countries can also be calculated.

At the end of this book, I provide a cultural map of the world that is similar to an MDS solution although the technique that I used is actually simpler. It is far from perfect and is not the only possible solution with the data that I have. But all other possible variants are quite close to what I propose.

Statistical software packages provide also various classification techniques that can help sort out countries in accordance with selected criteria. The easiest to use is called “hierarchical clustering.” This tool produces a “dendrogram” — a tree-shaped classification of countries or whatever else has been studied.

## **The Origins of Culture**

Apart from the purely pragmatic reasons for studying cultural differences, there also exist more abstract interests. Academics are not the only people who share them. During in-company training sessions devoted to practical knowledge about the world's cultures, middle managers and upper-level executives often ask me how culture is formed. What historical processes have made the East Asian societies so different from

those of the Arab world? Why is Latin America not like Eastern Europe? All sorts of influences can come to mind, but not all of them seem to have had the same impact.

### *The Role of Religion and Other Ideologies*

To many people, it is almost natural to think of religions as major sources of cultural differences. Because some theoreticians will certainly object to the separation of religion and culture, the issue should be paraphrased for more precision. If Arab societies are so different from those of Latin America, is that because Islam and Christianity teach different things? To be even more specific, do religious denominations shape people's values? Many observers are inclined to think that this is so. The best known of them was German sociologist Max Weber, who believed that Protestantism and Catholicism instilled different values in their followers (Weber, 1930). Modern scholars, such as Ronald Inglehart and Wayne Baker, have contributed to this belief by stating that "the broad cultural heritage of a society—Protestant, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Confucian, or Communist — leaves an imprint on values that endures despite modernization" (Inglehart & Baker, 2000, p. 19). This leaves one with the impression that different religions create different cultural values outside the domain of religious belief, although it is not clear how Christianity and Islam can be discussed in the same breath as Communism and Confucianism, which are secular ideologies. In fact, in their very next sentence, the same authors dispel the notion that religious denominations can create significant cultural divergence: "The differences between the values held by members of different religions within given societies are much smaller than are cross-national differences."

In this book, we will see that the degree of religiousness of a particular nation predicts many important phenomena. But that does not mean that the prevalent type of religion creates a particular culture. There is no basis for the view that most of the differences between Arabs and Brazilians have to do with Islam versus Christianity or that what distinguishes Italians from Swedes is associated with Catholicism versus Protestantism. Different religions are created in already existing different cultures, not the other way around. General cultural beliefs precede and shape specific religious tenets. Shared practices and an established order exist among all social animals such as wolves, lions, and chimps. In that sense, these animals also have cultures. But they do not have religion. Some extremely archaic and simple human societies that still survive in the Amazon also exist without any religion in the classic sense of the term, but they certainly possess distinct cultures.<sup>24</sup>

---

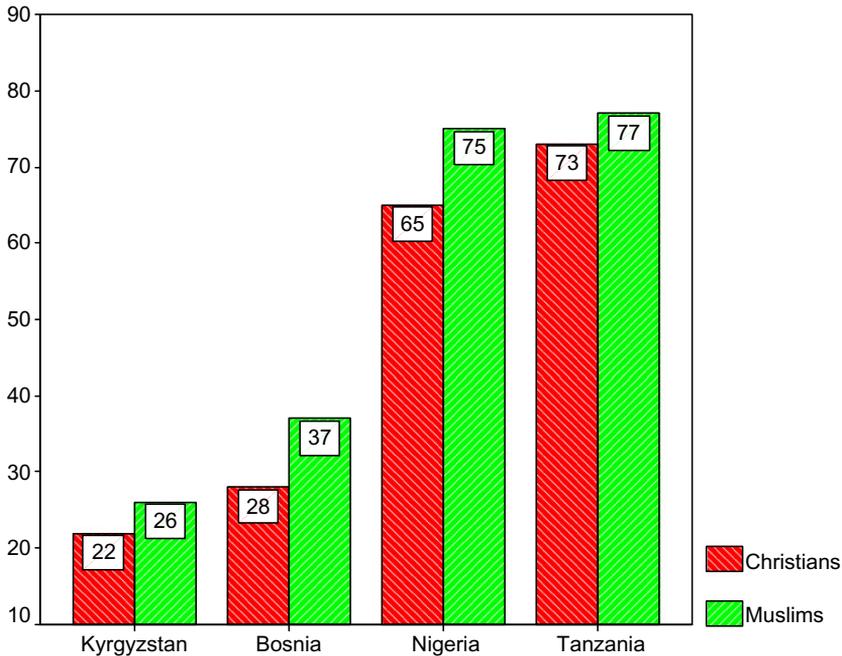
24. For this information, gathered through personal communication, I am indebted to American field researcher Daniel Everett who has lived six years with the Hiaitihi (also known as Piraha) in the Amazon. According to Everett, the Hiaitihi believe in spirits but do not worship them. They do not have any religious ceremonies or practices, or any priests, or any theories about the creation of the world. Asked who created the world, they answer "It has always been like this." They do not have a life-after-death theory and view death as an end beyond which there is nothing.

One of the many roles of religion is to codify the existing culture of a particular society and attempt to keep it in a petrified form forever. When a new religion is being introduced in a country, it cannot be accepted unless it falls on fertile cultural ground. Still, it is likely to be modified so as to suit the existing local cultural context.

Several studies have shown that people from different religious denominations that have cohabited in one in the same society for centuries have very similar values, norms, attitudes, and beliefs. Two of these are large-scale analyses that require special attention (Esmer, 2002; Schwartz, 1994). We already mentioned the first, by Shalom Schwartz. He compared the values of 41 populations across the globe. Most of them were different nations, but some were different ethnic groups or different cities in one and the same country. Two groups — Muslim Arabs from Israel and Christian Arabs from the same country — differed only in terms of religious affiliation and represented an excellent study case. Schwartz described seven cultural dimensions and provided population scores for all of them. On two of the seven dimensions, the Christian and Muslim Arabs have exactly the same score. On three other dimensions, they are next to each other in the country rankings, and their scores are so close as to be almost undistinguishable. Christians and Muslim Arabs score somewhat differently on only two of Schwartz's dimension, but even in those cases, they are not wide apart in the ranking: only two countries apart in one case and five countries apart in another. On some dimensions, there is a far greater cultural distance between the Chinese cities of Shanghai and Guangzhou than between Muslim and Christian Arabs of Israel on any given dimension. The clear conclusion is that Christianity and Islam have virtually no divisive effect on the values of their followers.

A study by Turkish political scientist Yilmaz Esmer, based on WVS data, produced similar results. She compared Muslims and Christians that had coexisted for centuries in several European, African, and Asian countries. Her study revealed some small differences in the values of different religious denominations within one and the same country, but they were dwarfed by the observed national differences. Besides, Esmer's study did not control for ethnicity. The observed slight differences between Orthodox Christian Bulgarians and Bulgarian Muslims in her study could stem from ethnic differences, not religious. The Bulgarian Muslims are overwhelmingly ethnic Turks. Once again, the conclusion is that major cultural differences between nations cannot be attributed to differences in religious denomination.

Graph 1.4 provides a visual illustration of the effect of national culture and the effect of religious denomination on an important value: religiousness for children. It is based on data from the WVS. The graph shows that in all of the compared countries, Muslims are slightly more likely than Christians to value religious faith in their children. But these denominational differences in religiousness are quite small compared to the national differences. Besides, in all of the countries in this sample, some Muslims and some Christians do not share the same ethnicity. If differences in religiousness are found between them, they may have ethnic roots as well, not only denominational.



Graph 1.4: Percentages of respondents who state that religious faith is an important value for children. *Note:* The data are the latest available for each country in the World Values Survey, mostly from around 2000.

Contrary to what some scholars believe,<sup>25</sup> there is no evidence that nonreligious ideological indoctrination can exert a more powerful influence on culture than religious sermons. People do not respond well to words, but they are susceptible to the impact of much more powerful factors that cause fundamental changes in the way that they live. Only when such a fundamental change has occurred will they adjust their values, beliefs, norms, attitudes, and behaviors accordingly.

Because Max Weber’s ideas clash strongly with this view, and because they are still so popular in some circles, let us look more closely at what that extremely influential thinker believed. He spoke of a moral conviction among Protestants that working hard and making infinite amounts of money pleases God; it is a calling and a moral duty. Staying idle is a sin, but working for the sake of accumulating enough wealth, so that one can retire and have fun, is not much better. Keeping oneself busy, working for the sake of work as an end in itself, and reinvesting the profit rather than spending it, should be the real goal of life.

25. Thus, [Kemmelmeier et al. \(2003\)](#): “Historically, individualism is a product of the ideology of liberalism ...” (p. 305).

How did this worldview come into being? Weber (1930, chapter 2) wants us to believe that “to speak here of a reflection of material conditions in the ideal superstructure would be patent nonsense.” But he does not explain why it is not patent nonsense to believe that the idea of a calling, as he describes it, can pop up in the heads of people out of nowhere and become socially acceptable. Where did that idea come from? The Scriptures? But if there are passages in them that suggest such a philosophy, they had been in the books for at least 16 centuries. Why did some people start paying attention to them so much later? And why did those thinkers suddenly decide, for no apparent social reason, to turn the existing interpretations of the Bible upside down? Nobody can decide that a certain population needs to change its values, announce that publicly, and expect any degree of success.

A capitalism of sorts emerged in Europe long before the advent of Protestantism in societies whose liberal cultures allowed relatively free trade. According to several Old Norse texts, such as the 13th-century Icelandic “Saga of Gisli Sur’s Son” and especially the 13th-century Norwegian book “The King’s Mirror,” which describes the life of tradesmen in some detail, medieval Scandinavians had free commercial practices, which did not feature any significant obstacles, other than the need for start-up capital, for those who wished to become sea-faring merchants. Norsemen were familiar with the notion of shareholding: investing capital in somebody else’s trading enterprise for a share of the profit,<sup>26</sup> which is a basic ingredient of capitalism. Shareholding was also practiced in some medieval Italian cities, such as Ragusa (modern Dubrovnik in Croatia).

The real precursor of modern capitalism emerged in the liberal northern Italian republics where the foundations of modern banking were developed as early as in the 15th century. Somewhat later, large international capitalist enterprises were also set up in other European countries. The best known of these are the financial empires of Jacques Coeur (1400–1456) and Jacob Fugger (1459–1525) who had offices from Lisbon to Krakow. Then, capitalism took off after the great geographic discoveries. They made financial enrichment easier than before, especially in the Netherlands, as that country controlled much of the world’s trade, then in Britain. We can only speculate about the values of the North Europeans in that period, but it is likely that they respected hard work and thrift. As we will see in this book, there is nothing Protestant about these values. Today, they are very strongly embraced across many Asian and East European countries.

### *The Role of Education*

Modern education can obviously bring about significant cultural change in a developing country. For example, as women get educated, they start giving birth

---

26. Such shareholding arrangements were called “felagskapr” and the people who entered into them were “felagi” (pl. “felagar”), literally “fee-layers” or people who have put their “fee” (money) together. The practice must have been common as it is frequently referred to in Old Norse texts, and “felagi” is the predecessor of the commonly used English word “fellow.”

later and participate more productively in the national economy. It is important to realize however that success in modern education is contingent on cultural factors. Culture and education are in a complex two-way cause-and-effect relationship that will receive special attention in this book.

### ***The Role of the Political System***

Cultural differences between East and West Europeans are often attributed to the legacy of the Soviet-style socialism. There is a widespread popular view in Eastern Europe that its culture was shaped by the regime that existed there for nearly 50 years. How correct is that belief?

The answer to this question is visible on the Inglehart-Welzel cultural map of the world,<sup>27</sup> based on an analysis of a large number of cultural traits. East and West Germany, which were studied separately in the 1990s, are as close to each other as Serbia and Montenegro: two ethnically identical countries that have always had the same political regime. The Czech Republic and West Germany are also equally close, so close indeed that they could be two regions of one and the same country. The distance between them is more than five times shorter than the distance between East European countries such as Bulgaria, Ukraine, and Russia and those of the Caucasus region: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. The conclusion is that cultural differences cannot be easily attributed to democracy versus 50 years of Soviet-style socialism.

This does not mean that a country's type of governance has nothing to do with its culture. It is conceivable that people who lived for centuries under oppressive regimes nowadays have cultures that distinguish them from those who lived under more liberal conditions. But the totalitarian governments that ruled Eastern Europe for half a century did not have enough time to produce a massive cultural change.

### ***The Role of Economic Development***

It has long been known that economic development inevitably impacts the existing culture. One of the first analysts who noticed this was Charles Louis de Secondat, better known as baron de Montesquieu — one of the fathers of modern political science and sociology. Back in the first half of the 18th century, he realized that a rise in national wealth results in a softer culture, characterized by less severe punishments (Montesquieu, 1748). More recently, Geert Hofstede argued that economic growth stimulates a shift from cohesive groups of friends and relatives to looser ties between individuals — a cultural distinction known as collectivism versus individualism.<sup>28</sup> Ronald Inglehart has presented unquestionable evidence that rising national wealth

---

27. The map is available on the front page of the official website of the World Values Survey: [www.worldvaluessurvey.com](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.com).

28. See Hofstede (2001, p. 225) for his definition of individualism.

eventually tends to result not only in less cohesive groups but also in a wide spectrum of other cultural changes. Most importantly, the members of richer nations are more tolerant, less religious, and less concerned about survival, while placing a greater emphasis on the quality of life (Inglehart, 1997, 2008; Inglehart & Baker, 2000).

National differences in wealth explain some important cultural differences quite well but say little about others. A search of the origins of a nation's culture cannot stop with a calculation of its gross domestic product per person, which is the most widely used measure of national wealth.

### ***The Role of the Prevalent Type of Economy***

Cultural anthropologists have long known that the way people obtain their food affects their way of thinking and feeling. Chapter 4 describes the work of US anthropologist Robert Edgerton, which provides some of the best evidence that different subsistence patterns can account for the existence of very different cultures. He compared four African tribes, each of which consisted of both farmers and pastoralists. Although they belonged to different ethnic groups, the cultures of the farmers exhibited some clear similarities and so did the cultures of the pastoralists. Vice versa, farmers and pastoralists from one and the same tribe were culturally distinct.

In this book and in other publications, I speculate that many societies today still carry a cultural imprint left by the type of economy that large percentages of people in them practiced for centuries or even millennia. The transition from industrial production to a service-oriented economy that has occurred in the richest countries in the last decades has also produced a discernible effect on their cultures.

### ***The Role of Technology***

Technological innovation can affect economic development; hence, it can have an impact on culture. The invention of the plow was probably one of the most significant innovations in history because it enabled some societies to switch from horticulture to intensive agriculture. This gradually resulted in massive cultural change that we will explore in this book.

It is also conceivable that some types of technology can have a direct impact on culture in specific historical periods. We still do not know how exactly information technologies will affect the cultures of those societies that use them intensely, but it is plausible that the Internet and mobile phones will eventually have profound cultural consequences.

### ***The Role of the Physical Environment***

Dutch organizational psychologist Evert Van de Vliert (2009) is known for his theory that links climatic variation to cultural differences. He believes that climates with stable temperatures, as in the tropics, tend to produce some cultural effects that differ

from those observed in countries with cold winters and hot summers. His theory is relatively new and insufficiently tested, but it seems promising, especially if it is developed further, so as to consider the mediating role of subsistence patterns. It is doubtful that climate can have a direct effect on human culture, although Van de Vliert makes a strong case for the possibility that it can affect subjective well-being or happiness. However, climatic patterns are associated with specific types of physical environments that facilitate or impede particular human activities such as wet rice cultivation versus desert pastoralism. In this way, climate can affect human culture indirectly, through the type of economy that it allows or hampers. Van de Vliert finds this complex relationship between climate, physical environment, economy, and culture quite plausible.<sup>29</sup>

Recently, a new perspective has been explored although the studies in that field are still not numerous. Various cultural patterns have been linked to the prevalence of communicable diseases in a particular geographic area, and a complex index of such prevalence has been published (Murray & Schaller, 2010). The premise is that areas with lots of parasites, bacteria, and viruses — as in the tropics — produce cultures that differ from those in cold areas, where microorganisms, insects, and other disease vectors do not thrive. Some scholars have gone as far as attempting to explain national variation in individualism versus collectivism in terms of pathogen prevalence (Fincher, Thornhill, Murray, & Schaller, 2008). This theory postulates that the collectivist trait of forming cohesive in-groups while shunning strangers may reflect an attempt to avoid contamination. Again, this is a very new field of research, and conclusions should be guarded. However, it would not be premature to issue a warning. A relatively high statistical correlation, as between high pathogen prevalence and collectivism, is neither proof of a cause-and-effect relationship, nor always the best explanation. Scandinavians tend to be blond and traditional beer drinkers, whereas Spain has more dark-headed individuals who drink wine. But there is no association between hair color and type of drink, let alone with the fact that Scandinavians score higher on the individualism dimension than Spaniards. In this book, I argue that some of the core aspects of individualism versus collectivism, which I prefer to call universalism versus exclusionism, are a direct result of the development of market economies and service sectors. This explanation is probably sufficient, while the contribution of pathogens, or of the lack of them, is unclear at best.

Other studies have found associations between the distribution of particular parasites and aggregate national personality traits. Kevin Lafferty of the University of California, Santa Barbara, found that nations with higher percentages of people infected with *Toxoplasma gondii*, a common brain parasite, have higher national neuroticism scores (Lafferty, 2006). Again, conclusions about associations of this type should be cautious, although one cannot completely rule out the possibility that pathogen prevalence could be at least partly responsible for some observable cultural differences.

---

29. Van de Vliert, personal communication, 2009.

### ***The Role of Biology***

It may be doubted whether any character can be named which is distinctive of a race and is constant.<sup>30</sup>

Charles Darwin

The view that group-level genetic differences might account for any psychological or cultural diversity among populations often raises hackles, especially among Western publics. Many prominent scholars, starting with Charles Darwin, and including prominent anthropologists such as Alfred Kroeber,<sup>31</sup> were skeptical of it. Nonetheless, nowadays, the idea is not considered implausible by some of the world's most prominent cross-cultural personality psychologists. For example, Juri Allik and Robert McCrae surmised that the group-level personality differences, which they observed in a study of respondents from 36 cultures, may be the result of differences in gene pools, among other things (Allik & McCrae, 2004). Others have been even bolder, attempting to explain national variation in anxiety and mood disorders, as well as in cultural dimensions such as individualism versus collectivism, in terms of different percentages of people in each nation that carry specific genetic polymorphisms.<sup>32</sup> There are also studies that attempt to show how certain culturally diverse phenomena may have coevolved with corresponding genes.

#### **On the Coevolution of Genes and Cultures<sup>33</sup>**

Researchers from diverse backgrounds are converging on the view that human evolution has been shaped by gene–culture interactions. Theoretical biologists have used population genetic models to demonstrate that cultural processes can have a profound effect on human evolution, and anthropologists are investigating cultural practices that modify current selection. These findings are supported by recent analyses of human genetic variation, which reveal that hundreds of genes have been subject to recent positive selection, often in response to human activities.

Before any discussion of the putative link between biology and culture, a more fundamental issue needs to be addressed. What exactly does the human genetic variation imply? Are there any meaningful significant biological distinctions between human groups? Or are they just skin-deep?

---

30. Darwin (1871), quoted in Jorde and Wooding (2004, p. 530).

31. Kroeber's conceptualization of culture and biology as radically opposed entities is treated in Brown (1991, p. 56).

32. See Chiao and Blizinsky (2009) and Way and Lieberman (2010). Genetic polymorphisms are variants of one and the same gene that may produce different effects.

33. From Laland, Odling-Smee, and Myles (2010, abstract).

In the past few decades, there has been a popular attempt in Western countries to discredit the practice of classifying humans on the basis of biological markers. The most serious attacks are launched on the concept of race as a biological category. Not only political activists but also scientists have participated in that movement. A 2001 editorial in the *New England Journal of Medicine* stated that race is a biologically meaningless concept (Schwartz, 2001). A statement to that effect was also made by the American Anthropological Association, although that organization admits that the statement does not reflect a consensus of all of its members, as individuals vary in their approaches to the study of race (American Anthropological Association, 1998).

Indeed, race — or any other designation of a group of humans — *can* be a social construct. In the United States, people sometimes categorize themselves as “black” or “white,” or something else, on the basis of the social affiliation that they feel rather than anything else. They cannot be expected to keep track of their genealogies, nor is it necessary for anybody to do that in a society that does not practice racial segregation. Besides, there are many individuals whose genes come from more than one continent. Even if they knew all their ancestors 10 generations back, it would be hard and highly impractical for them to try to paint an exact genetic picture of themselves. As a result, people take shortcuts and base their racial and other identification on social, rather than biological grounds.

But does that mean that scientists cannot group human populations on the basis of genetic similarity, even if ordinary people are not always aware of their exact genetic makeup? If the answer were negative, genetic analyses of individuals from different geographic locations would not allow scientists to identify any clusters of people who have lived in proximity for millennia and share certain genetic patterns that differentiate them from other human populations. But what if such clustering is possible?

Analyses of group-level biological differences often trigger questions about the motives of scholars who are interested in this topic. When the scientific arguments against this type of research are exhausted, its critics use one last line of defense: poking one’s nose into group-level biological differences is an insensitive and socially dangerous act. But this is a political position that has nothing to do with science. It is not insensitive to study any objective reality. As for the potential political implications, it is true that various misanthropes could attempt to distort the findings of science as they see fit in order to advance their repulsive agendas. But history teaches us that misanthropes do not need real science. The easiest thing in the world is to invent hundreds of unscientific reasons why a particular group of humans is inferior to yours and claim that this gives you the right to be an oppressor.

My own interest in the topic of clustering humans into groups on the basis of biological markers stems from the fact that the implications of the debate have far-reaching consequences for a general theory of science. In my view, this debate brings up fundamental questions about the nature and limitations of any scientific clustering, categorization, or classification of any given phenomena. I will attempt to explain this point without too much abstraction.

Stanford University professor Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza is one of the most prominent geneticists of the 20th century. He is a critic of the concept of biological race. Oddly, he is the coauthor of a book entitled *The History and Geography of*

*Human Genes* (Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi, & Piazza, 1996), whose very name suggests that some human genetic patterns do not have the same distribution across the world. Even the front cover of that book features a world map on which sub-Saharan Africa is colored differently from the rest of the globe (yellow). So is Australia (red). Europe and the two Americas are also distinct.

By now, there is overwhelming evidence that human populations can be clustered on the basis of a higher or lower prevalence of some genetic patterns. A study by a large international team of leading population geneticists concluded that “large genetic distances are observed among African populations and between African and non-African populations. The root of a neighbor-joining network is located closest to the African populations” (Watkins et al., 2003, abstract). Similar results were reported in other large-scale genetic studies, all of which demonstrated that population clustering is possible and meaningful and that the clusters correspond to geographic regions (Bastos-Rodriguez, Pimenta, & Pena, 2006; Batzer et al., 1996; Jorde & Wooding, 2004; Rosenberg et al., 2002; Zhivotovsky, Rosenberg, & Feldman, 2003). One of these studies — in agreement with the rest — defines the clusters as follows (Bastos-Rodriguez et al., 2006, p. 664):

We found that the genetic structure of the populations included in the HGDP-CEPH Diversity Panel is best portrayed by a picture of the world divided into genetic clusters that tightly correspond to five geographic regions: America, Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia, and a group composed of Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia.

Perhaps, the most serious blow to the claim that the concept of race does not have any biological meaning was delivered by a study of 3636 individuals who self-identified themselves as white, African American, East Asian, and Hispanic. On the basis of genetic analyses, the researchers (Tang et al., 2005) correctly guessed the self-reported races of the study participants in all but 5 of all the 3636 cases.

Critics of the clustering of human populations refer to studies showing that genetic differences are not discontinuous:<sup>34</sup> there are no categorical genetic distinctions between groups of humans because the boundaries between them are blurred. This is true, and the conclusion is that biological race or other genetic clusters of humans cannot be *monothetic* constructs. But they are fully legitimate *polythetic* constructs.<sup>35</sup>

---

34. See Serre and Paabo (2004) for evidence that human clusters are not discontinuous.

35. The members of monothetically defined groups all share at least one trait that is not found in the members of any other monothetic group. For example, “mammals” is a monothetic group because all mammals are reared on milk, whereas all nonmammals are not reared on milk.

The members of polythetically defined groups are likely to share various characteristics with many, yet not all, of the other group members. For example, various studies have found that street criminals in many countries tend to have lower than average IQs and various other personality characteristics that define them as a group. But some street criminals may lack some of those characteristics; for example, they may have a higher than average IQ.

A human race, or another biological cluster, can be defined as a group of people in which every individual shares a lot of biological features with many other individuals of the same group, which are not so frequent in other groups, but there is no single feature that is possessed by all members of the group and is not found in any other group. This definition is fully consistent with the descriptions of population geneticists of human genetic clusters (Jorde & Wooding, 2004, p. 530):

Each individual within a cluster shares most, but not all, of his or her ancestry with other members of the cluster (e.g. a member of the European cluster might have a posterior probability of 90 percent for assignment to that cluster, with 5 percent probability of assignment into each of the other clusters ...).

Assignments into genetic clusters are probabilistic and not categorical. But so are nearly all classifications in many sciences: psychology, sociology, anthropology, and political science. What is a “neurotic” or “extraverted” individual if not one that has a tendency to provide some specific self-descriptions and a proneness to exhibit certain behaviors? What is a democratic regime if not one that is likely to follow some principles of governance without always strictly adhering to all of them?

If we give up our cognitive ability to categorize phenomena on the basis of *prevalent* traits and probabilities, and accept only categorical distinctions, with sharp delineations between the observed groups of cases, we would end up being completely unable to distinguish between a car and a truck, a tree and a bush, or a hill and a mountain.<sup>36</sup>

If it is possible to assign people to probabilistic clusters on the basis of biological markers, what are the practical implications of that? Can we predict something interesting about these clusters or is the whole exercise inconsequential?

---

36. Those who claim that the concept of race has no validity because it is based on clinal (gradual) distinctions usually forget to tell their audiences that there are no categorical differences and biological barriers between dog breeds: nearly all of them can cross and produce offspring. The crossbreeds would blur anything that previously resembled a strict dividing line between two breeds. Whether a particular canine population is a separate breed or not is decided by human committees. In that sense, breeds are human social constructs. But that does not imply that there is no biological reality behind them, which translates into physical and psychological differences.

Critics of clinal differences are also silent about the fact that there are no biological barriers and categorical distinctions between many species. In fact, there is no strict definition of the term “species” in the first place, which means that this concept can also be a social construct or based on a probability analysis.

If the representatives of two populations *cannot* produce normal offspring, they are considered different species. However, “cannot” is often a probabilistic concept. On the contrary, if the members of two populations *can* have viable offspring, they are not necessarily viewed as one species. Wolves and dogs can interbreed successfully. There may be problems in some cases, but that can happen also if one tries to cross some breeds of domestic dogs. Still, wolves and dogs are considered two different species.

A huge number of studies have shown that different races or ethnic groups and their members differ probabilistically (not categorically) in terms of metabolism speed, substance tolerance, bone density, prevalence of many noncommunicable diseases, and more. Critics of biological categorizations of humans tend to accept these facts, albeit reluctantly, as long as two parts of the body are not involved: the brain and the genital system. Any mention of anatomical or genetic differences in those organs that might distinguish human populations, probabilistically or categorically, is likely to cause an uproar. Political correctness calls for the conclusion that genetic differences between populations have evolved in such a bizarre way that they seem to have affected nearly the whole body, but have bypassed precisely those two psychologically, politically, and culturally sensitive organs that people associate with values, norms, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. A conclusion of this kind would be all the more bizarre in view of the fact that one of these organs controls most functions of the living body, whereas the other ensures reproduction.

Unfortunately, Mother Nature does not care about human sensitivities. There is overwhelming evidence that human populations exhibit probabilistic differences in specific genetic patterns associated with brain functions and sexual hormones. Further in this book, I refer to studies that show population differences in genes that regulate the activity of serotonin and dopamine in the brain. Although it is premature to claim clear associations between the population distributions of these genetic patterns and measurable cultural and aggregate personality traits, it is not unlikely that such relationships exist. However, population distributions are not necessarily the same as racial distributions. It is possible for a particular pattern to follow ethnic lines that cut across racial lines. If it could be shown that this is the typical situation, the usefulness of racial analyses in studies of cross-cultural differences would be nil. But that would not render studies of biological and cultural correlates meaningless across other population units, such as ethnic groups

Studying genes is not the only way to find deep-seated biological differences between populations. There are other lines of research whose findings coincide with those from genetic studies. It is well known that men tend to have longer ring fingers than index fingers. In women, those two fingers are most often of equal length or the index finger is longer. In the scientific literature, this difference is known as the 2D:4D ratio: the ratio between the 2nd digit and the 4th digit, usually those of the right hand, although left-hand digits are also studied. British researcher John Manning and his associates proved this difference statistically. They, and other scholars, surmised that since 2D:4D ratios are congenital, men's lower ratios are most probably due to greater prenatal exposure to testosterone, whereas women's higher ratios are probably due to higher prenatal exposure to the female hormone estrogen. Manning has also presented evidence that men who have a lower 2D:4D ratio tend to have higher sperm counts and higher testosterone levels (Manning, 2002; Manning, Scutt, Wilson, & Lewis-Jones, 1998).

Initially, 2D:4D studies seemed like palmistry, but by now this is a very serious field of research for biologists and psychologists. It has expanded into population differences and has shown stark ethnic contrasts, discussed further in this book.

In the medical field, there are a number of studies of the androgen receptor gene CAG, which affects a man's susceptibility to the effect of testosterone: shorter variants of the gene are associated with greater sensitivity (Manning, Bundred, Newton, & Flanagan, 2003; Putz, Gaulin, Sporter, & McBurney, 2004). Manning and his associates showed that men with lower 2D:4D (more masculine hands) are more likely to have shorter variants of the CAG gene (Manning et al., 2003). The results of racial comparisons of average CAG lengths for medical purposes are similar to those of 2D:4D comparisons.<sup>37</sup> They also match the results of racial comparisons of the incidence of prostate cancer, which may be partly caused by genetic factors.<sup>38</sup> Black populations tend to have more masculine finger configurations, shorter CAG, and a higher incidence of prostate cancer than White populations. East Asians have less masculine finger configurations, longer CAG, and a lower incidence of prostate cancer than Whites.

Admittedly, the available scientific knowledge about group-level biological differences is still too rudimentary to provide a satisfactory explanation of any cultural differences. Besides, because some prevalent values, norms, beliefs, attitudes, or other self-descriptions can change significantly within one and the same nation over a few generations, some scholars' instinctive reaction is to express skepticism of any putative link between culture and biology. Inglehart and Klingemann (2000) observed significant worldwide changes in levels of happiness in different countries and noted that this is hard to square with a genetic interpretation of national happiness. Indeed, the observed fluctuations in happiness hardly reflect any sudden changes in nations' gene pools. But this does not prove that national happiness (which fluctuates more or less around a predictable baseline) has nothing to do with biological factors. Individual blood pressure varies widely as a function of the food one has had, the number of hours one has slept, the external temperature, and one's level of stress at the time of the measurement. But that does not mean that hypertension has nothing to do with genetic factors. It is also well known that, at least in modern nations, the average IQ of each generation is higher than that of the previous one. This does not mean that intelligence has nothing to do with genes. The average height of a nation can also increase as a result of better nutrition and other lifestyle factors. Still, nobody would deny the fact that height has a genetic component. In this case, it is also likely that some ethnic groups differ in their average height for genetic reasons, in addition to the impact of different lifestyles.

This being said, I must reiterate that for the time being, any link between biology and culture must be viewed as purely hypothetical. A number of studies in respectable academic journals have reported correlations between prevalence of

---

37. See Sartor, Zheng, and Eastham (1999) for data concerning CAG lengths in US blacks and whites; Hsing et al. (2000) for CAG lengths in Chinese; and Sasagawa et al. (2000) for CAG lengths in Japanese.

38. See Freedland and Isaacs (2005) for comparisons of prostate cancer incidence in Black and White Americans and an analysis of the likely causes, Hsing et al. (2000) for data concerning prostate cancer incidence in Chinese.

genetic polymorphisms and cultural indices,<sup>39</sup> but the totality of the available evidence is still inconclusive. The fact that some values and beliefs can evolve very significantly over a few generations suggests that biology is unlikely to provide a good explanation of the observed national differences. But some other aspects of culture may be more stable. Although the environment clearly plays a very strong role in everything associated with culture, it is not unlikely that some group-level biological differences can also account, albeit to a small extent, for the existence of some group differences in happiness, consumption of substances, cognitive skills, or the tendency to exhibit various behaviors in specific circumstances.

## Speed of Cultural Change

An interesting question that often comes up during seminars on cultural differences is “How much does culture change over time and how fast?”. The issue of convergence is also brought up: are we not moving towards a globally uniform culture?

The work of Ronald Inglehart is the best source of knowledge on the question of cultural change and convergence. He compared a wide range of values, norms, attitudes, and beliefs in Belgium, Italy, France, the Netherlands, West Germany, and the United Kingdom, measured from 1970 to 2006, and the percentages of people who espoused them. His results show two clear trends (Inglehart, 2008, Fig. 2, p. 135):

1. The cultural differences between those six countries became less pronounced. There was clear cultural convergence during the 36-year period of the study.
2. The convergence was partial. The cultural differences between those six countries did not disappear completely during the 36-year period. Most remarkably, all six countries at almost all times moved in the same direction on Inglehart’s measures (sometimes up and sometimes down) and at a fairly similar speed. As a result, the

---

39. Chiao and Blizinsky (2009) reported a high correlation ( $r = .70$ ) between Hofstede’s individualism index and national prevalence of the short (S) allele of the serotonin-transporter gene 5-HTTLPR across 29 nations. However, their 29-nation sample is absolutely unrepresentative. It includes only one African country (South Africa), whose individualism index (Hofstede, 2001) is based only on white individuals. Also, Chiao and Blizinsky are silent about the fact that Hofstede never studied Russia, Estonia, Poland, and Hungary. The individualism scores that he has published for those countries are from later replications of his IBM study whose reliability is highly questionable. As we will see in this book, the East European countries are low on individualism and high on collectivism. See also Gelfand, Bhawuk, Nishii, and Bechtold (2004) for similar findings for in-group collectivism practices.

Way and Lieberman (2010) attempted to explain individualism versus collectivism differences in terms of the national prevalence of some genetic polymorphisms. Yet, their argument is based on the premise that collectivism (the main cultural characteristic of poor societies) is associated with greater social sensitivity. In Chapter 6 of this book, I demonstrate that precisely the opposite is the case: the cultures of the developing world demonstrate significantly less sensitivity and empathy than those of the rich world.

ranking of the six countries on the percentages of people who endorsed the values, norms, attitudes, and beliefs that Inglehart studied was practically the same throughout the 36 years.

If the observed trend continues for a few more generations, the cultures of those six countries may merge on a number of important cultural characteristics. But it would take centuries of uninterrupted strong economic development, globalization, and exchange of ideas and practices for the whole world to fuse into one single culture.

Inglehart (2005) also compared how societies on all continents have changed in the past decades. He found that there has been no global cultural convergence at all. On the contrary, there is evidence of divergence between the values of some rich and poor nations.



## Chapter 2

# Major Cross-Cultural Studies

Perhaps the first edition of “Culture’s Consequences” [by Geert Hofstede] did not create the field of comparative cross-cultural studies but it certainly has shaped the field’s basic themes, structure and controversies for over 20 years.

Mark Peterson, professor of international management (Peterson, 2003, p. 128)

This chapter introduces the authors of the main large-scale cross-cultural studies in the past few decades and briefly mentions their contributions to our current knowledge of cultural differences across the nations of the modern world. Some of the main findings of these authors are discussed in greater detail in appropriate places in the following chapters.

### Geert Hofstede

The first analysis of a large paper-and-pencil culture-related study was carried out by Dutch scholar Geert Hofstede around 1970. He analyzed the work-related values of some 116,000 employees at subsidiaries of the IBM corporation in some 70 countries, or groups of countries — as was the case with some Arab and African states.<sup>1</sup> Hofstede constructed four cultural dimensions that can be used to explain a large myriad of national differences. His work has served as an inspiration for countless other studies, including mine, and some of those mentioned below. As a result, Hofstede has become the world’s most quoted cross-cultural analyst. But his influence is not limited to cross-cultural research. A 2008 Wall Street ranking of the most influential business thinkers of the 20th century ranked Hofstede 16th, ahead of Jack Welch, the legendary chief executive officer of General Electric and Tom Peters, one of the world’s most famous business consultants.

One of Hofstede’s dimensions — individualism versus collectivism — has become particularly salient in cross-cultural research for two reasons. It keeps recurring in

---

1. Hofstede’s main academic treatise is Hofstede (1980), thoroughly revised and published as a second edition in 2001. The latest popular version of his work is Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010).

many research projects, and it reflects differences between rich and poor nations. However, other analysts have conceptualized individualism and collectivism and measured it in various ways that have nothing to do with Hofstede's approach. Although nobody has a patent on scientific terms, it is a pity that the term individualism versus collectivism has been used to denote so many diverse concepts that have little to do with each other.

The other dimensions that Hofstede proposed have also generated very considerable interest, particularly in cross-cultural management studies. Business consultants and international managers often find them useful in their work.

After his IBM-related work, Hofstede added another two dimensions to his model: one from Michael Bond's work described below, later updated on the basis of my analysis of the World Values Survey (WVS), and one from my previous English-language book on cross-cultural differences.<sup>2</sup>

### **Michael Bond and the Chinese Culture Connection**

Inspired by Hofstede's work, Canadian researcher Michael Bond and his associates, who called themselves the Chinese Culture Connection, developed a questionnaire of personal values for cross-cultural research, known as the Chinese Values Survey ([Chinese Culture Connection, 1987](#)). It contained items suggested by Chinese scholars. Bond was concerned that Hofstede's work reflected answers to questions asked only by Western minds. Hofstede was also concerned that ethnocentric Western questionnaires could produce a tunnel vision: Westerners will inquire about what is relevant to them but may be completely ignorant of what is important in other societies. The Chinese Values Survey was supposed to replace Western ethnocentrism with Chinese. The idea was not that the latter is preferable to the first but that another perspective is always welcome.

The Chinese Values Survey was administered to students from 23 countries, about 100 persons from each nation. The results yielded four dimensions of national culture, three of which were statistically associated with three of Hofstede's although the conceptual similarity was not always clear. The fourth dimension contrasted some of the values of East Asians (Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese) to those of various nations in Southern Asia, Africa, and the Anglo world. The most interesting feature of this dimension, originally called "Confucian work dynamism," was its statistical association with economic growth. The values that defined it seemed to explain the miracle of the so-called Asian tigers: Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Korea. Hofstede renamed this dimension "long term-orientation" and adopted it as an expansion of his previously four-dimensional model of national cultures.

---

2. The dimension that [Hofstede et al. \(2010\)](#) adopted from my previous English-language book ([Minkov, 2007](#)) is called "indulgence versus restraint." It is very similar statistically and conceptually to the variant that I present in this book, called "industry versus indulgence."

The Chinese Culture Connection project demonstrated that Western and Chinese research instruments can lead to similar results. Still, there is some inevitable diversity in the findings. This widens the scope of our knowledge of cross-cultural differences.

Subsequently, Michael Bond and his associates reported other interesting dimensions of national culture (Bond et al., 2004). One of them — “societal cynicism” — is of particular interest as it distinguishes nations with a cynical social outlook from those with more pro-social attitudes.

## **Shalom Schwartz**

In the early 1990s, Israeli cross-cultural psychologist Shalom Schwartz studied the personal values of various samples of respondents, representing 41 cultural groups in 38 nations in all continents and published national and ethnic scores for seven dimensions.<sup>3</sup> They are all associated with Hofstede’s, particularly with individualism versus collectivism. Yet, the associations are not strong, which means that Schwartz’s dimensions are interesting in their own right. In addition, Schwartz has done some important and sophisticated work at the level of individuals, explaining how values relate to each other in a wide variety of nations.

## **Peter Smith, Shaun Dugan, and Fons Trompenaars**

During the 1980s, Dutch management consultant Fons Trompenaars interviewed about 8800 company employees from 43 countries, mostly about the norms of behavior that they would like others to follow, as well as some perceptions and personal values. His results were analyzed by British cross-cultural psychologist Peter Smith and his assistant Shaun Dugan and appeared in two publications that also bear Trompenaars’s name (Smith, Trompenaars, & Dugan, 1995; Smith, Dugan, & Trompenaars, 1996). Smith’s analysis identified several national dimensions of culture. One was clearly the same as Hofstede’s individualism versus collectivism, although it was given a different name: “conservatism versus egalitarian commitment”. Another dimension — “utilitarian versus loyal involvement” — had not been reported anywhere previously. It reflects differences in some aspects of group loyalty and contrasts the East European countries (where people often prefer to go alone than work and share the fruits of their labor with others) with various Asian societies (where the opposite tendency was observed).

A third dimension discovered by Smith also seems unrelated to any other. It is called “personal versus political” and creates a contrast between Eastern Europe and Asia, especially East Asia. It stands mostly for differences in beliefs that ordinary

---

3. Schwartz (1994). For the structure of the values that Schwartz studied see also Schwartz and Bardi (2001), Schwartz et al. (2001), and Schwartz and Sagiv (1995).

individuals can influence political decisions and beliefs that individual efforts bring academic success. East Europeans had high scores on the first set of beliefs and low on the second. In East Asia, the situation was the reverse. A fourth dimension also emerged from Trompenaars's database, but it did not seem very different from conservatism versus egalitarian commitment or collectivism versus individualism.

Fons Trompenaars and his associate Charles Hampden-Turner have also published a book in which they describe seven national dimensions of culture (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1999). Their descriptions are interesting and entertaining, yet those seven dimensions are based on pure imagination, not on statistical evidence. The scientifically acceptable interpretation of Trompenaars's data is Peter Smith's aforementioned analysis, not Trompenaars's and Hampden-Turner's imaginary dimensions, which they never supported with empirical evidence and national indices.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, because many business consultants have little concern for the principles of science, Trompenaars's seven dimensions are popular in some international management circles and adorn many books on organizational behavior. Still, it must be admitted that although the work of that author and Hampden-Turner lacks scientific rigor, it provides some interesting illustrations of cultural differences that a student of culture might find useful.

## Robert House and the GLOBE Project

In the early 1990s, Robert House of the Wharton School of Management and his associates initiated a cross-national project for the study of leadership and societal culture. Inspired by Hofstede's work, and intended as an improvement of it, the project was carried out by some 170 scholars in 62 societies and 951 organizations where some 17,000 managers were interviewed.<sup>5</sup> Apart from leadership issues, GLOBE studied norms for others and national stereotypes: laymen's generalized impressions of their societies and their subjective impressions of the prevalent national character.

The study of norms revealed several dimensions, some of them associated with Hofstede's individualism versus individualism. The study of national stereotypes also yielded a similar dimension. However, that study also resulted in several dimensions of national character stereotypes that do not seem to reflect anything objective.<sup>6</sup> In fact, some of the dimensions based on stereotypes predict the opposite of what they should. Thus, the GLOBE authors expected countries that score high on "humane orientation" to have less racism but the opposite is true if WVS measures are adopted as a benchmark. Also, more "humane" societies are more likely to have the death penalty and apply it.<sup>7</sup>

---

4. For a criticism of Trompenaars's model, see Hofstede (1996).

5. GLOBE's main publication is House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta (2004).

6. For this criticism of GLOBE, see McCrae et al. (2008).

7. The results of an analysis by myself and Vesselin Blagoev of what GLOBE's dimensions actually predict are going to be published in a forthcoming issue of *Asia Pacific Business Review*.

In addition to national stereotypes and norms, GLOBE also studied cultural differences in preferred leadership styles. Some of the dimensions that were obtained in that study are interesting and potentially useful, yet their statistical similarity suggests that they should be merged.

## **Ronald Inglehart and the World Values Survey**

American researcher Ronald Inglehart and his associates throughout the world conduct the WVS project that was already mentioned. They use representative samples of nations and regions on all continents to study their cultural values, beliefs, norms, self-perceptions, and other elements of culture. To date, this is the largest cross-cultural research project that uses representative samples, rather than matched samples<sup>8</sup> as was the case with all previous projects. Also, the WVS is a study that provides cultural images on an ongoing basis rather than still snapshots as most other studies do. It covers a wide range of areas and has revealed priceless cultural information about nearly 100 countries. The data are freely accessible in [www.worldvaluessurvey.com](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.com).

Inglehart's analysis of the WVS data has resulted in two cultural dimensions, explaining a great deal of the observed cultural variance (Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart, Basanez, & Moreno, 1998; Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Inglehart & Norris, 2003). The simplicity of this model makes it a good tool for teaching the idea of cultural differences to absolute beginners in the field. More advanced scholars may also find Inglehart's dimensions useful as they are closely associated with many cultural differences between nations.

## **Other Authors of Large-Scale Cross-Cultural Studies**

A number of other scholars have also reported various interesting national indices, either from individual analyses, aggregated to the national level, or from studies carried out directly at the national level. The following is a list of authors and their studies, in the approximate order of their chronology, involving at least 20 countries or ethnic groups each. The list is not exhaustive but reflects some of the best known large-scale studies, most of which have been quoted in subsequent research:

Robert Levine and associates (Levine & Norenzayan, 1999; Levine, Norenzayan, & Philbrick, 2001): Studies of observed behaviors.

---

8. In cross-cultural studies, matched samples are groups of people who are fairly similar in every respect, except their culture. For example, if you compared the values of Swedish, Arab, and Chinese business students of similar age, previous education, and wealth status, that would be a comparison of three matched samples.

Peter Smith, Mark Peterson, and Shalom Schwartz (Smith, Peterson, & Schwartz, 2002): A study of sources of guidance for managers.

Robert McCrae and associates (McCrae, 2002; McCrae & Terracciano, 2005; Schmitt, Allik, McCrae, & Benet-Martinez, 2007): Studies of mean national personality traits.

Ed Diener and associates (Schimmack, Oishi, & Diener, 2002; Kuppens, Ceulemans, Timmerman, Diener, & Kim-Prieto, 2006): Studies of pleasant and unpleasant emotions.

David Schmitt and associates (Schmitt, 2005; Schmitt et al., 2004; Schmitt & Allik, 2005): Studies of human sexuality and a study of self-esteem.

Christian Welzel (Welzel, 2010): Analyses of WVS data.

## Chapter 3

# Industry versus Indulgence

*Keywords:* Cultural Differences in Work Orientation; Thrift; Economic Development; Happiness; Attitudes toward Freedoms

Why should we plant, when there are so many mongongos in the world?

Xashe, a Kung man from Mahopa, referring to the fruit trees in the Kalahari desert in Southern Africa.<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

In his award-winning book “Guns, Germs, and Steel,” (Diamond, 1997) Jared Diamond mentions a poor Papua New Guinean, named Yali, who wants to know why Westerners have so much “cargo” (a local term for “property”), whereas people in his environment are dirt-poor. Westerners are also intrigued by national and ethnic differences in wealth and often discuss their probable causes, whereas East Europeans are truly obsessed with this topic.

The question of why some nations are economically poor whereas others are rich exercises not only the minds of ordinary people but also those of many scholars. Treatises on this topic have been written at least since the time of French sociologist Charles Louis de Secondat baron de Montesquieu, and British economist Adam Smith (Montesquieu, 1748; Smith, 1777). Since then, there has been a spate of publications on the matter. Many of them are by development economists who propose various economic, political, or geographic determinants. Culture, as a force that can speed up or slow down economic growth, is conspicuously absent from their analyses.

Economists are not the only scholars who omit the role of culture in their studies of economic development. Jared Diamond is a biologist. His book “Guns, Germs, and Steel” attempts to explain why some human populations, like Yali and his kin, never got beyond hunting-gathering and horticulture, whereas other groups of humans developed intensive agriculture — the use of draft animals, fertilizers, and irrigation systems — which is a prerequisite for further industrial development. Diamond proposes a theory of geographic determinism: because of their flora and fauna, tropical environments are not the right place for intensive agriculture.

---

1. Lee (1979), unnumbered initial page.

For instance, sub-Saharan Africa supposedly lacks animals that can be domesticated and used for plowing or riding.

Diamond is right in looking at the environment for clues about the early economic development of mankind. But culture, as a complex system of partly shared values, beliefs, and norms that are associated with particular practices, does not receive sufficient attention in his book. That impoverishes Diamond's analysis.

Diamond's thesis implies that domestication is about identifying docile species. Because the large herbivores of the African continent are too aggressive or shy, they could not be domesticated. Consequently, the African populations were unable to practice intensive agriculture with draft animals. But the wild predecessors of Eurasian cattle and horses must have been as aggressive or shy as the African bovines and equines today because they, too, were preyed upon by large prehistoric cats and wolves, as well as human beings. Domestication can be achieved by identifying docile individuals within a species and breeding them selectively in order to retain the desired characteristics.<sup>2</sup> If some human groups were more likely than others to engage in selective domestication, it was, among other things, because they saw a greater value in the results that this activity would bring. This vision is a cultural phenomenon; it has to do with what people collectively consider valuable or not worth the trouble.

Domestication of plants is also intricately associated with cultural values. American anthropologist Richard Lee lived in the 1960s among the Kalahari hunter-gatherers near the present border of Botswana and Namibia, known as Kung San or Bushmen, and wrote a book about them (Lee, 1979). It starts with the quote at the beginning of this chapter, a statement by a Kung man. As long as there were enough mongongo trees around, and they bore enough fruit, the Kung San saw no value in horticulture, let alone intensive agriculture, even after they learned about its existence.

Lee noticed another interesting fact. Each day, the Kung San walked long distances to the mongongo groves to collect their fruits. Once he asked a tribesman why nobody had ever made an attempt to grow mongongo trees near some of the permanent water holes where the tribe resided. This is what the man answered (Lee, 1979, p. 204):

“You could do that if you wanted to”, he replied, “but by the time the trees bore fruit, you would be long dead.”

Certainly, the physical environment is a powerful factor in the adoption of new ways of subsistence. But culture cannot be left out of this equation. A theory that

---

2. See Lindberg et al. (2005) — a study based on the work of Russian academician Dmitriy Belyaev who showed that silver foxes (an ill-tempered species) can be bred selectively for generations, the result being a population that is as tame as domestic dogs.

There are documentary films about White South-Africans who have raised aggressive and dangerous animals, such as rhinoceroses. One family even allowed their 800-kilo hippopotamus to enter their house and sleep in their bedroom. Such tame specimens could be bred selectively to obtain a domesticated breed. The reason that this has not been done is that nobody sees any economic value in breeding tame silver foxes, rhinos, and hippos.

explains economic change and development without analyzing culture provides a colorblind vision. It is not necessarily false but it is like a dish without a basic ingredient. A number of prominent sociologists, political scientists, and anthropologists have understood this. Although they do not reject the economists' explanations and those that focus on geographic factors, they believe that cultural values can additionally account, at least to some extent, for the observed differences in economic development and especially in speed of economic growth.<sup>3</sup>

This balanced approach is preferable to a one-sided perspective. Speaking of culture as the sole determinant of economic development, without considering the role of noncultural factors such as geographic location or political systems, is a simplistic method, just like the omission of culture. The story of the two German and Korean states is a case in point. Enforcement of Soviet-style socialism, which does not allow free markets, will eventually destroy a nation's economy, regardless of the underlying culture. Culture matters, as American social scientists [Harrison and Huntington \(2000\)](#) have famously put it, but it is certainly not the only engine that drives economic development. Most importantly, culture cannot be easily decoupled from the other factors. It is like gunpowder in a round of ammunition. It cannot produce a great effect if it is not encapsulated appropriately and ignited, but guns, shells, and bullets are also useless without gunpowder.

For instance, government policies are certainly important determinants of economic development as economists suggest, but they are not adopted in a cultural vacuum. [Javidan \(2004\)](#), one of the main authors of Project GLOBE's main monograph on culture and leadership, makes a very convincing point (p. 255):

Governments operate in a milieu of national cultural values and practices. Government policies and actions are derived from and are reflections of societal values. They, in turn, act to reinforce and sustain those values.

This does not mean that governments' decisions can be fully predicted on the basis of a country's culture or that one and the same country cannot experience a sudden radical shift in a particular governmental policy, despite the relative stability of its culture. But in the long run, the governments of some nations are likely to prefer some courses of action and avoid others. For example, the United States has never experienced anything similar to a socialist agenda. It is clear that American culture has played a role in that nation's strong belief in a free market and that these two phenomena are intricately interwoven.

Other examples of interplay between cultural and noncultural factors in economic development can be found from antiquity to the present times. The first great civilizations

---

3. See [Dornbusch, Fischer, and Startz \(2004\)](#) for economists' theories of economic development and [Gallup and Sachs \(1998\)](#) for a detailed analysis of geographic, political, and demographic determinants of economic growth in the modern world. Theories that associate economic development with cultural values were proposed by [Harrison \(1992\)](#), [Harrison and Huntington \(2000\)](#), [Hofstede \(2001\)](#), [Hofstede and Bond \(1988\)](#), [McClelland \(1961\)](#), [Weber \(1930\)](#), etc.

arose on the banks of rivers that provided fertile soils and irrigation. This created a relative abundance of food, some of which could be used by the local rulers to support a powerful coercive apparatus. An authoritarian culture arose, accompanied by severe human exploitation, at least by modern standards. The result was cheap and easily available labor, which — as any economist will agree — facilitates economic growth.

Despotism seems to have helped the execution of the great building projects of antiquity. But large-scale construction is not the only form of economic development. Trade is another way to riches and it requires a different type of culture. As Montesquieu (1748) observed, the flourishing of commerce is only possible in an environment of cultural liberalism that allows unhindered massive participation in a free-market economy. Trade is also facilitated by easy access to seaways. All rich-trading peoples in human history — Phoenicians, Greeks, Venetians and other Italians, as well as Dutchmen, Englishmen and other Northwest Europeans — enjoyed a combination of both factors. They were maritime nations with various types of parliamentary democracies and liberal cultures that allowed the nation's citizens relatively free participation in domestic and international trade. Dutch economic historian Oscar Gelderblom stresses the fact that during the 16th and 17th centuries, when the Netherlands was the richest nation in the world, Dutch citizens from all socioeconomic backgrounds were allowed to participate freely in the country's commerce (Gelderblom, 2000). Attempts by some merchants to establish cartels or monopolize trade were discouraged by the government.

The Iberian nations also had access to seaways and used them to conquer large parts of the worlds. But they lacked a liberal culture that allowed free participation in trade. This is what Montesquieu tells us about Portugal and Spain after the great geographic discoveries at the end of the 15th century:<sup>4</sup>

When the Portuguese and the Castellans dominated the West Indies, some commercial branches were so rich that the princes seized them. That ruined their establishments in that part of the world.

A little further in the same book, Montesquieu explains how the granting of exclusive trading rights to individuals by the viceroy of Goa produced a negative impact on commerce. Centuries ago, Montesquieu understood that trade monopolies could be bad for economic development. His account of the Spanish monarchy is a poignant example:<sup>5</sup>

The king of Spain receives large amounts [of money] from his customs office in Cadiz. In that respect, he is just a very rich individual in a very poor country. Everything goes from the foreigners straight into his hands and his subjects take hardly any part in that [activity].

---

4. Montesquieu (1748), livre XX, chapitre 20, my translation.

5. Montesquieu (1748), livre XXI, chapitre 22, my translation.

It appears that different cultural settings may facilitate diverse types of economic development in different ways. Mega-building projects are possible in a strongly authoritarian culture of intensive agriculturalists that allows little individual freedom, but trade development is impossible without liberalism. It is important to understand that there are different pathways to national wealth creation that tap different cultural values, beliefs, and norms. One and the same set of cultural traits cannot produce the same effect in all environments and in all historical periods.

Critics of theories that focus on culture as a factor in the East Asian economic miracle nowadays like to ask why these supposedly favorable cultural characteristics did not manifest themselves in East Asia before World War II. But this is a naïve argument because it assumes that a particular set of cultural values must have the same consequences — economic or other — in all time periods and all environments. Actually, it is far more logical to accept that the same values can lead to different economic outcomes in different periods and environments. Almost 80 years ago, [Weber \(1930\)](#) realized that what he called a Protestant work ethic could be regarded as a strong economic advantage only in a particular time period. Development economists [Gallup and Sachs \(1998\)](#) note that historians have stressed the changing nature of geographic advantage over time in conjunction with technological change and economic development. There is no reason to expect that the effect of a particular cultural trait is more durable than that of geographic location. It can last for decades or longer but it will inevitably fade away in the long run; then another cultural trait, hitherto irrelevant, will become a stronger advantage.

## **Integration of Economists' and Cultural Anthropologists' Perspectives on Economic Growth**

The available evidence suggests that explanations by economists and cultural anthropologists or cross-cultural psychologists need not be in contradiction. Economists have attributed differences in speed of economic growth between developing countries to, among other things, differences in savings rates ([Dornbusch et al., 2004](#)). But thrift is a measurable cultural value that is not embraced to the same extent in all societies ([Hofstede, 2001](#); [Hofstede et al., 2010](#); [Minkov, 2007](#)). If some nations consistently save and invest more than other nations, that obviously has to do with deeply entrenched cultural values. The nationally representative World Values Survey (WVS) demonstrates convincingly that thrift, as a desirable trait for children, is far more appreciated in Asia and Eastern Europe than in Africa and Latin America as well as the United States. This geographic contrast has a clear analogue in real differences in savings rates between regions.<sup>6</sup>

Discussing the East Asian economic miracle, development economists Rudiger Dornbusch, Stanley Fischer, and Richard Startz suggest another explanation: the

---

6. Data from World Bank Research Advisory Staff (1999).

countries in that region have increased the percentage of working women (Dornbusch et al., 2004). But the roles that women are allowed in a particular society reflect cultural values and norms. Middle Easterners and Pakistanis are far more likely than East Asians to see a working mother as unable to establish an appropriate emotional relationship with her child. Other studies confirm the relative reluctance of Middle Eastern societies and Pakistan to have women work.<sup>7</sup>

Studies of associations between natural resources and economic growth are another example. Economists have presented evidence that abundant natural resources in a poor nation tend to depress economic growth in the long run, rather than boost it (Dornbusch et al., 2004; Sachs & Warner, 1995). Again, the reasons for this have strong cultural components. Some economists indicate that resource-rich countries often squander their wealth (Dornbusch et al., 2004). Thrift as a cultural value is clearly implicated here even if economists are unaware of that. Other economists believe that abundant national resources may have a de-motivating effect with respect to education because the workforce would see little incentive to study hard and prepare for complex jobs in manufacturing if a windfall from natural resources were easily available (Sachs & Warner, 1995). But attitudes toward education are also strongly culture-dependent (Hofstede, 2001; Minkov, 2007, 2008; Noorderhaven & Tidjani, 2001).

Although I strongly emphasize the need to consider both cultural and noncultural factors in analyses of economic development and use both perspectives, this chapter focuses on a narrower topic: the type of culture that is conducive to fast economic growth at the beginning of the 21st century. Noncultural factors will be omitted simply because they should be studied by economists. In fact, they have been studied already, and — as far as I can tell — the findings are quite convincing. There is no need to repeat them in this book. Time periods before the last decades of the 20th century will also be largely ignored here because they are a subject for historians.

The analysis that I offer in this chapter focuses on culture. Nevertheless, it is inspired by the views of prominent development economists concerning the determinants of the East Asian economic miracle. Although those scholars do not speak of cultural traits, we will see that the supposedly noncultural factors that they mention actually reflect measurable cultural values. The nationally representative measurements of values in the WVS, collected around 1998, convincingly predict national differences in subsequent economic development, and more precisely gross

---

7. The WVS (2006) has an item (D056, used before 2004) that asks the respondents whether a working mother can establish a good emotional relationship with her child.

Item q38 in Pew Research Center (2003), a study across 44 countries on all continents using mostly nationally representative samples, asks what kind of marriage provides a more satisfying way of life: one where the husband provides for the family and the wife takes care of the house and children or one where both work. Pakistan, Egypt, and Jordan have the highest percentages of people in the world who choose the first option, ranging between 63 and 66, versus 7 in the former East Germany and 8 in Vietnam.

national income (GNI) per person growth, in the following decade. Since the data that I use cover a large number of countries from all continents, there is little doubt that the findings are reliable.<sup>8</sup>

The statistical evidence presented here is very important. Typically, the work of the social scientists who believe in a relationship between culture and economic development suffers from a lack of convincing statistical proof. For instance Max Weber, whose Protestant work ethic theory continues to enjoy great popularity as an explanation of the wealth of Northwestern Europe, used only verbal rhetoric without a jot of statistical evidence to support his claims. Other studies have relied on fragmented data from a small number of countries that do not lead to conclusive results.<sup>9</sup>

Economists are more likely to use statistical evidence. Still, they are also prone to making unsupported claims, some of which quickly become legal tender in the West simply because they perpetuate commonly accepted Western myths. Some of them are exposed in the next section along with various other flawed attempts to discover predictors of economic growth on the basis of culturally biased assumptions.

## **False Cultural Predictors of National Differences in Economic Growth**

Various authors have proposed a number of measurable variables that could be expected to predict and explain national differences in economic development. A number of them are quite popular in the headquarters of some academics or business practitioners and are relevant to this analysis because they have a cultural overtone. Unfortunately, their explanatory powers are fictitious.

A good example of a Western myth concerning economic development is the fable that links slow growth to a culture of corruption or a lack of Western institutions. Although this claim is very easy to debunk with statistical data, it persists in some Western academic publications and media reports because it reflects the deeply held

---

8. The analysis in this chapter is partly based on Minkov and Blagoev (2009).

9. The *Chinese Culture Connection* (1987), Hofstede and Bond (1988), and Hofstede (2001) have shown that economic development is statistically associated with a dimension of national culture called “Confucian work dynamism” or “long-term orientation” (LTO). However, these publications use LTO indexes for only 22 countries. Also, the association between culture and economic growth is retrospective: cultural values measured at a particular time are used to explain economic development in a previous period. Furnham, Kirkcaldy, and Lynn (1994) have also shown a retrospective association between cultural attitudes and economic growth.

Nevertheless in Hofstede et al. (2010) we present a new LTO index for 93 countries, which is correlated with GDP growth both retrospectively and synchronically (during the period of the values measurements), although the retrospective correlation is stronger.

Western conviction that corruption is morally bad, therefore it must depress economic growth. However, many studies have challenged the view that corruption has a detrimental effect on a nation's economy and some have even claimed that it can be good for development.<sup>10</sup> In fact, it probably does not matter how much corruption a particular country has. What matters is what state officials do with the bribes that they have collected. It appears that Asians and Eastern Europeans tend to invest this money in sensible business projects in their countries, whereas many Africans squander it or squirrel it away in foreign banks.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, corruption is not affecting much the Asian and East European economies but has a negative effect in Africa.

Dornbusch, Fischer, and Startz speak of "social infrastructure" (Dornbusch et al., 2004, p. 90), referring to the "rule of law" as it is known in the West. According to those authors, when the social infrastructure is good, as in the United States or in Ireland, one does not need to pay bribes as the government will protect people from being robbed, and the legal system will enforce contracts and resolve disputes. This,

---

10. According to some views, corruption "greases the wheels" of poor economies in countries with bad governance, whereas other authors believe that it "sands the wheels" (Meon & Sekkat, 2005). Different methodologies to test these views produce different results. A well-known empirical study by Mauro (1995) found that corruption depresses economic growth. After reanalyzing Mauro's data, Svensson (2005) found that they actually indicate that higher corruption leads to somewhat faster growth but the effect is not statistically significant. After examining the main available studies, Heckelman and Powell (2008) concluded that the issue still seemed unclear. They carried out their own analysis, which suggests that whether corruption greases or sands the wheels of a developing economy depends on various factors that are unrelated to corruption.

Of note, many studies of corruption, including Heckelman and Powell (2008) cover only a short period, for example five years. A simple analysis of the relationship between corruption at a given point in time and subsequent economic growth over a whole decade yields clearer results. The Transparency International corruption perception index in 1998 (Transparency International, 1998) correlates with GNI per person growth from 1998 to 2008 at  $-.24^*$  ( $n = 79$ ). This means that economies that were more corrupt in 1998 (and did not become much more transparent afterwards) grew a little faster, not slower. Corruption indices from subsequent years yield similar correlations over a larger number of countries. This does not necessarily prove that corruption greases the wheels; most likely it indicates that corruption and economic growth are unrelated.

More sophisticated analyses of the relationship between corruption and economic growth use various control variables. But it is a well-known fact that by carefully selecting such controls one can manipulate the results and demonstrate more or less anything; hence the discrepant results in the academic literature.

Another important point is that a lot of the attacks on corruption hypothesize that it props up inefficient firms; therefore it must be bad for the economy as a whole. However, microeconomic analyses do not necessarily have macroeconomic implications. Svensson (2005) indicates that although various studies indicate that corruption may depress company growth, cross-country analyses show that it is not associated with differences in national economic growth. Svensson calls this a "puzzle" (p. 39). In fact, there is nothing puzzling: corruption is bad for those companies whose leaders do not know how to deal with it but is very good for those that have specialized in it. These opposite effects at the microlevel seem to cancel each other out at the macro level.

11. According to some estimates, Mobutu Sese Seko, the former president of Congo, which he called Zaire, stole about 5 billion US dollars from the national treasury. Scams of a similar magnitude have been reported from other countries in Africa as well as Indonesia and the Philippines (Svensson, 2005).

supposedly, should result in faster economic growth. However, commonly used Western measures, such as the Kaufmann–Kraay rule of law index, perform more or less like the corruption index (Minkov & Blagoev, 2009).<sup>12</sup> They fail to predict subsequent economic growth.

Project GLOBE has proposed a dimension of national culture called “performance orientation” (Javidan, 2004). It reflects the degree to which people think that striving for improved performance occurs, or should occur, in their organizations or in society at large. The data were collected in the 1990s. According to GLOBE’s authors, this measure should be related to economic growth. But neither of the two GLOBE measures of performance orientation — “as is” or “as should be” — is significantly correlated with GNI per person growth from 1998 to 2008. This exposes the fallacy that statements of ambition and achievement orientation can predict subsequent success, especially at the national level. This very interesting topic will be revisited in the chapter on monumentalism, where we will see that the opposite is sometimes true: a professed ambition to excel can predict lower performance.

IMD Lausanne is a top-ranking world-class business school in Switzerland. It publishes yearly competitiveness reports for developed and developing economies. The World Economic Forum (WEF) produces very similar reports; in fact the two organizations have collaborated on this project. IMD Lausanne provides the following definition of competitiveness: “Competitiveness analyzes how nations and enterprises manage the totality of their competencies to achieve prosperity or profit” (Garelli, 2009). This definition suggests that, among other things, higher national competitiveness should result in faster economic growth.

Curiously, the 1998 IMD world competitiveness ranking is not associated with national economic growth in the following decade. The WEF ranking for 1998 performs a little better but it is not a good predictor of subsequent economic development either.<sup>13</sup> Still, prominent business consultants entertain the idea that national competitiveness is associated with economic growth. During the 2010 annual conference of the Central and Eastern European Management Development

---

12. We used the Kaufmann–Kraay (KK) rule of law index published by the [International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank \(2007\)](#) and showed that it does not predict economic growth. That index is very strongly correlated with the corruption indices of Transparency International, which explains why it has almost exactly the same predictive properties as those indices. Some economists believe that they have shown an association between a lack of rule of law and low economic growth but their methodology is plagued by a grave methodological error: explaining economic growth in a previous period with measures from a subsequent point in time. For example, [Bhattacharyya \(2004\)](#) attempted to estimate the contribution of “rule of law” as an economic growth factor in the period from 1960 to 1996 (p. 588) but used a rule of law index for 2002! The author completely ignored the plausible hypothesis that the rule of law, just like transparency versus corruption, can be a consequence of economic growth, not its antecedent.

13. IMD and WEF national competitiveness rankings for 1998 from [Woods \(1999\)](#). IMD’s ranking correlates with GNI per person growth from 1998 to 2008 at .21 ( $p = .17, n = 44$ ). WEF’s correlates at .30\* ( $n = 50$ ). These are Pearson’s correlations. Spearman’s correlations are only slightly higher (.25, still insignificant, for IMD’s ranking, and .34\* for WEF’s).

Association (CEEMAN), Peter Kraljic, former director of the French branch of McKinsey, one of the world's best-known business consultancies, spoke about national competitiveness as measured by the IMD and the WEF for an hour and remarked that unless the Central and Eastern European countries boosted their competitiveness, they might forever remain the poor neighbors of Western Europe. Ironically, Germany and Japan, which have had very insignificant economic growth in the past two decades, are ranked among the 10 most competitive economies, whereas China is some 30 ranks below. India is another 20 ranks lower. This is enough to form an opinion of the reliability of the IMD and WEF rankings as predictors of economic growth.

## **Culture and Economic Growth**

In the following sections, we will see that cultural values can be conceptually and statistically related to economic growth data. Evidently, culture can predict subsequent economic development. The rest of the chapter will be devoted to a deeper and broader cultural analysis, demonstrating that values that are associated with national wealth creation at the beginning of the 21st century form a single yet complex cultural syndrome that is stronger in some parts of the world than elsewhere. If we understand the nature of this cultural dimension properly, many observed national differences today will make better sense.

We will also try to discover the origins of the existing national differences on this dimension. We will search for an answer to a specific question: Why do some nations today have values that promote economic growth whereas other nations do not attach the same importance to these values?

## **Economists' Views of the East Asian Miracle**

The economic miracle of Japan, Taiwan, Hong-Kong, Singapore, and now China, has baffled economists and other scholars. The fast development of India and Vietnam is also noteworthy. After a lost decade, most of the former Soviet Union countries, as well as Bulgaria and Romania, nearly doubled their GNI per person between 1998 and 2008. What is behind this spectacular success?

In the case of China and Eastern Europe, it is clear that market liberalization has helped a lot. Until about 1998, the East European privatization process and the implementation of a market economy progressed in fits and starts due to all sorts of political maneuvers. But by 1998 the region was characterized by a strong private sector and relatively free markets. This triggered an economic boom. Nevertheless, this cannot be the whole story. Latin America is also free but — barring some short-lived episodes — has been historically characterized by sluggish economic growth (Gallup & Sachs, 1998). In addition, that region has a relatively high birth rate. As a result, its wealth-per-person growth was remarkably slow from 1998 to 2008. This is

true of all Latin American countries, including Brazil, despite the enthusiastic media reports about that country.<sup>14</sup>

Dornbusch, Fischer, and Startz indicate that some East Asian political leaders claim to have used a special trick that produces an economic miracle. Perhaps East Europeans have also been clever enough to learn this money-making scheme? The economists are skeptical of such claims. According to Dornbusch, Fischer, and Startz, the main trick is “old-fashioned hard work and sacrifice,” saving, investment, and education (Dornbusch et al., 2004, p. 87). The same authors stress the fact that the East Asian countries do not have high productivity but have relied on increased input, which means more man-hours spent at work. Also, they point out that savings rates and growth are positively correlated across countries and the correlation is strong. Countries that save more have faster-growing economies. They also quote other economists who have reached the same conclusion.<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, Dornbusch, Fischer, and Startz observe that although rich natural resources can be expected to enhance economic development, what happens is often the opposite. Undeveloped economies with abundant natural resources tend to do worse than others because they often squander their wealth.<sup>16</sup>

If the development economists are right, economic growth is promoted — among other things — by positive attitudes toward hard work, saving, and education. Cultural experts would quickly spot cultural values here. They would say that if some nations consistently save more, whereas others do the opposite, these are obviously durable cultural traits. They cannot stem from government policies that have nothing to do with culture.<sup>17</sup>

## Measuring Industry versus Indulgence across Nations

The WVS has an item that measures the importance of thrift as a value that children should learn. Another item measures how important it is for children to learn hard work. A third item asks about the importance of leisure in the respondents’ personal lives.<sup>18</sup> There are no items in the WVS that address the importance of education directly. Even if there were any, they would probably produce confusing results.

---

14. For a comparison, Brazil’s GNI per person at PPP grew 1.55 times from 1998 to 2008, which is similar to the Latin American average. During the same period, the value of this indicator rose much faster in most Asian and East European countries: Armenia –3.45, China –3.09, Russia –2.61, Romania –2.55, Latvia –2.39, Estonia –2.32, Bulgaria –2.29, Vietnam –2.23, India –2.19, South Korea –2.10, Kyrgyzstan –1.87, Malaysia –1.83, Hong Kong –1.84, and Indonesia –1.81. See “GNI per person at purchasing power parity (PPP)” in the research notes chapter.

15. Dornbusch et al. (2004), referring to Mankiw (1995).

16. Dornbusch et al. (2004), p. 59, footnote 1.

17. If similar government policies persist in some similar societies over long periods, how can that be explained without speaking of culture? Decoupling culture from such persistent practices becomes problematic, even illogical.

18. For details about these items see “industry and monumentalism indices” in the research notes chapter.

I explain this interesting phenomenon in the next chapter where I also show that measures of the importance of religious faith and some types of pride are strongly and negatively associated with educational achievement in mathematics and science. On the basis of those associations, one can predict that societies that emphasize religion and pride achieve less in modern education.

The average WVS measurements of the importance of thrift, hard work and leisure between 1994 and 2008 are intercorrelated at the national level and form a single cultural dimension.<sup>19</sup> Those that measure religious faith and pride form a different dimension that will be discussed in Chapter 4.

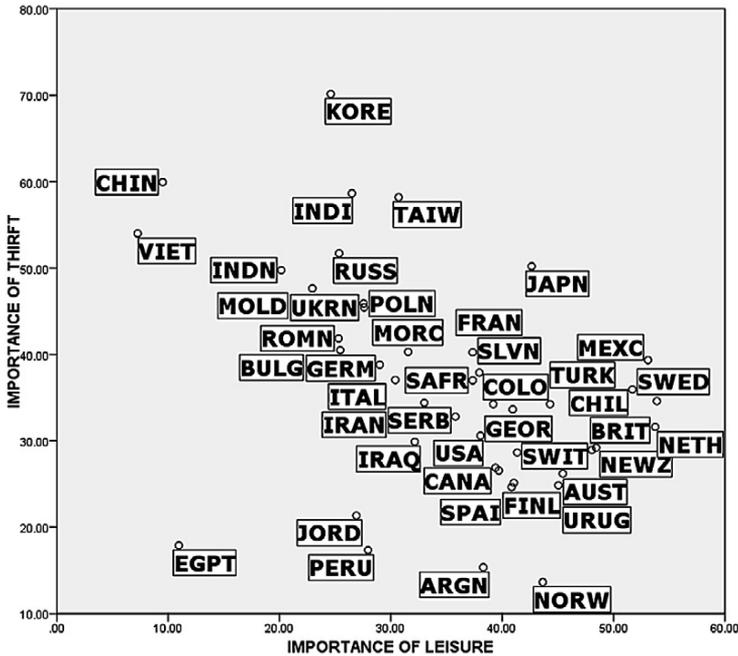
Graph 3.1 visualizes the inverse relationship between importance of thrift and importance of leisure across 44 nations for which data are available from 2005 to 2008 and at least once again from 1994 to 2004. The graph shows the average national scores from those two periods: percentages of people who have indicated that these values are important. It is easy to see that the East and Southeast Asian countries value thrift but do not attach a great importance to leisure, whereas the Scandinavian and Anglo countries, as well as those in Latin America, show the opposite pattern. If we plotted the importance of hard work versus the importance of leisure on a similar map, we would obtain a very similar image.

High importance of thrift plus high importance of hard work and low importance of leisure is a single cultural syndrome that is quite strong in some nations. Other nations are found at the other pole of this dimension. They value leisure but do not consider thrift and hard work essential. Naturally, there are also many nations that are in between the two poles.

The values that define one of the poles of this dimension can be collectively called “industry,” in the sense of industriousness. The opposite pole can be defined as “indulgence.” The main characteristics of industry (industriousness) versus indulgence as a dimension of national culture can be summarized in the following way:

<b>Industry:</b>	<b>versus</b>	<b>Indulgence:</b>
Hard work and thrift are very important		Leisure is very important
Leisure is not very important		Hard work and thrift are not very important

19. For details, see “industry and monumentalism indices” in the research notes chapter. It is important to remember that industry is a nation-level dimension that has no implications for the individual level. There is no basis for a conclusion that individuals who value hard work also value thrift, let alone that they will be economically successful. The reported correlations are at the national level, not the individual.



Graph 3.1: Visualization of the relationship between importance of thrift and importance of leisure. *Note:* The vertical axis shows the percentages of respondents in each country that have chosen thrift as an important value for children. The horizontal axis shows the percentages of respondents who have indicated that leisure is very important to them in their own lives. In both cases the percentages are averages from the 2005–2008 study by the WVS and the latest data from the 1994–2004 studies by the same organization. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

Table 3.1 presents an average industry index (national scores) for 43 countries for the 1994–2008 period. The highest scoring countries are those where thrift and hard work are most important, whereas leisure is least important, according to their nationally representative samples of respondents. In the lowest scoring countries, we observe the inverse pattern: their respondents attach the lowest importance to thrift and hard work and the highest to leisure.

“Highest” and “lowest” are relative terms. They reflect comparisons with the other countries in the sample and do not mean anything in an absolute sense. The fact that Sweden has a score of 0 does not mean that its citizens do not value thrift and hard work at all. It means that Sweden has an indulgent culture in comparison to all others and especially to those that are close to the industry extreme: the economically poor Asian and East European societies.

Table 3.1: Industry versus indulgence index: scores for 43 countries.

Asia, developing	East Europe	North Africa, Middle East, Caucasus	Sub- Saharan Africa	Asia, developed	West Europe	Latin America	North Europe	Score
China								1000
Vietnam								968
South Korea								900
India								883
Indonesia								869
	Moldova							864
	Romania							827
	Russia							826
	Bulgaria							744
	Ukraine							739
		Morocco						705
		Egypt						700
		Iraq						653
			Zimbabwe					636
				Taiwan				627
	Poland		South Africa					625
		Georgia						609
		Iran						600
		Jordan						563
		Turkey						548
	Serbia							527
						Brazil		489
					Italy			463
					France			455
			Nigeria					402
							United States	399
					Germany			395
					Spain			372
				Japan				343
					Slovenia			321
						Argentina		316
						Colombia		251
					Switzerland			250
						Mexico		228
						Chile	United Kingdom	213
							Australia	196
							New Zealand	167
						Uruguay		124
							Finland	84
							The Netherlands	71
							Sweden	0

A cultural dimension or any other construct in social science and psychology is meaningful and useful if it predicts something. It should be statistically correlated with other measures of conceptually similar phenomena. The next sections of this chapter are devoted to what the industry versus indulgence dimension predicts statistically and how that helps us make sense of the cross-cultural diversity that characterizes the modern world. Tentative explanations of the origins of the national differences on this dimension are also offered at the end of the chapter.

## Differences in Speed of National Economic Development in the First Decade of the 21st Century

Anybody who knows something about national differences in economic growth will notice immediately that nearly all the countries that are close to the high end of the ranking in [Table 3.1](#) have fast developing economies and rapidly rising wealth per person. [Graph 3.2](#) visualizes this relationship.

The spectacular economic growth of China, India, and Vietnam is common knowledge. It is less-well known that up until the 2008 world financial crisis many East European countries sustained the same vertiginous growth as China, in the neighborhood of 10 percent a year. Although many of them do not have any natural resources, they doubled their national wealth in the decade after 1998–1999. This is especially true of Armenia and the Baltics. These countries have not been studied by the WVS recently but if industry scores were calculated for them on the basis of data from around 1998 to 1999, they would be among the leaders in the ranking.<sup>20</sup>

Conversely, the economies of those countries that are at the bottom in [Table 3.1](#), near the indulgence extreme, grew slowly. The high statistical correlation between the industry index and speed of national wealth creation per person confirms the relationship between cultural values and economic development beyond any doubt.<sup>21</sup>

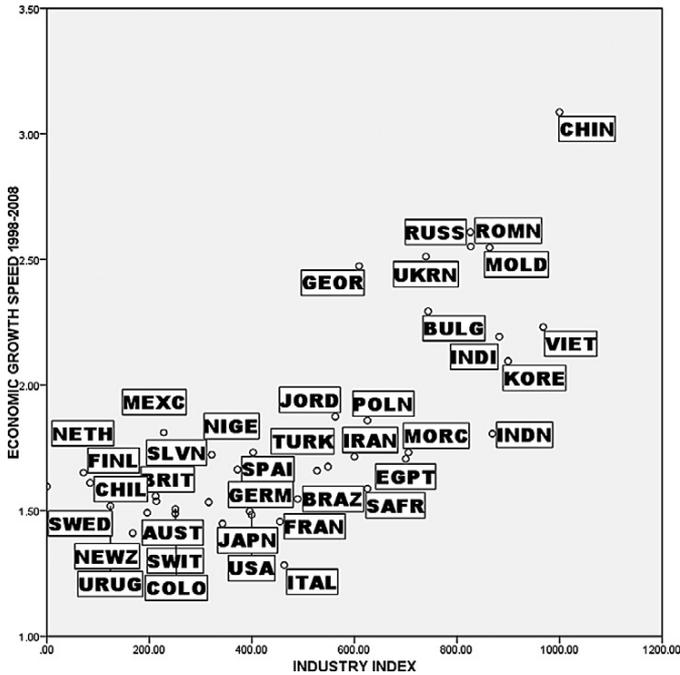
Economists like to point out that growing from a lower economic base is easier. A poor country's economy can grow faster than that of a rich one. This may be true but it does not explain why some poor countries grow much faster than other poor

---

20. Of course, Eastern Europe has not only rapidly growing economies but also shrinking populations. This explains part of the phenomenal GNI-per-person growth in that region. Yet, the effect of the shrinking population is relatively small and is also a cultural phenomenon.

21. The industry index in [Table 3.1](#), correlates with GNI per person at PPP growth in the 10 years from 1998 (the approximate time of the earliest WVS studies that I have used for the industry index) to 2008 (the year of the onset of the global financial crisis and the last year for which the World Bank provided data at the time when I was writing this text) at .74\*\* Pearson and .72\*\* Spearman. These are correlations across 40 countries. Other measures of national wealth growth (GDP per person at PPP increase or raw GDP per person increase) yield only slightly lower correlations with the industry index.

If an industry index were calculated solely on the basis of WVS data from around 1998 to 1999, it would cover about 80 countries. The correlation between that index (somewhat less reliable than the one I use because it is based on single measurements of cultural values) and GNI per person at PPP growth from 1998 to 2008 would be about .60.



Graph 3.2: Visualization of the relationship between economic growth per person and the cultural dimension of industry versus indulgence. *Note:* The vertical axis shows economic growth ratios: GNI per person at PPP (GNI per person at purchasing power parity) in 2008 divided by GNI per person at PPP in 1998. The horizontal axis shows the industry index. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

countries. In 1970 South Korea was exactly as poor as Ghana or Ivory Coast or Swaziland, whereas India in 1999 was still as poor as Kenya.<sup>22</sup>

It is statistically possible to eliminate the effect of national wealth and once again check the correlation between industry and economic growth. It remains significant.<sup>23</sup> It is safe to state that even after controlling for national wealth in 1998, the industry dimension explains statistically about 25 percent of the national variance in wealth per person increase in the years from 1998 to 2008.

Admittedly, 10 years is a short period. But it is possible to use WVS data from 1989 to 1991, calculate an industry versus indulgence index for that time, and then

22. Data from UN Statistics Division (2009).

23. Controlling for GNI per person at PPP in 1998 lowers the correlation between industry and GNI per person at PPP growth from 1998 to 2008 to .58. Other similar controls (GDP per person at PPP or raw GDP per person) yield slightly higher partial correlations.

ascertain whether it predicts subsequent economic growth. Although the developing world is severely underrepresented in the 1989–1991 WVS sample and the former Soviet bloc got off to a very bad economic start after the demise of the communist regime because the creation of a free market proved a difficult endeavor, the results from that statistical exercise would be positive. The 1989–1991 industry index is a positive predictor of subsequent economic growth.<sup>24</sup>

The previously quoted work by Dornbusch, Fischer, and Startz indicates that although saving seems to boost the development of poor economies, its effect eventually wears off. Economic growth in rich countries cannot be fueled in the same way. The factors that drive wealthy economies toward more wealth are probably associated with various types of innovation and its implementation, much less with saving. Consequently, the industry dimension should explain differences in economic development across poor countries, but not across rich ones. Indeed, the industry index has no predictive power for the economic growth of rich countries, analyzed separately.

It is also important to point out that the industry dimension is a good predictor of future economic growth but it does not explain much in retrospective. In other words, if only WVS data from 2005 to 2008 were used, their correlation with economic growth from 1998 to 2008 would be weaker (although still significant) than the correlation yielded by the averaged 1994–2008 WVS data. One of the plausible reasons for this is that as countries get richer, they change culturally as well, albeit slowly. They become more indulgent and seem to move closer together in some respects, even if the cultural differences between them are not completely lost. This masks their economic and cultural history to some extent. Using current data to explain past economic development is like looking at snapshots of living mammals and trying to find out which of them evolved faster into what they are now. That is difficult without using some historical data, such as DNA samples.

The findings presented here demonstrate that Max Weber was both right and wrong. He was right because he correctly identified the cultural predictors of fast economic growth in poor nations: hard work and thrift. He was wrong because he thought that these were Protestant values. They are not Confucian values either, as some people think today. They are found in poor countries with dissimilar religious and philosophical legacies, which shows that they have not been created by a particular religion or elitist philosophy. Their origin will be analyzed at the end of this chapter.

The industry versus indulgence dimension does not tell the whole story about the cultural determinants of economic growth. The story is to be continued in the next

---

24. In this case, I used raw GDP per person data from 1990 to 2007 since reliable data for GNI per person at PPP in 1990 were not available (GDP data for 2008 were not available either). This does not matter much because the statistical difference between the two measurement methods is minimal. The 1989–1991 industry index (a factor score composed of the 1989–1991 WVS measures of thrift, hard work and leisure as values, factor analyzed without other items) correlates with GDP per person growth from 1990 to 2007 at .48\*\* ( $n = 41$ ).

chapter, where we will see how cultural differences in attitudes toward some aspects of modern Western education affect a country's development.

### **“Self-Reliance”**

Eva Green and Jean-Claude Deschamps of the University of Lausanne, and Dario Paez of the University of the Basque Country, studied self-reliance across 20 countries from Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia by asking the respondents if they agreed with statements such as “Only those who depend on themselves get ahead in life.” The highest self-reliance score was obtained in China, followed by Lebanon, Russia, and Singapore. The lowest score was in Chile, followed by the rest of Latin America and Spain. Measured in this way, self-reliance is highly associated with industry.<sup>25</sup> Self-reliance is also a good predictor of future GNI per person growth.

This suggests that people in industrious nations are more likely to approve of active self-reliance and personal entrepreneurship rather than wait for help. This relationship additionally explains why industrious nations achieve faster economic growth.

### **“Moral Discipline” and “Confucian Dynamism”**

The international research project called *Chinese Culture Connection* (1987) reported four cultural dimensions, extracted from a study of 23 nations on all continents. Two of the four are particularly interesting because they are associated with industry versus indulgence and elucidate its nature.

The *Chinese Culture Connection* named one of its dimensions “moral discipline.” It was described in terms of two poles: “moral restraint” combined with “a disciplined stance” versus “a position lacking such self-control.” High-scoring nations are those whose respondents chose values such as “moderation,” “keeping oneself disinterested and pure,” and “having few desires,” whereas the low-scoring nations attached a lower importance to these values. It is logical to associate restraint, moderation and having few desires with thrift, whereas the opposite would be linked to spending, having fun, and leisurely activities. In other words, “moral discipline” should be positively associated with industry. Indeed, it is.<sup>26</sup> Just like

---

25. See Green, Deschamps, and Paez (2005). Their self-reliance questionnaire was borrowed from Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, and Lucca (1988). Some of the other items in that questionnaire are “If you want something done right, you’ve got to do it yourself,” and “In the long-run, the only person you can count on is yourself.”

The correlation between self-reliance and industry is .82\*\* ( $n = 12$ ). Self-reliance correlates with GNI per person growth from 1998 to 2008 at .56\*\* ( $n = 20$ ).

26. The correlation between industry and moral discipline is .60\*\* ( $n = 16$ ).

industry versus indulgence, the moral discipline dimension groups the Asian countries at the positive pole, suggesting high moral discipline. The Anglo countries, Sweden, and Zimbabwe are at the negative pole, which indicates low moral discipline. Eastern Europe is represented only by Poland (high score), whereas Latin America is represented only by Brazil (low score).

The name that the Chinese Culture Connection chose for its dimension is unfortunate because it will suggest to many readers that people in the Anglo world, Scandinavia, Zimbabwe, and Brazil are somehow immoral. In fact, the correct interpretation of the findings is that high “moral discipline” simply means a willingness to curb some particular desires, without specifying which, whereas low “moral discipline” is a tendency to gratify such desires, which are not necessarily bad and immoral in an absolute sense. The high correlation between moral discipline and industry reveals the nature of those desires. In much of Asia and Eastern Europe, many people have a tendency to sacrifice leisure, fun-oriented activities, and spending. In Northwestern Europe, Latin America, and parts of Africa the opposite situation is more typical. There is nothing moral or immoral about these cultural choices. They simply reflect different but perfectly normal adaptations to different environments.

The fact that Asians and East Europeans curb some desires does not mean that they curb all human desires. Actually, they are very enthusiastic about one particular wish: to become rich. Because this goal is extremely important to them, it subordinates various other desires, such as the inclination to indulge in leisurely activities and spend one’s money on fun today without thinking much about tomorrow.

Another noteworthy dimension reported by the Chinese Culture Connection is “Confucian (work) dynamism,” which Geert Hofstede later renamed “long-term orientation.” It is interesting because it is defined, among other things, by a high importance of thrift and persistence and has been found to correlate positively with economic growth. The highest scoring countries on this dimension are all in East Asia. They are followed by India. Unsurprisingly, Confucian dynamism/long-term orientation is positively associated with industry: countries that score high on one of these two dimensions score high on the other one as well.<sup>27</sup>

## **Thrift and Saving**

The WVS measures thrift as a value, not as a practice. Is there a correlation between the two? There is abundant anecdotal evidence, as well as statistical data, showing

---

27. For the correlation between economic growth and Confucian work dynamism/long-term orientation, see Hofstede and Bond (1988). The correlation between that dimension and industry is .62\*\* ( $n = 16$ ). However, this apparently high correlation would probably be reduced if Pakistan were not missing from my analysis. It has the lowest score of all countries on Confucian work dynamism, whereas its industry score, based on 1994–2004 data would be one of the highest in the world. Other Asian countries, such as the Philippines, seem to exhibit the same tendency. This suggests that the industry dimension is after all closer to moral discipline than to Confucian work dynamism.

that societies with higher industry scores do save more whereas indulgent ones save less.

Professor Enrique Ogliastri of Universidad de los Andes, Colombia, is the main Colombian contributor to Project GLOBE, the world's largest study of leadership and culture. This is what he wrote about his own culture (Ogliastri, 2008, p. 701):

Colombian society is oriented more toward the present than toward the future, even though it currently emphasizes the need to plan, predict, and sacrifice the here and now for tomorrow ...

First, Colombian culture is impulsive and spontaneous by nature; its members live for the moment and make themselves happy without due thought to life's necessities. This behavioral pattern is passed from parents to children.

Second, there is a contradiction between the official policy that advocates personal savings and the cultural reality of immediate expenditure ...

Colombian society is largely made up of a population whose basic needs go unmet and, therefore, embrace a cultural tradition based on instant gratification. Spontaneity is necessary for being authentic in Colombia — the act of living for the here and now, without repressing one's thoughts and feelings ...

The only unconvincing claim here concerns the causal link between poverty and a tendency toward instant gratification. The poor cultures of Asia prove that there is no such link. This is how the Chinese contributors to Project GLOBE describe Chinese culture (Fu, Wu, Yang, & Ye, 2008, p. 888.):

China is a farming country, and for farmers planning long-term means to save as much as you can and thriftiness was a virtue cherished in the traditional agricultural society that forms the backbone of China.

Statistical data concerning real practices confirm these impressions. According to a report by the World Bank (World Bank Research Advisory Staff, 1999), there were significant differences in national savings rates across the world between 1965 and 1995. The highest rates were in "East Asia and Pacific," where they exceeded 30 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) at the end of the period. That region was followed by "South Asia," where savings rates rose from 10–15 to 25 percent at the end of the period. In the "industrial [Western] countries," they fell from about 25 to 20 percent. In "Middle East and North Africa" they fluctuated around 20 percent during the whole period. "Latin America and the Caribbean" had an even

lower rate: between 15 and 20 percent. The lowest rate was in “sub-Saharan Africa”: between 10 and 15 percent.

Evidently, extreme poverty, as in sub-Saharan Africa, prevents people from saving much, whereas rising opulence, as in the West, appears to depress thrift. But this cannot explain the differences between East Asia and Latin America, whose wealth levels were not tremendously different in the 1960s and the 1970s.

In his testimony to the Committee on Finance of the US Senate on April 6, 2006, former US presidential advisor Barry Bosworth presented an analysis of differences in savings rates between the world’s main regions (Bosworth, 2006). It was based on aggregated data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and other sources. Bosworth’s findings were very similar to those in the aforementioned report by World Bank staff. In recent history, East Asia has had the highest savings rates, Latin America the lowest. Sub-Saharan Africa was not included in that report.

Interestingly, when economists analyze differences in national savings rates, they ignore the role of culture. The analysis by the World Bank staff mentions a wide spectrum of plausible economic explanations but is completely silent about any cultural factors that may be associated with them. Even some authors that write on cultural topics sometimes express doubts about cultural values as an explanation of a nation’s propensity to save. There is a view that a high savings rate may, for instance, be accounted for by comparatively high costs of consumption and poor availability of social security for the elderly, which forces people to save a higher proportion of their incomes (Ashkanasy, Gupta, Mayfield, & Trevor-Roberts, 2004). If this were so, Africans should have the highest savings rates in the world. Because of their low purchasing power, the cost of living in Africa is far higher than in Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, or Korea, whereas the social security for the African elderly is absolutely dismal or nonexistent. Still, Africans are saving far less than Chinese, although China’s national wealth per person is still comparable to that of some sub-Saharan countries and lower than in many Latin American countries.

## **Hard Work**

People in societies with more industrious cultures report a higher importance of hard work as a value for children and a lower importance of leisure as a personal value. But do they really work more than people in indulgent societies?

The OECD reports average working hours data for men and women from national labor force surveys and the European Labor Force Survey (OECD, June 26, 2009). Industrious societies have higher percentages of people who work more than 40 hours a week and this association remains significant even after taking into account national differences in wealth, thus allowing for the fact that people in poorer nations are

somewhat more likely to work longer simply because they are poor, regardless of their national culture.<sup>28</sup>

### ***Karoshi* and Workaholism**

In some parts of Western Europe, the United States has an image of a country of workaholics. But seen through Japanese eyes, the situation may look very different. Three decades ago, when Japan had a considerably more industrious culture than today, the Japanese managers of Sanyo Manufacturing Corporation in the United States compared organizational behaviors in Japan and America and were shocked by what they observed. In an interview for a case study, they said that if the Japanese workers had to produce 1000 TV sets in a week, they would manufacture exactly that number. If, for whatever reason, they had made only 950 sets by the end of the week, they would stay on and work until all 1000 sets were ready. But American workers went home at the end of the week regardless of the number of sets that they had assembled (Hayes & Clark, 1981).

Some Korean managers in Mexico also report dismay at the local work practices, which they find unacceptable by Korean standards. The following is an excerpt from a study of Koreans' perceptions in Mexico:<sup>29</sup>

Thus, Korean managers assigned to Mexico face a major challenge. Mexicans tend to view work not as a sacred duty but as a means to an end or a necessary evil. In certain cases, they behave as if they were nonchalantly committing themselves with little intention of later fulfillment. Moreover, they often fail to distinguish clearly between work and play ...

Such little emphasis on discipline in the Latin workplace tends to confuse Korean managers. Their most common complaint about Mexican employees, as stated by one of those interviewed in our study, is that "[we] cannot be quite sure if they are really concentrating on their work or just playing around, wasting time. Mexican workers often either listen to loud radio or talk too much to each other while they are working."

Of course, these are culturally insensitive and stereotypical descriptions that show little understanding of local values or individual-level variation. They could easily be shrugged off as nothing more than false impressions that are not supported by any

---

28. The percentages of people (men and women) who work more than 40 h a week correlates with industry at .64\*\* ( $n = 18$ ). After controlling for GDP per person in 1998, this correlation becomes .41\*\*.

29. Paik and Derick Sohn (1998). The excerpt in this chapter is from an Internet publication.

objective quantification. Yet, some East Asian managers claim that such quantification exists. According to an article in *The Economist* (July 7, 2001), Yung Kwon, the former president of Samsung Electromechanics of America, who supervised the company's plants in Tijuana, Mexico, said that productivity in that country is lower than in China or Thailand. According to him, Asian companies go to Mexico only because the US market is close by.

It appears that the problem that Koreans in Mexico encounter is not that Latin Americans cannot work hard but that Asians, especially those in the developing parts of the continent, have unusual expectations because they are used to uncommon sacrifices. Until recently, this was also true of Japan. As late as 1990, the percentage of Japanese respondents in the WVS who declared that leisure was very important to them was 24 percent, a score similar to those in Eastern Europe. At the same time, the scores of Northwestern Europeans ranged between 40 and 55 percent. According to American organizational behavior expert Stephen Robbins, decades ago Japanese managers considered workaholism and evidence of work-related stress as a badge of honor. They even took pride in having no social life and being unable to discuss anything except business (Robbins, 1998, p. 625). The Japanese have an internationally known term for workaholism: *karoshi*, meaning death from overwork. But in recent times, the situation has changed, at least at the level of values. In 2000, 35.5 percent of the Japanese respondents in the WVS described leisure as very important. In 2005 that percentage was 41.5.

Some studies suggest that workaholism does not always imply enjoyment of work. Nations whose members state that hard work is important and leisure is not are not necessarily nations where work is highly appreciated for its own sake. On the contrary, there is some evidence that it is people in these cultures that consider work a necessary evil rather than the members of indulgent societies.<sup>30</sup> In my native

---

30. Snir and Harpaz (2009) found that people in societies where survival values (such as hard work) are more important than self-expression values (such as leisure) have a greater tendency to describe work as something that provides and income and nothing else. The terms survival values versus self-expression values come from the work of Ronald Inglehart, director of the WVS project. (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Inglehart & Norris, 2003). The national scores for the self-expression versus survival dimension (Inglehart & Norris, 2003) correlate with industry at  $-.78^{**}$  ( $n = 42$ ). Inglehart's dimension is strong and correct from a statistical viewpoint. It is also conceptually defensible but it takes some effort to grasp the logical connection between the diverse items that define it: giving priority to economic and physical security over self-expression, political inactivity (respondent has not signed a petition), rejection of homosexuality, and distrust of people (see Inglehart & Baker, 2000, p. 24).

This is also a good place to alert the researchers who read this book to the fact that responses to questions about the importance of work in the respondents' personal lives (not work as a value that their children should learn) do not measure anything related to industry. These items in the World Value Survey do not correlate either with the leisure item or with the item that measures the importance of hard work for children. An analysis of the correlations of the item that measures importance of work in respondents' lives clearly shows that this item actually measures a form of pride: the importance of having an income so that one does not have to suffer the humiliation of living on welfare or depend on relatives. This issue will be revisited in the chapter on monumentalism.

Bulgaria, there seems to be a high level of agreement that work is hardly ever enjoyable. It is a bitter pill that needs to be swallowed because it is good for you: it gives you an income. There is linguistic evidence that the concept of work has evoked negative feelings in Eastern and Southern Europe for millennia. The Slavic word “trud” means “labor” or “work” but is also associated with “difficulty” and “hardship.” It is also akin to English “threat,” which means “affliction” in Old English and has an association with exhaustion in Old Norse. Latin “labor” also has a literal meaning of “becoming weak/exhausted.”

### **“Tightness” versus “Looseness”**

Greek-American cross-cultural psychologist Harry Triandis speaks of a cultural syndrome that differentiates “tight” from “loose” cultures. In his view, the former have many strict rules and norms. When these are violated, people become very upset and may even use violence in order to restore order. Loose cultures allow more deviations from the norms (Triandis, 2002, p. 18):

Tight cultures have many rules, norms, and ideas about what is correct behavior in different kinds of situations; loose cultures have fewer rules and norms. In the former cultures also, people become quite upset when others do not follow the norms of the society, and may even kill those who do not behave as is expected, while in the latter cultures people are tolerant of most deviations from normative behaviors ... In Japan, which is a tight culture, people are sometimes criticized for minor deviations from norms, such as having too much of a sun tan, or having curly hair ... Most Japanese live in fear that they will not act properly ...

Following Triandis’s logic, Singapore’s culture should also be classified as tight. That country is notorious for its official prohibitions of various, relatively innocuous activities, coupled with severe fines, such as 500 Singapore dollars (250 EUR) for smoking in a public place or throwing a cigarette butt on the sidewalk. For this reason, Singaporeans jokingly call their homeland “a fine country.” Notices like “No littering,” “No spitting,” “No loitering,” “No smoking,” “No feeding the birds,” and even “No durians” (reference to a smelly tropical fruit) adorn subway stations and parks. Singapore may be the only country in the world where chewing gum is banned in order to avoid littering. It is also one of the few countries, the other ones being its Southeast Asian neighbors and some Middle Eastern states, where drug dealing results in a death sentence, followed by a swift execution. After a few days in Singapore, you cannot help noticing the absolute absence of graffiti. I do not know what the penalty for writing on walls is. It must be severe, although it is hardly the capital punishment. In Singapore, there are no street performers, no beggars, no homeless people in the streets ... All this is forbidden. And the bans are enforced vigorously.

It seems that Germany also used to have a fairly tight culture. Some vestiges of it are still seen today. As I waited at a train station near Bremen in 2008, I read a plate with 14 prohibitions. Among other things, it was forbidden to play with a ball, to smoke on the open-air platform and to search the trash cans. But no 250 euro fines were announced for any of these misdemeanors. Germany's culture is quite relaxed nowadays. I have seen Germans urinating in broad daylight on the walls of buildings around Munich's train station, which is not at all a slum or a bad neighborhood.

Triandis has not published a tightness index. This makes it impossible to verify whether his concept really relates to industry versus indulgence. But such a conceptual link is possible. Eastern Europe and most of Asia are characterized by various social restrictions that would amaze Anglos and Scandinavians. Likewise, during my first visits to Scandinavian and English-speaking countries I literally could not believe my eyes as I watched interactions between parents and little children in homes, parks, and kindergartens.

From the viewpoint of an East European, toddlers and older children in the Anglo world and Scandinavia are allowed to do practically anything that cannot kill them instantly plus some things that probably can. Mothers sit and watch their children as they wade in puddles, wallow on the grass, climb trees, or touch things on the ground. All these activities are typically forbidden or strongly discouraged in Bulgaria and other East European countries. Where I live, most children are not allowed to get anywhere near a puddle, set foot on a muddy surface, or touch anything on the ground. In Bulgarian parks one constantly hears: "Don't touch that stuff! Stop climbing that thing! Don't run! Don't take off your hat! Stay away from that garbage can! Don't go near that puddle! Look what you have done to your shoes; you look like a pig!" Bulgarians are well aware of this peculiarity of their culture. Ask *any* Bulgarian how parents and grandparents treat children and you will hear the same story.

The aforementioned Bulgarian prohibitions are normally barked in a stern voice; oftentimes parents, and sometimes even grandparents, yell at their children as loud as they can. Spanking is also used in case the child will not desist from the seemingly dangerous, or simply inappropriate, behavior.

The list of bans that some parents in Eastern Europe impose is long. Many have nothing to do with danger. Some of the commands one can hear in a public place, such as a waiting room, are "Do not wriggle in your seat!", "Stop scratching yourself," "Stop humming," or "Do not play with your hair!"

When Bulgarians visit Scandinavian or Anglo countries, they find it hard to believe that the local child-rearing practices are so relaxed. After his trip to the United States two decades ago, Bulgarian writer Marko Semov described his amazement at the behavior of American parents (Semov, 1991, p. 38, my translation):

A mother had allowed her child to play around a pool with crystal-clear water. The child stumbled and dropped his sandwich. She did not beat him and did not yell at him. She just blew the dust off the sandwich ... and gave it back to him.

Tight child-rearing has also been observed in Chinese families. A survey of White American and immigrant Chinese mothers found that the American mothers scored higher on “sensitivity”, “nonrestrictiveness”, and “nurturance”, whereas the Chinese mothers scored higher on “physical punishment and yelling at the child” (Kelley & Tseng, 1992).

After the first six or seven years of tight home upbringing, Bulgarian schools continue to deliver heavy doses of stress and impose all types of prohibitions. Children are often shouted at by their teachers. Gym classes start with military commands: “attention” and “at ease.” First-graders have to learn to sit tight in their seats with their hands at designated places. Chewing gum is absolutely forbidden; it drives some teachers hysterical. Some of the phenomena that I have witnessed in classes in the United States (students wearing reversed baseball caps), or in Norway (female students knitting) would leave a Bulgarian teacher speechless. Walking around in socks, with no shoes on, which is normal in some Scandinavian schools, stupefies Bulgarians and other East Europeans, as does the fact that, in informal situations, some Scandinavians, Americans, and Britons — children and adults — sit on floors, drop their clothes, bags, and purses practically anywhere, and (especially Americans) put their feet on tables and chairs, and lie on sofas and beds with shoes on.

It seems that Eastern Europe has a very tight and restrictive culture, but the situation in China may be even more dramatic. In 2009, during a bus trip from Beijing to Datong, the stewardess discovered that some of the passengers had taken off their shoes and ordered them to put them back on. I received the same order in English, in a very stern voice. Everybody complied immediately. In Chinese society you obviously do not challenge authority even when the imposed regulations are apparently meaningless.

A walk in downtown Beijing will reveal that every shopping mall, large government building or company headquarters is symbolically guarded by young army conscripts, standing at attention, with their hands glued to their hips. This rule is not relaxed even in 40°C heat. From a cultural viewpoint, its main function is to prepare people for a tough self-discipline and shift their attention away from a pursuit of sensual indulgence. It is not very different from Indian yoga practices or the various Asian martial arts, all of which emphasize strong self-control and acceptance of pain and discomfort.

The tight regulations and restrictions that industrious cultures impose are motivated by a more or less well-defined single goal: to prepare people for hardship and sacrifice. What is outside the scope of this goal may be left completely unregulated. In the chapter on exclusionism we will discuss the seemingly chaotic behavior of drivers and pedestrians in Eastern Europe, and especially in China. That is a very different social phenomenon, requiring another type of analysis.

## **Intolerance and Severity of Punishments**

The WVS regularly gives its respondents worldwide an opportunity to assess the importance of tolerance and respect for others as a trait that children should learn.

Greater industry is consistently associated with lower tolerance.<sup>31</sup> Industrious cultures are far more intolerant of deviations from what they consider normal and acceptable. Among other things, this translates into more severe punishments.

The human rights organization Amnesty International has grouped most of the world's countries into four categories with respect to the death penalty: 1 — completely abolished, 2 — abolished for ordinary crimes, 3 — not abolished, although not applied recently, and 4 — retained and applied. When these four numerical values are assigned to countries, they form an index that is positively correlated with industry and negatively with indulgence.<sup>32</sup> Because of their lower tolerance of deviations, more industrious societies are more likely to have the death penalty and apply it than have abolished it completely.

The application of the death penalty creates a sharp contrast between the Southeast Asian countries and much of Latin America. In Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, possession of a few grams of an illegal drug results in a mandatory execution. In Venezuela, getting caught with a suitcase full of cocaine is often punished by less than 10 years in prison. Although China and Singapore still apply the death penalty vigorously, many Latin American countries have a long abolitionist history. Venezuela did away with the capital punishment for all crimes in 1863, followed by Costa Rica in 1887, Ecuador in 1906, Uruguay in 1907, and Colombia in 1910. In the 19th century, the only country outside Latin America that had abolished the death penalty was San Marino (1865).<sup>33</sup>

## **Political Freedoms**

Western analysts often raise eyebrows at election results and opinion polls in countries like Belarus and Russia. Why do the local people want to keep strongmen in power? Is Western democracy not a far better option? Surely, these electoral choices must mean that many East Europeans do not understand what they are doing?

The WVS presents its respondents with four national priorities:

1. “maintain order in the nation”;
2. “give people more say”;
3. “fighting rising prices”; and
4. “protecting freedom of speech.”

Respondents are asked to rank these priorities. The percentages of people who have chosen the second and fourth item as a main priority for their nation are

---

31. The tolerance and respect item was coded A035 until 2004 and v16 in 2005–2008. Industry correlates with A035 (latest data for each country) at  $-.53^{**}$  ( $n = 43$ ) and with v16 at  $-.73^{**}$  ( $n = 41$ ).

32. Data from [Amnesty International \(2009\)](#). The correlation between industry and the Amnesty International death penalty index is  $.50^{**}$  ( $n = 43$ ).

33. Data from [Amnesty International \(2009\)](#).

negatively associated with industry, whereas the first one is positively associated with it.<sup>34</sup> A culture of industry is associated with a greater perceived importance of maintaining a specific kind of order (not necessarily Western), a lower importance of giving people more say, and a far lower importance of freedom of speech, than in indulgent societies. These are logical characteristics of a tight culture that imposes a number of restrictions on its members from an early age.

Surveys by the Pew Research Center in 2002 confirm these results. Respondents from 44 nations on all continents (mostly nationally representative samples) were asked how important some democratic freedoms were to them, such as being able to openly say what you think and criticize the government, honest elections held regularly with a choice of at least two political parties, and more. The more industrious cultures attached a lower importance to these freedoms.<sup>35</sup>

This does not mean that Russians and other East Europeans, as well as Chinese, are completely uninterested in democracy. But as long as some basic human rights are guaranteed and nobody is executed or beaten arbitrarily, or sent to a labor camp, maintaining the kind of order that people expect is far more important than greater Western freedoms.

The WVS presents another four choices:

1. “a stable economy”;
2. “progress toward a less impersonal and more humane society”;
3. “ideas count more than money”; and
4. “the fight against crime.”

Industrious cultures have the highest percentages of respondents who choose the first option.<sup>36</sup> Also, the lowest percentages that have chosen “ideas count more than money” are in Eastern Europe, East Asia, Indonesia, and Pakistan. The hard work and thrift that define the cultures of these countries are clearly coupled with a desire for material success and a relative disdain for ideas that have no financial value. Interestingly, this is so even in highly religious Pakistan.

---

34. This is WVS item E003. Across 43 nations, industry yields the following correlations with the percentages of respondents (latest data from 1994 to 2004 for each country) who have chosen each of these as a first priority:

Freedom of speech	– .67**
Maintaining order	.59**
Give people more say	– .49**

35. For instance, the correlation between the industry index and q 41a in *Pew Research Center (2003)*, asking the respondents how important it is to be able to speak openly and criticize the government, is  $-.51^*$  ( $n = 16$ ).

36. This is WVS item E005. The percentages who have chosen “a stable economy” (latest data from 1994 to 2004 for each country) correlate with the industry indexes at  $.41^{**}$  ( $n = 38$ ).

## Life Control, Happiness, and Subjective Health

During an international PhD seminar on cross-cultural differences that I taught at the University of Maastricht, I once spoke about national differences in happiness. I told the class that the Latin American countries, especially those in northern Latin America, have the highest confirmed percentages of very happy people on earth. The two Puerto Ricans in the audience nodded approvingly. Then I spoke about the general sense of unhappiness and dissatisfaction that characterizes Eastern Europe. The Puerto Ricans looked at me in dismay. After the class they wanted to talk to me privately and asked me, with worried expressions on their faces, what is wrong with Eastern Europe. How is it possible for its people not to be happy? It seemed to them that happiness is a natural state of mind.

Happiness, or subjective well-being — as academics prefer to call it<sup>37</sup> — is a universally cherished goal (Suh & Oishi, 2002). Unfortunately, some nations have far lower average levels of it than others. Even more disturbingly for the low-scorers, research on cross-cultural differences in subjective well-being evidences a high level of stability. Some studies suggest that happiness has risen slightly across the few poor nations for which historical data are available, whereas others speak of some general increase.<sup>38</sup> Yet, there is no evidence of convergence. The data in the nationally representative WVS show that global happiness rankings have not changed appreciably in the past 25 years. Studies using European data allow the same conclusion.<sup>39</sup>

Some laymen, as well as scholars who are not experts in the field, express doubts about the measurability of happiness and the meaningfulness of the measures. By now, these concerns have been laid to rest by the world's leading researchers in the field (see Diener & Suh, 2000; Inglehart & Klingemann, 2000; Veenhoven, 1991, 2007). Their work shows that national happiness rankings do not reflect

---

37. Subjective well-being has been defined as “a person’s evaluative reaction to his or her life — either in terms of life satisfaction (cognitive evaluations) or affect (ongoing emotional reactions)” (Diener & Diener, 1995, p. 653). These two facets of subjective well-being have been defined as “cognitive” (or “evaluations of one’s life according to subjectively determined standards”) and “hedonic balance” (or “the balance between pleasant affect and unpleasant affect”) (Schimmack, Radhakrishnan, Oishi, Dzokoto, & Ahadi, 2002, p. 582). The cognitive component is also known as contentment (Veenhoven, 2007).

38. Veenhoven and Hagerty (2006) found evidence that subjective well-being has increased in some developing countries. Inglehart, Foa, Peterson, and Welzel (2008) analyzed data from the WVS, ranging from 1981 to 2007, and concluded that, overall, happiness rose during that period in most countries. However, their comparisons involve a variety of very different periods. A comparison of the situation in 2005–2008 (the latest WVS data) and the latest available measure from a previous period (mostly 1998–1999) shows that the percentage of very happy people rose in 28 countries and fell in 14 countries for which such longitudinal data are available.

39. Inglehart and Klingemann (2000) collected Eurobarometer data demonstrating that from 1973 to 1998 there were some fluctuations across the European Union countries but no convergence. What is more, Rice and Steele (2004) demonstrated a high similarity between the subjective well-being (SWB) rank order of 20 nations and the SWB rank order of groups of Americans with ancestors from those nations. This means that even when people of different ethnic origins share the same environment, some group-level SWB differences remain.

empty words. Additionally, I have demonstrated that a national happiness index extracted from the WVS correlates negatively with two sets of data provided by the World Health Organization: average national blood pressure and national death rates from cardiovascular diseases.<sup>40</sup> Societies with less happy people tend to have more health problems associated with the cardiovascular system. This means that the so-called subjective well-being is probably not as subjective as it may seem.

National differences in (subjective) well-being have been explained in terms of a large number of factors.<sup>41</sup> However, I have demonstrated that nearly all of these are

---

40. Minkov (2009a). Significant correlations remain even after controlling for GNI per person at PPP. Controlling for this variable is necessary in the case of death from cardiovascular diseases because richer countries have better healthcare systems and a significant part of the variance can be explained in that way rather than as a function of happiness differences. Blanchflower and Oswald (2008) also reported a negative nation-level correlation between hypertension and subjective well-being.

41. Some of the variables that have been used to explain national difference in subjective well-being are: wealth (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003; Inglehart & Klingemann, 2000; Ouweneel & Veenhoven, 1991; Suh & Oishi, 2002; Triandis, 2000), individualism versus collectivism (Suh & Oishi, 2002; Triandis, 2000), Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance and masculinity versus femininity dimensions (Arrindell, 1998; Hofstede, 2001), average national personality traits such as extraversion and neuroticism (Lynn & Steel, 2006; Steel & Ones, 2002), political freedoms (Ouweneel & Veenhoven, 1991; Veenhoven, 2007; Triandis, 2000), personal freedom (Suh & Oishi, 2002; Veenhoven, 2007), social equality (Diener & Diener, 1995; Ouweneel & Veenhoven, 1991; Triandis, 2000; Veenhoven, 2007), gender equality (Veenhoven, 2007), social security (Ouweneel & Veenhoven, 1991; Triandis, 2000), tolerance (Veenhoven, 2007), the quality of citizen-bureaucrat relationships and the quality of public institutions (Triandis, 2000), the degree of rule of law and corruption (Veenhoven, 2007), norms dictating appropriate feelings and how important SWB should be (Diener et al., 2003), levels of trust (Triandis, 2000; Veenhoven, 2007), and competitiveness (Van de Vliert & Janssen, 2002). Triandis (2000) believes that subjective well-being is lower in "tight" cultures that are characterized by a fear of criticism. In his view, subjective well-being is also reduced by high levels of fantasy, by civil and international conflict, oppression of the political opposition and undemocratic government, and "many vulnerabilities (e.g. floods)" (Triandis, 2000, p. 31).

Various finer-grained analyses have also been proposed, controlling for wealth versus poverty or individualism versus collectivism. Oishi, Diener, Lucas, and Suh (1999) found that financial satisfaction or dissatisfaction with esteem needs does not have the same predictive power in poor collectivist nations as in rich individualist nations. Diener and Diener (1995) found that self-esteem is a good predictor of subjective well-being (SWB) in the United States but not in some collectivist nations. Suh and Oishi (2002) indicate that wealth is a predictor of SWB among poor nations but not across affluent ones. Arrindell (1998) found that femininity is a positive predictor of SWB only across rich nations.

Historical analyses have also been proposed. Inglehart and Klingemann (2000) believe that a historical legacy of communist rule explains the low SWB of Eastern Europe, whereas the legacy of Protestantism may have something to do with the high SWB of the Anglo and Scandinavian countries.

It has also been suggested that some of the aforementioned determinants may not have a direct effect on SWB; it is some of their side effects that actually influence SWB. For example, it may be that what raises SWB is not national wealth per se but the superior quality of democracy and human rights that rich nations enjoy (Suh & Oishi, 2002). The same authors have also sought to explain the higher SWB of individualist nations through the personal freedom that individualism generates. Doubts about the direction of the cause-and-effect relationships between some of these variables have also been expressed. For example, Inglehart and Klingemann (2000) are not at all convinced that it is democracy that fosters high SWB, despite the high correlation between the two.

statistically redundant.<sup>42</sup> In particular, there is no statistical support for theories according to which democracy, the rule of law, or social or gender equality are important determinants of national differences in subjective well-being worldwide. It is plausible that extremes in some of these variables — for instance a total collapse of the rule of law as in a war-torn country — will cause great unhappiness and low satisfaction with life, but such extreme cases appear to be relatively rare nowadays.

Of note, national happiness is weakly related to national wealth or not at all, depending on the time period that we analyze. National life satisfaction is consistently associated with greater affluence but the link is not very strong, suggesting that other factors are also involved.<sup>43</sup>

At the level of nations, happiness, and to some extent also life satisfaction (the two main facets of subjective well-being), are largely a function of indulgence: the degree to which a particular nation's culture allows its members to live their lives as they wish, without imposing tight social restrictions on them. In particular, people in the happy nations tend to perceive greater personal life control. They value leisure more than people in the unhappier nations do and attach a lower importance to thrift.<sup>44</sup>

As the industry dimension is about social restrictions on spending, leisure, and fun, versus a lack of such restrictions, it is not surprising that it is negatively associated with measures of subjective well-being. Additionally, industry evokes some aspects of tightness: a high number of strict regulations (although not necessarily the same in all countries) coupled with an intolerance of deviations, which creates a subconscious feeling of being in a straightjacket. Societies that share these traits cannot be expected to have a lot of happy people.

The WVS consistently finds the highest percentages of very happy people in the indulgent parts of the world: Latin America (especially the northern regions), some

---

42. Minkov (2009a). However, statistical redundancy does not necessarily imply actual redundancy. Statistical tools do not give perfect solutions. A statistical analysis can suggest that a particular factor has no effect on a variable when in fact it has some effect. I acknowledge this in the aforementioned publication.

43. National wealth is more closely correlated with the life satisfaction item in the WVS than with the item that measures happiness. In fact, the national percentages of people who reported that they were very happy in 2005–2008 are unrelated to GDP or GNI per person, although previous measures of happiness yielded a weak positive correlation.

Life satisfaction seems to correspond to the cognitive facet of subjective well-being (a calculative assessment of one's life) whereas the happiness item probably captures what psychologists call hedonic balance. If this is so, "happy" is interpreted by the respondents as a tendency to be in a good mood, which may be the case even if one's life is not exactly as one wishes it to be. A Nigerian student of mine once told me that this would be a perfectly normal situation in his country.

44. Minkov (2007, 2009a). In these publications, I speak of a dimension of national culture underpinned by happiness, a sense of personal life control, and high importance of leisure. I have called that dimension "indulgence versus restraint." Its nature and properties are somewhat similar to industry versus indulgence, although it is not a very convincing predictor of economic growth. The latest presentation of this dimension is in Hofstede et al. (2010).

African nations (Nigeria and Ghana, perhaps also Tanzania) and Northwestern Europe. The Anglo nations outside Europe also score relatively high. The lowest percentages of very happy people are found — also consistently — in Eastern Europe, China, and South Korea. Pakistan and Bangladesh also tend to score low.<sup>45</sup> Graph 3.3 visualizes the relationship between happiness and industry versus indulgence.

When the WVS respondents are asked how healthy they feel, the resulting geographic pattern resembles the worldwide distribution of happiness. Stark differences are evident even among wealthy nations with good healthcare systems. Around 1999, the percentages of Danes, Swedes, Americans, Canadians, and Australians who felt they were in very good health ranged between 36 and 47 percent. This is two to three times as high as the percentages of Germans, Japanese, Spaniards, and Italians, ranging between 13 and 18 percent, who made the same statement. The 2005–2008 wave of the WVS confirmed these differences.

National happiness and subjective health rankings are stable and very similar. Both are negatively associated with industry as a cultural dimension: industrious societies are less happy and their members feel less healthy.<sup>46</sup>

Other large-scale studies have yielded similar results. Invariably, Latin Americans report the strongest and most frequent positive feelings, usually followed by

---

45. The correlations between the industry index and WVS measures of subjective well-being and life control are:

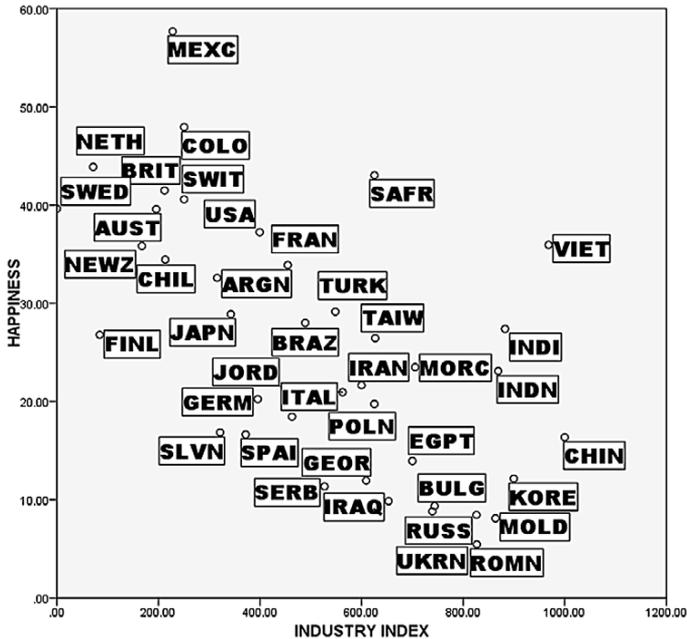
WVS item A008, 1994–2004 (percentage very happy)	–.53 ** ( <i>n</i> = 43)
WVS item A171, 1994–2004 (average life satisfaction)	–.72** ( <i>n</i> = 43)
WVS item A173, 1994–2004 (average perceived personal life control)	–.49** ( <i>n</i> = 43)
WVS item v10, 2005–2008 (percentage very happy)	–.63** ( <i>n</i> = 39)
WVS item v22, 2005–2008 (average life satisfaction)	–.69** ( <i>n</i> = 39)
WVS item v46, 2005–2008 (average perceived personal life control)	–.40* ( <i>n</i> = 39)

In Minkov (2009a), I explain why percentages “very happy” in the WVS are the most meaningful ecological measure of happiness (rather than national averages calculated on the basis of the four positions of the Likert scale that was used in the WVS).

46. The industry index in Table 1.1 correlates with:

WVS item A009, 1995–2004 (very healthy)	–.44** ( <i>n</i> = 43)
WVS item v11, 2005–2008 (very healthy)	–.42* ( <i>n</i> = 39)

Controlling for various measures of GNI or GDP per person leaves a correlation with industry of about –.35 for the first of these variables and about –.30 for the second.



Graph 3.3: Visualization of the relationship between happiness and the cultural dimension of industry versus indulgence. *Note:* The vertical axis shows percentages of respondents who describe themselves as very happy: average country scores from the 2005–2008 study of the WVS and from the latest available study of the same organization between 1994 and 2004. The horizontal axis shows the industry index. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

Northwestern Europeans. East Europeans and East Asians report the least frequent and weakest positive feelings.<sup>47</sup>

Studies of standard deviations can also be informative. Essentially, this statistical indicator measures how much diversity there is in the answers of a group of respondents. A very low standard deviation means that almost everybody has

47. One of the large-scale studies of the frequency of positive feelings in 37 cultures from the whole world was carried out by Schimmack et al. (2002). The reported frequency of positive emotions correlates with industry at  $-.66^{**}$  ( $n = 22$ ).

Another large study was done by Kuppens et al. (2006). It extracted a pleasant feelings component that correlates with industry at  $-.41^{*}$  across 27 nations.

Scolon, Diener, Oishi, and Biswas-Diener (2004) compared the emotions of Japanese, Asian Americans, European Americans, Hispanics, and Indians. The Hispanics reported the highest happiness, affection, and joy, as well as the lowest worrying. Japanese and Asian Americans reported the lowest happiness, joy, and affection, and the greatest worrying, guilt, and irritation.

answered in almost the same way. A very high value suggests that quite a few respondents gave widely divergent answers, deviating from the group mean.

A large group of scholars from all over the world, led by American psychologist David Schmitt, measured personality traits in 56 nations and provided average national standard deviations for each of them (Schmitt et al., 2007). The highest standard deviations (over 10.00) were found in Latin American and Anglo countries: Argentina, Mexico, the United States, and Australia. The lowest (below 8.00) were recorded in Asia and Eastern Europe, as well as in some African countries. These national standard deviations are highly and positively associated with life satisfaction, as measured by the WVS. To a somewhat lower degree, they are negatively correlated with the industry index.<sup>48</sup> A low national standard deviation in self-descriptions of personality traits can be attributed to the effect of strong social pressure for conformity and a lack of tolerance for personal deviations. As a result, many people become somewhat similar, at least in their self-concepts or self-descriptions. As part of that process, the strong pressure for conformity reduces their life satisfaction.

The conclusion is that, as a cultural syndrome, industry can be seen as good or bad news, depending on one's outlook. It facilitates rapid economic growth and wealth creation in the poor world but is associated with lower subjective well-being across all countries — rich and poor.

Some analysts may be tempted to search for the direction of the causality: does a culture of industry make people less happy or are they industrious because they are unhappy and wish to improve their economic situation? Such a search may be a fruitless exercise, though. It is simpler to accept that a national syndrome that combines hard work, thrift and foregoing of leisure and fun is intricately interwoven with a feeling of lower subjective well-being. These are strands of one and the same thread that probably do not need to be disentangled.

Intriguingly, East Europeans — the unhappiest people on earth — are unaware of the causes of their misery. Overwhelmingly, the hundreds of Bulgarians that I have asked to explain this phenomenon attribute it to poverty and bad government. But why do Colombia, El Salvador, and Nigeria have the highest percentages of very happy people on earth, despite their poverty, corruption, and exorbitant crime rates? My Bulgarian respondents are baffled. When I explain the trade-off between national economic success and happiness to them, they invariably say they would prefer the first to the second if they had a choice. They do not wish to sit back, stop worrying about the future and enjoy life as it is. People cannot make such collective choices and suddenly create a different society. Their choices have been made for them through the cultural upbringing that they have received. For that reason, the existing national differences in subjective well-being are here to stay for some time.

---

48. The average standard deviations in Table 5 in Schmitt et al. (2007) correlate with mean national life satisfaction between 2005 and 2008 (item v22 in WVS Association, 2008) at .62\*\* ( $n = 34$ ), mean national life satisfaction between 1994 and 2004 (A171 in WVS, 2006, latest data for each country) at .53\*\* ( $n = 47$ ), and industry at  $-.55^{**}$  ( $n = 30$ ).

## **Industry and Economic Growth Revisited: Investment Decisions Concerning Developing Countries**

A reviewer of a paper on culture and economic growth that I once submitted to an international academic journal observed that foreign direct investment might be a stronger driver of economic growth than a country's culture. There are different opinions on this issue.<sup>49</sup> But suppose that the reviewer is right. How do investors make their decisions? Certainly they expect a free market, a stable political environment, a reasonable infrastructure, and a regime that allows easy repatriation of profits. But they also have some cultural expectations concerning the workforce. Ideally, these should be hard-working people who are ready to stay long hours on the job and make strenuous efforts for little pay.

Hermann Simon is a former professor of economics, currently a world-renowned German business consultant. He has introduced the term "hidden champions": middle-sized companies that are relatively unknown although they are world leaders in their sectors. According to a recent presentation by Simon, the hidden champions can account for up to two-thirds of the exports of some Western countries, such as Germany (Simon, 2009). Simon has presented data concerning the investment preferences of the hidden champions. By far, their first choice is China. Russia comes next, followed by India. Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe also seem attractive, whereas Latin America, including Brazil, does not. Asked why they would rather stay out of Latin America, the hidden champions explain that the region is socially disorganized. Indeed, Latin America neither attaches a very strong importance to "maintaining order in the nation" in the WVS, nor maintains such order in practice. It has the highest violent crime rates in the world. However, this is hardly the whole story. Russia's murder rate is comparable to that of an average Latin American country, whereas India has a terrible infrastructure. As for China, it is known for its mind-boggling bureaucracy. Still, these countries seem attractive to foreign investors.

It is not very hard to understand why China is at the top of the investors' list, despite all the red tape and other hindrances that they often run into. Chinese factory workers nowadays often work 7 days a week, 13 hours a day. In some sectors, such as construction, they get paid only at the end of the year. Sometimes their Chinese employers do not pay them at all.<sup>50</sup> Although the workers do not accept this as normal, their tight cultural upbringing gives them an ability to take a lot of rough treatment. Foreign investors like that.

Because Bulgaria is a member of the European Union, workers cannot be subjected to the same treatment as in China. But many self-employed people normally work seven days a week. This is also the norm in much of the tourist industry. I know quite a few young people who have two jobs, sometimes adding

---

49. According to Landes (2000), "some economists contend that foreign capital hurts growth; others that it helps but less than domestic investment. Much obviously depends on the uses" (p. 4).

50. Evidence from interviews with Chinese sociologists in Thomas (2006).

up to a working day of 16 hours, including weekends. During an in-company training session at one of Bulgaria's largest production plants, I was told by a trade union leader that some company workers had accumulated 280 days of unclaimed paid leave. Although their supervisors urge them to go on vacation, they prefer to collect the payment that they are entitled to if they give up their vacations. Of note, the average worker's salary in that company is four times the national average.

This provides an additional answer to the question of why poor countries with industrious cultures develop faster. We saw that they save more. But they are also perceived as better places for investment. Hard work, small wages, and a literate workforce (in some cases) sounds like an attractive combination.

In a study published in 2006, randomly chosen Europeans from 15 cities in different countries were asked to describe the typical members of 25 nations in terms of 30 characteristics. The stereotypes that the study revealed showed that East Asians are perceived as hard-working and thrifty, whereas speakers of Italian and Spanish (including Mexicans) were viewed as scoring low on these characteristics (Boster & Maltseva, 2006). These stereotypes are probably based on perceptions of Latin country traditions of singing and dancing, as well as the notorious siesta. The stereotypical views that people hold of other groups of people are based on correct or false impressions of some particular members of the observed group. Then, those impressions are blown out of proportion and are crudely overgeneralized. Wrong as they may be as descriptors of a whole nation or ethnic group, stereotypes can persist and serve as a basis for decision making. However Europeans' stereotypes of other nations correlate positively with those nations' own descriptions of personal values.<sup>51</sup> This means that sometimes, when salient characteristics are involved, Europeans' views of others may not be far wrong from the way that those others describe themselves. And, as we saw, the self-descriptions predict real phenomena, such as saving, working hours, and economic growth.

## **Industry versus Indulgence as a Cultural Dimension: Definition and Summary**

The evidence presented so far can be used for the following broad definition of industry versus indulgence as a single bipolar cultural dimension:

Industry is a cultural syndrome that stands for a specific personal and societal discipline necessary nowadays for the achievement of economic prosperity in poor countries. It consists mainly of a high prioritization of hard work and thrift versus a low prioritization of leisure.

Indulgence stands for the opposite of industry: a relaxed attitude toward hard work and thrift and a prioritization of leisure.

The main contrasts between highly industrious and highly indulgent societies are summarized in [Table 3.2](#).

---

51. The national dimension that Boster and Maltseva (2006) extracted from stereotypes concerning thrift and hard work was called "self-control." It correlates positively with industry at .53\* ( $n = 20$ ).

Table 3.2: Main Contrasts between Highly Industrious and Highly Indulgent Societies.

Highly Industrious Societies	Highly Indulgent Societies
Hard work is important, leisure is not	Leisure is important, hard work somewhat less
Thrift is important	Relatively free spending of disposable income
Economic development is a top priority	Economic development is desirable but is not the top priority
Low happiness and life satisfaction	High happiness and life satisfaction
A feeling that one does not fully control one's life	A feeling that one is largely one's own master
Strong government and restrictive order for the citizens are desirable as long as they do not turn into outright oppression of the masses	Strong government and restrictive order are viewed as oppression
Political liberties, such as freedom of speech, are not very important	Political freedoms are very important
Harsher punishments for deviations from the established norm and accepted rules	Softer punishments

## Origins of the Cultural Differences in Industry versus Indulgence

### *The Role of National Differences in Wealth*

The indices in Table 3.1 show clearly that economically developed countries tend to have indulgent cultures. As people get rich, they have higher disposable incomes and can afford to indulge in various leisurely activities. They do not need to save much because in case of need they can fall back on the strong welfare systems that rich societies have. Even the United States takes far better care of its poor than China, Russia, or India. Thus, as a nation becomes wealthy, a natural cultural shift toward indulgence occurs that hardly needs a detailed explanation.

Nevertheless, the negative association between industry and national wealth does not explain everything.<sup>52</sup> Most intriguingly, why is there such a large cultural

52. The correlation between the industry index and measures of national wealth (GNI per person at PPP or raw GDP per person) in 1999 is  $-.65^{**}$  ( $n = 42$ ). This means that national wealth differences explain about 40 percent of the national differences in industry versus indulgence.

difference between Asia and Eastern Europe on the one hand and Latin America and some parts of Africa on the other?

### *The Legacy of Differences in Subsistence Patterns*

The main facets of the industry versus indulgence dimension can be analyzed in terms of climate differences. Saving is not a strong characteristic of pre-industrial societies in the tropics. In warm climates, the idea of preserving food over long periods is not practical; therefore it is normally consumed within 48 hours of its procurement (Lee, 1979, p. 118). In temperate and cold climates, part of what is gathered or produced during the warm months needs to be saved for consumption in the unproductive winter period.

Additionally, temperate climates facilitated the development of intensive agriculture. This type of economy relies on the use of draft animals, fertilizers, and irrigation systems. It teaches the idea that even animal waste can be saved for future purposes and that complex constructions, such as water canals, can be built in the present in order to reap benefits in the future.

The traditional subsistence activities in the tropics were hunting-gathering, horticulture, and pastoralism. These economic practices do not encourage saving as they often involve some nomadism in search of better hunting, planting, or grazing grounds. The main idea of nomadism is to travel and look for resources rather than amass them in one place. On the contrary, intensive agriculture requires peasants to live sedentary lives.

However, the physical environment is not an absolute determinant of the type of subsistence and culture that prevailed in it in a given period. Intensive agriculture and an accompanying culture of industry can be transplanted from one place to another. Southeast Asians have adopted intensive agriculture and industry values although they live in the tropics. This demonstrates that culture can sometimes be a stronger force than the physical environment.

Similarly, the culture of hunting-gathering and horticulture in the tropics may prevent the practice of saving from taking hold and the use of food preservation techniques may remain limited for a long time after a population learns about their existence. Daniel Everett, who spent about six years with the Hiaitihi Indians of the Amazon (known as Piraha in Portuguese) noticed that although they know how to salt or smoke meat, they do that only when trading with Brazilians and never for their own use. According to Everett, the Hiaitihi lack any concern for the nonimmediate. Present action for future benefits, as in the expression “saving for a rainy day,” are absent from their culture. Everett reports that artifacts that they trade for, such as machetes, cans, and pans, are not well taken care of and are often lost on the day that they are purchased (Everett, 2005; 2005 draft). Various experimental studies of delay of gratification, which is a form of thrift, show that people of Amerindian, West African, and Pacific descent are more likely than

East Asians, and even European Americans, to indulge in immediate gratification of desire.<sup>53</sup>

It is also interesting to hear what happened in 2003, when some Chadian horticulturalist farmers were compensated by oil companies for the loss of their farmlands. As *The Economist* put it, they squandered their windfall. One celebrated by bathing in beer. Another farmer left his mud hut and spent a few weeks in a four-star hotel, whereas others bought more wives. There were a few wise investments in windmills or cattle, but most farmers parted with their unexpected bonanza (*The Economist*, December 6, 2003).

Some hunter-gatherers had cultural mechanisms that actually forbade thrift and encouraged immediate and generous sharing. Richard Lee provides an example from his studies of the Kung San in Southern Africa (Lee, 1979, p. 458):

The most serious accusations one Kung can level against another are the charge of stinginess and the charge of arrogance. To be stingy, or far-hearted, is to hoard one's goods jealously and secretly, guarding them "like a hyena". The corrective for this, in the Kung view, is to make the hoarder give "till it hurts", that is to make him give generously and without stint until everyone can see that he is truly cleaned out. In order to ensure compliance with this cardinal rule, the Kung browbeat each other constantly to be more generous and not to hoard.

It appears that the concept of preserving food, and — more generally speaking — of saving, is not easily accepted in societies that have not been under long and persistent pressure to adopt it. What seems to generate such pressure is a long history of intensive agriculture in a temperate climate.

A number of studies also indicate that intensive agriculturalists have less time for leisure, and work longer than horticulturalists or hunter-gatherers (Ember & Ember, 1992, p. 192). According to Daniel Everett, Hiatihi (Piraha) Indians normally work no more than an hour at a time. Adults often sit in the sun all day. When Everett

---

53. Gallimore, Weiss, and Finney (1974) asked American adolescents of Hawaiian and Japanese origin what they would do if they got 1500 US dollars. The Hawaiians were more likely than the Japanese to spend the money immediately or share it with in-group members. The Japanese were more prone to save the money for education.

Price-Williams and Ramirez (1974) found that fourth grade level Black and Mexican-American children were more prone than Anglo children to accept a small reward immediately than wait for a bigger one. Rotenberg and Mayer (1990) found that White Canadian children were more likely than Ojibwa Indian children to wait for a larger reward rather than accept a smaller one immediately.

These findings can be attributed to wealth differences, poorer (and presumably hungrier) people being more likely to prefer immediate gratification. However, in a study of 369 US college students Bembenuddy (2002) found that minority students — who were not necessarily poor — were more likely than Anglos to go to a favorite concert or indulge in another leisurely activity even though they knew that their choice could have a negative impact on their academic performance.

noticed that they greatly valued hardwood dugout canoes, which are far better than the indigenous tree-bark vessels, he paid Brazilians to teach them how to make dugout canoes. But although the Indians learned the technique, they never made a single canoe on their own; only two under Brazilian supervision. They preferred to maintain their canoe supply by stealing from Brazilians or trading with them (Everett, 2005, draft). Their values are quite different from those of intensive agriculturalists who have adapted to hard labor and attach a lower importance to leisure.

Differences in happiness today can also be explained, at least to some extent, in terms of the different historical legacies of intensive agriculture versus hunting-gathering and horticulture. Highly intensive agriculture of the Eurasian type, involving irrigation and draft animals, may not exactly be the worst mistake in the history of the human race as Jared Diamond put it (Diamond, 1987), but it certainly brought innumerable calamities on those who practiced it: back-breaking work, oppressive states and exploitation, devastating epidemics, and never-ending wars for territory. It is hardly strange that the Eurasian societies of intensive agriculturalists have generated philosophies such as Bhuddism, according to which all life is suffering and the pursuit of happiness is a reproachable waste of time,<sup>54</sup> or the three great Middle-Eastern religions, which teach that real bliss is only achievable in the hereafter.

Societies of hunter-gatherers and horticulturalists were not plagued by the evils of intensive agriculture to the same extent, which may partly explain their higher sense of freedom and happiness. Research among Inuit and Maasai populations revealed that they are about as happy as the richest Americans (Diener & Tov, 2007).

### ***Biological Differences at the Group Level?***

Some studies have associated national differences in subjective well-being with personality differences and have claimed that some of these associations are extremely strong (Lynn & Steel, 2006; Steel & Ones, 2002). This issue needs to be addressed because it suggests a possible genetic base of national differences in some of the facets of industry versus indulgence, for instance thrift or subjective well-being.<sup>55</sup>

---

54. Carus (1995), p. 52, based on the Buddha's famous Benares sermon.

55. In Hofstede and McCrae (2004), the second author indicates that personality traits are strongly heritable and do not seem to be much influenced by the environment. He admits that these conclusions are based on individual-level studies and may not have the same validity for average national personality traits where the environment may play a bigger role. Still, McCrae believes that differences in average national personality traits may stem, at least in part, from different genetic patterns.

Summarizing the available evidence concerning the individual heritability of Big-Five traits, Corr (2006, p. 556) presents a conclusion that differs from McCrae's. He reports that model fitting analyses across twin and adoption studies produce heritability estimates for the Big-Five personality traits in the 35–50 percent range.

The main problem associated with national personality differences is that the available large-scale studies do not yield fully convincing results because they do not replicate well.<sup>56</sup> Second, as I have shown, the available measures of average national personality traits do not predict any national differences in subjective well-being over and above what is predicted by the national values and perceptions, such as personal life control, that are associated with industry versus indulgence (see [Minkov, 2009a](#)). Nevertheless, this does not mean that looking for nation-level associations between personality and subjective well-being or thrift is a waste of time. The science of studying national personality traits is not even in its infancy; it is just a fetus. It is possible that its methodology will be improved and more coherent results will emerge.

There is some scant evidence to support the view that different genetic patterns may explain at least a small part of the national variance on some particular facets of the industry dimension. At least two genes are worth considering for the time being.

The serotonin transporter gene SLC6A4 or 5HTT has a variant described as a short-allele polymorphism in the genetics literature. This variant is much more common in East Asian populations than in African populations whereas Europeans fall in-between.<sup>57</sup> In individual-level studies, the short allele has been associated with higher anxiety ([Chiao & Ambady, 2007](#); [Gunthert et al., 2007](#); [Katsuragi et al., 1999](#); [Ohara, Nagai, Suzuki, Ochiai, & Ohara, 1998](#)).

DRD4 is a gene that regulates the activity of dopamine in the brain. It is highly polymorphic, which means that it exists in many variants. Some of the polymorphisms have quite unequal geographic distributions. The short 2-repeat allele is most common in East and Southeast Asians and somewhat less in Europeans. It is absent or nearly absent in sub-Saharan and Amerindian populations ([Chang, Kidd, Livak, Pakstis, & Kidd, 1996](#)). In individual-level studies this allele has been linked to anxiety and neuroticism ([Tochigi et al., 2006](#)). On the contrary, the long 7-repeat allele is nearly absent in East Asians, but is highly prevalent in Amerindians, whereas Europeans and sub-Saharan Africans are in-between. Individual-level studies have associated this long allele with a propensity to take financial risks ([Dreber et al., 2009](#); [Kuhnen & Chiao, 2009](#)).

The available data are fragmented and controversial. For almost each study that associates a particular polymorphism with a personality trait or behavior, there is a study that has failed to replicate the same association. However, it is not absolutely implausible that the high propensity toward thrift in East Asia is associated with an element of genetically underpinned anxiety, expressed among other things as a tendency to worry about the future and avoid uncertainty by saving. This tendency may be individually and socially advantageous in environments that present a specific

---

56. Some of the measures of one and the same Big-Five dimension in [McCrae \(2002\)](#), [McCrae and Terracciano \(2005\)](#), and [Schmitt et al. \(2007\)](#) yield weak and insignificant correlations.

57. See [Esau, Kaur, Adonis, and Arieff \(2008\)](#) for data about Black and White South Africans; [Lotrich, Pollock, and Ferrell \(2003\)](#) for data about Black and White Americans; [Sakado, Sakado, Muratake, Mundt, and Someya \(2003\)](#) for data about Japanese; [Chiao and Ambady \(2007\)](#) for a partial synopsis of similar findings.

balance of threats and opportunities. One such environment may be a geographic region with warm summers and harsh winters. Although the winter is a threat, there is an opportunity to produce food during the end of the warm season and store it for a long time during the cold period. Humid tropical environments do not present the same balance of threats and opportunities with respect to food production and preservation. Selection for genetic anxiety about the future is less likely because it would not enhance survival chances to the same extent.

Yet, it is entirely possible that a culture of thrift has evolved in one place, with or without genetic anxiety, and then migrated to another place. This, and other similar complications, can render the interaction between genes, environment, subsistence patterns, and cultural values and behaviors hopelessly complex and impossible to explain simplistically. A lot of research in the future will be needed before we are able to speak about these relationships in a more confident manner.

## Chapter 4

# Monumentalism versus Flexumility

*Keywords:* Cultural Differences in Personal Stability and Pride; Religiousness; Educational Achievement; Suicide Rates; Gender Equality and Communication

Il faut rester soi-même (You must remain yourself).

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in an interview on French channel TV5 (March 22, 2007, 19:00 GMT), describing cultural westernization as an undesirable phenomenon

### Introduction

During my first year as a high school student in Tunisia, in 1973, I experienced a number of powerful cultural shocks. Below I narrate three of my collisions with Tunisian Arab culture. The three events seemed unrelated to me at the time of their occurrence. Many years later, as a social anthropologist, I discovered what they had in common. The events may appear somewhat trivial and unimportant. But the underlying cultural differences that they illustrate are of paramount importance for the world. Their analysis can take us far beyond what we see on the surface and shed light on fundamental questions such as why some nations achieve better results in modern education than others and why they accept some modern ideas more easily and have faster economic growth.

On one of my first days at the boarding house of the French Lyceum of La Marsa, near Tunis, the capital of Tunisia, a younger Arab child teased me by making faces and calling me various funny names. In Varna, Bulgaria, where I came from, the natural and usual reaction to this was a good slap on the face of the teaser. And that is exactly what I did to that younger child. I had no idea what I would unleash. It was as if I had hit a nest of hornets. I was immediately surrounded by some 20 Tunisians, most of them older than me, who started pushing me around, yelling at the top of their voices that I was a miserable wretch and the most despicable person on Earth for beating a younger child. Amazingly, the behavior of my assailants was consistent with the rules of conduct that they stood up for. Nobody hit me, not even once, although some of the boys were big enough to crush me single-handedly. I took some pushing and yelling but not a single blow.

A week later, another child teased me in the schoolyard. Although he was my age, I dreaded the stew after being burned and was careful not to initiate serious physical contact. However, I was holding a small slice of bread in my hand — a perfectly

acceptable weapon in a skirmish among friends where I came from. I aimed for the child's head but missed. Nobody was hurt this time. Yet, the hornets' nest broke open again. At least 10 Arab children screamed as loud as they could: "You throw bread! You throw bread! Have you no respect for bread? Don't you know that bread is sacred?" Well, I did not. Sacredness was not a concept that I had grown up with.

On my first visit to a movie theater in the city of Tunis, a female usher escorted me and a Bulgarian friend of mine to the two seats that she had chosen for us. Her service was unsolicited and completely useless because the theater was nearly empty. Nevertheless, the usher did not leave after we were seated. She stood right next to us and stared at us in expectation. We stared back in bewilderment. Then she boldly asked for a tip. We told her, somewhat shyly, that we were poor high school students and did not have much money. Certainly we could not afford to spend the little that we had on a service that we had not asked for. This time there was no hornets' nest. The usher simply walked away, cursing us in loud and colorful Arabic.

What do these three events have in common? All three occurrences illustrate the relative importance of maintaining a dignified public image, or "face", in some cultures versus its relative unimportance in others. In the Arab world, people strive to behave in such a way that others admire their magnanimity and generosity. Hitting a weaker person, even a despicable one like myself, is below a man's dignity. Squeezing your miserable pennies in your tight fist is worthy of disdain. You may haggle over prices in the market place but when you are seeking entertainment, you must show largesse. If you cannot afford proudly to splash around some money and demonstrate that it is not your last, you had better stay at home. In Eastern Europe, these ideas are not completely unknown, but they are not cultural priorities.

But what do dignity and pride have to do with the worshipping of sacrosanct symbols, such as the daily bread? An answer to this question can only be provided after a scrutiny of the academic literature. If we start our analysis from one particular theory, we will gradually understand why culturally conservative societies, such as those of North Africa, the Middle East, and Pakistan, are fundamentally different from those of East Asia and most of Europe.

## **The Concept of Self-Enhancement and Self-Stability**

There is a rich literature in cross-cultural psychology on "self-enhancement": a tendency to have a positive self-regard and seek and value positive information about oneself, while dismissing negative information (Heine, 2001, 2003; Heine & Lehman, 1997; Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999; Heine, Takata, & Lehman, 2000; Kim, Kim, Kam, & Shin, 2003; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasukkunkit, 1997, etc.). To put it simply, this is a form of pride, possibly combined with a sense of superiority. The opposite characteristic is called "self-effacement." In plain English, it means modesty and humility.

The available cross-cultural studies compare mostly North American and East Asian individuals. The former are more likely to be self-enhancers: proud and willing

to demonstrate their personal superiority at least in some particular domains where they believe they are exceptionally good. Americans like to receive compliments. But in Japan and China, just like in Eastern Europe, personal praise often causes embarrassment.

A number of other comparative studies and analyses have elucidated an equally interesting and important concept: self-stability or self-consistency (Choi & Choi, 2002; Hofstede, 2001; Nisbett, 2003; Nisbett, Peng, Choi, & Norenzayan, 2001; Peng & Nisbett, 1999; Peng, Spencer-Rodgers, & Nian, 2006, etc.). This is a tendency to have an invariant self and be a person with immutable values, principles, and beliefs. Naturally, when asked to describe themselves, such people would provide consistent self-presentations rather than contradictions, such as “I am sometimes just, sometimes unfair” or “I am a vegetarian who sometimes eats meat.” Contradictory self-descriptions would suggest self-flexibility or personal dialecticism: combining what seems to be mutually exclusive traits or opposites in a single individual.

The results of the comparative studies in this domain show that East Asians exhibit greater self-flexibility and dialecticism than Americans. They are more likely to make contradictory statements about themselves and live with personal paradoxes. Some of these differences may persist for some time even in a shared environment. Asian Americans report mixed feelings — such as being happy and sad at the same time — more often than European Americans (Schimmack et al., 2002). The available evidence suggests that the East Asian self is more flexible and dialectical than the North American one. It can be characterized by what North Americans might consider a paradoxical combination of opposites and shifting characteristics, as well as by inconsistency and duality.

Canadian psychologist Steven Heine proposed that individuals with stable and consistent selves are likely to be self-enhancers. This means that those who have firm and immutable values and beliefs and see themselves as strongly principled individuals who do not allow themselves to drift with the current, can be expected to be proud of themselves and what they stand for (Heine, 2003). Vice versa — because of their pride and high self-regard — they would have no incentive to wish for fundamental changes in what makes up their personal identity.

Conversely, people who do not have an inflated self-regard are more likely to possess flexible and malleable selves and have a greater tendency to adapt their values and beliefs to shifting circumstances. As they are not too proud, there is no good reason why they would not wish to learn from others.

This is not all. Steven Heine also believes that self-enhancers would not be very interested in self-improvement activities such as education. Their subconscious logic might be, “Since I am so great, why do I need to improve?” On the contrary, humbler individuals should not have difficulty admitting to themselves that they are in need of improvement. Other things being equal, they should achieve more in education.

Heine’s hypothesis finds some support in the work of Carol Dweck, an educational psychologist at Stanford University (Dweck, 2007a, 2007b). She found that, contrary to common beliefs held by many educators and parents in North America, praising students’ intelligence is not necessarily a motivator. On the contrary, enhancing their self-esteem in that way can depress effort. The students

might seek easy tasks that merely confirm their superior intelligence, rather than struggle with novel and difficult problems.

It is interesting to verify all this at the level of cultures. Are self-enhancement and self-stability or self-consistency associated? And does the combination of the two predict low interest or achievement in self-improvement activities like education? If this is true, the implications would be tremendously important. They would suggest that differences in educational achievement across nations and ethnic groups have a cultural basis: in some societies, many people do not have a strong positive bias toward education, or at least some types of it, because they think or subconsciously feel that efforts to achieve self-improvement of that type are not quite necessary.

### **Measuring Self-Enhancement, Self-Stability, and Other Related Concepts across Nations**

Verifying Heine's hypothesis involves some difficulty because there are practically no worldwide cross-cultural studies of self-enhancement or self-stability or self-consistency per se. Some small-scale studies<sup>1</sup> suggest that he might be right. But a much larger study is needed to reveal the general trends across the world.

The World Values Survey (WVS) has two items that obviously measure pride. One asks whether one of the main goals in the respondent's lives is to make their parents proud. The other one asks how proud the respondents are to be citizens of their countries.<sup>2</sup>

If it makes sense to ask people how proud they are, it would be sheer nonsense to ask them whether they are self-stable or self-consistent because they would not understand what you are talking about. Self-stability or self-consistency need to be measured in a roundabout way. A good idea would be to ask people how religious they are since religions, at least those that originate from the Middle East, emphasize immutable values, beliefs and norms and encourage consistent behaviors that do not depend on situational contingencies.

The WVS has a number of items that measure religiousness. Among other things, respondents are asked how important God and religion are in their lives, if they are religious persons, and whether children should learn religious faith. The results that these items produce are nearly identical and it does not matter much which one is

---

1. Spencer-Rodgers, Peng, Wang, and Hou (2004) found that Chinese individuals and Asian Americans presented more ambivalent (dialectical) self-evaluations than European Americans. Latinos and African Americans presented even less ambivalent self-evaluations than European Americans. Similarly, Chinese presented the lowest positive self-evaluations, followed by Asian Americans, then by European Americans, then by Latinos and African Americans. The negative self-evaluations ranking was exactly the opposite.

2. WVS items v64 (in the 2005–2008 wave) and D045 (in the waves before 2004) measure the importance of making one's parents proud. Items v209 (in the 2005–2008 wave) and G006 (in the waves before 2004) measure national pride. For the association between self-enhancement and pride, especially national pride, see Heine and Hamamura (2007).

chosen. Still, the last one — religious faith as an important trait for children — is particularly appropriate because the respondents can choose it freely from a list of traits.<sup>3</sup>

As explained in the research notes chapter at the end of this book,<sup>4</sup> national pride, importance of parental pride, and religious faith are intercorrelated and form a single and exceptionally strong cultural dimension that validates Steven Heine’s hypothesis beyond any doubt. This is a validation at the national level. Countries with high percentages of religious people are also countries with high percentages of people who are very proud of their nationality and high percentages who strongly wish to make their parents proud. This does not necessarily mean that religious *individuals* are very proud. Yet, an individual level analysis of the WVS data shows that in many countries there is such a correlation, albeit not very strong, also across individuals. **Graph 4.1** shows the association between importance of parental pride and religiousness across nations.

I have figuratively called one of the poles of this dimension “monumentalism.” In societies where many people are proud and religious, the human self is like a monolithic monument: proud and hewn out of a single piece of rock or cast in the same hard and rigid metal, without alloys. It is a durable product with a strong identity that is not easily changed.

The name that I have chosen for the opposite pole of this cultural dimension is “flexumility.” It refers to a characteristic of a society where people tend to be flexible and humble. The human self there is malleable and changeable. It is composed of different ingredients, some of which may seem incompatible to those who are not used to contradictions and reconciliation of opposites.

The main characteristics that define the monumentalism versus flexumility dimension can be presented as follows:

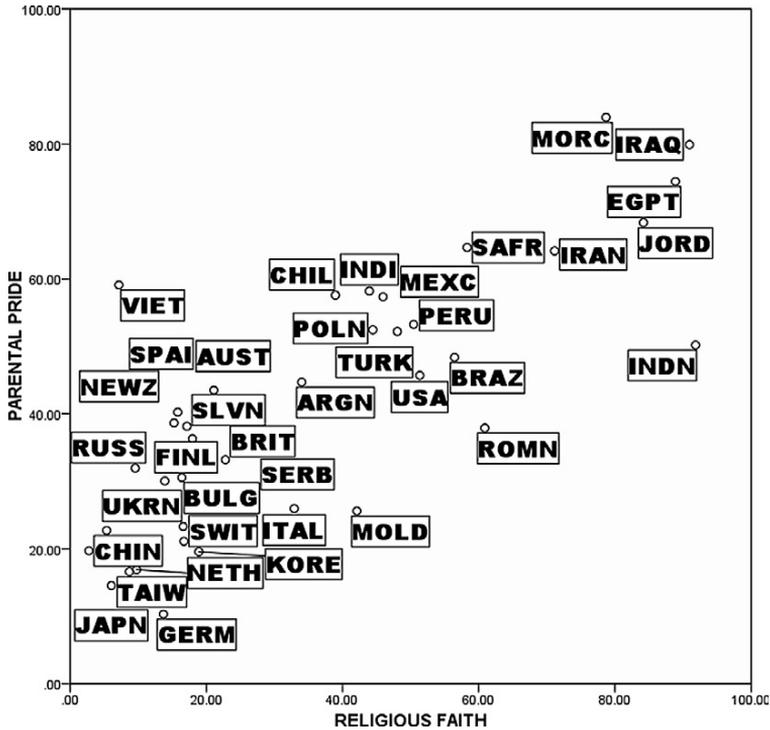
<b>Monumentalism</b>	<b>versus</b>	<b>Flexumility</b>
High pride		Low pride
Immutable identities, values, norms and beliefs, associated with strong religiousness		Flexible identities, values, norms and beliefs, as well as weak religiousness

**Table 4.1** presents scores for 43 countries for the monumentalism versus flexumility dimension.

Monumentalism helps explain why pride and a high concern for personal dignity coexist with religious worship of sacred symbols, such as the daily bread. Pride and

3. This is item v19 in the 2005–2008 wave of the WVS and item A040 in the previous waves.

4. See the entry “industry and monumentalism indices” in the research notes chapter.



Graph 4.1: Visualization of the relationship between importance of religious faith and importance of parental pride. *Notes:* The vertical axis shows percentages of respondents who agree strongly that one of their main goals in life is to make their parents proud. The horizontal axis shows percentages of respondents who state that religious faith is an important value for children. In both cases the percentages are averages from the 2005–2008 study by the WVS and the latest data from the 1994–2004 studies by the same organization. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

religiousness have the same national habitat: when a country has a lot of the first, it almost always has a lot of the second. There are some minor discrepancies to be sure: on some measures of pride, Latin Americans surpass Arabs, whereas some Middle Eastern societies and Pakistan are unequalled in their religious zeal. But by and large, Heine’s theory is correct. Some specific aspects of self-enhancement and self-stability are so highly correlated, as far as nations are concerned, that they can be merged into a single dimension. Now, does it really predict national differences in self-improvement through education?



## **Educational Achievement**

Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is an international project that carries out studies across some 50 countries at a time. Every four years, nationally representative samples of students in the 4th and 8th grades are given standardized tests in mathematics and science. Each time, the results are very similar. East Asian students have the highest results in mathematics, followed by some East and Northwest Europeans. The lowest results are always in Africa and the Middle East. Latin America also scores low. The results in science are not very different.<sup>5</sup>

OECD PISA is another similar project. It measures reading skills, mathematics and science achievement, and problem-solving skills at age 15 in some 40 countries. The latest data at the time of the writing of this text are from 2003. The OECD PISA results (OECD PISA, 2003) and the TIMSS results are highly correlated and obviously measure more or less one and the same thing. The high correlations validate both projects as highly reliable and convincing, despite some small disparities — for example, Eastern Europe is somewhat lower in the OECD PISA ranking than in TIMSS.

The TIMSS and OECD PISA studies illustrate several interesting phenomena. First, educational achievement in the domains that they cover is a single dimension.<sup>6</sup> Even reading skills produce the same country rankings as the other disciplines although children in some countries, especially the Chinese-, Japanese-, French-, and English-speaking ones, have to cope with much more complex orthographies than other children who learn simple and straightforward spelling systems — for example, those in Latin America, the Arab countries, Turkey, and Indonesia. Still, students in the former group of countries perform far better than those in the latter.

Second, there is an obvious positive association between national wealth and educational achievement. But it is not strong and cannot explain many puzzling phenomena. Why does the United States consistently perform less well than South Korea? Why are the emirates and Saudi Arabia in the low part of the national ranking on educational achievement?

Consider the following problem given to 4th grade children in their native languages (Mullis et al., 2007, p. 93): “Al wanted to find how much his cat weighed. He weighed himself and noted that the scale read 57 kg. He then stepped on the scale holding his cat and found that it read 62 kg. What was the weight of the cat in kilograms?” How can we explain the fact that 95 percent of

---

5. For the TIMSS mathematics results see Mullis et al. (2000), Mullis, Martin, and Foy (2005, 2007). See also the TIMSS website — <http://timss.bc.edu/> — where science results are available as well. Across the three latest studies (2007, 2003, 1999) the math results correlate at .95 to .98. The science results are intercorrelated in the same way. Correlations between science results and math results, in one and the same study or across studies, range from .86 to .95.

6. The average national OECD PISA scores for the four cognitive domains yield a Chronbach's alpha of .99. They load on a single factor with loadings ranging from .97 to .99 (Minkov, 2008).

the students in Taiwan answered correctly, versus 12 percent in Kuwait and 9 percent in Qatar? The automatic reply that many people give is “The Taiwanese students receive better school instruction than those in the Gulf states.” But that is stating the obvious. Why is Taiwanese education better? What stops the fabulously rich countries in the Gulf from providing high-quality instruction to their children?

The authors of the TIMSS publications present a large database with a number of indicators that could conceivably account for national differences in mathematics achievement: the teachers’ background, the schools’ curricula, amount of time spent studying mathematics, availability of extracurricular activities (such as “remedial” courses in mathematics), and so forth. Yet, none of those indicators yield significant and convincing correlations with average national mathematics achievement.<sup>7</sup>

One exception is the reported differences in “home educational resources” or HER. These do correlate with national achievement. However, the TIMSS analysts admit that there is far from one-to-one correspondence between high performance and home resources, which means that there are clearly other influences at work (Mullis et al., 2000, pp. 116–117.). Most incomprehensibly, the average achievement of the low-HER students in East Asia is considerably higher than the average achievement of the high-HER students in the Arab world and Latin America. Poor Chinese and Koreans do better than rich Arabs and Chileans.

To illustrate the country differences, I have calculated an average country score in average achievement in mathematics in the 8th grade, based on the 1999, 2003, and 2007 TIMSS studies. The method is explained in the research notes chapter, under “math achievement index.” The monumentalism scores in Table 4.1 and the math achievement index are strongly and negatively correlated. The more monumentalist a particular society is, the lower its achievement in mathematics. The correlation remains very high even after statistically removing the effect of national wealth.<sup>8</sup> Again, we find support for Steven Heine’s theory: self-enhancement and self-stability are associated with weaker self-improvement in a particular area: mathematics. Although Heine’s hypothesis is about individuals, it is validated for nations. Graph 4.2 clearly visualizes the relationship between monumentalism and school achievement in mathematics.

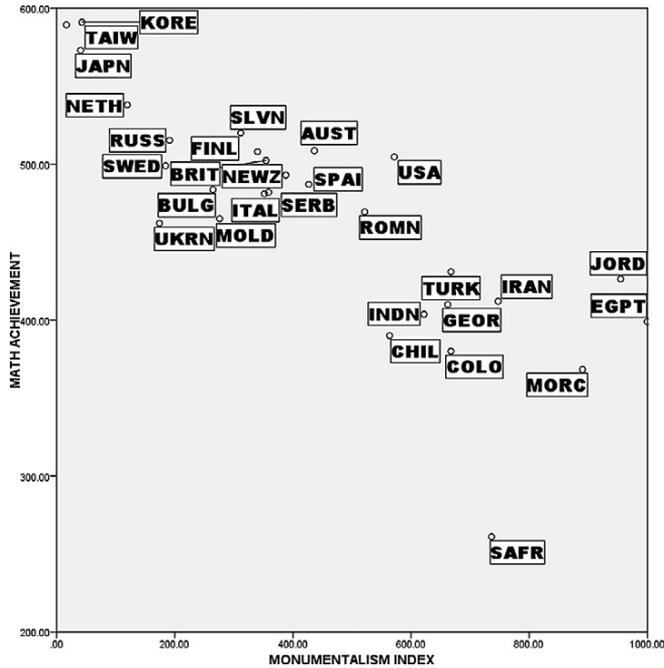
Of course, there is much more to education than mathematics. But very similar results are obtained when other educational measures are used, such as TIMSS

---

7. For the variables that could conceivably affect national achievement in mathematics (but do not), see for instance Mullis et al. (2000). For the analysis of the data, see Minkov (2008).

8. Across 29 overlapping countries, the correlation between math achievement (see “math achievement index” in the research notes chapter) and monumentalism is  $-.81^{**}$ . Math achievement correlates with GNI per person at PPP in 1999 at only  $.39^{**}$  ( $n = 59$ ). Controlling for GNI per person in 1999 still leaves a correlation of  $-.71$  between math achievement and monumentalism.

A sample of 29 countries may seem small. However, in Minkov (2007, 2008), I have far larger samples and show nearly the same strong negative correlations between monumentalism and educational achievement.



Graph 4.2: Visualization of the relationship between the cultural dimension of monumentalism and average national achievement in mathematics in the 8th grade. *Notes:* The vertical axis shows average national achievement in mathematics in the 8th grade on standardized tests from the TIMSS studies in 1999, 2003, and 2007. The horizontal axis shows the monumentalism index. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

school achievement in science or the OECD PISA results. Societies whose children are better in mathematics are also societies whose children are better in science, in logical reasoning, and in reading. Success in all these domains is closely associated with weak monumentalism and strong flexumility, even after taking into account the role of national wealth.

The monumentalism index is positively associated with national illiteracy rates: percentages of adults who cannot read. Again, the correlation is not reduced very much after accounting for national wealth differences.<sup>9</sup> This means that disparities in illiteracy rates are a cultural phenomenon and cannot be explained solely in terms of wealth versus poverty differences. Otherwise, the super-rich Gulf states would not have amazingly high percentages of people who cannot read.

9. Monumentalism correlates with the illiteracy rates in [UN Statistics Division \(2007\)](#), plus estimates for the developed countries, at  $.67^{**}$  ( $n = 38$ ). After controlling for GNI per person at PPP in 1999, this correlation is  $.51$ .

Still, the relationship between monumentalism and poor achievement in education is more complex than that Heine's theory suggests. We explore this issue further in this chapter. Before that, let us get a more profound understanding of what monumentalism stands for as a national dimension of culture. This can be done by examining some other phenomena — apart from educational achievement — that it is associated with.

### *Wenzhong and Yao Mianzi*

The Chinese Culture Connection project, which we met on several occasions already, described a dimension of national culture called “Confucian (work) dynamism.” Later, Geert Hofstede renamed it “long-term orientation,” or LTO, as he felt that the values defining this dimension had little to do with the teachings of Confucius (see *Chinese Culture Connection*, 1987; Hofstede, 2001; Hofstede et al., 2010). LTO is a complex construct, capturing national differences in conceptually dissimilar phenomena, without a connection that is obvious to a Western mind. Although this dimension was extracted from research using a Chinese questionnaire, Chinese scholars did not understand it either.<sup>10</sup> However, in the 2010 edition of “Cultures and Organizations; Software of the Mind,” Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede, and I show the statistical and conceptual similarity between LTO and my monumentalism dimension, both of which can be explained in terms of Steven Heine's theory. LTO and monumentalism are not exactly identical twins, but they are certainly sisters.

The original LTO dimension in the study by the Chinese Culture Connection was defined, among other things, by a low importance of two Chinese values: *wenzhong* and *yao mianzi*. These were translated as “personal steadiness and stability” and “protecting your face.”<sup>11</sup> How the first item relates to Heine's theory is more than clear. As for “face” — a concept that seems to have penetrated the Anglo-American language and culture under Chinese influence — it simply means maintenance of a dignified personal image. Striving to maintain face can be viewed as a self-enhancing act.

There is no society on Earth where people are not at all concerned about their public image or face. But the Chinese Culture Connection study revealed that although preserving face may be viewed as a good thing all over the world, it is a much more important goal in some countries than in others. Therefore Pakistan, Nigeria and the Philippines had the lowest LTO scores (relatively high importance of face and personal stability), whereas the East Asian countries were at the opposite extreme (relatively low importance of face and personal stability). As a

---

10. The dimension was completely dismissed by Fang (2003). It was also seriously challenged by Ashkanasy et al. (2004).

11. Chinese Culture Connection (1987). For the meaning of the Chinese terms *wenzhong* and *yao mianzi*, see Fang (2003).

consequence, LTO and monumentalism are associated conceptually, as well as statistically.<sup>12</sup>

This is extremely important because it shows that very similar cultural dimensions can be arrived at from different starting points: Western and Chinese. The WVS, from where I extracted the monumentalism dimension, is a product of Western minds. The Chinese Culture Connection, which produced the LTO dimension, used a questionnaire inspired by Chinese culture. Both pathways led to something fairly similar, confirming a crucial cultural difference between East Asia on the one hand, where personal flexibility and humility are the norm, and countries where pride is acceptable and maintaining a strong and unchangeable identity is encouraged.

## Service to Others

Many people in monumentalist societies have a pronounced tendency to attach a high importance to rendering services to others.<sup>13</sup> They have a strongly felt need to come across as good citizens who are worthy of admiration. Helping others is a way of maintaining a positive public image or face — something very important in a monumentalist culture.

American psychologist Robert Levine is known for his studies of helping behavior throughout the world. Levine's associates orchestrated three types of experiments, repeated hundreds of times each in major cities in Africa, Asia, Europe, and South and North America: an apparently blind person seemed to need help to cross the

---

12. Monumentalism correlates with Confucian work dynamism/LTO (*Chinese Culture Connection*, 1987) at  $-.62^{**}$  ( $n = 16$ ). After controlling for GNI or GDP per person, either in 1987 or in 1998, this correlation becomes about  $-.80$ . The partialing out of the effect of national wealth is justified by the fact that Confucian work dynamism was obtained by means of factor analysis, which purged it from the effect of national wealth and rendered it orthogonal to that variable (whereas the effects of national wealth were concentrated on some of the other factors).

Monumentalism is very close also to Inglehart's traditional values dimension. This is not surprising as Inglehart's dimension is also highly correlated with Confucian work dynamism, or LTO. After controlling for GDP or GNI per person, that correlation is  $.75$ . All three dimensions — monumentalism, Confucian dynamism/LTO, and Inglehart's traditional values — represent different facets of a broad cultural syndrome, interpreted very differently. Monumentalism (Minkov, 2007, 2008) provides a psychological explanation (self-enhancement and self-stability versus self-effacement and self-flexibility) that was lacking in previous studies of this syndrome but was adopted in Hofstede et al. (2010). Historical explanations of the two dimensions are also different. Inglehart and Baker (2000) associate traditional values with the effect of agrarian life and see secular values as a result of industrialization. Further in this chapter, I discuss a link between pastoralism (as practiced in the arid lands of the Middle East and Africa) and monumentalism versus wet-rice cultivation and flexumility.

Another major difference between monumentalism and Inglehart's dimension is that my dimension contrasts the Arab world and East Asia, whereas Inglehart's produces a different contrast at its two extremes: Latin America versus the Scandinavian countries.

13. WVS item A007 (latest data from 1994 to 2004) asks the respondents how important "service to others" is to them. The percentages of those who chose "very important" correlate with monumentalism at  $.90^{**}$  ( $n = 21$ ).

street, a pedestrian dropped a pen on the sidewalk and walked away, a limping person with a leg brace dropped some magazines and could not pick them up. Levine counted the percentage of cases in which these persons were helped in the cities where the experiments were carried out.

Despite the enormous methodological problems with this type of research, the results reveal a discernible pattern. The blind man experiments took place amidst a steady pedestrian flow. The national percentages of cases in which the blind man was helped are strongly associated with monumentalism.<sup>14</sup> But the persons who dropped the pen (and probably the limping persons) were solitary pedestrians. Occurrence of helping behavior in that case is not correlated with monumentalism.

This sheds light on the psychology of philanthropy as practiced in a relatively monumentalist society, such as the United States. Millionaires gladly give away their fortunes as long as they receive loud media coverage or their names are conspicuously attached to universities or foundations. Helping in secret does not have a great appeal in a monumentalist society.

## Personal Pride

We saw already that the monumentalist dimension is defined by collective self-enhancement, such as stronger national pride and a greater importance of parental pride. But the high importance of preserving face suggests that it is also associated with greater personal pride.

In the earliest studies of the WVS, respondents were asked how proud they were of their work. People in more monumentalist societies expressed greater pride. Another item, from a later WVS study, asked the respondents whether they saw themselves as models for other people. Unsurprisingly, monumentalist nations had higher percentages of people who provided this self-description.<sup>15</sup>

Apart from the large-scale paper-and-pencil surveys, focused idiographic studies of the two geographic extremes of monumentalism — the Arab world and the Middle East versus East Asia — illustrate some marked differences in pride. In traditional Chinese culture, like in Europe, inferior people had to bow to those that were higher up in the social hierarchy. In Japan, this custom was practiced so often that it has lost some of its original meaning. Today, a bow may be a simple greeting. But it still conveys a note of humility. In the Arab world, bowing to people is frowned upon as an act that is below a person's dignity. Many Arabs say that they will bow to no one but Allah. There are social hierarchies in Arab societies, but even a person of low rank is allowed to maintain

---

14. Data from Levine et al. (2001). The correlation between monumentalism and occurrence of help for the blind man is .85\*\* ( $n = 12$ ).

15. The work pride item is C031, latest data for each country from 1981 to 1984. It correlates with monumentalism at .74\*\*, albeit across only eight overlapping countries. The model-for-others item is E050, latest data for each country from 1990 to 1993. Its correlation with monumentalism is .54\*\* ( $n = 22$ ).

a dignified image and should not be asked to debase himself by lowering his head and symbolically acknowledging his personal inferiority.

Differences in personal pride and self-enhancement between Americans and East Europeans or East Asians are also easily discernible. An American friend of mine who had lived in Bulgaria for a year once asked me to explain an apparently strange phenomenon: when you make a compliment to a Bulgarian — “You look beautiful in this dress” or “You did a really great job” — the most common reaction is embarrassment, a giggle and an attempt to discount the praise: “Well, yeah, more or less...but not really.” This is also typical of East Asia where people are not accustomed to receiving personal praise. In the United States, however, when you hear a compliment you stand proudly and say “Thank you.” There is no giggling and discounting. This can strike an East European or an East Asian as unacceptable arrogance, but is perfectly normal in monumentalist America.

## **Tipping Practices**

Tipping may be a marginal social phenomenon but it illustrates the nature of monumentalism quite well. Michael Lynn of the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University studied cross-cultural differences in tipping by comparing the number of professions in which tipping is customary in 32 countries.<sup>16</sup> He found that the highest number of such professions is in the United States (31), followed by Egypt (30), southern Europe, some Latin American countries and India. The lowest number of such professions is in the Scandinavian countries, New Zealand and East Asia, where it is between 0 and 13.

A study of tipping practices in East and Southeast Asia, published in *Time Asia* (Beach, 1999), concluded that tipping is not part of Korean, Japanese, and Chinese culture: “In Japan, if you leave a couple of coins on the table, the waiter is liable to chase after you to return your forgotten change....” I have had similar experiences in Singapore. If your taxi bill is 11 Singaporean dollars and 65 cents, and you give the driver 12 dollars, he will hand you back 35 cents unless you have told him to keep the change. The same is also very likely to occur after a taxi ride in most small Bulgarian towns that have not been affected by the tourism industry. But in an Arab country, a customer who saves his pennies will be viewed as a cheap tightwad, and his behavior can cause serious offense. It can be swallowed with some effort or expressed in no uncertain terms.

Michael Lynn explained tipping as, among other things, a result of people’s needs for status-seeking. The high correlation between monumentalism and prevalence of tipping shows that, in a sense, this is correct, at least at the level of societies. Those,

---

16. See Lynn (1997, 2000). I obtained the tipping data through personal communication with M. Lynn (May 27, 2006). The correlation between monumentalism and the number of professions where tipping is typical is .67\*\* ( $n = 19$ ).

where it is more important to maintain a dignified public image, have more professions where tipping is expected.

This explains why thrift is negatively associated with monumentalism: monumentalist societies attach a lower importance to it because the need for ostentatious spending is often a priority.<sup>17</sup> In the previous chapter, we saw that a lack of thrift is associated with a sort of indulgence: seeking pleasure today, despite a potentially uncertain tomorrow. But profligacy can also have an element of monumentalism. Conspicuous spending is more likely to occur in monumentalist societies because it buys the social prestige and admiration that people value so much. An interesting illustration of this was a gesture of generosity by Cameroonian football star Samuel Eto'o before the World Cup in South Africa. On June 9, 2010, Yahoo!Sports announced that he had bought each of his Cameroonian teammates a designer watch, worth 29,000 British pounds each. The total bill that Eto'o paid amounted to 900,000 British pounds (1.3 million US dollars).

## **Suicide Rates**

Suicide is a complex behavioral phenomenon that has attracted much attention since French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858–1917) first attempted to explain it. Two different issues need to be considered in this context: why some individuals are more prone to suicidal behavior than others and why some nations consistently have higher suicide rates than others. The first question is outside the scope of this book. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that low subjective well-being (unhappiness and low life satisfaction) has been discussed as a powerful factor that causes individuals to commit suicide.

Suicide rates have been studied from a number of psychological and sociological perspectives. Some of these have found associations with subjective well-being, whereas others have focused on religious denomination.<sup>18</sup> Neither of the two explanations are fully satisfactory. National differences in suicide rates cannot be well explained as a function of happiness or life satisfaction as measured by the WVS. The highest annual suicide rates are in the unhappiest nations — those of the European part of the former Soviet Union, exceeding 60 or even 70 per 100,000 inhabitants in some of them. However, Georgians and Armenians are also very unhappy, yet their annual rates are about 4. Contrary to widespread myths, the Scandinavian countries, with the exception of Finland, do not have high suicide rates. But it is also true that they are not champions in suicide prevention despite having some of the highest happiness levels in the world. Every year about 25 Norwegians per 100,000 people take their own lives. The nations that have the lowest

---

17. See “industry and monumentalism indices” in the research notes chapter at the end of the book.

18. For an individual-level analysis, see Joiner (2005). For some psychological and sociological perspectives on national differences in suicide rates, see for example Wu and Bond (2006). The link between national suicide rates and religious denomination is discussed in Bertolote and Fleischmann (2002).

suicide rates — those in the Arab world — are not particularly happy. Still, in most of them hardly anybody at all commits suicide (Suicide bombers view their deaths as combat casualties, not as acts of despair). Even if differences in subjective well-being explain a little bit of the national suicide rates, we must look elsewhere for a more convincing answer.

Austrian psychologist Martin Voracek has shown that nations with higher IQs have higher suicide rates (Voracek, 2004, 2009; see also Templer, Connelly, Lester, Arikawa, & Mancuso, 2007). He backs these findings with a complex theory, which basically boils down to the idea that suicide requires a high intelligence level. Leaving aside the controversial question of what average national IQs actually measure, Voracek's studies are statistically correct: higher national IQs, whatever they mean, are associated with higher suicide rates.

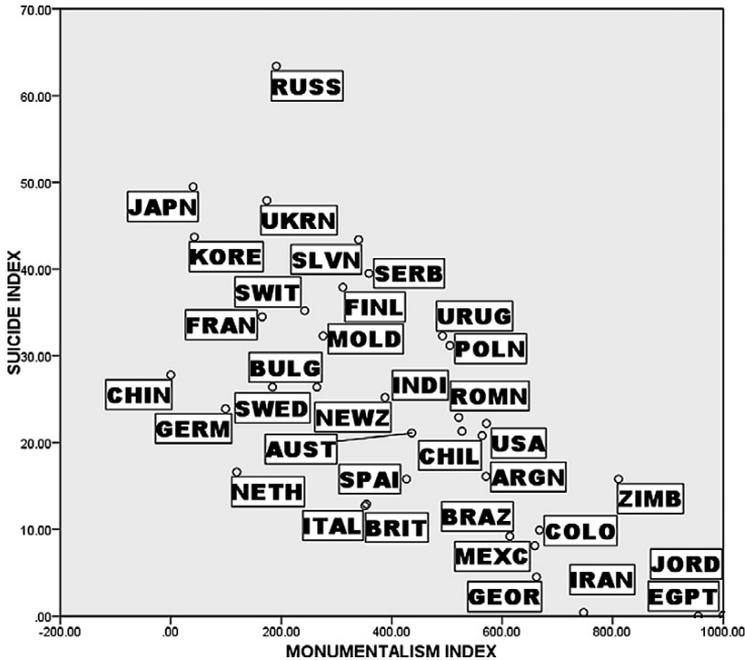
Yet, monumentalism produces such a strong negative association with national suicide rates that it renders all other explanations, including national IQs, redundant.<sup>19</sup> National measures of subjective well-being, especially percentages of people in the WVS who say they feel very healthy, also explain a little, but only a little, over and above what can be explained by monumentalism. Graph 4.3 visualizes the relationship between monumentalism and national suicide rates: in more monumentalist societies, there are fewer suicides.

It may seem natural that populations with higher percentages of people who feel very healthy will have fewer suicides. But the main statistical explanation of suicide rates is provided by monumentalism. What is the conceptual link between the two?

Monumentalist nations are characterized by high family pride and cohesion. Although the nation-level correlation does not necessarily have implications for the individual level, it is logical to assume that proud people who enjoy a lot of family support have no good reason to commit suicide. High religiousness also acts as a buffer but hardly because the Qur'an or the Bible says that suicide is a sin. Most ordinary Arabs have a rather poor knowledge of the sacred books of Islam and do not understand them well because they are written in an extremely archaic language, the English equivalent of which would be an original text by Chaucer. Rather than taking guidance for their behavior directly from sacred books, religious people with poor education rely on strong networks of relatives and friends that provide mutual emotional support.

---

19. In Minkov (2010), which is a reply to Voracek, I show that religiousness is a better predictor of national suicide rates than aggregate national IQs. Monumentalism is an even better predictor. It correlates with average national suicide rates (calculated on the basis of national rates for men and women in World Health Organization, 2009b) at  $-.73^{**}$  ( $n = 35$ ). Monumentalism indices for larger country samples (based on 1994–2004 data) yield slightly weaker correlations. National IQ scores (Lynn & Vanhanen, 2002) correlate with average national suicide rates at  $.51^{**}$  ( $n = 96$ ). In linear regression, any monumentalism index (based on data from 1994 to 2004 or 2005 to 2008, or on average data) is a significant predictor of national suicide rates, explaining 40–50 percent of the variance. IQs, and WVS measures of subjective well-being, are not significant predictors in a regression model with monumentalism. One possible exception may be the item that measures subjective health. The percentages of males who say their health is very good are a weak negative predictor of suicide across male populations.



Graph 4.3: Visualization of the relationship between suicide rates and the cultural dimension of monumentalism. *Notes:* The vertical axis shoes average numbers of people (males and females) per 100,000 inhabitants who commit suicide annually (latest data from the World Health Organization). The horizontal axis shows monumentalism scores. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

As for the ban on suicide that the ideologists of the Middle Eastern religions have imposed on their followers, it can be explained as a result of the monumentalism, which — as we will see — was characteristic of Middle Eastern culture as far back as the early Middle Ages and probably also in antiquity. Because the rare cases of suicide in the Middle East have always seemed shocking and incomprehensible acts amidst a strongly monumentalist culture, suicide has been banned by religious decree. This ban can be mentioned as a reference during a religious sermon to prevent suicidal ideation, but it would hardly be a good deterrent if it were not backed by a strongly monumentalist culture.

### Self-Stability and Self-Consistency

We have seen already that monumentalist societies are characterized by a number of traits that suggest higher collective and personal pride and a higher concern for

maintaining a dignified public image. But how exactly are self-stability and consistency expressed?

A number of items in the WVS elucidate this issue. Consider the following questions, most of them asked between 2005 and 2008 in some 50 countries. Some have been slightly paraphrased for the sake of clarity:

- Is it very important to you always to behave properly?
- Do you make efforts to live up to your friends' expectations?
- Is tradition very important to you?
- Do you believe that having ancestors from your country should be a requirement for citizenship?

At the national level, positive answers to all these questions are conceptually and statistically associated with the cultural dimension of exclusionism, explained in Chapter 6. People in exclusionist societies are more likely to adhere to in-group norms and strive to satisfy the expectations of their relatives and friends, while ignoring the customs of other groups and discriminating against them. But agreement with these questions is also highly correlated with monumentalism.<sup>20</sup>

Permanent adherence to proper behavior suggests personal consistency: being always the same person. Making efforts to live up to friends' expectations means the same. Honoring traditional customs is also a form of self-stability. Believing that only people with ancestors from your country should be granted citizenship stands for a conviction that identities do not and should not change. You cannot belong to one nation for some time and then switch to another.

These ideas appeal most strongly to Arabs and other North Africans (respondents in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Mali), followed by some sub-Saharan Africans (Ghana, Burkina Faso). They receive much lower support in Europe and East Asia, particularly in Japan.

The earlier versions of the WVS, those before 2004, had some other questions that address self-stability and self-consistency or avoidance of duality. Again, I have paraphrased them for greater clarity:

- Should parents always strive to do their best for their children or can they have a parallel life of their own?
- Is divorce justifiable?

Respondents in monumentalist societies are more likely to view the ideal parents as totally devoted to their children, without a parallel life of their own. People should

---

20. Monumentalism correlates with the following items in the 2005–2008 wave of the WVS: v89 (a person to whom tradition is important is very much like me): .82\*\* ( $n = 35$ ), v217 (having ancestors from this country is a very important requirement for citizenship, strongly agree): .69\*\* ( $n = 31$ ), v66 (I always try to live up to friends' expectations, strongly agree): .65\*\* ( $n = 37$ ), v87 (a person who always behaves properly is very much like me): .67\*\* ( $n = 35$ ).

have only one indivisible self, which does not incorporate inconsistencies. You cannot be a good parent while also being detached from your children. As for divorce, it is obviously an act of personal instability.<sup>21</sup>

Although the available national surveys provide strong evidence for cross-cultural differences in personal stability and consistency, idiographic analyses of some salient features of traditional East Asian and Arab cultures illustrate these concepts even more vividly.

### Self-Flexibility in Traditional East Asia

There are two Japanese words that are known to most cross-cultural experts: *honne* and *tatemae*. The first refers to one's inside feelings, beliefs, and intentions. The second can be translated as "facade." This is the show that you put on if you feel that you need to hide your internal self. In Japan, and throughout East Asia, it is perfectly acceptable to be two different people at the same time: one visible and one hidden deep inside.

Various comparative studies have revealed that, in contrast to Americans, East Asians see no problem pretending that they are happy when they are not. They are far more likely to make statements like "I am not the same person at home that I am at school," and far less inclined to say "I act the same, no matter who I am with" (Gudykunst, Yang, & Nishida, 1987; Heine, Lehman, Peng, & Greenholtz, 2002). In East Asia, it is important to adapt to others, not to show what you actually feel or be the same person. If others are having a good time at a party, you should not spoil it for them by showing your boredom. If necessary, you should be tough and strict toward your children, while being lenient toward your students, or the other way around.

Flexibility is considered an essential human quality in Japan, but not in monumentalist America. In the United States, lawyers are often an object of crude jokes such as "What do you call 100,000 lawyers on the bottom of the ocean? A good start" and "What is the difference between a spermatozoid and a lawyer? The spermatozoid has one chance in one million of becoming a human being." There are multiple explanations of this phenomenon but one seems to be the fact that lawyers are required to be able to defend a cause that they do not believe in — something very reprehensible in a monumentalist culture that stresses self-consistency.

Because the East Asian human self is so flexible and malleable, it may not have a strongly defined identity. Who you are may depend on the social situation. This perception of a flexible identity was so strong that it affected the East Asian languages, as well as those of Thais, Vietnamese, and other Southeast Asians. In the classic

---

21. The item that measures parental consistency (agreement that parents must always do their best) is A026. It correlates with monumentalism at  $.74^{**}$  ( $n = 42$ ). The acceptance of divorce item is F121. The average national scores for that item correlates with monumentalism at  $-.60^{**}$  ( $n = 43$ ).

versions of those languages, and often in modern speech as well, there is no single “I” pronoun or a consistent way to refer to one’s self; the choice of the expression depends on the situation. For example, when addressing a person of superior rank in the imperial period, the Chinese would not use the same self-reference as when they talked to their equals. Standing before a superior, the Chinese would choose from a wide range of different words or idioms, meaning “[I], the unintelligent,” “[I], who failed to give you proper notice,” “[I], the lowly,” “[I] who am humbler and lower than you,” “[I], the worthless commoner,” “[I], your servant,” and so forth, as the case may be.<sup>22</sup> These different self-references suggest a relational self (an identity that depends on the situation) and strong humility at the same time.

Since their first contacts with Europeans and Americans, many East Asians have strived to identify themselves with them, both visibly and inwardly. Euro-American customs such as Christmas trees, white bride dresses, birthday cakes with candles, and Halloween pageants have penetrated East Asian societies, just like bleached or undulated hair, earrings, body piercing, and tattoos. Old cultural identities are being abandoned fast, especially by the Chinese. Nowadays, it is absolutely normal for a Chinese in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia to have an English first name. This habit has reached the People’s Republic as well, where more and more people have two names: one for interactions with Chinese and one — for instance Debbie, Pam, or Steve — for foreigners. This duality is not a problem for many Chinese.

It is noteworthy that this identification with a foreign culture takes place in flexhumble societies only when their members view a particular foreign culture as somehow superior to theirs, at least in some respects. The Chinese in Malaysia have chosen to identify themselves with Americans and other Anglos, and some even speak English to their children, albeit with a Chinese accent. They wish no identification with Malay culture and even keep themselves at some distance from Malays. Bulgarians lived nearly 500 years under Turkish rule but did not adopt any customs, names, or other symbols from the Ottomans. Today, just like the Chinese, they gladly call their children Edward, Patrick, and Deborah, although French female names are also popular.

## **Self-Stability and Self-Consistency in the Traditional Arab World**

In many ways, the Arab world is the exact cultural opposite of East Asia. It is very important for a person to be one’s self and resist the temptation to change. Duality is condemned: you cannot and should not be two persons at the same time. Having a *honne* and *tatemae* would be viewed as horrible hypocrisy. These are very old characteristics of Arab culture. Seen through the prism of monumentalism theory,

---

22. Examples from *Chinese honorifics* in Wikipedia.

they help explain some traits of Arab and Muslim societies that perplex Western publics.

In the strongly monumentalist traditional Arab culture, a person was believed to have a single stable identity and a single image — the one of flesh and blood. Artificial representations were subconsciously viewed as clumsy attempts to duplicate a person's real self. Therefore, drawings and statues were forbidden and this ban is still supported by some religious leaders. Interestingly, according to Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, one of the foremost modern Islamic authorities on what is forbidden (*haram*) or allowed (*halal*) to Muslims, a statue stops being *haram* if its face is disfigured (Al-Qaradawi, 2002). When a human likeness loses its face, it is no longer possible to tell whose self it duplicates. Nowadays, some pious Arab artists paint street scenes, or even portraits, in which people have deliberately blurred or erased faces.

Despite its astonishing advances in various arts and sciences in the Middle Ages, the traditional Arab world did not develop a taste for theatrical performances.<sup>23</sup> Acting involves something unnatural in a traditional Arab society: assumption of a different self. Likewise, the need for a stable identity discouraged the use of masks in that culture, because they suggest a change of identity. Masks are an integral part of the material culture of East Asia but have been practically unknown in the Arab world.

Although alcohol has made its way into most Arab societies today, its use is still minimal. The Qur'an forbids "strong drinks." A drunken person looks like a different individual.

The need for self-consistency can be so strongly felt in some parts of Arab societies as to result in prohibitions that would amaze a European or an East Asian. Al-Qaradawi and others denounce any attempt to permanently change one's physical outlook. Tattoos and cosmetic surgery are *haram* because they amount to "unnecessarily changing what Allah has created." Even wigs are an unacceptable form of falsification of one's true identity. According to Al-Qaradawi, the Prophet was very strict in combating such deceptions, so much so that if a woman lost her hair due to some illness, he did not permit her to add other hair to that on her head, even if she were soon to be married (Al-Qaradawi, 2002).

It must be emphasized that these bans do not have a religious origin. They cannot have been invented by religious leaders and then imposed on an unwilling population. Rather, they reflect cultural norms and values, so natural in the Arab world that they have penetrated the mainstream religious doctrine and may now be reinforced by it.

These cultural bans work remarkably well in the Arab world and the Middle East. In contrast to East Asians, Arabs and Middle Easterners do not easily adopt Western looks. Males have not taken to dying their hair, or shaving it, or wearing it long. Earrings and tattoos are taboo for them. This is so even in officially secular Turkey.

---

23. Perhaps the best historical analysis of the performing arts in the Arab world can be found in Allen (2000). According to that author, some Arab communities had puppet theaters and on-stage storytelling. Real acting, involving character personification, in the traditional Arab world was mostly confined to some Shia communities, some of which were actually in Iran.

In 2008, I spent four days in Istanbul, looking at thousands of young males. I saw only one with a somewhat conspicuous hairstyle and not one with died hair, an earring, or a tattoo.

It is not surprising then that although many people from Arab countries, the Middle East, and Pakistan fully integrate in Western societies, quite a few actively resist complete westernization because it seems to them like a betrayal of their true identity and an act that is below their dignity. They view those who change their identity as apostates. Like many other Muslim clerics, Al-Qaradawi criticizes those Muslims who adopt Western customs. Condemning their behavior, he says that Islam is the word of Allah and His word is always uppermost: “Islam came to be followed, not to follow; to be dominant, not subordinate. How can the Lord of men follow men and how can the Creator submit to the whims of His creatures?” (Al-Qaradawi, 2002)

The Pew Research Center (2006) provided exact percentages of Muslims in Western European countries who said that they preferred to remain distinct from the mainstream society rather than adopt European national customs: 21 percent of the Muslim population in France, 27 in Spain, 35 in the United Kingdom, and 52 in Germany. Roughly, one-third of European Muslims — who are mainly Arabs, Turks, and Pakistanis — wish to maintain some original identity rather than merge with the cultural mainstream of their adoptive countries.

### **Assertion versus the Middle Way in Judgments and Opinions**

Many American expatriates in East Asia have been frustrated by the perceived unwillingness of their local associates to take a clear position on seemingly simple issues and give straight answers to straight questions. But the frustration is mutual. East Asians can also be exasperated by the need to express an unambiguous stance in their communication with Americans because that is unnatural in their culture. In a televised interview in Japan, Akio Morita, the late founder of Sony Corporation, shared his rich experience with Americans (*Fortune*, November 22, 1999). He told the audience that the critical thing in America was to start right out with a “yes” or “no,” followed by a brief explanation, whereas Japanese prefer to avoid such straight answers, especially if they are negative. Motivated by various concerns, such as a desire to avoid sounding abrupt, Japanese interlocutors may go to significant lengths in their attempts to maintain vagueness.

Different societies have different ways of expression. In some, categorical judgments and opinions are perfectly acceptable. Elsewhere, one must be more ambiguous. An example of the first type of expression would be a statement like “I very much approve of the way our government is handling the situation in this country” or “I think the government is doing a very bad job.” A more ambiguous opinion would be “I am somewhat satisfied with this government” or “I am somewhat skeptical of it.”

In 2007, the Pew Research Center asked representative samples of people in 44 countries around the world to make judgments about various aspects of life in their countries, as well as to assess the quality of their own lives. The respondents were

asked to give personal opinions on issues such as the economic situation in the country, the performance of the national government, the use of military force in international affairs, the influence of various entities in the country such as the media, large multinational companies, immigrants, and more. The respondents were also asked to judge the quality of their family life, job, and household income. These issues fell into many different categories, not only conceptually, but also statistically. This means that if there is a consistent pattern in the observed answers in a particular country, it is not formed by the contents of the questions — which are very dissimilar — but by some cultural programming that makes people prefer one type of expression style to another.

In my analysis of the expression of these judgments, I calculated the degree of polarization for each item and each country, defined as relatively high national percentages of people that provide an extreme positive answer (“this is very good”) and at the same time relatively high percentages in the same country that provide an extreme negative answer (“this is very bad”). The results showed that, across all judgments, the Middle Eastern countries (Kuwait, Palestine, Egypt and Jordan) had the most polarized judgments. Tanzania, Pakistan, and South Africa were close to them, followed by the United States.

South Korea, China, Japan, and Indonesia had the lowest polarization. These countries had the highest percentages of people who consistently preferred answers in the middle of the scale: “somewhat good” or “somewhat bad.” Malaysia and Eastern and Southern Europe were also weakly polarized. Interestingly, the Latin American countries exhibited relatively low polarization, too.

On the basis of the Pew Research Center data, I calculated a judgment polarization index for 47 countries. The index is positively associated with monumentalism: the more monumentalist a country’s culture, the higher its polarization in expressions of judgments.<sup>24</sup> The reason for this should not be hard to grasp. East Asians have flexible selves but flexibility has its limits. One cannot make an extreme judgment, such as “the government of our country is very bad” and then, after hearing somebody make the opposite statement, say, “In fact, you are right. We have a very good government.” Flexibility is possible when one follows the famous Buddhist Middle Way: “Our government is somewhat bad.” After this statement, it is much easier to say, “I agree with you. In some ways, our government is somewhat good.”

In contrast, a person who is not guided by a need to be flexible would not hesitate to make extreme statements. When challenged, that person would not budge and may even fight back verbally. Monumentalist cultures apparently have higher

---

24. For the statistical analysis and the Pew Research Center data see Minkov (2009b). In-country polarization measures can be obtained by multiplying the percentages of respondents in a particular country who have chosen the positive extreme (“very good”) by the percentages who have chosen the negative extreme (“very bad”). In this way, a country with 30 percent answering “very good” and 20 percent answering “very bad” ( $30 \times 20 = 600$ ) is obviously more polarized than a country where 80 percent answer “very good” and 5 percent answer “very bad” ( $80 \times 5 = 400$ ). The correlation between monumentalism and the polarization index in Minkov (2009b) is .53\*\* ( $n = 26$ ).

percentages of such people. However, Latin America's relative avoidance of polarized judgments suggests that other factors are also involved.

Differences in the ways that people express their opinions account for some differences in negotiation styles. Arabs are hard and pushy bargainers. They see nothing wrong with telling you that your price is too high and needs to be halved. To Japanese ears, a strong statement of this kind is so unnatural that it could cause utmost confusion or indignation, or both. Richard Lewis, a British business consultant and linguist who taught English at the Japanese imperial court, provides an interesting example (Lewis, 2006, p. 513). He and an Arab colleague negotiated for the lease of some real estate. After the Japanese owner explained the merits of the property, he quoted a price. The Arab immediately slashed it by half, believing that he was setting the normal tone for bargaining. The owner and his interpreter smiled, bowed, and left the room. They were never seen again.

## Religion

1. "Say: O disbelievers!
2. I worship not that which ye worship;
3. Nor worship ye that which I worship.
4. And I shall not worship that which ye worship,
5. Nor will ye worship that which I worship.
6. Unto you your religion, and unto me my religion."

Qur'an, surah CIX; 1–6

We believe not only in universal toleration, but we [also] accept all religions as true.<sup>25</sup>

Swami Vivekananda  
Hindu guru

Since antiquity, the world has been divided into two main religious zones: absolutist and dialectical. The absolutist religions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — arose in the Middle East and spread throughout the Western hemisphere, but reached also South and Southeast Asia. The main dialectical doctrines — Hinduism and Buddhism — originated in India but propagated eastward. Buddhism was adopted throughout East Asia and has coexisted with local doctrines, such as Taoism and Shinto, whereas Hinduism reached Indonesia.

Defining the Middle Eastern religions as absolutist, and those of India as dialectical, is of course an act of reductionism. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism exist in countless forms, some of which are so different from the mainstream

---

25. Statement in Hinduwebsite.com.

that it is unclear how they should be classified. Besides, it is possible to find absolutism in Buddhist sermons and flexibility in Islamic lore. Nevertheless, if we compare the essence of the Middle Eastern doctrine to that of India, we will notice a fairly clear contrast that can be explained in terms of monumentalism versus flexumility. These two poles of one and the same cultural dimension have approximate equivalents in religious thought: absolutist versus dialectical.

Generally speaking, the Middle Eastern religions are characterized by strongly expressed positions that are often enshrined as sacred dogmas. There is no Middle Way when it comes to judgment. Typically, things are either very good or absolutely bad, quite right or terribly wrong. These are not abstract religious tenets without an analogue in the thinking of ordinary people. The WVS asked its respondents whether there exist clear guidelines about what is good and evil. Monumentalist societies have far higher percentages of people who agree with this statement.<sup>26</sup>

Middle Eastern religions do not normally allow different positions on one and the same important issue. Life after death cannot exist and be non-existent at the same time, nor can the answer to this depend on one's viewpoint. A person cannot have a soul and be without one. God cannot be simultaneously real and a product of people's imagination. Nor can He be one and several, although Christianity, in contrast to Judaism and Islam, is somewhat ambiguous on this matter.

In the Middle Eastern doctrine, all people have an immutable identity, encapsulated in their souls, which stays with them not only in this life but also in the hereafter. Once created, the self is not only stable but also eternal. There can be no duality in religious identity, either. It is absurd to be a Muslim and a Christian at the same time, or a Jew and a Christian, or any other combination.

While the Christian religion allows some ambiguity with respect to the nature of God and speaks of three faces of one and the same entity — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — Islam vehemently denounces this concept as dangerous heresy. Just like the human self, the self of God must be stable, consistent, and unique.

#### **The Qur'an on the Christian Saint Trinity<sup>27</sup>**

72. They surely disbelieve who say: Lo! Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary. The Messiah (himself) said: O Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. Lo! Whoso ascribeth partners unto Allah, for him Allah hath forbidden paradise. His abode is the Fire. For evil-doers there will be no helpers.

73. They surely disbelieve who say: Lo! Allah is the third of three; when there is no God save the One God. If they desist not from so saying, a painful doom will fall on those of them who disbelieve.

26. This is item F022. It correlates with monumentalism at .71\*\* ( $n = 38$ ).

27. Qur'an (n.d., V; 72–73).

This absolutist philosophy suits stable and consistent selves that need to tether themselves to a steady and unambiguous moral anchor. It appeals to proud selves who would be pleased to remain as they are forever. True, the Middle Eastern religions are familiar with the concept of becoming a better person through repentance, strengthening of one's faith, and good deeds. But that is not viewed as a substantial change of identity.

The Indian religions are quite different. Typically, no dogmatic answers are given to basic questions about the identity of God or man. In Hinduism, God can be viewed as one or three or many. The supreme and absolute deity is one, called Brahma(n), but he has three main personifications: Shiva, Vishnu, and Rama. Furthermore, these can have multiple *avatars* or descents on Earth in various forms. The Christian religion recognizes one such descent — when God assumed the form of Jesus Christ. In Hinduism, the avatars of a deity can be countless. Sacred figures from all over the world can be viewed and accepted as divine personifications: Krishna, Jesus, and the Buddha are only some of the best-known examples. It is perfectly possible for an Indian to follow several religions at the same time. A large-scale anthropological survey of India conducted research in 4635 Indian communities from 1985 to 1992. The study found that in 393 of those communities, people followed two religions at the same time. The members of 16 communities followed as many as three religions simultaneously (Singh, 1992).

An interesting example is provided by Dominik Guss of Northern Illinois University in the United States (Guss, 2002). In an Indian hospital, a disabled worker was visited by a Christian missionary. The worker agreed to believe in Jesus and experienced positive changes in his life. He said that as a result of that the Christian faith of his family had become very strong. So strong indeed, that they put a picture of Jesus in their praying room, next to those of their other gods.

This religious flexibility does not occur only when an Indian's main faith is Hinduism. Other Indian religions allow it as well. During a visit to a Hindu temple in Singapore, I noticed a tall man wearing an unmistakable Sikh turban. He was not a curious tourist but an active participant in an ongoing religious ritual, standing in front of a half-naked Hindu priest who was making some symbolic gestures in front of his face. After that, the Sikh bowed and started walking toward the exit. Intrigued by what I saw, I asked the Indian doorkeeper whether he could explain the situation. Naturally, he did not feel that had the authority to do that but helpfully called the guru of the temple. The guru came, accompanied by a Tamil lady in a sari. I told them that I was a cross-cultural researcher with a strong interest in religious differences. I pointed to the man with the turban who was putting his shoes on outside the temple at that moment and asked the guru whether the man was a Sikh. "Yes," replied the guru. "But this is a Hindu temple," I said, "and Sikhism is a different religion. Is that right?" "That is right," the guru agreed, "but the temple is open to people of all religions and all races. We only expect you to show respect and take off your shoes outside." "I know that," I said, "but this man participated in the rituals as if he was a Hindu." "We accept

all religions,” the guru and the woman said in one voice. “Everybody is welcome.” “Does that mean that this man can now go to a Sikh temple, pray there, and come here tomorrow? Would you still accept him?” “Yes,” said the two Indians without any hesitation. “We accept everybody. It does not matter what other religion they practice.”

Naturally, this religious flexibility means that Hinduism cannot adhere to very strict theological dogmas. It allows views that would be considered mutually exclusive in a strongly monumentalist society. There is no hard dogma even about the existence of God. Sri Ramana Maharshi (1879–1950), one of the most venerated Hindu gurus in recorded history, and a living saint during his lifetime, accepted all sorts of opinions about the nature of God, ranging from an Islamic position (“nothing can happen without His will”) to pure atheism. Sometimes he might say that God never does anything but on other occasions he would state that nothing happens except by God’s will. In some sermons, he claimed that God is just an idea in the mind, while at other times he would say that God is the only existing reality. It all depended on the nature of the audience and the viewpoint that they were comfortable with (Godman, 2005).

This philosophical flexibility can easily be mistaken for political populism: the guru says whatever the audience likes to hear, motivated only by a populist desire to please everybody and attract as many followers as possible. In fact, the flexible Hindu doctrine is compatible with modern scientific thought. God can be identical to Mother Nature or the combination of all forces that maintain the world in its present state while changing it at the same time: gravity, electricity, magnetism, atomic forces, and everything else that a physicist can think of. The laws of evolution or social change could also be added here. But is God anything beyond that, and — most importantly — does He have expectations concerning our behavior? Would we be disciplined in the case of a transgression? That is also a matter of viewpoint. If we wish, we can view the destruction of our natural environment and global warming as acts against God for which we will be punished by Nature. It is all a matter of what words we choose to describe one and the same reality.

Siddharta Gautama, known as the Buddha, and his followers were well aware of Hinduism’s philosophical flexibility and penchant for dialecticism. In *Brahmajala sutta* — one of the key Buddhist discourses composed some 2300 years ago — and in other similar texts, they describe the enormous variety of religious doctrines in ancient India, which taught widely divergent views: human beings have souls; do not have souls; have and do not have souls in one sense or another; neither have nor do not have souls. If they have souls, the soul is corporeal; is not corporeal; is neither of the two. It is eternal; is not eternal; is eternal and not eternal; is neither eternal, nor not eternal (*Brahmajala sutta*, 2003). After a detailed analysis, the Buddha arrived at the conclusion that none of these views can be proven right or wrong. His solution was not to express a view on any of these matters and avoid any debate on them.

**The Buddha's Views on the Nature of the Human Self or Soul and Life after Death**<sup>28</sup>

As he [the ignorant person] attends inappropriately in this way, one of six kinds of views arises in him: The view "I have a self" arises in him as true and established, or the view "I have no self" ... or the view "It is precisely by means of self that I perceive self" ... or the view "It is precisely by means of self that I perceive no-self" ... or the view "It is precisely by means of no-self that I perceive self" arises in him as true and established. Or else, he has a view like this: "This very self of mine — the knower that is sensitive here and there to the ripening of good and bad actions — is the self of mine that is constant, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change, and will stay just as it is for eternity."

This is called a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a writhing of views, a fetter of views. Bound by a fetter of views, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is not freed from birth, aging, and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair. He is not freed, I tell you, from suffering and stress.

So, Malunkyaputta, remember what is undisclosed by me as undisclosed, and what is disclosed by me as disclosed. And what is undisclosed by me? "The cosmos is eternal," is undisclosed by me. "The cosmos is not eternal", is undisclosed by me. "The cosmos is finite" ... "The cosmos is infinite" ... "The soul and the body are the same" ... "The soul is one thing and the body another" ...! "After death a Tathagata [the Buddha] exists" ... "After death a Tathagata does not exist" ... "After death a Tathagata both exists and does not exist" ... "After death a Tathagata neither exists nor does not exist," is undisclosed by me.

And why are they undisclosed by me? Because they are not connected with the goal, are not fundamental to the holy life. They do not lead to disenchantment, dispassion, cessation, calming, direct knowledge, self-awakening, unbinding. That's why they are undisclosed by me.

Buddhism is often viewed as a philosophy that teaches a doctrine of rebirth. However, the canonical texts explicitly state that this is not the same as a transmigration of a soul from one body to another. What is reborn is one's *karma* or deeds. For instance Hitler is dead but the neo-Nazis are keeping his legacy alive. From a Hindu viewpoint, this could be interpreted as evidence for the dialectical unity of life and death. The Buddha would have probably deflected questions on this issue.

There is a clear parallel between the spirit of a religion and the way in which its followers express judgments. The absolutist Middle Eastern religions are associated with strong expression of opinions, such as "absolutely right" versus "unmistakably

28. The first excerpt in this box is from *Sabbasava sutta* (1997). The second is from *Cula-Mahunkyaovada sutta* (2005). Both were composed between 400 and 200 BC.

wrong.” The dialectical doctrines of India are taught in the opposite style. There are no strong dogmas that do not allow an alternative view. When the Middle Way is followed in the expression of opinions, reconciliation is much easier in the case of disagreement.

Another tactic, preferred by mainstream Buddhist schools, is not to address controversial issues at all. Buddhism is silent about the existence and nonexistence of God. The issue is simply not treated in the canonical literature.

Admittedly, all sorts of exceptions from these generalizations are possible. I have listened to sermons by Hindu gurus who exuded religious intolerance despite their proclaimed doctrinal flexibility. I have also heard imams state that righteous people can see the Kingdom of Heaven, no matter if they are Muslims, Christians, or Jews. There are also Islamic websites that try to explain why the theory of evolution does not contradict the Qur’an. Nevertheless, the flexibility and dualism of the Middle Eastern faiths is relatively limited. It is unlikely that any of their mainstream versions would accept that one can freely decide whether God exists or does not exist, depending on how the concept is defined, or that atheism is simply another way of presenting the eternal truth of the Bible and the Qur’an.

## **Female and Male Labor Inequality**

Gender inequality is a painful topic of discussion throughout the globe. In many developing countries, there is a tendency to view women as unsuitable for many traditionally male occupations, such as leadership. This can be explained in terms of the cultural dimension of exclusionism, introduced in Chapter 6. Even rich Japan has not completely parted with this attitude toward women. Cultural change may lag behind economic development.

However, monumentalism is also implicated in gender relationships. The WVS has an item that asks whether the respondents agree that if a woman makes more money than her husband that can cause problems. In monumentalist societies, there is much higher agreement with this statement.<sup>29</sup> This is one of the keys to understand why many women in North Africa and the Middle East stay at home. If a wife earns more than her husband or has a more important job than him, that can result in hurting male pride.

Another WVS item asks whether a working mother can establish a good emotional relationship with her child. People in monumentalist societies, and especially in Pakistan and the Middle East, express the highest disagreement.<sup>30</sup> Many of them view the role of a mother as incompatible with the role of a working woman. Trying to combine the two would result in unacceptable duality.

---

29. This is item D006. Strong agreement that if a woman makes more money than her husband, there can be a problem correlates with monumentalism at .67\*\* ( $n = 30$ ).

30. This is item D056. The percentages who disagree, plus those who disagree strongly, correlate with monumentalism at .71\*\* ( $n = 42$ ).

When it comes to women's participation in the labor force, people in monumentalist nations are as good as their statements. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Statistics Division provide data on various aspects of gender inequality. Monumentalist nations have lower percentages of working women. The leaders in that respect are Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt, where these percentages range from 14 to 22. In Europe, the Anglo world, and East Asia, nearly half of all adult women work.

Sub-Saharan African countries have high female participation in the labor force, with percentages similar to those in Europe or higher. Clearly a factor other than monumentalism versus flexumility is at work here. We explore it in the next chapter.

When women do work in monumentalist nations, they make considerably less money than men.<sup>31</sup> This means that women are prevented from hurting male pride not only in words but also in deeds.

Interestingly, when compared to other societies, those with monumentalist cultures report higher percentages of working men. Their respondents are also more likely to say that they attach a higher importance to work as a value in their personal lives. However, at the national level these statements correlate only weakly with real working hours and that association disappears completely after taking into account the effect of national differences in wealth.<sup>32</sup> Also, there is no association between statements in the WVS concerning the importance of work and statements about the importance of leisure. This means that asking people how much they value work does not reveal anything about how industrious their societies are. Rather, the answers reflect how much pride they have.

In monumentalist societies, people state that work is important to them because their pride would suffer if they did not have a source of income. This is borne out by the fact that they are far more likely to agree that living on welfare is humiliating.<sup>33</sup> This raises a very interesting question: What is the meaning of the UN data concerning national percentages of working men? In many African and Arab countries, these reach and even exceed 90 percent. In Eastern Europe, the typical percentage is about 60 or even lower. At least part of this huge gap can probably be

---

31. Monumentalism correlates with the percentages of women in the adult labor force (UN Statistics Division, 2007) at  $-.76^{**}$  ( $n = 41$ ) and with the female-to-male income ratios in the UN Development Program (2007/2008) at  $-.56^{**}$  ( $n = 36$ ).

32. The correlation between monumentalism and "adult (15+) economic activity rate, male" in 2006 (UN Statistics Division, 2007) is  $.45^{**}$  ( $n = 41$ ). Monumentalism correlates with item A005 in the WVS (percentages who strongly agree that work is very important to them) at  $.74^{**}$  ( $n = 43$ ).

The correlation between item A005 and the percentages of people who work more than 40 hours a week — calculated on the basis of OECD (June 26, 2009) — is only .38 across 35 overlapping countries. It becomes .00 after controlling for national differences in wealth.

33. Monumentalism correlates with WVS item C037 (strong agreement that welfare is humiliating) at  $.54^{**}$  ( $n = 28$ ). This item also correlates negatively with measures of GNI per person at PPP (in poorer countries people are more likely to see welfare as humiliating), yet monumentalism is the better predictor in linear regression. On the contrary, importance of work in one's life (A005) correlates with seeing welfare as humiliating (C037) at  $.72^{**}$  ( $n = 52$ ).

attributed to differences in reporting. Compared to an Arab or African man, an East European male who does not have regular employment but lives on odd jobs is less likely to feel humiliated by describing himself as unemployed.

## **Educational Achievement Revisited**

Now that we have enough knowledge about the nature of monumentalism versus flexumility as a cultural dimension, it is time to revisit the crucially important issue of national differences in educational achievement. Heine's theory seems to provide a plausible explanation of this vexed issue: some populations achieve less than others because they are characterized by more pride and self-stability. This combination depresses interest in some types of self-improvement. Hence the low average achievement in education in the monumentalist nations. But does this not sound all too simplistic? Apart from the fact that national differences on various measures of educational achievement are strongly associated with monumentalism — a dimension inspired by Steve Heine's and Carol Dweck's ideas — what other evidence is there to demonstrate a real association between the two phenomena? Do some populations really have a weaker average tendency toward self-improvement through modern education?

A team of scholars led by Niels Noorderhaven of Tilburg University in the Netherlands and his Senegalese associate Bassirou Tidjani studied the cultural values of students in Cameroon, Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe and compared them with those of students in a number of Western countries, Hong Kong, and Malaysia: a total of 1000 respondents in 14 countries. The study produced a dimension of national culture defined by statements that wisdom is more important than knowledge and wisdom comes from experience and time, not from education. Compared to the other nations, those of Africa scored higher on this dimension, which means that they attached a lower importance to education and a higher importance to wisdom (Noorderhaven & Tidjani, 1998, 2001). In this case, "wisdom" is associated with time-honored tradition and maintaining connections to the past: remaining who you are rather than acquiring new aspects of the self.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to measuring the actual achievement in mathematics of national representative samples of 15-year olds in some 40 countries, the OECD PISA project also studied their attitudes toward mathematics. Interestingly, countries with higher percentages of students who agree strongly that they would like to be among the best in their class in mathematics have a lower average achievement. Another question asked to the students is whether they always try to be better than others. Again,

---

34. This interpretation of "wisdom" is based on Fischer, Vauclair, Fontaine, and Schwartz (2010) who indicate that in country-level structures of values "wisdom" refers to "maintaining connections to the past (e.g. devout, honoring elders). Societies high on embeddedness [that is traditionalism and conservatism], attribute importance to wisdom" (p. 147).

countries with high percentages of students who answer positively have lower actual achievement. In both cases, there is a convincing association with monumentalism as well. Countries with more students who say they want to be among the best, and more students who claim that they make real efforts to achieve that, have higher monumentalism scores.<sup>35</sup> Thus — consistent with Carol Dweck's theory — these statements reflect nothing more than a willingness to be in the spotlight and bask in the admiration of the spectators. They predict weaker, rather than stronger, actual effort.

The TIMSS studies illustrate a similar phenomenon. Students in countries with the highest achievement in mathematics have the most negative attitudes toward that subject and vice versa (Minkov, 2008). This suggests that children in the high-achieving countries feel a strong pressure for high results. They achieve such results but do not like the subject. Inversely, students in the underachieving countries do not mind studying mathematics because they do not feel a strong pressure from their teachers, parents, and peers. Monumentalist societies appear to be characterized by greater complacency and lenience in school practices.

There is also another possible explanation of the educational gap between monumentalist and flexhumble cultures: societies that encourage self-enhancement may generate counter-productive school practices. According to some researchers (Watkins, McInerney, Akande, & Lee, 2003), a school culture that promotes competition and rewards the top students is likely to foster goals associated with superficial learning, done simply to demonstrate personal superiority. This can undermine teachers' attempts to foster intrinsic motivation.

Individual-level studies of learning motivations in East Asia, a region that is regularly at the top of achievement rankings in mathematics and science in primary and secondary schools, suggest that lay Chinese views of what is necessary for school success concur with the idea that humility is a prerequisite for academic achievement. The terms "humility" and "humble" occur time and again in a detailed analysis of Chinese learning motivations by Chinese researcher Jin Li who reports that Chinese students express the following summarized view of all students, regardless of their innate abilities: "so long as they are persistent and humble enough to learn from others, they are capable of learning" (Li, 2002, p. 260).

A study by a group of Harvard University experts in education found that Chinese and Asian Indian schoolchildren in the United States reported stronger perception of parental shame about poor performance than European Americans, Latinos, or Blacks (Bempechat, Graham, & Jimenez, 1999). A feeling of shame is associated with humility and self-effacement. Self-enhancement is about the opposite: downplaying the importance and consequences of failure rather than feeling ashamed.

---

35. Data from OECD PISA (2003). The percentages of students who say they always try to be better than others in mathematics correlate with actual national achievement in that subject at  $-.58^{**}$  ( $n = 41$ .) and with monumentalism at  $.69^{**}$  ( $n = 22$ ). See also Minkov (2008).

When Heine's and Dweck's theories are transposed to the national level, they can account for cultural differences in many types of educational achievement. But there are cases that remain unexplained. I remember a TV documentary about the students at an Islamic higher school in Palestine. Their knowledge of the Qur'an and other religious texts was stunning. Many of them knew whole chapters by heart and recited them without hesitation. Asked how long they had practiced in that way, some said that they had started their studies when they were five or six years old. Those students were hardly some geniuses, selected on the basis of a superior IQ. They had simply been extremely zealous in their studies. If monumentalism depresses the need for self-improvement, how had those young Arabs been capable of such persistent effort and brilliant results in that specific type of education? Consider also the fact that most Tunisians, Algerians, and Moroccans are proficient in French, which they have learned at school; intellectuals speak that language almost like a mother tongue. On top of that, nowadays most educated people in those countries are fluent in English. And all of them have a good command of literary Arabic, which is very different from their native dialects. How do they achieve that?

The answer to this enigma is that knowledge of religious subjects brings prestige in an Arab society. A good command of important foreign languages also means social status, apparently more so than knowledge of mathematics and science. Also, knowledge of a language can easily be displayed in public, whereas mathematical skills remain hidden outside specific contexts.

This leads to two conclusions. First, most people in any population can learn well what is important to them in their own environment and is consistent with their traditional wisdom. If this is so, one of the reasons for the underachievement in modern education that characterizes the world outside East Asia, Europe, and the Anglo countries is that some elements of that education are considered alien or unimportant, despite statements by the students to the contrary. Some of these elements may even clash head-on with the traditional local wisdom and be therefore rejected by a strongly monumentalist culture.

In all religious nations, of which the United States is the best-known example in this respect, there is widespread skepticism of the theory of evolution and even active movements against it, attempting to replace it with something closer to a theory of intelligent design. Darwinism requires human beings to admit to themselves that their bloodline is linked to that of monkeys. Rather than being created in a noble divine image, we used to look like macaques. Before that, we were rats. Even earlier, our ancestors were dumb fish. To be accepted, this theory takes a considerable degree of personal humility that is not typical of a monumentalist culture. I have heard some Americans say, "If your great grandfather was an ape, mine was not." For some white racists it is also painful to think that their ancestors were black Africans some 100,000 years ago.

The theory of evolution also requires a mindset that does not see anything unnatural in a complete transformation of personal identity. When this is not the case, the result can be anti-scientific extremism. An example of this is the Nigerian Boko Haram movement, meaning "Western education is sin." Its aim is to purge local school curricula of heretic European theories. Other examples are the various

Christian movements, mainly in the United States, against stem cell research and cloning. The idea of tinkering with genes and producing new identities or duplicating an organism, even that of an animal, sounds horrendous in a monumentalist society.

A report on education in the Arab world, published by *The Economist*, referred to surveys according to which barely a third of Egyptian adults have ever heard of Charles Darwin and just 8 percent think there is any evidence to back his theory (*The Economist*, October 17, 2009). In nine Egyptian state schools where evolution is taught, none of the more than 30 science teachers interviewed believed in it. The report also pointed out that, until recent reforms, state primary schools in Saudi Arabia devoted 31 percent of classroom time to religion and only 20 percent to mathematics and science.

There is a theoretical perspective that explains a lack of interest in modern Western education in terms of a fear of losing one's cultural identity. American anthropologists Signithia Fordham and John Ogbu (a Nigerian-born American) studied the educational underachievement that characterizes some groups of Black American children in the United States (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). Their conclusion was that many of those children deliberately resist doing their schoolwork because they have formed an oppositional identity, defined as an unwillingness to accept Anglo culture and its values. The authors report that some Mexican-American students exhibit the same cultural resistance.

This explanation is fully consistent with the theory of monumentalism. However, Fordham and Ogbu look for a different angle on the rejection of Anglo values. They seek the roots of this phenomenon in the existing social conflicts in the United States, the unequal opportunities and the discrimination that some minorities still perceive in their environment. But this begs the question of why East Asian immigrants do not form oppositional identities and outperform Anglo students in the United States and the United Kingdom. According to some views, East Asians have never been viewed as a social threat because they have always been relatively few in numbers, compared to the large Black minority in the United States (see for example Wilson, 1987). For this reasons, Europeans and Americans have traditionally held relatively positive opinions of Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese immigrants and have not discriminated against them as much as against Blacks.

Since the Middle Ages, one minority has been persistently discriminated against at least as much as American Blacks, perceived as a terrible threat, and subjected to regular persecution and genocide, not just at the hands of the German Nazis, but across all Europe, from England and Spain to Russia. Despite that, the educational performance of European and American Jews has always been second to none. Notwithstanding the discrimination that they suffered, just like the Chinese in Southeast Asia, they managed to achieve a proportionally unmatched representation in business and science. Why have they not developed oppositional identities? Because of their cultural programming.

There are also other plausible explanations of the poor average educational achievement of the monumentalist nations. It is said that knowledge is power. For that to be true, the powerful should be more knowledgeable than the powerless.

The WVS demonstrates that monumentalist nations are far more likely to expect obedience from their children and, consequently, to downplay the importance of personal responsibility for children. Their members also have a stronger tendency to believe that greater respect for authority, in principle, would be a good thing.<sup>36</sup> Unchallenged authority and full obedience are good sources of self-enhancement. But if a child becomes more educated than the parents, they might lose face. A study by a group of Harvard University educational experts mentions that one reason for the educational underachievement of some American minorities might be the fact that modern education might be seen by parents of minority students as undermining the role of the family as an educational institution (Bempechat et al., 1999).

Modern education can also undermine the authority of a coercive government in a developing country. One of the questions in an international opinion survey by the Pew Research Center in 2002 asks whether government is in principle for the benefit of all citizens. Monumentalist societies have higher percentages of people who agree strongly. Another question in the same survey asks whether the influence of the national government is good.<sup>37</sup> Again, the highest level of strong approval is in the monumentalist parts of the world where large segments of the population are poorly educated. This is quite convenient for governments that do not believe in accountability to their citizens. As long as the populace is uneducated, it is less likely to criticize and challenge the authority of the powers-that-be, unless people are stirred into action by oppositional leaders. But, under an autocratic regime, these can be easily dealt with.

Although we have already examined various factors that appear to account for the observed national and ethnic differences in educational achievement, we still do not have the whole story. We come back to this topic in the next chapter, where yet another factor will emerge.

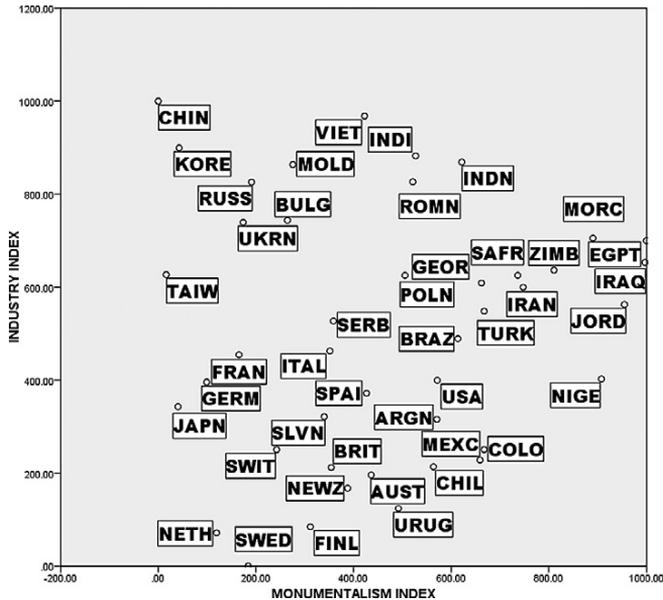
## **Economic Growth**

In Chapter 3, we saw that US economists Rudiger Dornbush, Stanley Fischer, and Richard Startz attributed the East Asian economic miracle to old-fashioned hard work and thrift. But they mention other factors as well: the superior school education of East Asia and the greater female participation in the workforce. Since monumentalism is associated with lower educational achievement and fewer working women, it can be expected to be a negative predictor of economic development. Indeed it is. After accounting for differences in wealth in 1998, the economies of the

---

36. Monumentalism correlates with the following WVS items measured before 2005: A042 (obedience mentioned as an important trait for children): .74\*\* ( $n = 43$ ), A032 (responsibility mentioned as an important trait for children):  $-.59^{**}$  ( $n = 43$ ), E018 (greater respect for authority would be a good thing): .65\*\* ( $n = 40$ ).

37. Monumentalism correlates with item q37d (percentages who strongly agree that government is for the benefit of all) in Pew Research Center (2002) at .56\*\* ( $n = 21$ ). The question about the influence of the national government is q35a.



Graph 4.4: A cultural map of the world based on industry and monumentalism scores. *Notes:* The vertical axis shows industry scores. The horizontal axis shows monumentalism scores. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

more monumentalist nations grew considerably slower in the next decade. This relationship is especially strong across the 51 developing countries for which data are available.<sup>38</sup>

The conclusion is that economic development is positively associated with two cultural factors: higher industry and lower monumentalism. Both factors explain independently part of the national differences in wealth growth across the developing world.<sup>39</sup>

Graph 4.4 shows a cultural map of the world, based on monumentalism and industry scores. The countries in the northwest quadrant (upper left corner) are

38. In a zero-order correlation, monumentalism is insignificantly correlated with GNI per person at PPP growth from 1998 to 2008 but after controlling for GNI per person at PPP in 1998, the correlation becomes  $-.68^{**}$  ( $n = 38$ ). Across the developing countries, monumentalism yields a zero-order correlation with GNI per person at PPP growth from 1998 to 2008 of  $-.67^{**}$  ( $n = 25$ ), which becomes  $-.79$  ( $n = 23$ ) after controlling for GNI.

39. Cumulatively, the industry and monumentalism dimensions, and GDP (or GNI) per person in 1998, explain 70 percent of the national variance in GNI per person growth from 1998 to 2008. The contributions of these three variables are roughly the same. Across larger country samples (when industry and monumentalism scores are calculated on the basis of 1994–2004 data), the three variables explain 50–60 percent of the national variance in economic growth, with roughly equal contributions.

those that have the highest industry scores and the lowest monumentalism scores. These are the developing countries in East Asia and Eastern Europe, although two of them — Taiwan and South Korea — are already on their way of joining the developed world. The countries in that area of the map are also the ones that had the fastest economic growth between 1998 and 2008. Vice versa, the countries in the southeast quadrant (lower right corner) have relatively low industry scores while having relatively high monumentalism scores although, as the graph shows, they are not champions on either measure. Nevertheless, the cultural combination that they possess can explain, at least partly, their slow economic development between 1998 and 2008.

However, neither of the two dimensions has predictive powers for the rich countries. If there are cultural factors that can help a rich country get yet richer, they have not been found yet.

Unlike industry, monumentalism is a relatively stable dimension. There have been no dramatic changes in country positions since the beginning of the WVS 30 years ago. Therefore, it makes sense to check the relationship between the monumentalism index, based on measures from 1998 to 1999 and economic growth for the longest period for which public data are available: 1970–2008. The correlation is significant and negative: more monumentalist nations had slower growing economies during those 38 years.<sup>40</sup>

## Monumentalism versus Flexumility as a Cultural Dimension: Definition and Summary

After all the evidence in this chapter, we arrive at the following broad definition of monumentalism versus flexumility as a single bipolar cultural dimension:

Monumentalism is a cultural syndrome that stands for pride and an invariant self: a preference for unchangeable identities, strong values, unshakable beliefs, and avoidance of personal duality and inconsistency.

Flexumility is the opposite of the same syndrome. It stands for humility and changeable and adaptable selves that can assume multiple identities and are not bothered by duality.

The main contrasts between highly monumentalist and highly flexhumble societies are summarized in [Table 4.2](#).

---

40. GNI data and GDP at PPP data for 1970–2008 are unavailable in the public UN and World Bank databases. However GDP per person data (practically the same variable) are available for the whole period. The former Soviet bloc countries and China, which did not have market economies during much of the 1970–2008 period, were excluded. Across the remaining 52 rich and poor countries, the zero-order correlation between monumentalism and GDP per person growth for the 1970–2008 period is  $-.55^{**}$  Pearson and  $-.73^{**}$  Spearman ( $n = 31$ ). After controlling for raw GDP per person in 1970, this correlation is  $-.71$ .

Table 4.2: Main contrasts between highly monumentalist and highly flexhumble societies.

Highly monumentalist societies	Highly flexhumble societies
Pride is allowed and encouraged	Pride, and especially its outward expression, is discouraged
It is important always to be the same person and avoid personal duality	Personal duality and divergent roles are allowed
Feelings and their expressions should not differ	One can express the opposite of what one feels
High religiousness and importance of tradition	Low religiousness and importance of tradition
An inclination for religious dogmatism	Relative absence of religious dogmas
Religions teach existence of an eternal, stable, and unique individual self or soul	Religions and philosophies accept that the notion of an eternal, stable, and individual self or soul is disputable
One can follow only one religion at a time	One can follow several religions at a time
It is acceptable to express strong views and defend them in the face of opposition	Strongly expressed views should be avoided; the Middle Way is preferable
Opposites are hard to reconcile	Opposites can be reconciled even if they seem contradictory
High social polarization of opinions on current affairs	Low social polarization of opinions on current affairs
Aggressive negotiation style	Roundabout negotiation style
Low educational achievement in modern subjects, such as mathematics and science, but also in reading	High educational achievement
Women must not eclipse men and hurt their pride	A successful woman does not necessarily humiliate her less successful husband or other men
Lower participation of women in the workforce	Higher participation of women in the workforce
Lower salaries for women	Women are not necessarily underpaid
Slow economic development	Fast economic development in poor countries
Low suicide rates	High suicide rates

## **Origins of the Cultural Differences in Monumentalism versus Flexumility**

### *Differences in Education*

Heine's theory postulates that self-enhancement and self-stability are predecessors of poor educational performance. Indeed, we saw that the monumentalism index, based mostly on data from 1998 to 1999, predicts achievement in subsequent TIMSS and OECD PISA studies. But, hypothetically, the direction of the cause-and-effect relationship between monumentalism and national academic achievement can be reversed. Arguably, higher monumentalism is at least to some extent a result of poor education, not only its cause. This is possible since people in societies with lower educational levels are more likely to be susceptible to nationalistic and religious indoctrination. If this is so, monumentalism and poor education are in a two-way cause-and-effect relationship. One reinforces the other.

### *The Role of National Wealth*

Monumentalist societies tend to be less developed economically.<sup>41</sup> Wealth may depress monumentalism. That effect is probably mediated through education: a higher national income means better educational opportunities. However, this effect has so far failed to materialize in the super-rich Gulf states.

### *The Legacy of Differences in Subsistence Patterns*

Some of the cultural differences that can be described under the heading of monumentalism versus flexumility are very old. They existed in ancient times and contrasted populations that were hardly strikingly different in terms of level of education.

We discussed a parallelism between type of religious thought and expression style: dialecticism and an unwillingness to take a strong stance in East Asia versus absolutism and categorical judgments in the Middle East. These differences are probably attributable to the type of subsistence that has prevailed in East Asia and the Middle East for millennia.

The dialectical Asian societies have a millennium-old tradition of rice cultivation. According to the [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations \(2004, p. 1\)](#), this type of agriculture has always been a collective enterprise. The investment and the shaping of the landscape that go with it require joint efforts. The irrigation systems were typically considered common property and the members of the community, which often included several villages, were obliged to provide labor and materials for their maintenance (Cohen & Pearson, 1998). Additionally, a labor

---

41. The correlation between monumentalism and GDP per person in 1999 is  $-.52^{**}$  ( $n = 42$ ).

exchange system was practiced in periods of rice transplantation and rice harvesting: work parties consisting of several households worked on the rice fields of each of the households (Tatsuro, 2006).

In cultures where the whole community's welfare is dependent on the complex management of common property and the achievement of shared goals, harmony and cooperation are essential. Expression of strong opinions is undesirable because they may clash with somebody else's dissenting strong opinion. The best strategy to maintain harmony and cooperation is to avoid extreme statements, keep a low profile, and try to concur with others, even if that means accepting seemingly contradictory views.

The most absolutist cultures emerged in semi-arid areas, where a specific form of pastoralism was practiced. That way of life has a strong tradition in East Africa and the region that extends from North Africa through the Middle East, Iran, and Afghanistan, to Central Asia (Haviland, 1990; Oswalt, 1986). Pastoralist nomads have had a strong presence in North Africa and the Middle East from antiquity to modern times (Ali Mohamed, 1992). In 1860, Tunisia still had about 600,000 nomadic pastoralists versus 500,000 settled people (some of whom may also have practiced pastoralism), whereas their estimated number in Saudi Arabia on the eve of the World War II was 3 million (Findlay, 1994, p. 145). Pastoralism still represents a strong sector of the economies of the Saharan countries and those of East Africa; it accounts for more than 80 percent of the revenues that are derived from the land in countries such as Niger and Sudan (Hatfield & Davies, 2006). Pastoralism was practiced also by some African tribes outside East Africa, such as the South African Zulus (Chanaiwa, 1980) and other populations.

American psychologist Richard Nisbett has shown that animal herders all over the world tend to be characterized by greater verbal and physical assertiveness than agriculturalists because they need to protect their animals from theft — a common phenomenon among herders. As a result, pastoralists quarrel and fight more often. Nisbett (1996) quotes ethnographic studies according to which in some pastoralist societies a young shepherd's first public quarrel is a critical moment in the development of his reputation. In sum, pastoralism encourages the expression of a strong stance in unambiguous terms.

Tension between herding nomads and surrounding populations is also very common (Phillips, 2001). This explains why the former have always felt a need to be outspoken and stand their ground not only as individuals but also as a group. Nomadic pastoralists can be a politically volatile force, capable of strong action. The history of Morocco provides many examples of sultans being replaced by rebellious tribal leaders of nomads, whereas uprisings by sedentary agriculturalists in that country have usually been far less successful (Findlay, 1994).

American anthropologist Robert Edgerton provides compelling evidence for a number of interesting differences between pastoralists and farmers. He studied four tribes in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda, each of which consisted of both pastoralists and farmers (Edgerton, 1974, p. 355). He observed important cultural differences between the people in these two occupations even when they belonged to the same

ethnic group. There is little doubt that what accounted for these differences was the different type of subsistence.

Edgerton found that pastoralists were more conflict-oriented than the farmers of the same ethnicity. Also, farmers were more likely to recall insults but they defined these as oblique acts: an act of omission, an overheard remark, or an interpreted intention to insult somebody. When pastoralists' recalled insults, they typically referred to a direct verbal affront in a face-to-face situation. Edgerton's study shows that farmers are more prudent in their communication style, whereas pastoralists are more likely to express themselves in strong terms, even at the risk of clashing with somebody. In sum, pastoralism encourages the expression of a strong stance in unambiguous terms and an "us-versus-them" philosophy, coupled with forceful action.

Edgerton's study revealed also some other striking differences between pastoralists and farmers that shed light on the nature of the most monumentalist cultures. Pastoralists were more given to expressing genuine respect for authority, whereas farmers showed greater disrespect, at least in their words. Pastoralists agreed to a far greater extent with the statement that a man should always obey his father without argument.

When shown one and the same picture of a man and a woman together inside a house, pastoralists far more often than farmers interpreted the situation as an act of adultery. This explains why modern societies that formerly relied on herding are extremely protective of their women. If a man's wife commits adultery, he would suffer an unbearable loss of face.

Pastoralists are often resistant to external cultural influences. They consider their own culture superior and have a strong sense of pride (Neckebrouck, 1993). These characteristics seem to have survived even in modern populations that no longer rely on herding animals.

Cross-cultural psychologists Ayse Uskul, Shinobu Kitayama, and Richard Nisbett provide additional evidence of relevant differences between herders and farmers, as well as fishermen (Uskul, Kitayama, & Nisbett, 2008). Their study was similar to Edgerton's in the sense that their respondents differed only in terms of their occupation. All were Turks from Turkey's Black Sea region. The respondents were presented with various perception tasks. In the first one, they were asked to draw a line that was identical in length to a benchmark line in absolute terms and a line that was proportionate in length to the benchmark but within a smaller frame. The herders did better on the first task, which requires absolute perception, whereas the farmers and fishermen did better on the second task, which requires an ability to see objects in relative terms.

In the second experiment, the respondents saw pictures of different objects, such as a hand, a pair of gloves, and a scarf. They were asked which goes with which. Farmers and fishermen were more likely than the herders to form groups of objects on the basis of their practical relationship: the hand goes with the glove, and the scarf is separate from them. The herders were more likely than them to see categorical distinctions: the gloves and the scarf go together because they belong to the category of clothes.

Finally, the respondents were shown a picture of a separate flower and two groups of flowers. Those in the first group all had one thing in common with the separate

flower: the same stem. Those in the second group resembled the separate flower in different ways, but there was no one trait that was shared by all. The herders were more likely to classify the separate flower with the first group on the basis of the evident categorical distinction: the stem similarity. The farmers and the fishermen more often classified the separate flower with the second group, obviously based on a holistic analysis.

The results of this study strongly suggest that herders are more prone than farmers to absolutist perceptions and are hence inclined toward thinking in absolute categories. Farmers, on the contrary, have a more relativist, function-based, and holistic perception, which influences their thinking accordingly.<sup>42</sup>

There is additional evidence to support the view that pastoralism may foster various aspects of monumentalism. A group of Dutch researchers from Radboud University in Nijmegen examined and presented ethnographic data from 150 preindustrial societies. Pastoralists were found to be considerably more likely than agriculturalists, horticulturalists, or hunter-gatherers to have an idea of an active supreme creator who is supportive of a human morality (Moor, Ultee, & Need, 2009, p. 92, Table 1).

The degree to which different populations accept the official doctrine of the local religious authorities may also depend on the type of the main economy. According to Edgerton's study, pastoralists show more deference to authority, whereas farmers often have a cynical attitude. This may explain, at least partly, the lack of great enthusiasm for the teachings of the religious establishment that is observed in some agricultural communities.

Aleko Konstantinov (1863–1897) was a Bulgarian writer and an anthropologist of sorts who wrote extensively on the Bulgarian national character. He summarized his observations to create a personage called Bay Ganyo — the prototypical Bulgarian of the 19th century — a time when virtually the whole Bulgarian population was illiterate. The following passage describes Bay Ganyo at a dinner table<sup>43</sup>:

Before the dinner, Bay Ganyo starts to cross himself, but as he does that he snickers, which is supposed to suggest to the hosts that he is not a simpleton. It is not that he is a real believer; there is just no harm in this act. (We are on good terms with the devil, so why not butter up God as well, just in case?)

There is a tendency to view preindustrial Europe as a very religious place. Certainly, the role of the religious institutions was far stronger than today, but that does not necessarily mean that most people's faith was extremely solid throughout

---

42. Similar differences have been reported in studies that compare Americans and East Asians. Americans have been found to be more prone to seeing categorical relationships, such as cow-chicken, whereas East Asians tend to see functional relationships, such as cow-grass (Gutchess, Hedden, Ketay, Aron, & Gabrieli, 2010).

43. Konstantinov (1967, pp. 52–53), my translation.

Europe. In some societies, religious practices may have been followed during a particular period even in the absence of a strong belief in the official doctrine. My father has told me that his father (born in 1905) asked him to say a prayer before going to bed. However, I remember my grandfather as a staunch atheist. In his view, adherence to Christian practices could help maintain a certain morality even if the philosophical pillars of the faith are nonsense. My mother's mother (born in 1907) would often kiss icons and light candles, but I heard her say on several occasions that life after death is a myth for the gullible.

Resistance to official religious indoctrination has a long history in Bulgaria. In the 10th century BC, shortly after the introduction of Christianity, the country saw the rise of Bogomilism — a philosophy that not only completely rejected the authority of the Orthodox Church but also adopted a docetic position (Obolensky, 1948), which consists in viewing the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus as illusions. Bogomilism was strong and persisted for centuries. From Bulgaria, it spread throughout Europe in various forms and under different names and finally reached England. As a result, the word “Bulgar” was adopted in Western Europe as a synonym of a despicable heretic, and even a sodomite. It still survives as “bugger” in British English and “bougre” in French.

The Old Norse texts provide abundant evidence that medieval Scandinavians had no compunctions about making fun of their gods. The Edda poems, composed in pagan Norway and Iceland in the 9th and 10th centuries, often ridicule the rulers of the universe. One particular poem, called *Lokasenna*, presents them as whores, homosexuals, and incestuous perverts. According to the first Icelandic historian, Ari Thorgilsson (1067–1148 AD), around 1000 AD his fellow countryman Hialti Skeggiason recited a blasphemous poem about the goddess Freya before the whole parliament<sup>44</sup>:

I do not mean to insult the gods,  
but I think Freya is a bitch.

Christianity put an end to such practices, but it is doubtful that it made medieval Scandinavians extremely pious.

The final conclusion is that the origins of the existing monumentalism versus flexumility differences are very complex. Some countries may have relatively monumentalist cultures because of the low average education level of their populations. But the differences between the two extremes, the Middle East and East Asia, are thousands of years old and most probably stem, among other factors, from the different economies that predominated in those two regions.

---

44. Thorgilsson (1981, p. 36), my translation.



## Chapter 5

# Hypometropia versus Prudence

*Keywords:* Cultural Differences in Risk-Acceptance; Violent Crime; Sexual Permissiveness; Adolescent Fertility; HIV Rates; Competition-Oriented; Social Inequality and Mathematical Intelligence

All die be die.

A response by a 16-year old Ghanaian prostitute to warnings that she might contract AIDS. The expression means that it does not matter what one will die from or when.

From Awusabo-Asare, Abane, Badasu, and Anarfi (1999)

### Introduction

We have to tackle yet another vexed question. Why do some ethnic groups or nations consistently have more serious violence among their own members than other populations? Just like in the previous chapters, the analysis of this issue will help us understand a wide spectrum of complex cultural differences. To an even greater extent than in the previous chapters, it will be difficult to combine scientific accuracy with political correctness. Just stating that some societies, or even some of their segments, have more violence than others and that this is a deeply rooted cultural feature, rather than the fault of outsiders or a bad national government, can cause indignation.

There is an important detail that needs to be mentioned before the start of this discussion. Consider the following statement in a book by two American social psychologists: “Asians in such high-density settings as Hong Kong and Tokyo have lower levels of social pathology than do North Americans living in much less dense settings, such as Los Angeles” (Baron & Byrne, 1991, p. 558). Such statements go uncensored in the West and do not generate much uproar. But imagine what the social repercussions would be if a White American stated that US Blacks or Africans exhibited higher levels of “social pathology” than European Americans in any particular situation! Not only would the choice of words be denounced but the very claim would be labeled unscientific, racist, or xenophobic. The author would stand a good chance of being disgraced and, if he were also a public figure, there would be loud calls for him to resign.

Offensive labels, such as “social pathology,” should be avoided, not only because they bruise feelings. This term is questionable also from a scientific viewpoint. Since we have no use for violence and vehemently denounce it in our own modern societies today, we might assume that it has always been a pathological phenomenon in all societies since the dawn of mankind. But that is an example of cultural ethnocentrism. In fact, violence and the other social phenomena that accompany it

have their own good logic among some human populations that are quite different from the mainstream segments of all modern nations. Yet, traces of that old culture are still acutely felt today by the members of some contemporary societies. Rather than deny the fact that systemic violence within a particular human group has deep cultural roots, we should try to understand the evolutionary logic of this phenomenon and ask why it has survived to the present day in some environments.

Violence is a diverse phenomenon that is not easy to study. One difficulty is that it is not defined and reported in the same way in all societies. However, one important type of violence — murder — is fairly uncontroversial in terms of its definition. In preliterate societies, the boundary between assassination, war casualty and execution may be blurred but in modern nations there is some consensus concerning the meaning of murder or deliberate homicide. Also, while other crimes — such as rape — often go unreported, a dead person is unlikely simply to disappear, without any mention in police records or those of another social institution. Some national governments, especially those of Africa, seem to keep inaccurate records or to deliberately underreport the real occurrence of murder. Still, there exist various public organizations that also monitor the crime situation. A comparison of a variety of sources can provide fairly trustworthy information.

National murder rates fluctuate because of various nation-specific factors. Still, country rankings from different years are relatively stable and there emerge some clear geographic trends. The relative stability of these national differences suggests that there exist durable determinants of homicide that consistently produce stronger effects in some countries than in others. The search for such determinants has generated various theories, ranging from quite plausible to exotic and highly controversial.<sup>1</sup>

The single most preferred explanation in the literature on national differences in violent crime rates, especially murder, focuses on differences in socioeconomic inequality (Avison & Loring, 1986; Barber, 2007; Braithwaite & Braithwaite, 1980; Fajnzylber, Lederman, & Loayza, 2002; Krohn, 1976; Lim, Bond, & Bond, 2005; Messner, Raffalovich, & Shrok, 2002; Wilkinson, Kawachi, & Kennedy, 1998; Wilson, Daly, & Pound, 2002). This societal characteristic can be measured as an income ratio, comparing the revenues of the wealthy and destitute citizens. For example, one can divide the wealth of the richest 20 percent by that of the poorest 20 percent. One such popularly used measure is the Gini index. It has been demonstrated statistically that societies with a higher Gini or

---

1. For the most recent review of plausible theories that explain differences in national murder rates see Barber (2007). An example of an exotic theory is provided by Mawson and Jacobs (1978). According to those authors, the high occurrence of homicide in Latin America may be due to an excessive consumption of corn. The explanation is that corn reduces brain tryptophan and/or serotonin and that can cause mood disturbances. At the time of their study, the authors could not have known that Latin Americans would consistently rank at the top of all large-scale cross-cultural studies of subjective well-being, and have very low suicide rates, which is hard to square with the hypothesis that they may suffer from a serotonin deficiency.

An example of a highly controversial theory is Rushton and Whitney's (2002) attempt to explain national murder rates in terms of genetic racial differences. Rushton consistently claims that Blacks have the highest murder rates across the world but is silent about the very high rates in northern Latin America and various indigenous populations that are not African Blacks.

other similar indicators (meaning high socioeconomic inequality), such as those of Latin America and parts of sub-Saharan Africa, have higher murder rates and other types of violence.

The mechanism through which socioeconomic inequality supposedly generates violent crime is explained in terms of strain theory.<sup>2</sup> It proposes a relatively simplistic model to explain how exactly an uneven income distribution generates violent crime. Individuals whose aspirations and opportunities are not properly balanced may experience psychological strain and that will push some of them toward violent criminal behavior. Anger and frustration seem to be important elements in this theory. From this theoretical perspective, it seems plausible to assume that greater inequality can generate bitterness and envy on the part of some members of the less privileged social classes. As a result, some of those individuals will resort to violent crime, including homicide, in a misguided effort to redress the perceived social injustice.

One problem with a purely socioeconomic interpretation of murder rates is that it does not consider the possibility of a reverse causation. If criminal violence can be a result of socioeconomic inequality, it is equally conceivable that it contributes to it. Drug barons and warlords in poor countries, who are responsible for a high proportion of the homicides, amass untold fortunes precisely by means of violence and murder. Corrupt political leaders also enrich themselves through kickbacks from criminals. The cause-and-effect relationship from violence to affluence and status is easy to discern in some societies that have not reached statehood, for instance those of foragers (Wilson et al., 2002).

Some of the most crucial evidence against the strain-from-socioeconomic-inequality theory comes from studies of preliterate societies, characterized by extremely egalitarian cultures. Despite their socioeconomic egalitarianism, some of them have an exorbitant incidence of homicide. As some authors put it, murder rates in hunter-gatherers' societies generally dwarf those of modern nation-states (Wilson et al., 2002, p. 395).

American anthropologist Richard Lee carried out a meticulous longitudinal study of intentional homicide among 1500 Kung tribesmen in the middle of the 20th century, at a time when they had very few contacts with outsiders and no social hierarchy or inequality at all. Lee reported an annual rate of 29.3 homicides per 100,000 people (Lee, 1979, p. 398), which is similar to the high rates of the northern Latin American countries nowadays. Charlotte Faurie and Michel Raymond of the University of Montpellier in France reported stunning murder rates — hundreds per 100,000 people — for several preliterate societies, such as the Yanomamo of the Amazon basin and some tribes in Papua New Guinea (Faurie & Raymond, 2005), who are also characterized by very insignificant social hierarchy and inequality.

There is further evidence that compromises the strain-from-socioeconomic-inequality theory. National homicide rates<sup>3</sup> correlate with other phenomena that

---

2. See Agnew (1999) and Lim et al. (2005). Strain theory was first proposed by Merton (1938), later developed by Agnew (1992, 1999), Agnew and White (1992), and other authors.

3. See “murder index” in the research notes chapter of this book.

cannot be explained in terms of socioeconomic frustration. Most important, they correlate with adolescent fertility rates. Countries with a lot of murders are also countries where a lot of children are born to teenage mothers. Those countries also have high percentages of individuals who carry HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

Besides, among the 35 rich countries for which data are available, murder rates are weakly associated with the Gini index but strongly with adolescent fertility rates. The association between murder and HIV rates is similar across all samples: poor countries, rich countries, or combined.<sup>4</sup> This suggests that murder rates have something to do with adolescent fertility and HIV. What could that be?

4. Adolescent fertility rates from [UN Statistics Division \(2008\)](#), HIV rates (high estimates for all countries) from the [World Health Organization \(2010\)](#), Gini index from the [UN Development Program \(2007/2008\)](#). These variables produce the following correlations with the murder index (see “murder index” in the research notes chapter of this book) and between themselves:

	Adolescent fertility	HIV	Gini
<i>(A) Across the whole sample of countries for which data are available</i>			
<i>Pearson</i>			
Murder	.55** ( <i>n</i> = 168)	.43** ( <i>n</i> = 164),	.61** ( <i>n</i> = 123)
Adolescent fertility		.28** ( <i>n</i> = 163)	.50** ( <i>n</i> = 123)
HIV			.50** ( <i>n</i> = 122)
<i>Spearman</i>			
Murder	.77**	.72**	.65**
Adolescent fertility		.63**	.61**
HIV			.63**
<i>(B) Across developing countries</i>			
<i>Pearson</i>			
Murder	.45** ( <i>n</i> = 132)	.38** ( <i>n</i> = 130)	.55** ( <i>n</i> = 97)
Adolescent fertility		.20* ( <i>n</i> = 129)	.39** ( <i>n</i> = 97)
HIV			.47** ( <i>n</i> = 97)
<i>Spearman</i>			
Murder	.64**	.72**	.60**
Adolescent fertility		.58**	.49**
HIV			.56**
<i>(C) Across rich countries</i>			
<i>Pearson</i>			
Murder	.70** ( <i>n</i> = 36)	.23 ( <i>n</i> = 34)	.34 ( <i>n</i> = 26)
Adolescent fertility		.04 ( <i>n</i> = 34)	.41** ( <i>n</i> = 26)
HIV			.54** ( <i>n</i> = 25)
<i>Spearman</i>			
Murder	.28	.08	.22
Adolescent fertility		-.22	.40*
HIV			.45*

An interesting perspective is suggested by some evolutionary psychologists. From the viewpoint of evolution, violence — and particularly murder — can be viewed as a byproduct of mating competition (Barber, 2007; Buss & Duntley, 2004; Duntley & Buss, 2004) (also called reproductive competition). Evolution can certainly breed adaptive mechanisms such as altruism. But it is also a highly competitive process and, from an evolutionary viewpoint, violence can represent a “fitness contest” (Duntley & Buss, 2004, p. 106), despite all the potential costs that the violent party may incur. Greater fitness results in better mating and reproduction opportunities. Thus, evolution seems to have followed two opposite paths simultaneously: “cooperative and benefit-bestowing adaptations” and “adaptations in humans whose proper function is to inflict costs on competitors” (Buss & Duntley, 2004, p. 119). Using the logic of this theory, murder can occur for the purpose of the direct elimination of a sexual rival. Alternatively, it can also be motivated by a desire for power and higher social and economic status. Ultimately, power and status will increase a man’s reproductive opportunities.

There is significant evidence to support the reproductive competition theory as an explanation of violence and murder. Various anthropologists (Haviland, 1990; Oswalt, 1986) discuss a link between the polygyny that characterizes many horticulturalist and hunting-gathering societies, traditionally typical of sub-Saharan Africa and what is now Latin America, and aggression: where polygyny is practiced, men tend to compete for women and fight. Harvard anthropologist Frank Marlowe presents evidence that societies with more polygyny have more violence among their members (Marlowe, 2003). Other prominent anthropologists have also found a link between male warfare mortality in pre-industrial societies and polygyny.<sup>5</sup> Nigel Barber, an expert in the field of societal differences in violence, has discovered evidence that the high violent crime rates in the Americas nowadays can be attributed to mating competition (Barber, 2006). He points out that, compared to other world regions, the Americas have not only higher murder rates, but also higher rape rates. From an evolutionary perspective, rape is an aggressive attempt to spread one’s genes.

From the viewpoint of reproductive competition theory, socioeconomic inequality can also be viewed as a result of a fitness contest. The idea that richer individuals are somehow more fit may sound socially indigestible. But it is well known that more affluent men have better mating opportunities in most societies (Fisher, 1992; White, 1988) and better chances of survival. Women prefer men of high status, dominance and genetic quality (Schmitt, 2005). Even in strictly egalitarian societies, women have a preference for men who are capable of providing more resources. Although the Hadza tribe in Africa share game meat evenly across households, women prefer better hunters as mates, probably because hunting success could indicate a man’s

---

5. Ember, Ember, and Low (2007). See also De Munck and Korotayev (2007) who found an association between polygyny and socialization for violence.

health, vigor, and intelligence (Marlowe, 2004). In a Darwinian sense, men who have the potential to provide more resources are winners in a survival contest. Stronger competition inevitably results in a greater distance between the winners and the losers; hence the greater socioeconomic polarization of societies where such competition is more prevalent, especially in modernizing societies.

It appears then that instead of speaking of a cause-and-effect direction from socioeconomic inequality to high murder rates, it may be more logical to accept that the two are caused by a common factor: strong competition for resources which — from an evolutionary viewpoint — ultimately amounts to reproductive competition.

HIV rates tell the same story. Nowhere in the world are they higher than in sub-Saharan Africa. This peculiar phenomenon has been studied extensively and the results are clear. Despite the complexity of the HIV pandemic, its development is attributable, among other things, to sexual networking. Not all politicians and other public figures like this fact but it has been firmly documented and its denial cannot help contain the pandemic in any way. Australian demographer John Caldwell, who in the 1990s carried out extensive studies of the social mechanisms of HIV transmission in association with African scholars, strongly emphasizes the finding that the sub-Saharan HIV pandemic is largely a result of heterosexual contacts with multiple parallel partners (Caldwell, 2000, 2002). In other words, it is attributable to mating competition.

The association between murder, adolescent fertility, and HIV can be analyzed also from another angle. All three phenomena evidently involve acceptance of risk or indifference to it. As evolutionary psychologists indicate, competitive situations lead to risk-taking, especially by males (Wilson et al., 2002). It is only natural that some people in societies with fierce competition will be pushed toward risk acceptance, despite the danger that they might lose their lives. From an evolutionary viewpoint, it is preferable to spread one's genes and die young than live to an old age without having any offspring.

It is a well-known fact that most violent criminals have poor education and a low IQ. According to one theory of crime, although criminal behavior is an extremely diverse phenomenon and various explanations of it are possible, some criminals — especially violent ones — often lack adequate self-control (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990, pp. xv and 89). In the framework of this theory, although self-control is a complex personality characteristic, one major element of it is a tendency to defer gratification rather than have a here-and-now orientation. Also, the proponents of the theory explain that the cognitive requirements for most crimes are minimal and people lacking self-control need not possess or value academic skills.

Interestingly, less educated and less intelligent persons are also more likely to become homicide victims (Batty, Deary, Tengstrom, & Rasmussen, 2008). This raises the question of the role that education and intelligence might play at the national or ethnic level with respect to violence and sexual competition. Might societies with lower average scores on measures of education and intelligence also have higher murder rates, HIV rates and adolescent fertility? The answer to this question is

positive.<sup>6</sup> This suggests that intracommunal violence and stronger sexual competition are associated with a form of myopia and a lack of a long-term perspective, associated with lower education and intelligence.

Thus, human societies differ on a cultural dimension reflecting their time perspective in reproduction and the dangers that can be associated with its pursuit. At one extreme, we find cultures where a short-term vision makes perfect sense considering the natural environment; therefore it is tolerated and may even be encouraged despite any obvious mortal dangers that it poses to individuals. As long as the behaviors that stem from this short-term vision guarantee the long-term survival of the community, they are justifiable from an evolutionary perspective; how long an individual will survive does not matter. At the other extreme of the same cultural dimension, we see societies that have evolved in different circumstances. They view risk-accepting pursuits of reproductive instincts as a dangerous myopia and encourage more prudent behaviors that are aimed at individual survival, not just the long-term existence of the community. In-between, there are various intermediate cases: cultures that are not at either extreme.

A myopic short-term vision does not characterize all or even most members of any modern nation. On the contrary, it appears that modern countries with a lot of violent crime have very wide cultural differences within them. For example, in Latin America, the short-term vision subcultures are primarily concentrated in urban ghettos, such as the Brazilian *favelas*, whereas the better-educated classes have a very different culture. In this sense, a subculture of myopia may not be shared at the national level. But its consequences are. Violent crime creates a shared culture of fear, whereas the results of adolescent fertility and the spreading of HIV are a burden on the whole nation.

Myopia has an established negative connotation. To avoid unnecessary pejorative associations, I will henceforth use another ophthalmologic term that means the same thing: hypometropia. But I must reiterate my conviction that the phenomenon that this term describes should not necessarily be viewed as some sort of social pathology. A violent pursuit of reproductive instincts in the face of obvious danger can be a normal adaptation to specific social conditions. The reason that some groups of people in some societies adopt this behavioral strategy, even if it baffles people from other cultures, is that it makes perfect sense in their environment. In fact, following a longer-term vision may be totally counterproductive for the survival of the community in an environment where hypometropia has traditionally been prevalent. Speaking of the so-called myopia of the perpetrators of violent acts such as murder, evolutionary psychologists Margo Wilson and Martin Daly point out that

---

6. The average national IQs provided by Lynn and Vanhanen (2002), excluding those based on uncertain estimates rather than actual studies, produce the following correlations with the following three variables:

Adolescent fertility	– .82** (n = 68)
Murder index	– .63** (n = 62)
HIV rates	– .49** (n = 66)

the steep discounting of the future (which means a short-term vision), may be a “‘rational’ response to information that indicates an uncertain or low probability of surviving to reap delayed benefits, for example, and ‘reckless’ risk taking can be optimal when the expected profits from safer courses of action are negligible”.<sup>7</sup>

## **Measuring Hypometropia versus Prudence**

A national index for a cultural dimension associated with dangerous risk-acceptance, especially in the pursuit of reproductive instincts, can be computed by averaging each country’s murder index, adolescent fertility, HIV rates, and average IQ.<sup>8</sup> This averaging is justified by the fact that these four measures are associated. The correlations between them are particularly high if we do not compare raw scores (numbers of people per 100,000 inhabitants who get killed annually or who have HIV) but country ranks or percentiles. A visualization of the correlation between the adolescent fertility and murder percentiles that countries belong to is provided in [Graph 5.1](#).

However, the murder index is also associated with various other social indicators, such as national road death tolls (numbers of people per 100,000 inhabitants who die annually in road-related accidents), the national transparency versus corruption index that is published every year in the website of Transparency International, national percentages of adults who live together with their parents and so forth. In the research notes chapter of this book, under “Hypometropia index”, I explain how these indicators can be sorted out and a relatively pure national measure of hypometropia can be distilled. Nations that score high on this measure, called a hypometropia index, have the following characteristics:

- high murder rates;
- high HIV rates;
- low average IQ (= low education); and
- high adolescent fertility.

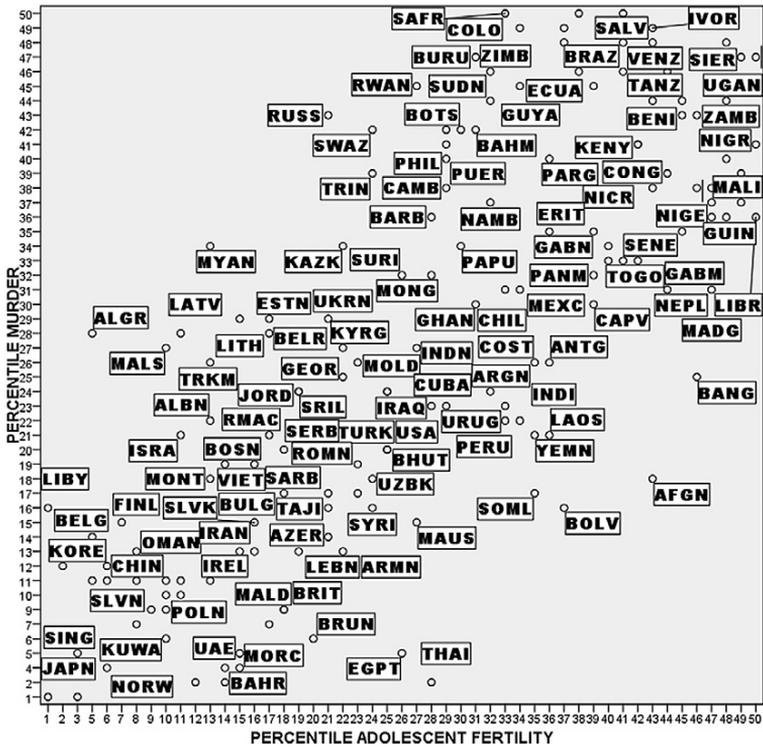
It is noteworthy that the transparency index and national measures of “rule of law” are only weakly associated with hypometropia. Being a measure of societal risk-acceptance, high road death tolls are related to hypometropia but they gravitate even more closely toward a different cultural dimension that is discussed in the next chapter.

Like all national dimensions of culture, hypometropia can be viewed as having two opposite poles. They can be called high versus low hypometropia or hypometropia

---

7. Wilson and Daly (1997, p. 1271). These authors demonstrated an association between life expectancy on the one hand and murder rates and reproduction time on the other. Chicago neighborhoods with shorter life expectancy had more murders and women in them reproduced earlier.

8. The fact that national murder rates, rape rates, HIV rates, assault rates, average IQs, birth rates, and other variables are correlated was noted by Rushton and Templer (2009). They performed a factor analysis of such variables and obtained a solution described in the research notes chapter of this book, under “hypometropia index.”



Graph 5.1: Visualization of the relationship between adolescent fertility and occurrence of murder. *Note:* The vertical axis shows the murder percentile (1st to 50th) to which each country belongs. The horizontal axis shows the adolescent fertility percentile (1st to 50th) to which each country belongs. A higher percentile means more frequent murders and adolescent fertility. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations. See also “Hypometropia index” in that chapter for the data sources.

versus prudence.<sup>9</sup> This refers to a contrast between a risky short-term vision and a prudent long-term perspective, especially in behaviors that are directly or indirectly

9. This chapter, and the idea to measure a dimension associated with murder and mating competition, is an elaboration on an article published in *Cross-Cultural Research* (Minkov, 2009c). In that publication, I call the dimension “risk-taking reproductive competition.” However, that name is too long and is not appropriate in a popular publication.

In Minkov (2009c), I use road death tolls as one of the variables that define risk-taking reproductive competition. Shortly after that, the World Health Organization published a new estimate of national road death tolls. The new figures are not as closely associated with variables that suggest reproductive competition as the old ones. It is now clear that road death tolls are better viewed as a function of exclusionism versus universalism — the dimension discussed in Chapter 6.

associated with mating and violence. The first type of vision emphasizes early, abundant and competitive reproduction combined with acceptance of the mortal risks that this involves for the individual. The prudent perspective at the other extreme of the dimension focuses on the survival of the individual, which entails risk-avoidance in reproduction and related matters. The main aspects of the cultural dimension that we will be discussing in this chapter can be summarized as follows:

<b>Hypometropia:</b>	<b>versus</b>	<b>Prudence:</b>
Reproductive instincts are followed competitively, despite dangers to individuals		Reproductive instincts are prudently managed in order to minimize dangers to individuals
Recourse to violence when reproductive opportunities and interests associated with them are threatened		Violence is not a vehicle for successful reproduction or promotion of interests associated with it
Short time horizons		Long time horizons
Risk-acceptance		Risk-avoidance

As in the case of all other dimensions of culture, societal differences in hypometropia do not imply that most individuals in a country with a high score have a tendency to exhibit the behaviors that define the dimension: compete for women, disregard risks, procreate at a very early age, be violent or have a low IQ. Likewise, the opposite trends are not necessarily true of most individuals in a society with a low score. What hypometropia measures is the likelihood that particular tendencies will be found more often or less often in one society or another. Knowing that South Africa has the highest score on hypometropia does not allow the prediction that the next South African that we meet will exhibit a series of hypometropic behaviors. But our knowledge about South African culture does allow the conclusion that a large city in that country is much more dangerous than Tokyo or even Jakarta. From a statistical viewpoint, it is also correct to say that a randomly selected South African is far more likely to be HIV-positive than a randomly selected East Asian.<sup>10</sup> Differences in hypometropia also have other important societal implications. In 2007, the Pew Research Center asked nationally representative samples in 46 countries if there was a place near their homes where they were afraid to walk at night. In some Arab countries, the percentages of people who

10. Of course, this probability can be calculated even more reliably on the basis of national HIV rates than on the basis of the hypometropia index, which is a complex measure.

answered affirmatively were lower than eight. In some Latin American countries, they exceeded 80. These percentages are statistically associated with hypometropia.<sup>11</sup> Further, adolescent fertility and the treatment of AIDS can be very serious shared national problems as they put a heavy burden on a nation's economy. Therefore, hypometropia is a dimension with very important shared social implications at the national level.

The calculation method for the hypometropia versus prudence index is explained in detail in the research notes chapter at the end of this book. The index is presented below, in Table 5.1.

The next sections examine the different facets of hypometropia versus prudence and the cross-cultural differences that they are associated with. At the end, we will try to find some explanations of the roots of these differences.

## Life Expectancy

Hypometropia is associated with a shorter average lifespan: people in nations with more pronounced hypometropic behaviors tend to die younger.<sup>12</sup>

This association is reminiscent of, although not identical to, the well-known theory of *r* selection versus *K* selection, proposed by American biologists McArthur and Wilson (2001). *R*-selected species (for instance mice) produce many offspring, which die young, whereas *K*-selected species (for instance apes) breed few offspring, which live longer. British-Canadian psychologist John Philippe Rushton attempted to use this theory to explain various behavioral differences between human races (Rushton, 2000). He has come under heavy criticism for taking for granted the existence of significant genetic differences between Blacks, Europeans, and East Asians and basing his adaptation of *K* versus *r* theory on them.

It is clear that some aspects of hypometropia can dramatically decrease in intensity over a relatively short period. Western Europe had a much higher adolescent fertility rate in the 18th century than nowadays. This is hardly due to quick mutations in the European genetic makeup. Whatever the truth about genetic differences between populations is, hypometropia is first of all an environmental adaptation. Some of its facets can morph relatively rapidly in response to changes in the environment.

Following a strategy of hypometropia is one possible and perfectly logical response to stressful and highly competitive environments with high mortality rates at a young age. Under such circumstances, if mating competition and risk-taking were curbed and childbirth were postponed and reduced, the survival of the

---

11. Across 38 countries for which data are available, hypometropia correlates with the national percentages of people who are afraid to walk at night near their homes (item q15 in Pew Research Center, 2007) at .60\*\*.

12. The correlation between hypometropia and life expectancy at birth (UN Statistics Division, 2007, data for 2005–2010) is  $-.79^{**}$  for men and  $-.78^{**}$  for women ( $n = 80$  in both cases).



India		182
Indonesia	Jordan	176
	Egypt	175
	Qatar	170
	Iraq	166
	Saudi Arabia	165
		162
		159
		157
Lithuania		155
Latvia	Canada	150
	Norway	148
	Syria	143
		142
	Australia	140
		136
	Turkey	135
		134
		133
Thailand	Switzerland	
	France	
	United Arab Emirates	
	The Netherlands	132
	Romania	128
	Bahrain	127
	Kuwait	125
		120
	Bulgaria	118
	Israel, Lebanon	
	Malaysia	115
	Belgium	113
	Germany	112

Table 5.1: (Continued)

Sub-Saharan Africa	Latin and Caribbean	Former Soviet Union: Europe	South Asia	Anglo world and Scandinavian countries	Middle East, North Africa	Continental Europe and Caucasus	East Asia	Index
					Tunisia	Slovakia, Spain		111
						Czech Republic		110
						Hungary		109
						Austria		108
						Croatia		107
				Malta				100
						Serbia		97
						Armenia		95
				Iran		Bosnia, Cyprus		93
						Slovenia		90
								86
				Morocco				80
						Poland		73
						Italy		67
						Greece		60
							China	49
							South Korea	35
							Japan	18
							Singapore	0

Note: Singapore is classified as an East Asian country since 80 percent of its population is of Chinese descent. In Malaysia, about 25 percent are of Chinese origin, 50 percent are Malays, and the rest are of mixed origin.

community would be jeopardized. Vice versa, less stressful environments do not require much mating competition and generate a different survival strategy: risk avoidance and heavy investment in a few offspring per individual.

## **Murder**

A 1998 longitudinal study for the World Bank (Fajnzylber, Lederman, & Loayza, 1998) concluded that the highest incidence of intentional homicides was found in “Latin American countries.” From 1970–1974 to 1985–1989, the average rate in that part of the world was about 8 murders per 100,000 inhabitants. Then, the rate rose to about 12 in 1990–1994. According to the same study, the second highest rate was found in “sub-Saharan Africa.” There, rates rose from just over 4 murders per 100,000 inhabitants in 1970–1974 to 6 in 1975–1979, fell to 2 in 1985–1989, and soared to about 9 in 1990–1994. In “Europe and Central Asia,” “Asia,” and “the Middle East and North Africa” homicide rates fluctuated between 2 and 4 throughout the whole period. In fact, in the Middle East and North Africa the average annual rate did not exceed 2 per 100,000 inhabitants.

The latest available data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime are for the 2003–2008 period. These are the data are that I used for the compilation of the murder index for this book. They show that all sub-Saharan countries have high murder rates and in many cases these rates are exorbitant, reaching and exceeding 50 per 100,000 inhabitants. Northern Latin America (e.g., Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, and Venezuela) have more or less equally high rates. At the other extreme are Western Europe, East Asia, and most Arab countries.

Admittedly, although national murder statistics tend to be more or less reliable, they are more trustworthy in some countries than in others. Murder in tribal areas in sub-Saharan Africa may be underreported. Besides, government records may not be kept properly, either through negligence or for political reasons. For example, Botswana reported official murder rate is very low. However, according to the [US Department of State \(March 2, 2009\)](#), Botswana is characterized by multiple incidents of violent crime, routine home invasions, “smash and grab” from vehicles, and cell phone theft, often at knifepoint. One can only wonder if the murder rate of a country where such incidents are very frequent is really similar to that of Japan and Singapore. Fortunately, there exist alternative records by local and international public health institutions, endorsed by the United Nations and the World Health Organization, which show a more credible picture.

Another obstacle in measuring murder rates is that the lines between criminal homicide and intertribal violence in Africa, or between warfare and its usual side-effects — plundering, rape, and killing of civilians — may be blurred. This is not an exclusively African phenomenon. The Yugoslav wars of the 1990s also obfuscated the distinction between combat and banditry. But whatever definition is used, there is no doubt that sub-Saharan Africa is a violent place where it takes less than an all-out war between two nations to trigger considerable violence, including murder. And the

local and public health organizations that provide homicide data for African countries can hardly be accused of conniving to orchestrate a giant scam.

A number of evolutionary psychologists view violence as an adaptive mechanism, not as deviant behavior (Wilson et al., 2002, p. 384). Evolutionists recognize the fact that murder can be a result of intoxication or mental illness. However, the perpetrators of most homicides, all over the world, are motivated by a very rational reason: rivalry. The victim may be the lover of one's wife or girlfriend, a new drug-dealer that has encroached on one's turf, or a business competitor. If you somehow undermine the power and authority of a criminal, and thus make him vulnerable to his rivals — for instance by defecting to the competition's camp, snitching, or simply forgetting to pay back your loan — you are also likely to make yourself a target.

There is no controversy about the fact that in modern nations most violent criminals come from socially disadvantaged environments, such as urban ghettos, that can be viewed as pathological by the standards of an economically developed country. But the criminals' responses to those pathological environments have their own rationality. Reprehensible as it is, it cannot be equated with madness.

An important point in this discussion is that a poor social environment absolutely does not guarantee high murder rates or other crime. The United Kingdom Home Office publishes crime statistics for the different ethnic and racial groups in the country (UK Home Office, 2005). In those reports, Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis are classified as "Asians." The term excludes Chinese and other Asians for whom data are not provided. The statistics show that whereas Whites are underrepresented in all UK crimes statistics in the report, "Asians" are very slightly overrepresented as clients of the UK justice system; for example they are more likely than Whites to appear as defendants in court. Still, they are underrepresented in the prison population. Interviews with dwellers of Pakistani and Bangladeshi ghettos in Manningham, United Kingdom, confirmed the fact that crime rates there are relatively low, despite the abject conditions in which those immigrants live. Even a self-confessed car thief from a Manningham ghetto told *The Economist* that there was little crime in his environment.<sup>13</sup>

UK Blacks are strongly overrepresented in all crime statistics. British government sources show that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the United Kingdom are often disadvantaged because a large percentage of them live in relative poverty, but there are no strong differences in that respect between Chinese, Indians, Whites, Caribbeans, and African Blacks (Cuneo, 2001).

In fact, the situation in the United Kingdom, and the other Western nations, mirrors that in the home countries of the immigrants. There is more violence among those who come from countries with a lot of violence. This is not a reason to brand all members of a particular ethnic group as murderers and be afraid of them. But it is

---

13. *The Economist* (September 10, 2005). According to that source, "more than a third of households [in the Manningham ghetto] lack central heating or the sole use of a bath and indoor toilet, and 57 percent have no car."

indisputable that some cultures breed more violence than others — in their home environments as well as after a transfer abroad — and this cultural difference between ethnic groups remains for a long time.

## **Rape and Assault**

Unreliable as national rape rates may be, it is noteworthy that murder rates are positively correlated with them: countries with more murders tend to have more incidences of rape. This correlation is evident also across the rich countries, where rape-reporting patterns are unlikely to be as diverse as across the poor nations. Interestingly, the Scandinavian countries report far more rape cases per 100,000 inhabitants than the German-speaking countries and the Netherlands.

Murder and rape rates are associated at the national level. Rape rates are also correlated with the hypometropia index.<sup>14</sup> This communality indicates a common root: hypometropic behavior in the high-scoring countries whose evolutionary logic is the insurance of dominance to spread one's genes, even at the expense of potentially negative long-term consequences at the individual level.

The available assault and robbery statistics for the whole world are probably quite unreliable. But those for the wealthy countries can be trusted to a higher degree. Both indicators are highly associated with the hypometropia index: in the rich world, more hypometropic societies have more frequent assaults and robberies.<sup>15</sup>

## **HIV and Sexual Networking**

The African HIV and AIDS pandemic was a mystery for quite a while until it became the subject of a number of studies in the 1990s. Some of the best known are by John Caldwell, done in association with a team of West African scholars from three African universities. Initially carried out in West Africa, these studies were later replicated nearly all over the sub-Saharan part of the continent, covering a period of 12 years. They shed some light on African sexuality, previously a murky subject.

---

14. The correlation between the murder index and a rape index (see that entry in the research notes chapter) based on data from the [UN Office on Drugs and Crime \(2010\)](#), and expanded with data from the [UN Office on Drugs and Crime \(2004\)](#) across all countries for which data are available is .42\*\* ( $n = 112$ ). The correlation between hypometropia and rape rates across the whole country sample is .57\*\* ( $n = 67$ ). Across the rich countries for which data are available, these correlations are approximately the same.

Across 261 US cities whose population exceeds 100,000, reported murder rates and rape rates for 2010 ([Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2010](#)) correlate at .81\*\*. The fact that murder and rape are correlated not only across countries but also across US cities suggests that the correlation cannot be spuriously created by reporting patterns: there is a real factor behind it.

15. The correlation between the hypometropia index and annual occurrence of assaults per 100,000 people (data from [UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2004](#)) is .46\*\* ( $n = 46$ ).

Caldwell and his African associates found that the average number of sexual partners that their African respondents had in their lives was comparable to that in American, French, and British populations (Caldwell, 2002). This is interesting because these numbers are high in comparison with North African, Middle Eastern, or Asian cultures. In addition, the researchers found some unusual extremes: over half the men and more than one quarter of the women in the Nigerian state of Ekiti identified lifetime sexual relationships with 10 or more persons. The researchers indicate that they were not studying a macho culture in which men brag about the number of women that they have scored with. On the contrary, because of the influence of Christianity and Islam in that extremely religious part of the world, sex is often a taboo subject across Africa; therefore underreporting is far more likely than overreporting.

The finding that many people in Nigeria or elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa have a high number of parallel sexual partners should not be surprising in view of the fact that polygyny is still widespread in the continent. What appears as lax sexual norms to outsiders may actually be considered legitimate relationships in Africa. However, sub-Saharan sexuality is characterized by a degree of permissiveness that transcends the boundaries of marriage. A large-scale study in the 1990s focused on male sexuality and male sexual behavior outside marriage, and the extent and success of female attempts to control it, in urban and rural populations in three states of southwest Nigeria.<sup>16</sup> The researchers found that the majority of the community believed that males are by nature sexually polygynous. Only half of the community believed that male sexuality can and should be confined to marriage. In another study in the Ondo state of Nigeria, the same researchers interviewed 488 males aged 15–50. They found evidence of extensive male and female sexual networking (Orubuloye, Caldwell, & Caldwell, 1992). After aggregating such data, Caldwell and his African research associates concluded that only 40 percent of people's most recent sexual relationship had been between spouses (Caldwell, 2002). Later, the researchers found similar patterns across sub-Saharan Africa and discovered that traditional society regarded female immorality as being constituted by sterility, not promiscuity.

Attitudes toward prostitution were also found to be somewhat permissive. Interviews with nearly 1000 prostitutes in Nigeria revealed that their level of education was above the rural average and that “most would have felt more degraded by taking up the traditional activities of rural women, trading and farming” (Caldwell, 2002, pp. 180–181). By the time they were 30, most of those women had returned to their villages, set up a small business, and married. “Unlike such women in earlier Europe or much of contemporary Asia, they did not thereafter spend their time feeling that they would be ruined if their past caught up with them” (Caldwell, 2002, pp. 180–181).

---

16. Orubuloye, Caldwell, and Caldwell (1997). The study included 1749 males and 1976 females.

The conscious risk-taking and short-term vision that sexual networking involves is also well documented. According to Caldwell, during the 1990s many African interviewees were knowledgeable about the cause of AIDS but did not consider the prospect of death a deterrent and did not intend to desist from their sexual networking practices. Many told the interviewers that they would probably be dead within 10 years even without AIDS, therefore the disease was not considered frightful (Caldwell, 2002). Another team of researchers (Moore & Oppong, 2006) reached a similar conclusion concerning the risk acceptance that characterizes many African cultures. They interviewed 151 HIV carriers in Togo and found that despite the awareness that HIV-positive people may infect their sexual partners, these individuals deliberately ignored the risk because other considerations — such as a desire to have a child — were more important to them. The researchers concluded that condom access is insufficient to change risky sexual behavior.

In a study of attitudes toward HIV and death, a team of African researchers reported that some young Ghanaians “think that people are going to die anyway and it may not matter much what they die from” (Awusabo-Asare et al., 1999, p. 125). Summarizing findings from a large research project that targeted 10–25 year olds in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia, carried out from 1995 to 2000, another group of African scholars (Amuyunzu-Nyamongo et al., 1999, p. 8) reported the following reactions to the prospect of contracting HIV and AIDS, expressed by some of their young interviewees: “AIDS came for the people,” “I am not a tree to be used for furniture,” and “Everybody will die anyway.”

It is precisely this evidence that justifies the inclusion of HIV rates in the index of a cultural dimension that reflects competitive reproductive behavior, coupled with risk acceptance.

## **Adolescent Fertility and Adolescent Sex**

After centuries of strict sexual norms, the Western world has seen considerable relaxation.<sup>17</sup> This is attributable to multiple causes, such as female emancipation and relative economic independence, availability of contraceptives, and a hedonistic culture. One of the effects of this relaxation is earlier sexual initiation. Adolescent sex does not necessarily result in pregnancy, because contraceptives, especially condoms, are easily available. From this perspective, it is arguable if adolescent sex in the West should be viewed as a form of reproductive competition.

Across the developing world, where contraceptives were introduced later, and are still not available to everybody, adolescent sex and fertility have a different meaning.

---

17. See Schmitt (2005) and Schmitt et al. (2004) for data about different aspects of sexuality across many countries. However, a word of advice is in order here: the reliability of sex-related surveys outside the Western countries, where the topic is largely taboo, is questionable. This is so even when anonymity seems to be guaranteed. In particular, the surveys by Schmitt and his associates do not point to the same conclusions as the in-depth interviews by Caldwell and his associates.

More intense sexual competition and a shorter lifespan can be expected to depress the age at which it is socially acceptable for young people to have sex and children. In societies with less strong mating rivalry, that age will be higher.

Adolescent fertility is indeed highest in sub-Saharan Africa, followed by northern Latin America. The Arab world and developing Asia score somewhat lower. This situation has an almost exact parallel in terms of time of sexual initiation: earliest in Africa, somewhat later in Latin America, considerably later in Asia.<sup>18</sup>

Aggregate data in a report by the [International Women's Health Coalition \(2007\)](#) reveal the same differences. Sub-Saharan Africans, both boys and girls, are more likely to have had sexual intercourse before age 15 than the inhabitants of any other poor region (there are no data about rich countries in that report), followed by "Latin America and Caribbean." Next in this ranking are "Central Asian Republics," followed by "South and Southeast Asia." "Northern Africa and Middle East" is last.

As for the rich countries, data are available from studies of nationally representative samples in the United States ([Leigh, Morrison, Trocki, & Temple, 1994](#); [Warren et al., 1998](#)). As a whole, that country's position is in between Latin America and Asia, with Blacks being more likely to obtain earlier sexual experience than Whites and Hispanics. According to some studies ([Warren et al., 1998](#)) Hispanics have a slightly lower median age of sexual initiation than Whites but this conclusion is not unequivocal.

As far as adolescent females in Africa and elsewhere are concerned, sex and childbirth may not necessarily involve imprudence because their sexual initiation often takes place forcefully. But such individual details do not change the conclusion of the group-level analysis: some societies tend to exhibit more risky behaviors than others. In the case of the unwillingly initiated African female teenagers, the risk is enforced on them by their male partners.

## Sociosexuality

American psychologist David Schmitt founded the International Sexuality Description Project — a survey of self-reported sexual practices, as well as sex-related ideation and attitudes, carried out in some 50 countries. The analysis of some of the results led to the construction of an individual-level dimension called sociosexuality. Persons with low scores on this dimension follow a monogamous mating strategy;

---

18. Data concerning age of first sex are available from a number of studies in different countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia: Kenya ([Ajayi, Marangu, Miller, & Paxman, 1991](#)), Tanzania ([Matasha et al., 1998](#)), Uganda ([Agvei, Mukiza-Gapere, & Epema, 1994](#)), South Africa ([Buga, Amoko, & Ncayiyana, 1996](#)), Brazil ([Tajman et al., 2003](#)), Ecuador ([Park, Sneed, Morisky, Alvear, & Hearst, 2002](#)), Colombia ([Ramirez, 1991](#)), Mexico ([Morris et al., 1988](#)), India ([Abraham, 2003](#)), Indonesia ([Merati, Ekstrand, Hudes, Suarmiartha, & Mandel, 1997](#)), the Philippines ([Aplasca et al., 1995](#)), South Korea ([Han, Choe, Lee, & Lee, 2001](#)), Vietnam ([Kaljee et al., 2007](#)), and China ([Liu et al., 1998](#)).

those with high scores seek multiple partners and report acceptance of casual sex. Two national sociosexuality indices — one for men and one for women — were also calculated and published (Schmitt, 2005). Taken as they are, these indices are not statistically associated with hypometropia. However, an interesting picture emerges when the wealthy countries are separated from the developing ones. In the rich world, sex may not be an easy topic of discussion but it is not exactly the strict taboo that it is in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Therefore, the answers of the respondents from the rich countries are more likely to reflect the real situation.

Among the 19 wealthy countries for which data are available, the sociosexuality index is positively associated with hypometropia, suggesting greater promiscuity for both men and women in countries with higher hypometropia scores. Among the 13 developing countries for which we have data, hypometropia and the sociosexuality indices are inversely related. There is an inverse relationship, this time across 23 developing countries, also between men's national sociosexuality index and HIV rates, meaning that in the poor world *higher* sociosexuality goes together with *lower* HIV rates.<sup>19</sup> One way to make sense of this paradox is to accept that highly hypometropic societies in the developing world, which also have high HIV rates, are in denial of the real situation, and strongly underreport their sociosexuality. The studies by Caldwell and his African associates, which we aforementioned, confirm the fact that sex is a taboo subject in Africa and underreporting is common. Another possible explanation is that the respondents in Schmidt's study were college students. It is quite plausible that in highly hypometropic cultures it is mostly the sexually restrained and more intelligent individuals who make it to university.

## Spouse Age Preference

American evolutionary psychologist David Buss studied various aspects of mating preferences in 37 societies.<sup>20</sup> His data show that men in societies with hypometropic

---

19. The correlations that the national sociosexuality indices for men and women (Schmitt, 2005) produce with hypometropia and HIV rates are:

<i>Rich countries</i>	
Hypometropia	men: .53**; women: .54** ( <i>n</i> = 21)
<i>Developing countries</i>	
Hypometropia	men: −.55*; women: −.43* ( <i>n</i> = 23)
HIV rates	men: −.43*; women: −.30 ( <i>n</i> = 23)

20. Buss (1989). Hypometropia correlates significantly with the age difference that men prefer to have between themselves and their spouses (a lower negative figure = preference for younger wives) at  $-.59^{**}$  ( $n = 32$ ). The correlation between hypometropia and the age difference that women prefer to have between themselves and their spouses is statistically insignificant.

cultures prefer their wives to be considerably younger than themselves when compared to men in prudent cultures.

Younger women are preferred by men in hypometropic cultures because life expectancy is short and childbirth must start early. In prudent societies, this consideration is not important.

## **Delay of Gratification**

Chapter 3 mentions various studies that document shorter time horizons in Black, American Indian, and Pacific Island children when compared to White American or Japanese children.<sup>21</sup> The former are more likely to accept a small immediate reward than wait for a larger reward. These differences can be explained also in terms of hypometropia versus prudence. Hypometropic cultures are more oriented toward immediate indulgence and consumption because postponing to a later time does not make much sense. For people who live in a turbulent and dangerous environment, tomorrow may never come.

## **Intelligence and Education**

Nations that score high on hypometropia have a lower average score on IQ tests. This also means that they have a lower educational achievement in mathematics. These associations are more or less similar across the whole world and across the developing countries.

Because of the extreme importance of this issue, and the controversies that its interpretation can generate, it is necessary first of all to explain what intelligence is. Only then would it be appropriate to attempt to make sense of the reported associations.

Like all other dimensions in psychology or anthropology, intelligence can be approached in two ways. It is possible to start from abstract theories as to what intelligence might be or should be about, depending on one's subjective views. Inevitably, this will lead to the conclusion that there are many types of intelligence that require many different measurement tools. The second approach is to give people various types of mental tasks, analyze the results, and attempt to find a recurrent pattern, suggesting a single mental skill that is needed to solve a wide range of problems despite their seeming diversity. If there is such a single skill, it could be called general intelligence. It would be a bipolar dimension on which everybody could be ranked, from the mentally retarded to the geniuses. Besides — in order to be of any interest — this dimension should be associated with important social

---

21. See the subsection "Origins of the Cultural Differences in Industry versus Indulgence; The Legacy of Differences in Subsistence Patterns" in Chapter 3.

phenomena. For instance, one should be able to predict that people who score higher on general intelligence will be more successful in a wide range of complex jobs, such as financial analyst, university professor, medical doctor, engineer, or army general.

The first described approach has led to a lot of debates and confusion among academics and laymen alike. One can hardly doubt the existence of diverse mental skills that are not associated with each other. However, a century of research following the second approach has revealed that there is one single and very important skill, called general intelligence or *g*, which is a valid single dimension. It accurately predicts performance in any complex endeavor although, naturally, it definitely does not guarantee success in life and is not the only success factor.<sup>22</sup>

Although general intelligence is a single (albeit multifaceted) phenomenon, and not an amalgamation of widely diverse skills, it is possible to define it in different ways. However, if the definitions are appropriate, they will not contradict each other but simply say the same thing in different words. A relatively simple way to define general intelligence is the following. It is an ability to analyze complex and seemingly disorganized information, see a meaningful pattern, and make a valid prediction on that basis. More intelligent people will make more complex predictions that are more likely to come true. Thus, the smarter chess player can better foresee which series of moves will lead to victory. The more intelligent of two medical doctors, who have been through the same training, will be better able to diagnose a difficult case and tell what will happen if a particular course of action is followed or nothing is done.

This definition of general intelligence has nothing to do with cultural relativity. Defined as an ability to make complex predictions, *g* is a universal phenomenon. A brighter Bushman is more likely than his duller tribesmen to read an animal's tracks correctly and predict whether the pursuit will result in a kill or a wild goose chase<sup>23</sup>.

However, the trouble starts when one has to decide what items to put in an IQ test for general intelligence. If *g* is one's ability to process and use information, and not the volume of information that one has, it should be measured in such a way that

---

22. The two approaches are reflected in two important publications on the nature of intelligence that can be easily read by nonexperts. The first is an article on intelligence by a special task force appointed by the Board of Scientific Affairs of the American Psychological Association (Neisser et al., 1996). The article starts with the assertion that when two dozen prominent theorists were asked to define intelligence, they gave two dozen somewhat different definitions. The authors find this to be normal and add "Scientific research rarely begins with fully agreed definitions, though it may eventually lead to them" (p. 77).

The second approach is illustrated in Arvey et al. (1994). This is an article explaining the nature of intelligence and its implications, signed by 52 renowned intelligence experts. Right on the first page, the article makes the assertion that "While there are different types of intelligence tests, they all measure the same intelligence." This is not a denial of the fact that there exist mental skills that are not correlated with the general intelligence that IQ tests measure. The statement simply implies that the article is concerned with that particular type of intelligence that takes center stage in any society because it predicts, at least partly, success on all complex mental tasks.

23. Hans Eysenck, one of the world's most-quoted psychologists and a staunch proponent of the concept of general intelligence, takes issue with this position. According to him, tracking animals in the forest is not a good element of an intelligence test (Eysenck & Fulker, 2007, p. 70). To the best of my knowledge, nobody has ever tried to validate or invalidate this empirically.

minimum knowledge is required to solve the tasks in the IQ test. But how can that minimum be defined? Although it is relatively easy to reach consensus concerning what most able-minded people in a given society know, it is much more difficult to assess what all people across the world are familiar with. Without a correct assessment of this type, does it make sense to compare different ethnic groups that come from diverse environments on one and the same IQ test?

American researcher Peter Gordon studied the numerical skills of the Hiaitihi (Piraha) tribe in the Amazon (Gordon, 2004). He sat across from his respondents, divided his side of the ground from theirs with a stick, and put small numbers of familiar objects, nuts or batteries, on his side. Then, he asked the respondents to look at the objects on his side and provide the same number of objects on their side. The performance of the Hiaitihi depended on the number of the objects that they saw and on their visual arrangement. When the objects on Gordon's side appeared to be randomly scattered, the Hiaitihi started making mistakes even with groups of three objects. With five, six, or seven objects, they provided the correct answer in 75 percent of their trials. With nine objects, they were completely unable to solve the problem. The reason for this is clear. Amazon Indians do not know how to count and without that skill it is impossible to do well on this task.<sup>24</sup>

---

24. In another experiment, Gordon provided his Hiaitihi respondents with a straight row of objects and asked them to place the same number of objects on their side of the stick. In this experiment, no counting is necessary because the respondents can solve the task by placing one object on their side, across from each object on the other side of the stick.

My experiments with Bulgarian children aged five and six, with poor counting skills or no such skills at all, show that the problem can be solved without counting, simply by using what mathematicians call the principle of one-to-one correspondence. In order to prevent the children from counting, I present them with a long straight row of objects — for example 30 or 40 pawns — and ask them to provide “as many as you see here” on their side. If the children resorted to counting, I would certainly notice that because of the high number of objects. Still, in order to make it clear that counting would not help, after presenting the row of objects I immediately cover one of the two ends with a piece of paper. In that way, the children realize that I will not let them find out the exact number by counting.

Although counting is eliminated as a problem-solving method in this case, bright children are not deterred. They immediately start placing their pawns across from mine, in a one-to-one correspondence row. Asked why they are doing that, they explain that in that way there will be as many pawns in their row as in mine. Clearly, they are subconsciously aware of the principle of one-to-one correspondence.

However, the Hiaitihi were not aware of that principle. They clearly understood the task because their arrangements were 100 percent right for numbers up to three. But when Gordon's row contained four, five, or six objects, only between 50 and 75 percent of the arrangements that the Hiaitihi created were correct.

One might conclude that European pre-school children are brighter than adult Hiaitihi because they can solve this supposedly culture-free test, whereas the Hiaitihi cannot. On second thought, the test is anything but culture-free. I realized that the Bulgarian children that I tested had seen teachers distribute objects to pupils in a one-pupil-one-object manner, in kindergartens or on the TV. This explains how they had subconsciously learned the mathematical principle of one-to-one correspondence. I asked American linguist Daniel Everett, who has lived six years with the Hiaitihi, whether those Indians ever distribute things in a one-person-one-object manner. His negative answer confirmed my suspicion. There is sharing in Hiaitihi culture but it is done in a haphazard manner. There is no one-person-one-object distribution. Like any other people, the Hiaitihi cannot solve a task requiring a significant amount of totally unfamiliar knowledge.

My own experiments confirm the importance of standardizing IQ tests for cross-cultural research in such a way that all participants are equally familiar with the information in the test. During a training session with Afghani high school graduates, I was asked to explain what an IQ test represents. I drew the following on the white board:



Then I invited the students to guess how the next arrow would be positioned. No matter how I paraphrased my question, the result was a row of blank faces. By that time, I had established a very good rapport with my students and an active two-way communication pattern. The blank faces could not be explained by shyness or a lack of interest. Being familiar with the difficulties that Western IQ tests pose to ethnic groups that are not used to them, I was not at all surprised. I explained that the arrow had been turned (I avoided words like “rotated”) always in the same direction and by the same angle, and used a whiteboard marker to illustrate the rotation. Then, once again, I asked how the next arrow would look. After a long pause, I had one volunteer. He came to the blackboard and drew a circle.

Jumping to the conclusion that failure on this easy task (by European standards, of course) means a severe lack of intelligence would be a mistake. Immediately after this problem, I administered another one: unscramble “IHRAC” so that it gives a meaningful word in English. Only three seconds later, one of the students suggested “CHAIR.” Other tasks of this type were also solved with relative ease. The students were familiar with the concept of mentally combining the letters of the English language in such a way that they gave meaningful words.

Some IQ tests, such as Raven’s progressive matrices, have been pronounced culture-free by some academics.<sup>25</sup> This is a doubtful assertion. On the contrary, it is equally unacceptable to claim that people from different cultures should not, as a matter of principle, be compared on general intelligence. This is like saying that they cannot be compared on physical strength. If it makes sense to compare the power of muscles and bones, there is no reason why one should not compare the power of brains. The problem, however, is that the first task is far easier than the second. To date, there is no known universally accepted IQ test that fairly measures only ability, and not culture-specific knowledge, across all ethnic and racial groups.

If this is so, what are we to make of cross-cultural comparisons on IQ tests? They are very strongly correlated with measures of school achievement in mathematics and science.<sup>26</sup> In other words, they reflect differences in educational achievement: a combination of ability and knowledge. This is somewhat different from pure *g* and should not be equated with it.

25. Arvey et al. (1994) are some of the authors who claim that culture-free IQ tests exist.

26. The correlations between the average national IQs in Lynn and Vanhanen (2002) and the TIMSS or OECD PISA measures of achievement in mathematics and science are invariably about .90\*\* or higher.

What logically follows from this is that administering standardized IQ tests to people all over the world is not less meaningful than giving them math or science problems. However, one should be clear about what this type of research would reveal. It would not necessarily tell us how much average genetic intelligence a particular population has. But it would certainly tell us how well it is prepared to cope with the globalizing world.

The negative association between educational achievement and hypometropia suggests a cause-and-effect relationship between the two. It is known that as a particular population acquires better education, its adolescent fertility falls dramatically. Murder rates are also depressed although their link with education is less strong. But might there also be a reverse causality? Is it not logical to assume that populations with shorter time-horizons, in which early reproduction is a priority even at the expense of the long-term survival of the individual, would be less interested in investing efforts in school activities that could bring hypothetical benefits in the distant future?

According to Daniel Everett, the Hiaitiiti Indians have traded goods with Brazilians for 200 years (Everett, 2005, draft). Still, although the Hiaitiiti understand what cheating is, and are very much concerned about it, they have always been completely unable to figure out what a fair bargain is because they cannot count. In fact — like many other hunter-gatherers — they do not have any real numerals in their language. Equations such as “five nuts are worth a roll of tobacco” do not make any sense to them. As a result, they will offer any quantity of what they have for any quantity of what the Brazilians have brought, depending on the Hiaitiiti’s impressionistic estimate of the value of the goods at the moment of the barter. Yet, they understand that this haphazard approach to business is not good. When they return to their village, they discuss their transactions to find out through collective efforts if they have been cheated, and feel upset if they reach such a conclusion. Because of that, the Hiaitiiti reported a genuine desire to learn how to count and do simple sums. They asked Everett and his wife to teach them these skills. The Everetts offered regular classes each evening, for eight months in a row. The sessions were always initiated by the Hiaitiiti with much apparent enthusiasm; they did not have to be asked to go to school. Still, after eight months of classes, not a single Hiaitiiti had learned how to count from 1 to 10. Not a single person had learned how to solve problems such as “ $3 + 1 = x$ ” or even “ $1 + 1 = x$ .” Then, the classes were discontinued.

What is behind this educational fiasco? There can be various explanations. One might suspect monumentalism, as discussed in the previous chapter. Yet, there is no evidence that Hiaitiiti culture is monumentalist. Some might be tempted to ascribe the Hiaitiiti’s inability to learn elementary arithmetic to a genetic disadvantage. However, Everett reports that he also taught the Hiaitiiti how to read and some tribesmen understood the principle of combining letters into words. Yet, right after that, they lost their interest in education and stated that their language did not need to be written.

The explanation of the Hiaitiiti’s scholastic failure was suggested by Everett, himself. He reports that they view the educational process as fun. They do not consider it an organized activity during which some discipline should be observed to reach a

specific goal. Why should the Hiaitihi be interested in reading and writing when they have no use for such skills in the Amazon jungle? Even if they state that they wish to learn arithmetics, making a strong effort to achieve that goal is hardly worthwhile because the investment would by far outweigh the potential return on it: trade is not essential to the Hiaitihi. The trouble is that populations that have developed in such environments retain their short-term vision even after they have emerged from them. This severely impedes their ability to integrate in a globalizing world.

The previous chapter mentioned the research project of Niels Noorderhaven and Bassirou Tidjani who studied the values of students from Cameroon, Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe and some countries outside Africa. The findings did not reveal a negative attitude toward education in Africa. But they showed that many people in that continent have other cultural priorities. These findings are confirmed by African and Western academics. In a statement in *The Economist* magazine, Dr. Lourenco do Rosario, Rector of the Instituto Superior Politecnico e Universitario in Mozambique said that Mozambicans have traditionally been a rural people. Because education is an urban phenomenon, many rural citizens are wary of it (*The Economist*, September 14, 2002).

A similar conclusion was reached by Robert Sternberg of Yale University in an article where he defends the view that non-Western societies face an unfair cultural disadvantage in Western intelligence tests. This is what he says about the Kenyan children that he studied: “Children generally drop out of school before graduation, and most families in the village do not particularly value formal Western schooling” (Sternberg, 2002).

The Southeast European Gypsies<sup>27</sup> are another interesting example. Contrary to widespread myths, many of them are not at all incapable of integration. They have become successful and honest business people, artists, and scientists. But Southeast Europe is still home to hundreds of thousands of Gypsy ghetto dwellers and nomads, many of whom are completely illiterate. I have personally interviewed quite a few of them about the causes of their illiteracy. They do not speak of discrimination, racism or unequal opportunities. Some say that girls should not go to school beyond elementary school because they can learn bad things. But what about the men? Why are they also illiterate? Oftentimes, the answer is just a smile. Others explain, in their own words, that they see no point in studying. When your main way of life is collection of scrap metal and firewood, production of hand-made baskets and

---

27. Around 1990, the word “Roma,” being considered politically correct, started gradually replacing the word “Gypsy,” both in Eastern Europe and in the West. In fact, there are many Gypsy groups who do not consider themselves Roma, do not use that self-identification and do not wish to be called that name. For example, the Republic of Macedonia has a group of Gypsies that call themselves “Egyptians” and wish to be seen as different from the Roma. There are Gypsies who call themselves “Sintis,” “Manushes,” “Vlakhs,” “Turks,” etc. Still, they all share an Indian origin, a low socioeconomic status and various cultural features, such as low education. Those who acquire a good education and integrate in the mainstream culture of their nations usually hide their Gypsy origin and do not wish to maintain their original identity.

brooms, fortune-telling, selling blood for surgical operations, playing folk music and begging (and sometimes pick-pocketing and prostitution), literacy is not needed. Many nomadic Gypsies and ghetto-dwellers openly admit in front of TV cameras that they cannot imagine a better life than theirs and cannot see themselves holding down a regular job that curtails that freedom. They complain of inadequate housing and poor sanitation in their neighborhoods but some of them evidently prefer to be free in poverty than well-fed slaves in a factory. These cultural choices need to be recognized and understood rather than denied for fear that their recognition may sound politically incorrect. In fact, the denial would amount to ethnocentrism: disliking the values of a foreign culture and refusing to accept the reality of their existence.

The totality of this evidence suggests that a deeply entrenched hypometropic vision may prevent its carriers from easily adapting to environments where such vision is dysfunctional and needs to be replaced by a longer time horizon. This is one of the main obstacles to the integration of some cultural groups in modern environments that require achievement in modern education.

### **Competitiveness and Social Inequality**

There is a positive association between hypometropia and a World Values Survey item that measures approval of interpersonal competition.<sup>28</sup> The hypometropia index is associated with the percentages of people who have chosen the extreme position on the 10-point scale that measures such approval, not with the average national scores. Nations with more hypometropic cultures have higher percentages of people who fully approve of competition and its outcome but this is not true of the rest of the population. In the absence of more detailed information, one can only speculate that the winners fully approve of competition and the social divisions that it creates, but the losers are not of the same opinion.

Business consultants Fons Trompenaars and Charles–Hampden Turner measured another aspect of competitiveness. They asked company managers in 12 developed countries whether they agreed that business competition is the antidote to collusion (formation of monopolies and price-fixing). Despite the fact that this study was only across rich nations, it shows a very strong association between hypometropia and agreement that business competition is a good thing.<sup>29</sup>

The hypometropia index is also correlated with inequality.<sup>30</sup> The largest socioeconomic distances between the rich and the poor citizens of one and the same country are found in Latin America and Africa, the smallest are in Japan.

---

28. The correlation between hypometropia and item EO39 (respondent completely agrees that interpersonal competition is a good thing) is .46\*\* ( $n = 57$ ).

29. Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1996, p. 71). The correlation between hypometropia and approval of business competition is .86\*\* ( $n = 12$ ).

30. The correlation between hypometropia and the Gini index for 2007 (UN Development Program, 2007/2008) is .66\*\* ( $n = 67$ ).

Hypometropia is a factor associated with strong competition for the resources that are necessary to spread one's genes. When other conditions are equal, societies where the gene-spreading contest is fiercer will have a greater distance between the winners and the losers. This is especially true of the developing world where differences in socioeconomic inequality can be stark. The winners of the contest usually accept the effect of the competition as normal, whereas the losers do not.

The high social inequality of Latin America can also be seen from another angle. Many of the countries in that region have well-educated and economically successful elites of European descent as well as an underclass of uneducated indigenous Amerindian populations or former slaves from Africa. The elites typically do little to reduce the socioeconomic distance between themselves and the underclass, whereas the underclass carries a hypometropic culture that prevents it from easily becoming middle class through its own efforts.

### **Hypometropia versus Prudence as a Cultural Dimension: Definition and Summary**

The evidence in this chapter can be used to propose the following definition of hypometropia versus prudence as a single bipolar cultural dimension:

Hypometropia is the tendency to follow a short-term vision in reproduction and associated matters. It involves mating competition, risk acceptance, and violence as a means of spreading one's genes and ensuring the survival of the group at the expense of individual longevity.

Prudence is the opposite of hypometropia. It involves careful management of reproductive instincts: prudent behaviors in the name of individual longevity without an emphasis on mating competition.

Table 5.2 summarizes the most salient contrasts between highly hypometropic and highly prudent cultures.

### **Origins of the Cultural Differences in Hypometropia versus Prudence**

Hypometropia is a multifaceted phenomenon. Looking for one single explanation of how different societies came to diverge on this dimension is bound to be a fruitless exercise. Instead, a variety of potential determinants should be analyzed and their impact on the various facets of hypometropia should be assessed separately. For instance, although murder rates and adolescent fertility are correlated and obviously have something in common, this does not mean that all their determinants are exactly the same. In some Middle Eastern and South Asian societies, homicide is rare but childbearing at a young age is not. This means that, apart from the general factor that operates more or less across all societies, there are local conditions that need to be taken into account for a better understanding of the existing cultural diversity in everything that is associated with hypometropia. Further, it would not be useless to

Table 5.2: Main contrasts between highly hypometropic and highly prudent societies.

<b>Highly hypometropic societies</b>	<b>Highly prudent societies</b>
It is more important to follow procreative instincts than live long	Procreative instincts are curbed in the name of longevity
Strong and free mating competition, even when danger is involved	Weak mating competition, especially when danger is involved
Risk acceptance	Risk avoidance
In pre-industrial societies: sexual networking is widely practiced, especially by men	In pre-industrial societies: sexual networking is rare
In pre-industrial societies: earlier sexual initiation	In pre-industrial societies: later sexual initiation
Shorter life span	Longer life expectancy
Delay of gratification (postponement of the consumption of pleasure) is less frequent	Delay of gratification is frequent when future rewards seem preferable
High adolescent fertility	Low adolescent fertility
High murder rates	Low murder rates
High rape rates	Low rape rates
High HIV rates	Low HIV rates
Men prefer their wives to be considerably younger	Men do not mind spouses of their own age
High approval of competition in some segments of the population	Low competition orientation
High socioeconomic inequality	Low socioeconomic inequality

reiterate the fact that there are important differences within many nations: some subcultures are much more hypometropic than others.

This section provides only a brief overview of the historical factors that might explain the observed differences in hypometropia across modern and modernizing societies. The analysis is speculative as it is often impossible to provide hard evidence for processes that occurred in the distant past. Because the matter is of extreme social importance, we can hope to see more research in this area in the future and obtain clearer answers to some of the questions that are raised on the next pages.

The remaining sections of this chapter are divided into two parts. In the first part, I briefly mention some of the likely (and less likely) historical causes of mating competition and violence. In the second part I dwell — also very briefly — on an equally difficult issue: the history of intelligence. My goal is not to provide definitive answers, which is scientifically impossible at this stage of the development of our knowledge, but to create some food for thought.

## **Origins of the Cultural Differences in Mating Competition and Violence**

### ***Differences in National Wealth***

If we consider all countries for which data are available, there is a negative association between hypometropia and national wealth: more hypometropic countries are poorer.<sup>31</sup> Yet this is a weak correlation that explains only a small part of the observed national variance. Besides, it is perfectly possible for a society to be very poor and score very low on some of the main facets of hypometropia, such as murder and sexual networking.

### ***Differences in Life Expectancy***

People in more hypometropic societies die younger. As a consequence, they compete for early procreation and are less sensitive to the risks that this behavior might entail. The association between hypometropia and longevity is strong even when the rich countries are eliminated from the analysis and only the developing ones are considered.<sup>32</sup>

Hypometropia, involving risk-taking mating competition, has proven to be a very successful survival strategy for whole communities, even if it means early deaths for the community members. Naturally, this begs the question of why life expectancy is lower in societies with high hypometropia. One of the answers is that hypometropic societies have evolved in the tropics, where a lot of life-threatening communicable diseases are common.<sup>33</sup> However, because hypometropia is associated with insensitivity to risks and greater violence, it is to some extent also a cause of short life expectancy, not only its outcome. Therefore, a more detailed analysis is needed to understand why some societies have developed less hypometropic cultures than others.

### ***Population Structure and the Legacy of Slavery and Discrimination***

In the Americas, the highest murder rates, HIV rates and adolescent fertility are found in the areas where the two continents meet as well as in the Caribbean islands. The populations of those countries are predominantly of indigenous origin or descend from African slaves. Typically, these ethnic elements are worse off socioeconomically than

---

31. Across the whole sample of nations, the correlation between hypometropia and GDP per person in 2005 is weak:  $-.38^{**}$  ( $n = 80$ ). Across the 50 developing countries, the correlation is weak and statistically insignificant:  $-.28$  ( $n = 50$ ). Across the 23 wealthy countries in the sample, the correlation is positive:  $.43^{**}$  Pearson and  $.54^{**}$  Spearman ( $n = 50$ ).

32. Across 50 developing countries, the correlation between hypometropia and life expectancy is  $-.76^{**}$  for men and  $-.77^{**}$  for women. Controlling for GDP per person (to account for the different levels of national wealth among developing countries) does not change these correlations.

33. The hypometropia index is positively correlated with the estimated prevalence of infectious diseases for 230 countries, calculated by Murray and Schaller (2010), especially with their nine-item index, but that correlation is weak:  $r = .38^{**}$  ( $n = 79$ ).

the white minorities of their countries. It is tempting to think of the legacy of slavery and racial discrimination here but these factors are not convincing explanations. In many northern Latin American and Caribbean countries, the percentages of whites are small. They cannot successfully oppress the rest of the population without being overthrown. They have not created the predominant local cultures through slavery and discrimination, either. There is clear evidence that the hypometropia of those societies is an old phenomenon that evolved as a response to the local environment in the Americas and sub-Saharan Africa long before the first Europeans came.

### *The Legacy of Differences in Subsistence Patterns*

The index in [Table 5.1](#) shows that sub-Saharan Africa and northern Latin America are higher in the hypometropia ranking than the other parts of the world. What they have in common is an absence of a long history of intensive agriculture — the type of farming that employs draft animals, complex irrigation systems, and fertilizers. The predominant traditional economy in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America was horticulture: gardening or farming without draft animals and complex irrigation.

Women in hunting-gathering societies contribute a good deal of the food, often as much as the men. Among horticulturalists, they may contribute even more. This gives them a relatively high economic status (at least in comparison to women in agriculturalist societies) and some freedom. It is hard for men to subjugate them to the extent that they can completely control their sexual activities. Instead, in such societies, and especially among horticulturalists, men often choose a different strategy: instead of trying to keep their own sexual partners on a leash, they compete for new partners. There is a well-established link between horticulture and competition for women that results in polygyny and aggression ([Haviland, 1990](#); [Marlowe, 2003](#); [Oswalt, 1986](#)), as well as in sexual networking between individuals who are not necessarily spouses.

Because one of the main instruments in horticulture is the hoe, anthropologist Helen Fisher and others speak of the morality of the hoe in horticulturalist societies ([Fisher, 1992](#)). In summary, the link between a hoe and sexual permissiveness is the following: since women can easily wield a hoe, they can participate in food provisioning through horticultural activities. Because of that, horticulturalist women enjoy some economic and sexual independence, which men have accepted as more or less normal. But this equation has also another element. When women contribute a lot of the food, men have time for nonprovisioning activities, such as competing for women and fighting.

Intensive agriculture appears to have suppressed these phenomena. This can be explained in several ways. Among intensive agriculturalists, women cannot raise children without a very significant contribution from men ([Fisher, 1992](#)), because women cannot easily plow and dig irrigation canals. The morality of the plow replaces that of the hoe. Men become more involved in paternal provisioning for the family ([Marlowe, 2000, 2003](#)). According to [Ember and Ember \(1992\)](#), a number of studies

show that intensive agriculturalists typically work longer hours than horticulturalists. When men work longer, they have less time to compete for women. Also, without intensive paternal provisioning their offspring would die. Intensive agriculturalists can subjugate their wives because the latter are almost entirely dependent on them. Without much economic freedom, women lose their sexual freedom as well.

There is also another reason why agriculture suppresses competition for women. Intensive agriculture — and especially the maintenance of irrigation systems — is often a collective activity. Men who cultivate and irrigate crops together should learn (and do learn) how to cooperate rather than compete.

### ***Female-to-Male Ratios***

This is the ratio between women and men in a particular society: the number of females per 100 males. Evolutionary psychologist Nigel Barber is one of the main proponents of the idea that societies with a higher ratio (many more women than men) can be expected to have more violence and, in particular, more murders. However, there is no significant correlation between national female-to-male ratios and national murder rates. Interestingly, the hypometropia index is strongly and positively associated with female-to-male ratios across the nine African countries for which data are available. In those regions, female-to-male ratios are also associated with higher HIV rates.<sup>34</sup> Although a sample of nine countries is small, it lends some limited support to Barber's theory.

Barber's explanation of this interesting phenomenon is that when women are scarce, men focus on a stable marriage because they are unwilling to risk losing what they have. If there is a surplus of women, some of them will be unmated and men can compete for them. As a result, marriages will be less stable and there will be greater violence among the competitors. Some anthropologists believe that a factor of this type may indeed be at work across sub-Saharan populations and, probably, some pre-literate peoples on other continents. In their view, the practice of polygyny works best if there are considerably more adult women than men. Thus, violence among males reduces the number of men and the resulting female-to-male imbalance facilitates polygyny (Haviland, 1990, p. 39).

Naturally, this raises the question of why some societies have unbalanced sex ratios. A scarcity of men could stem from excessive competition, risk-acceptance, and violence. But a severe shortage of women, as in many Gulf states, calls for a different explanation that seems to be beyond the scope of this book.

---

34. See Barber (2009). The correlation between the murder index and female-to-male ratios (UN Statistics Division, 2007) is weak and statistically insignificant. The hypometropia index also yields weak and insignificant correlations with female-to-male ratios worldwide. Across nine African countries for which hypometropia scores are available, hypometropia is strongly and positively correlated with female-to-male ratios: .77\*\*. Interestingly, across 45 countries with African populations (including Caribbean countries with populations of African descent) HIV rates correlate with female-to-male ratios at .37\*.

### ***Parasites and Infectious Diseases***

Communicable diseases reduce life expectancy, the result being a shorter time horizon. But it is possible that a high prevalence of parasites, pathogenic bacteria, and viruses also contributes to mating competition in the form of polygyny and sexual networking. Some studies suggest that when humans, as well as animals, mate with different partners, the resulting greater genetic variety comes with evolutionary benefits for some of the offspring: they become immune to some of the pathogens in the environment (Barber, 2008; Read, 1991). Thus, the relative sexual permissiveness that characterizes hunting-gathering and horticulturalist societies in the tropics may be an evolutionary advantage. Without it, whole human populations may have been gradually wiped out by communicable diseases.

### ***Group-Level Biological Differences?***

Discussing group-level biological differences and their putative association with a cultural dimension such as hypometropia, or any other, is a scientifically and politically risky endeavor. From a scientific viewpoint, nothing is yet known with certainty, although there is some scattered evidence suggesting that such an association is not to be ruled out simply because, if proven, it would be politically incorrect. From a Western political perspective, it is considered poor taste to discuss biological differences between groups that may even partly account for the peculiarities of their cultures. When an author brings up this touchy subject, almost inevitably a Western commentator will stand up and state that pseudoscientific racism has once again reared its ugly head. Statements of this kind may be intended as a legitimate attack on racism but they often betray cultural ethnocentrism. They reveal that those who make them view some aspects of foreign cultures as a deviation from normality. Therefore these well-meaning, yet ethnocentric, commentators are incensed when such supposedly abnormal aspects of foreign cultures are mentioned. Naturally, what is normal and acceptable is the cultural outlook of the indignant commentators.

Thus, if African societies are characterized by sexual networking, that must be a pathology because it is not consistent with the traditional Puritan morality of Europe and North America, which should be the norm for all peoples in the world. Those who do not have that morality must be taught the proper gospel. But what if sexual networking has been so beneficial to the survival of the community in some specific environments for tens of thousands of years that it has selected for some biological features? No, that cannot be true for moral reasons. If it were, how would people who have undergone such genetic selection adopt the best morality in the world, that of Puritan-minded Europeans and Americans? Although biology is not immutable destiny, it can supposedly interfere with cultural change, making it more difficult in some cases.

Cultural differences in violence are also often viewed from the wrong perspective. One can hardly find many individuals in any society who would fancy being

victimized. But societal logic is not always the same as the logic of the individual. The Romans would say, “*Patriae uiuere necesse est; tibi uiuere non necesse est*”: “It is necessary for the fatherland to live, but it is not necessary for you to live.” If violence ensures societal fitness and the survival of the community, it does not matter — from a societal perspective — that some individuals will perish. And if this has resulted in some genetic selection, protesting against this development is like saying that nature has made a mistake in allowing the evolution of male animals that fight for females; in the right kind of world, all creatures should be female sheep.

The next sections of this chapter examine some of the scattered and controversial evidence that some aspects of societal differences in hypometropia might have a partial biological element, regardless of the fact that some commentators may find this distasteful. My goal is not to defend a particular position, which would be unscientific given the scarcity of the evidence, but to generate further interest in this intriguing topic.

**Handedness** Let us look again at the study by Charlotte Faurie and Michel Raymond of murder rates across indigenous preliterate societies practicing hunting-gathering or horticulture. The results showed that murder rates were strongly and positively associated with the percentages of left-handers in each society: more left-handers means more murders. The researchers noted that left-handers have a proven advantage in sports such as boxing and fencing, because most fighters do not expect a hard and skillful blow from the adversary’s left side. Left-handedness is an advantage in hand-to-hand combat and might therefore stimulate aggression in preliterate populations because it pays off, at least for those who win violent showdowns. Social environments where violence provides benefits may select for left-handedness because left-handers are somewhat more likely to survive a direct confrontation.

Left-handedness appears to be partly genetic or congenital and attributable, among other factors, to higher prenatal exposure or sensitivity to testosterone (Geschwind & Galaburda, 1985). If this is so, differences in murder rates between some indigenous populations have a partly biological nature. But Faurie and Raymond’s findings need to be replicated across a far larger sample of societies before a conclusion of this kind can firmly be made. Further, even if left-handedness could predict murder rates across pre-literate societies, that does not mean that it would have the same statistical properties across all societies.

**Finger ratios** There is another line of research that may eventually lead to the conclusion that some average group-level biological indicators predict aspects of violence, such as murder rates. The chapter on culture and its origins mentioned the finding that a person who has a low second-to-fourth finger ratio (also known as a low 2D:4D or simply a more masculine configuration of the hand), is likely to have had a higher exposure to testosterone as a fetus in the womb. Some studies have found that

men with more masculine hands are more prone to aggression and have more sexual partners.<sup>35</sup>

Recently, Emma Nelson of the University of Liverpool in the United Kingdom and Susanne Shultz of the University of Oxford published a ground-breaking study in which they showed a correlation between finger ratios and mating competition across primate species. Polygynous monkeys and apes have more masculine hands, whereas pair-bonded primates have more feminine hands (Nelson & Shultz, 2010).

By now there is a considerable and reliable body of scientific evidence concerning the ethnic and geographic variation in finger ratios in humans.<sup>36</sup> The data show that the most masculine hands, indicating the highest prenatal exposure or sensibility to testosterone, are found in African populations, particularly in Jamaicans, who are predominantly of West-African origin, but also in Nigerian Igbos and Yorubas and South African Zulus. Data for Mexicans also suggest strongly masculine hands, although the available study used children whose hand configurations may not have stabilized.

Moving north from the zones around the equator, finger ratios become less masculine in India and then even more feminine in Europe and China. They seem to reach their most feminine values in Poland and Denmark.<sup>37</sup> However, in Sweden, Finland, and Lithuania, this trend is reversed. Hands become more masculine again, reaching average values that are similar to those in Hungary. A study that compared individuals from Finland found that those born farther up north in that country had more masculine hands than Finns born in the south. Comparing cross-national data, the authors concluded that there is a weak  $\cap$ -shaped association between latitude and

---

35. For the association between 2D:4D and aggression across individuals see Bailey and Hurd (2005), Cousins, Fugere, and Franklin (2009), Kuepper and Henning (2007), and McIntyre et al. (2007). For the association between 2D:4D and number of sexual partners see Honekopp, Voracek, and Manning (2006).

36. See Albores-Gallo, Fernandez-Guasti, Hernandez-Guzman, and List-Hilton (2009) for data about Mexicans; Bang et al. (2005) for data about Danes; Manning, Henzi, Venkatramana, Martin, and Singh (2003) for data about Englishmen, Indians (Sugali and Yanadi), and South African Zulus; Fink, Thanzami, Seydel, and Manning (2006) for data about Germans and Indians (Mizos); Loehlin, McFadden, Medland, and Martin (2006) for data about white Australians, Englishmen, and White Americans; Manning et al. (2000) for data about Englishmen, Germans, Poles, Spaniards, Hungarians, Hungarian Gypsies, and Jamaicans; Manning, Stewart, Bundred, and Trivers (2004) for data about Moroccan Berbers, Chinese Uygurs and Hans, and Jamaicans; Oladipo, Fawehinmi, Edibamode, Osunwoke, and Ordu (2009) for data about Nigerian Yorubas and Igbos; Von Horn, Backman, Davidsson, and Hansen (2010) for data about Swedes; Voracek, Bagdonas, and Dressler (2007) for data about Lithuanians; Voracek, Manning, and Ponocny (2005) for data about Austrians. See also Helle and Laaksonen (2009) for a summary of such data.

Note that some of these studies compare adults' 2D:4D, whereas others compare children's fingers. Cross-comparisons (adults from one ethnic group and children from another) would not be justified because 2D:4D changes in childhood. Besides, some of these studies, such as Helle and Laaksonen (2009), provide only data for women.

37. The findings in the Danish study (Bang et al., 2005) seemed surprising. The finger ratios of Danish men, at least in the 360 males from the general populations that were studied, were like those of women elsewhere in Europe. An independent re-examination of the findings (Voracek & Dressler, 2006) concluded that the findings were reliable.

finger ratios. They are low (masculine) in the tropics and rise (become more feminine) in the direction of Europe, then they fall again in the far north of Europe. It is also worth mentioning that the available study of White Americans from California revealed very masculine hands, only slightly more feminine than those of Zulus.

At present, the data are hard to combine and insufficient to make firm conclusions about group-level biological markers and aspects of hypometropia. But they suggest that an association between the two cannot be ruled out simply because it would sound unacceptable to those who have no time for cultural relativity and view hypometropia as social pathology. Of course, if biology has anything to do with hypometropia, its effect is not insurmountable. It can be strongly diluted by social and economic developments such as those that have taken place in the past centuries in Europe. The modern nations of the Scandinavian peninsula have lower murder rates than the predominant hand pattern would predict. But there is historical evidence that early medieval Scandinavia had extremely intense intracommunal violence. Homicide was a very common phenomenon according to the Icelandic sagas, which tell of frequent murders and constant blood feuds between the early settlers. In continental Scandinavia, the situation was the same. Mating competition was clearly implicated in much of the violence: men fought in order to acquire a woman as a wife or to defend her honor. According to *Gisla saga*, written in the 12th century, there were bullies in Norway who traveled from one settlement to another, asking other men to give them their wives for a week or two, or face them in a duel. Of note, the Scandinavian countries still have unusually high rape rates if we believe the official reports.

In the absence of reliable cross-cultural data, it is impossible to know whether medieval Scandinavians really had more intracommunal violence than other Europeans. If they did, that might be evidence of a U-shaped association between latitude and violence, at least across pre-industrial societies, mirroring the observed  $\cap$ -shaped relationship between latitude and finger ratios. Despite centuries of societal and economic influences, some traces of the effect of latitude on violence may not have disappeared completely. Today, Russia and the Baltic countries have the highest murder rates in Europe, whereas Finland has a low murder rate by global standards but is the homicide champion of Western Europe.

If the currently murky societal link between biology and violence were ever confirmed, it would have several upsetting implications. Those who are dead set against the assumption that cultural differences are not always completely dissociated from biology would be disturbed by the hole in their arguments. But it would probably be equally disconcerting to those who use old stereotypes in their thinking to hear that there is nothing peculiar in sub-Saharan biology with respect to mating competition and violence. Various non-African populations, including medieval Scandinavians and modern Russians and Baltics, had or still have equally high murder rates, if not higher. And some of their relevant biological markers may not be too different from those of Africans. This should not be surprising as survival in the European North used to be as difficult as in the tropics and life spans must have been shorter than around the Mediterranean. These were good conditions for the development of a hypometropic vision and behavior.

If a statistical correlation could be demonstrated between average finger ratios and murder rates, at least across societies that are still close to a pre-industrial state, it

would be equally easy to propose a conceptual link as well, and to challenge it at the same time. Hands with more masculine finger ratios have a stronger handgrip (Fink et al., 2006). At present, it is unclear if there is a direct link between the two, or something else causes both at the same time, but a longer ring finger may strengthen one's grip on objects shaped like a stick. Everything else being equal, men with a strong handgrip would have an advantage in fighting with striking or thrusting weapons. Eventually, these men would become aware of this and would be more inclined to use their advantage, especially in disorganized and competitive preliterate societies where combat dexterity matters. Such societies were typical not only in the tropics, but also in the European North. Medieval Iceland was a country without a national executive government. It had a general assembly that acted as a legislative body and a court but there was no law-enforcement agency such as a police or an army. If a murderer was convicted, it was up to those who were interested in the matter to execute him. Typically, this led to feuds and more murders.

On the contrary, one could also imagine that a highly masculine hand configuration and a strong handgrip in a particular society simply mean that people use a lot of hand tools, collect wood, pull ropes, climb trees and practice all sorts of other activities that are not necessarily related to combat. Finally, frequent weapon wielding may have nothing to do with longer ring fingers because finger ratios in primates seem to be associated with mating competition but not with holding weapons.

It would also be possible to argue that even if there exists an association between biology and violence at the societal level, at least across societies of a particular type, the direction of the cause-and-effect relationship is the reverse. It is violence that selects for particular biological features in some populations; it is not their biology that triggers the frequent violence in their societies.

**Skin color** There is a new theory, proposed by John Manning and his associates, that links skin color to finger ratios and mating systems in a fairly complex way (Manning, Bundred, & Mather, 2004). First, darker peoples have higher polygyny rates. Second, European individuals with more masculine hands (suggesting higher prenatal exposure to testosterone and a tendency to compete for women) reported higher susceptibility to sunburn. Hence the idea that populations that seem to have a biological inclination toward mating competition and polygyny (because of their higher sensitivity to testosterone) might need stronger UV protection if they live near the equator (because testosterone renders their skin more sensitive to UV). As a result, they have evolved darker skin. This theory is highly speculative but one cannot fail to notice an argument in its favor: the Kung San, who are almost constantly exposed to strong UV radiation in the Kalahari desert, have lighter skin than Bantu populations who live in more forested areas. The Kung San rarely practice polygyny, whereas high percentages of Bantu women in many societies are married polygynously. Thus, mating systems may predict skin color better than exposure to UV radiation. However, it is not clear from the perspective of Manning's theory how originally dark populations from Africa acquired a lighter skin in Europe and northern Asia.

Associations between skin darkness and facets of hypometropia, such as murder rates and IQ, were studied also by Rushton and Templer (2009). The results of their

study were inconclusive. Despite Rushton's inclination to explain cultural differences through biological features, he admitted that when the African countries were excluded from the analysis, no association between measures of violent crime and skin darkness were found.

**The androgen receptor gene** The androgen receptor gene, or AR, regulates men's sensitivity to testosterone. It is polymorphic, meaning that it exists in different variants: short and long. In the literature on genetics, these differences are known as lower versus higher numbers of CAG repeats (or short versus long CAG). Men with short CAG have a higher sensitivity to the effect of testosterone. According to some studies, they may also be more prone to suffer from prostate cancer. It also appears that men with shorter CAG are more likely to be left-handed (Medland et al., 2005) and have higher sperm concentrations (Von Ehardstein et al., 2001).

There are pronounced racial differences in the average numbers of CAG repeats: lowest in Black populations, higher in Europeans, highest in East Asians.<sup>38</sup> John Manning believes that a higher number of CAG repeats may facilitate neuronal transmission speed and account for a higher IQ. His hypothesis is interesting, yet entirely speculative. A large-scale study of European individuals failed to find an individual-level association between CAG repeat length and some measures of fluid intelligence (Lee et al., 2010). However, if a lower number of CAG repeats is associated with higher sperm concentration, that may be an indication that men who have this characteristic have been selected for stronger mating competition. Societies with higher percentages of such men could be viewed as carrying a biological marker that is associated with their culture.

**Twinning rates** Jared Diamond, one of the best-known champions of anti-racism in the scientific world, published a study in *Nature* in which he reports findings that East Asian men have smaller testes than Europeans, even after correcting for body size (Diamond, 1986). Even more intriguingly, the same publication features a table with twinning rates for various populations: numbers of twins per 1000 births. These rates evidence a clear ascending geographic pattern in the following order: Japanese, Chinese, Malays, Koreans, Spaniards, French, Swiss and Dutch, Scandinavians and British, South African Bantus, and Nigerian Yorubas. The published rates for Indians are different for Bombay, Bangalore, and Calcutta, spanning the range between the rates of Latin and Scandinavian Europe. These twinning rates are strongly correlated with the hypometropia index<sup>39</sup>: societies where more twins are born are more hypometropic.

---

38. Manning (2007). According to that publication, the mean CAG repeat lengths are 16.7–17.8 repeats in Blacks (presumably Americans), 19.7 in Europeans, and 20.1 in East Asians.

39. Across 15 ethnicities, the correlation between twinning rates and hypometropia is .59\* Pearson and .81\*\* Spearman. In cases where more than one rate was published for a particular ethnicity, I used the one that was closest to a mean or median rate. I disregarded the rates of emigrants, such as Japanese in Hawaii, who may be mixed with local ethnicities. For India, I used the Bangalore rate, which is close to a median.

These findings need to be confirmed with a larger sample of ethnicities. Still, their interpretation would be difficult. One possible explanation might be that ethnic groups that have evolved in very challenging environments, such as sub-Saharan Africa and the European North, need to reproduce in greater numbers to compensate for their high mortality. Yet, it is unclear if twins are a reproductive advantage in a challenging environment; they may in fact be a burden on their parents.

### ***Summary***

It is unlikely that we will soon have full academic consensus on the relationship between biology and any aspect of hypometropia as a cultural dimension. But we can hope that future research in this interesting area will continue, regardless of what the conclusions will eventually be: for or against a role for biology. In any event, even if biology is confirmed as a factor in the formation of some aspects of culture, environmental conditions are clearly also important, probably much more so than genes. Biology is not destiny and much of its impact can be overcome by economic, educational, political, and various historical developments.

## **Origins of the Cultural Differences in Mathematical Intelligence**

Despite all controversies as to what IQ tests measure, there is no doubt that a good performance on them is associated with an ability to learn mathematics and become good in that discipline. Therefore, what is known as general intelligence (the mental skill that IQ tests are supposed to measure) is also a kind of mathematical intelligence.

Why do some nations and ethnic groups have higher mathematical intelligence? The simple answer is that they have better educational opportunities. The chapter on monumentalism demonstrated that some cultural factors are also involved. And this one discussed the possibility that mating competition may have a depressing effect on the acquisition of the mental skills that are measured by IQ tests.

There are various other angles from which the development of societal differences in mathematical intelligence can be approached. One study showed that societies that live in areas of climatic instability often experience starvation. As a result, they need to store food items over long periods. This requires planning and an ability to count to higher numbers. Eventually, this skill enables the formation of more complex societies (Divale, 1999). The more complex a society is, the greater the need for mathematical intelligence. Hunter-gatherers do not need a calendar, but agriculturalists do. Agriculturalists have no need for calculus but a modern society is unthinkable without that branch of mathematics. Thus, by definition very simple societies will have low mathematical intelligence and some proneness toward hypometropia, whereas complex societies require high mathematical intelligence and prudence. The ghettos in the modern African and Latin American cities, which largely account for the high hypometropia scores of Africa and Latin America, are remnants of simple societies amidst more complex ones.

Table 5.1 ascribes the lowest hypometropia scores to the East Asian countries. They are also the ones that invariably have the highest performance on tests of mathematics and IQ. The chapter on monumentalism provided a partial explanation of that phenomenon. Various other perspectives are also possible. Wet rice cultivation is a complex activity, requiring a sophisticated water management system. Inevitably, the societies of wet rice cultivators also become sophisticated in various ways. Until the 17th century, China was technologically more advanced than Europe.

Might the observed ethnic differences in mathematical intelligence have a biological component? A fierce debate on that issue has raged for decades between two camps of scholars who vehemently reject the position of their opponents (see Arvey et al., 1994; Lynn & Vanhanen, 2002; Rushton, 2000; Rushton & Jensen, 2005, 2006, 2008 versus Neisser et al., 1996; Nisbett, 2005; Sternberg, 2005). Unfortunately, the debate is largely speculative, with little direct evidence that some ethnic or racial groups might have biological features that are associated with greater or lower mathematical intelligence.

One exception was a study by Cochran, Hardy, and Harpending (2005). These scholars claim that Ashkenazi Jews have a superior average general intelligence for biological reasons. The authors of the study presented data suggesting that the well-documented strong average performance of Ashkenazi Jews on IQ tests, which exceeds the performance of any other ethnic group, as well as their enormous overrepresentation as Nobel Prize winners and world chess champions, has a biological ingredient. Most importantly, Ashkenazi Jews have a high prevalence of sphingolipid storage mutations. These promote specific brain developments such as axonal growth and branching. Similarly, Ashkenazis have a high prevalence of Gaucher disease, which, according to the authors, appears to be an IQ booster. The authors also mention other conditions, prevalent among the Ashkenazis that may correlate with neurobiological factors boosting IQ performance: torsion dystonia, nonclassical congenital adrenal hyperplasia, and more. According to the authors, the superior IQ performance of Ashkenazi Jews is the result of their brain evolution, which took place mostly during the Middle Ages, when many of them were money-lenders. That profession required superior numerical skills. Those who had such skills were better off economically and were able to feed more children. As a result, their genes spread in the Ashkenazi communities.

Understandably, this study caused mixed reactions. Some Jews felt honored while others wrote negative commentaries in their blogs. They felt that if Jews were genetically endowed, their achievements would somehow be downplayed because they would seem too natural. There were also commentators who were afraid that if one group of people has a genetic advantage in mathematical intelligence that would imply that other groups are genetically disadvantaged. We can only hope that the rapid advance in genetics and psychometrics will eventually provide the evidence that is needed to refute or confirm the genetic explanations of group differences in mathematical intelligence.



## Chapter 6

# Exclusionism versus Universalism

*Keywords:* Cultural Differences in Treatment of People; Racism; Corruption; Rule of Law; Safety Measures and Practices; Product Quality; Punctuality; Protection of the Environment; Extroversion; Communication

Even if a log lies in a river for a hundred years, it does not become a crocodile.

A Swahili saying, quoted by some people in Congo when asked if the Tutsi minority of their country are Congolese (*The Economist*, August 21, 2004)

### Introduction

What happens to a society's culture after the achievement of economic prosperity?

The three dimensions discussed in the three previous chapters are all associated with national wealth, albeit to different degrees. As societies get richer, they tend to become more indulgent, less monumentalist, and somewhat less hypometric, although not all these changes stem directly from economic growth. Are there any other cultural transformations that are associated more clearly with an increase in national wealth?

The main cultural differences between poor and rich nations have been summarized as "collectivism" versus "individualism."<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, these terms have generated a lot of misunderstandings, confusions, and controversies in various academic circles. As a result, the issue has been muddled, and it seems unclear what exactly the terms "collectivism" and "individualism" mean.<sup>2</sup> The fact that they are popularly used in English and in many other European languages has contributed to

---

1. The two largest cross-national studies of collectivism versus individualism so far are described in Hofstede (1980, 2001) and Gelfand et al. (2004). Both measures of collectivism versus individualism (or vice versa) are strongly correlated with GDP or GNI per person. This shows that the measures clearly capture cultural differences between poor and rich countries.

2. Geert Hofstede is the first author who has explained the main cultural differences between poor and rich nations on the basis of a statistical analysis of a large database and has used the terms collectivism versus individualism to describe those differences (Hofstede, 1980, 2001). Unfortunately, many subsequent studies that refer to his descriptions have misinterpreted or misrepresented them, or mixed levels of analyses.

Oyserman, Coon, and Kimmelmeier's (2002) treatment of collectivism versus individualism provides a classic example of such mixing. Although they start their analysis from Hofstede's nation-level study, they also involve individual-level studies, such as Triandis et al. (1993). This is somewhat like mixing the average air temperatures of two countries with the average body temperatures of their citizens.

the confusion. People have their own laymen's ideas of what these words should stand for. But relying on such abstract views, or even on dictionary definitions by linguists, is not good social science.

If we start from Geert Hofstede's work, "individualism" should denote some salient cultural characteristics of the rich Western nations, probably a result of increased national wealth, whereas "collectivism" should describe cultural traits found primarily in poor nations. If we accept this, and if we focus our analysis on groups of people, such as nations, not individuals, individualism versus collectivism has little or nothing to do with a number of phenomena that have been associated with this dimension. To avoid any potential nebulosity, it makes sense to start this discussion by mentioning some major myths and fallacies concerning individualism versus collectivism as a nation-level cultural syndrome that distinguishes rich societies from poor ones. After explaining what this cultural dimension *is not* about, we will be able to focus more clearly on what it really stands for.

Individualism is said to be associated with a perceived preference for individual goals or individual work, whereas collectivism should be about the opposite. Generally speaking, there is no such difference between the cultures of rich and poor nations.<sup>3</sup>

---

Studies at the individual level have produced statistically different collectivism versus individualism dimensions under similar headings. Triandis, Chen, and Chan (1998) speak of horizontal and vertical collectivism and individualism. Others (for instance, Oyserman et al., 2002) have contributed to the impression that this is not a single dimension. Apart from working at different levels (national versus individual), different researchers, including Oyserman et al. (2002), have had dissimilar expectations of what collectivism versus individualism *should* be about, based on abstract imagination. This has resulted in discordant results and has created an impression that this dimension is elusive and its credibility is dubious.

Nevertheless, prominent scholars have defended the collectivism versus individualism dimension. Smith et al. (1996) called it "the most important yield of cross-cultural psychology to date" (p. 237), whereas Schimmack, Oishi, and Diener (2005) published a response to Oyserman et al. (2002), entitled "Individualism: A Valid and Important Dimension of Cultural Differences Between Nations." They showed that, as a national dimension of culture, collectivism versus individualism can be construed as a single dimension that makes good sense. This is so indeed, providing the dimension is highly correlated statistically with national wealth.

3. For the association between individualism and individual goals or individual work, see Hayward and Kemmelmeier (2007), Oyserman et al. (2002), and Triandis et al. (1993). At the national level, these associations were not supported by two large-scale studies.

Smith et al. (1996) extracted a nation-level dimension that they called "conservatism versus egalitarian commitment" and one that they described as "utilitarian involvement versus loyal involvement." The two dimensions are orthogonal (completely unrelated). The first dimension is associated with differences in national wealth. It captures aspects of paternalism that are reminiscent of collectivism. The items that are associated with the second dimension had been written by Fons Trompenaars with the expectation that they would measure individualism versus collectivism (Smith et al., 1996, p. 252). In fact, they captured a preference for group involvement versus a lack of such preference. One of the main items that is associated with this dimension asks the respondents what the children should do after the father has died: should they work together (group involvement) or split the business (no group involvement)? The other items measure acceptance of group responsibility and group rewards versus a preference for individual responsibility and rewards, etc. This dimension is not associated with national wealth differences. Eastern Europe shows the lowest preference for group involvement, whereas East and Southeast Asia demonstrate the greatest group involvement.

Individualism is believed to stand for a weaker family focus. This is a broad statement that may or may not be true, depending on what exactly is meant by it. As we will see, poor societies are indeed more likely to have norms *for other people* that advocate family cohesion. It is also true that people in poor countries take care of extended families, which may include grandparents, uncles, aunts, close in-laws, and other people. Besides, children normally have an obligation to look after their old parents. In the rich world, people most often take care only of their spouses and children. However, the perceived importance of family in one's life has nothing to do with national wealth.<sup>4</sup>

Individualism is expected to be characterized by a greater inclination toward competition, whereas collectivism should encourage cooperation. No such difference exists between rich and poor nations.<sup>5</sup>

Individualism is viewed as something related to independence, whereas collectivism should relate to dependence on others. It is true that people in poor societies often rely

---

Project GLOBE (Gelfand et al., 2004) measured “institutional collectivism” — a nation-level dimension that reflects differences in practices and norms for other people concerning group loyalty. Measured on the basis of described practices, this dimension shows no association with any measures of national wealth or Hofstede's individualism. Measured as norms (what is desirable for other people to do), it shows a weak negative association with GDP per capita in 1999 ( $r = -.36^{**}$ ,  $n = 57$ ) and a modest negative association with Hofstede's individualism ( $r = -.56^{**}$ ,  $n = 47$ ). This means that — compared to people in richer countries — people in poorer countries would like to see others be more loyal to their groups. This does not mean at all that they value group loyalty as a personal value. If anything, it could mean that they are somewhat disappointed by the behaviors of their co-workers who are not perceived as having enough group loyalty.

4. See Oyserman et al. (2002) for the presumed association between individualism and weaker family focus.

World Values Survey (WVS) item that measures importance of family (coded A001 before 2005) shows no association with measures of national wealth. Only one particular position (percentages of respondents who have chosen “not very important,” latest data for each country from 1994 to 2004) is positively correlated with Hofstede's individualism at  $.48^{**}$  ( $n = 48$ ). The percentages of respondents who have chosen other positions (“very important,” “somewhat important,” and “not at all important”) yield weak and insignificant correlations with Hofstede's individualism.

Project GLOBE studied national differences in family cohesiveness (Gelfand et al., 2004) by asking respondents to provide stereotypical descriptions of their societies. The scores for the dimension that this approach yielded (in-group collectivism “as is”) are strongly and negatively correlated with Hofstede's individualism index and national wealth. However, because these descriptions are based on stereotypes, it is unclear what is actually behind them.

5. For a hypothesized link between individualism and competition, see for example Hayward and Kimmelmeier (2007) and Triandis et al. (1988).

Using WVS data, Hayward and Kimmelmeier (2007) report that they have found only weak support for this hypothesis. In fact, there is no support at all. Hofstede's measure of individualism is unrelated to mean approval of competition (item E039 in the WVS, latest data from 1994–2004). Mean approval of competition is negatively correlated with GDP per person in 1999 ( $r = -.25^*$ ,  $n = 72$ ): there is somewhat greater approval of competition in poorer countries. Green et al. (2005) measured approval of competitiveness across 20 nations from different continents. Their measure is negatively correlated with Hofstede's individualism ( $r = -.53^*$ ,  $n = 18$ ). Thus, individualism is associated with lower competitiveness, not higher. The same conclusion transpires from the study by the Chinese Culture Connection (1987). That study extracted a dimension called “integration,” strongly and positively correlated with Hofstede's individualism. One of the key defining features of “integration” is “non-competitiveness.”

on friends and relatives for economic support, whereas Westerners are better able to fend for themselves. But this does not mean that there is a general psychological reliance on others in the developing world. People in poor countries are not necessarily less likely to believe that self-reliant people get ahead in life or to wish to be themselves rather than follow others. In fact, they are more likely to state that they choose their own goals.<sup>6</sup> The most recent study by the WVS also provides some relevant information. It asks the respondents whether they see themselves as autonomous individuals.<sup>7</sup> In the United States, 16.0 percent agreed strongly with this statement, whereas 47.0 simply agreed. In Japan, South Korea, and China the corresponding percentages were 21.8 versus 69.6, 17.5 versus 52.2, and 28.4 versus 42.7. The worldwide pattern was very mixed (highest autonomy in Norway, Finland, Jordan, India and Cyprus, lowest in Brazil, Morocco, Thailand, the United States and Australia), suggesting that there is no correlation between perceived individual autonomy and national wealth.

If the cultures of rich societies do not clearly differ from those of the poor parts of the world in terms of individual work versus group work, general psychological independence versus self-reliance, and competition versus cooperation, is there any salient cultural difference between them?

The answer manifested itself to me one nice summer day in 1983 as I stood on the curb of a sidewalk in Oslo, the capital of Norway. I was near a street intersection without traffic lights. The building on the other side sported some beautiful ornamentation. I had been gazing at it for some time when I noticed a curious phenomenon: five or six cars had pulled up on my left-hand side. There was no other traffic on the street and I wondered what the drivers were waiting for. Suddenly, the answer hit me like a tidal wave. They were waiting for me to cross the street.

---

6. See Green et al. (2005) and Oyserman et al. (2002) for discussions of the association between individualism and independence or interdependence.

Green et al.'s (2005) study defines Chinese, Turks, Lebanese, Russians, Singaporeans, Swiss, French, Greeks, Italians, and Belgians as self-reliant (which — among other things — implies greater agreement that self-reliance brings success), whereas the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking nations on both sides of the Atlantic are defined as interdependent, with the US exactly in the middle (Fig. 2). Thus, the study did not find a clear association between national wealth and approval of self-reliance versus interdependence.

Fischer et al. (2009) studied individualism versus collectivism across 11 nationalities and found that the Western nationalities in their study scored higher than the rest on various measures of independence. However, their study was based on national stereotypes: they asked their respondents to describe “most people in their country” (p. 195). Studies of stereotypes do not necessarily reflect the real situation in a particular country.

The 2005–2008 wave of the WVS has two items that presumably measure aspects of self-reliance. Item v65 asks whether the respondents seek to be themselves or follow others, whereas item v65 asks whether they decide their goals themselves. The percentages of people who agree strongly that they seek to be themselves are uncorrelated with GDP or GNI per person. The percentages of people who agree strongly that they decide their goals themselves are negatively correlated with GDP per person in 2005 ( $r = -.30^*$ ,  $n = 45$ ). This means that people in poorer countries are somewhat more likely to state that they choose their own goals, not the other way around.

7. Item v214 (World Values Survey Association, 2008).

The cultural shock that I experienced at that moment could not have been more powerful if I had discovered that Norwegians have three eyes and two noses. Although I had no business on the other side of the street, I crossed over out of embarrassment. Because I could not quite believe what had happened, I decided to conduct some experiments. It was not nice to play around with the considerate Norwegian drivers but I had to know if they really had a habit of stopping and yielding to pedestrians that they had never seen in their lives. During my childhood years in Bulgaria and my adolescence in Tunisia, I had never seen anything like that.

And lo and behold, my experiments showed what anybody who has done some traveling will confirm. Not only Norwegian drivers yield to pedestrians. Almost all people in all very rich countries do, almost always. As you move from West to East in Europe, the situation changes. Central Europeans tend to yield but not always. There is evidence that the situation is similar in other places that are on the border between Western and non-Western culture. The following is an account by a reporter of *The Economist* about an area in Mexico along the US border (*The Economist*, July 7, 2001):

An ability to laugh at things that scare their compatriots is not the only thing that distinguishes border dwellers ... Appointments are kept. Cars stop for pedestrians — sometimes.

In poor countries, you are normally ignored and cross the street at your own risk.<sup>8</sup> I have witnessed this in many places, but my most dramatic experiences were in Beijing and Datong. In those Chinese cities, drivers cut through groups of pedestrians, dispersing them like flocks of sheep. Red lights count for nothing. Even if you are crossing at a green light and are already in the middle of the street, drivers who are in violation of traffic rules will honk at you to get out of their way. There are similar reports about other places in Asia where I have not been. According to an account in *The Economist*, in Iran red lights are for shooting, pedestrian crossings are for running

---

8. It must be admitted that experiments of this type are always characterized by a degree of subjectivity. It is impossible to find two identical crossings anywhere in the world. Whether a driver will stop for a pedestrian or not depends on the car's speed, how visible the pedestrian is, and whether the pedestrians' posture clearly indicates that they intend to cross the street. Still, my general conclusions will doubtlessly be confirmed by most international travelers.

In the United States, the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, Belgium, Britain, Germany, Slovenia, Switzerland, and Austria, drivers practically never fail to yield to pedestrians. I obtained the same results in Strasbourg and Rouen in France, although I had a somewhat mixed experience in Paris. My results from Singapore are also inconclusive: drivers are inclined to stop if you have started crossing but they may ignore you if you are on the curb.

My experiments from Hungary and the Czech Republic are from the period between 1992 and 1998. During that time, I visited Prague and Budapest about 15 times each. Roughly, about half of all drivers yielded, half did not. I had similar experiences in Croatia between 1995 and 2004.

In Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Greece, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, the Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Thailand, Tunisia, and Turkey, I was normally ignored by the drivers.

I have not conducted experiments in the other countries that I have visited.

people down (*The Economist*, January 18, 2003). Crossing streets in some Arab countries can also be a life-threatening experience.

Many years ago, German sociologist Norbert Elias observed that economically developed countries have lower road death tolls and realized that careful versus reckless driving is a cultural phenomenon.<sup>9</sup> It is only one of the aspects of the dramatic differences in the treatment of people that are observed in rich and poor societies. Considerateness and empathy are universal phenomena, but they do not occur in the same circumstances. In the poor world, they are normally reserved for friends, relatives, or one's tribesmen and clansmen. Everybody else may be ignored or treated with indifference and neglect. As societies develop economically, they almost inevitably experience a massive change in the way that they manage relationships between people. The distinction between friends and kin versus other people becomes blurred and may even disappear in many circumstances. This does not happen at the same speed in all countries that are developing economically, but some change in this direction is inevitable.

This difference between rich and poor nations is extremely important. It is at the core of a wide spectrum of phenomena that differentiate the extremes of these two cultural worlds, although there are many intermediate cases. As cultural differences of this type are easily visible and felt, they can account for strong feelings when people from very rich and very poor societies meet for the first time and are not well prepared for that encounter.

As soon as Westerners disembark for the first time in a very poor country and step out of the airport, they are bound to experience a number of shocking cultural surprises that can leave an unsavory impression: chaotic driving, cheating by taxi drivers, waiters and street peddlers, poor service outside high-end establishments, pushing and shoving, a seemingly total lack of safety measures, dumping of garbage in inappropriate public places, poor hygiene, and street dogs or cats. A longer stay will add more items to this black list: a lack of punctuality, some disrespect for agreements, corrupt police and state officials, racism and discrimination against minorities, a lack of facilities for the physically challenged.

Yet, Westerners who have spent some time in a poor country and managed to make some close friends and acquaintances will start seeing a very different parallel world. Once they have formed good personal relationships, they are often overwhelmed by the locals' friendliness and willingness to do all sorts of favors to each other that can reach the point of self-sacrifice. At that point many Westerners may lose their bearings. An Australian student of mine, who lives in Bulgaria, once said, "Bulgarians can be wonderful friends and will even help you with things that you cannot expect from most people in Australia. But as soon as you step out of the circle of friends and relatives you are in the jungle. Most people do not give a damn about strangers. If you get hurt because of somebody's negligence, it is your fault. If you can't walk on the sidewalks because they are occupied by parked cars, that is your problem. If your dog has pooped in the street, too bad for those who come after you. This is something I really can't understand." Some

---

9. Elias (1995) — a posthumous publication.

Westerners manage to swallow the strange taste of this cultural peculiarity of poor countries. But most view it as completely unacceptable and in need of repair.

The coin has two sides, though. People from poor nations visiting a rich Western country may be dazzled by the opulence that they see. However, the cultural shock that they experience may be quite painful. Generally, they are likely to perceive a peculiar sense of order for which they may not be quite prepared. Relationships between people seem too formalized and unnatural. Westerners appear polite, yet too distant and inflexible. Their officials do not normally accept presents in exchange for special services and call that bribery. At work, many people put business before personal relationships. Most individuals balk at statements that sound perfectly natural back home: that women must be subordinate to men, that some races or ethnic groups are inferior and discrimination against them is justified.

These differences between rich and poor societies have created a lot of discomfort and even pain in cross-cultural encounters. When a culture is viewed through the prism of the opposite end of the cultural spectrum, and observed without adequate preparation, it may appear perplexing, irrational and illogical, so much so that it is not unlikely to be pronounced immoral or pathological. The goal of this chapter is to explain the logic of the main cultural differences between rich and poor societies that have to do with treatment of people. Hopefully, this analysis will help the reader understand the main differences between Western cultures and those of the poor world as well as the intermediate cases. This understanding is not likely to result in a celebration of diversity and cultural rapprochement. The readers are more likely to realize that some of their own values and beliefs are nonnegotiable. They might expect the other side to make an effort and change, not the other way around. We will also see why such change cannot be a matter of conscious choice but can only occur after specific economic developments.

The three previously discussed dimensions also have the potential to create cultural conflicts. But the differences that they define are less easily perceived and felt. It takes some initiation into a given society to understand how it treats its women or how much enthusiasm there is for Western education. Adolescent fertility is not the first thing that one observes in a foreign country, whereas HIV is invisible. A high prevalence of murder may be the worst thing that a visitor can expect in a foreign society but the phenomenon is usually confined to poor neighborhoods. In contrast, driving practices are salient, and it takes only a few minutes to notice them.

## **Measuring Exclusionism versus Universalism across Nations**

The WVS has a number of good items that address relationships between people. Unfortunately, many of them were not asked after 2004. This makes it impossible to construct a dimension index on the basis of recent data that reflect values, norms, and beliefs.

Nevertheless, there are various national statistics that reveal differences between rich and poor nations in the way that people treat other people. The following three are particularly interesting.

- Percentage of people who live with their parents as measured by the WVS.
- Transparency-versus-corruption indices, as measured by the well-known monitoring organization Transparency International. These indices are based on in-depth interviews with various groups of respondents, including business people, from most of the world's countries. Studies of this type normally ask the respondents not only to share their general impressions of how much corruption there is in their countries (which could result in an unfounded stereotype) but also to specify how often they have been the subject of extortion by government officials.
- Road death tolls: numbers of people per 100,000 inhabitants who die annually on roads as drivers or pedestrians.<sup>10</sup>

These three items are closely associated with each other. They form a single cultural dimension with two poles. At one of the extremes — that of the poorest parts of the world — we find high percentages of adults who live with their parents, high corruption, and high road death tolls. In the richest countries, the observed situation is precisely the opposite. [Graph 6.1](#) visualizes one of these relationships. It shows that countries where extended families are more common (higher percentages of adults live with their parents) have lower transparency and higher corruption.

There is a visible contrast here in the way that people treat other people. The poor world is characterized by greater cohesiveness among relatives. Different generations of adults often live under the same roof<sup>11</sup> and take care of each other far more often than people in the West. Not everybody is always happy with this situation, but poverty may prevent some young people from leaving their parents' nest. Yet, many who do not have a family of their own (including myself until the age of 33) choose to stay home voluntarily, even if they can afford their own housing. These strong bonds between relatives go together with some neglect of strangers, which can translate into careless driving or an unwillingness to perform one's professional duty without a special financial consideration from the person who needs some service from the government. In the rich world, these phenomena are not unknown, but they are less common.

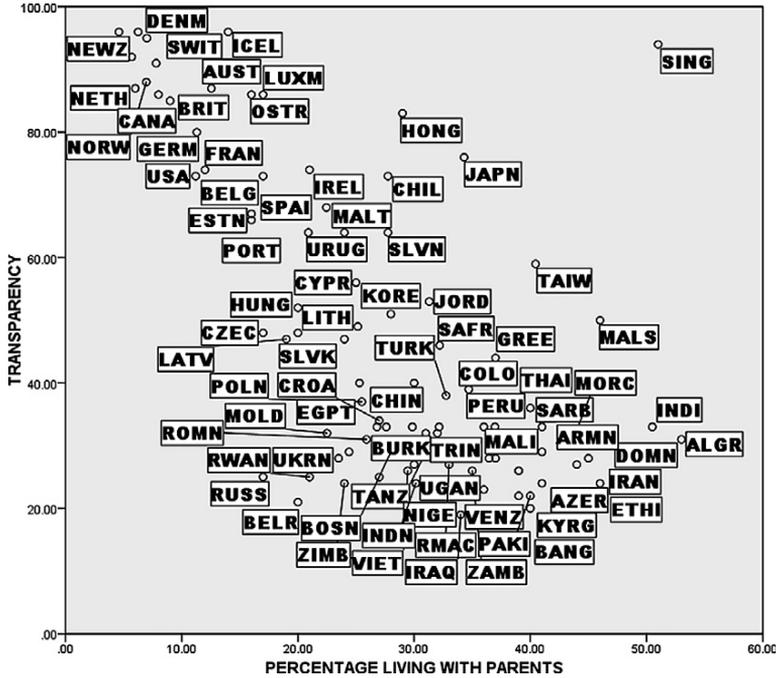
What we have here is a cultural dimension that creates the same national configurations as Hofstede's individualism versus collectivism: the richest countries are at one extreme, the poorest ones are at the other. Nevertheless, I have chosen a new name for the dimension that we discuss here: "exclusionism versus universalism."<sup>12</sup> This name means that people in poor societies are often (though not always) considerate toward friends and relatives and may reserve various privileges for them, but often tend to exclude strangers or distant acquaintances from the circle of those who

---

10. For details, see "exclusionism index" in the research notes chapter.

11. Project GLOBE used a similar approach to measure societal in-group collectivism practices: they asked their respondents if aging parents in their countries live with their children and whether children live with their parents until they get married (Gelfand et al., 2004, p. 463).

12. In fact, I follow a suggestion made by Bond (2002) and many other cross-cultural psychologists who feel that the terms "individualism" and "collectivism" are too broad, should be replaced by more focused concepts, and may be abandoned for that reason.



Graph 6.1: Visualization of the relationship between national corruption and prevalence of extended families. *Notes:* The vertical axis shows the Transparency International transparency-versus-corruption index for 2006, multiplied by 10. The horizontal axis shows percentages of adults who live with their parents: average data from the 2005–2008 study by the WVS and the latest data from the 1994–2004 studies by the same organization. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

deserve such privileged treatment. In rich societies, the treatment of people is more universal. If some form of discrimination must be practiced — for example, only one job applicant must be selected — the decision does not depend much on the applicants' group membership but on who they are as individuals and what they are capable of.

To put it in another similar way, the exclusionism versus universalism distinction refers to behaviors, values, and norms, that have to do with different criteria for the treatment of people and the distribution of favors and privileges: discriminatory and group-based versus universal and individual-based. Collectivism versus individualism, as a national dimension of culture (not as an amalgamation of individual-level dimensions) should be interpreted in the same way because it is simply another name for the same distinction. Collectivism means collective treatment of people. Individualism stands for treatment of people as individuals. As descriptors of poor versus rich societies, these terms should not be interpreted as a group orientation versus

a tendency to keep to oneself, because there is no such general cultural difference between the developing world and the West.

The following table summarizes the difference between exclusionism and universalism on the basis of the three statistical indicators that I used for the extraction of the dimension:

<b>Exclusionism</b>	<b>versus</b>	<b>Universalism</b>
Stronger ties between generations and within groups of relatives		Weaker ties between generations and groups of relatives
Stronger neglect of the interests of strangers		Stronger empathy for strangers and respect for their interests

Table 6.1 shows exclusionism scores for 86 countries. Nations that are high in the ranking are relatively exclusionist, whereas the low scorers are relatively universalist. As all other cultural dimensions, this one is not about absolutes. It only shows how some countries compare to other countries.

Even a quick look at Table 6.1 reveals that the rich countries have more universalist cultures than the poor ones. Unlike the previous tables with country rankings, this one does not evidence any clear geographic pattern other than the grouping of very rich and fairly poor countries at opposite extremes. The statistical association between the exclusionism index and national wealth is very strong. It is considerably stronger than the correlation between national wealth and any of the three dimensions discussed in the previous chapters. Although exclusionism is statistically associated with all of them, and especially with indulgence and monumentalism, it makes sense to discuss this dimension separately.<sup>13</sup> It provides a clear focus on a number of very important phenomena that the previous three dimensions cannot explain satisfactorily.

---

13. The correlation between the exclusionism index and GDP per capita in 1999 is  $-.84^{**}$  ( $n = 86$ ). GDP per capita at PPP and GNI per capita at PPP in 1999 yield almost the same correlations. The same is true of national wealth measures from later years. Exclusionism correlates with the other three dimensions in this book as follows:

Indulgence	.67 <sup>**</sup> ( $n = 42$ )
Monumentalism	.65 <sup>**</sup> ( $n = 42$ )
Hypometropia	.36 <sup>**</sup> ( $n = 71$ )

Table 6.1: Exclusionism versus universalism index: Scores for 86 countries.

Ethiopia	1000
Iran	977
Iraq	949
Nigeria	873
Morocco	872
Mali	871
Egypt	858
Pakistan	851
Saudi Arabia	849
Tanzania	836
Kyrgyzstan	815
Ghana	811
India	803
Burkina Faso	796
Zambia	791
Dominican R.	782
Venezuela	773
Malaysia	758
South Africa	756
Rwanda	736
Uganda	733
Peru	732
Jordan	727
Thailand	725
Bangladesh	724
Zimbabwe	723
Azerbaijan	718
Guatemala	710
Georgia	700
Armenia	705
Albania	701
Mexico	681
Philippines	664
Indonesia	656
Vietnam	640
Ukraine	635
Russia	631
Trinidad and Tobago	619
Brazil, China	615
Greece	611
Turkey	585
Serbia	580
Colombia	579

Table 6.1: (Continued)

---

Belarus	574
Bosnia	557
Argentina	555
Croatia	554
Romania	548
El Salvador	542
Poland	539
Moldova	529
Lithuania	522
Bulgaria	507
Slovakia	484
South Korea	476
Latvia	469
Slovenia	433
Italy	425
Cyprus	400
Singapore	397
Hungary	395
Czech Republic	383
Chile	382
Japan	333
Estonia	316
Spain	311
Malta	279
Portugal	274
Ireland	262
Uruguay	261
Belgium	249
United States	237
France	170
Austria	160
Germany	120
Australia	119
Iceland	114
Canada	107
United Kingdom	57
New Zealand	46
Norway	34
Netherlands	28
Switzerland	27
Sweden	7
Finland	0

---

## **The Essence of Exclusionism versus Universalism**

Before we embark on an exploration of the associations between exclusionism or universalism and other cultural phenomena, it would make sense to explain in greater detail what this syndrome means. Outside the Western world, there still exist close-knit social entities — bands, tribes, extended families, or other similar groups of people bound by kinship and tested friendship — which anthropologists call in-groups. The members of an in-group normally believe that they owe loyalty and various kinds of favoritism or preferential treatment to each other. For instance, they will take care of sick and elderly in-group members, feed the unemployed or hire them if they have a vacant slot (sometimes even if they do not visibly contribute to the growth of the business), forgive some of their misdemeanors, give them better business service, reserve better merchandise for them, and offer them discounts on purchases. They may even buy goods from them that they do not need. As the saying goes, in those societies blood (and tested friendship) is thicker than water.

On the contrary, strangers in such traditional societies are considered out-group persons. Such people are excluded from the in-group distribution of the aforementioned privileges. Still, after some out-group members have proven their friendship and loyalty, they have the potential to be accepted in the in-group and become full or almost full members. In some traditional societies, this may be announced at special ceremonies, marking the passage from out-group to in-group status. Elsewhere, the process is more gradual and less visible.

The distinctions between in-groups and out-groups need not be sharp. Many people, such as a regular customer or a co-worker, may have an intermediate status. Some privileges — for instance better merchandise or discounts — will be granted, whereas others such as unpaid assistance with the construction of a house may be refused.

In some circumstances, the perceived boundaries of one's in-group can expand and include all members of the same people, nation, or even race. This may happen for instance when such large groups are under external threat or are being criticized or derided. But this is hardly a difference between rich and poor societies. Some Western nations are not less likely than other people to stand up for their countries.

Some authors (Triandis, 1989) note that each person in the so-called collectivist societies, which I call exclusionist, can belong to different in-groups, whose members are entitled to different degrees of attention and privileged treatment. You may be ready to defend the honor of your nation, but that does not mean that you are willing to treat each of your fellow countrymen as you would a close friend.

In-group members in exclusionist societies may be kind to each other, especially in the case of people who are closely related through kinship or proven friendship. At the same time, they may be relatively or completely oblivious of the interests of strangers. This explains why drivers in non-Western countries do not yield to passengers, as well as other phenomena that I treat separately. In contrast, modern Westerners believe that everybody deserves the same treatment in many social situations in which non-Westerners distinguish between privileged in-group members and everybody else. This is a simplification bordering on stereotype, but the exceptions — numerous as they may be — do not destroy the general picture.

In general, a Westerner is likely to do many things for strangers that a non-Westerner may not think of doing. On the contrary, a Westerner will withhold some services and favors to friends and relatives, which many non-Westerners would not hesitate to grant. For example, the prevalent Western view is that everybody must receive the same merchandise and the same customer service although exceptions are of course possible. You have to be considerate toward all pedestrians, even if you have never seen them in your life. Hiring, firing, and promotion practices must not have anything to do with in-groups; a privileged treatment of that kind would be called nepotism, buddyism, cronyism, and other disparaging terms. This phenomenon has not altogether disappeared in the West, but visible efforts are made to stamp it out. On the contrary, you do not have an absolute obligation to feed your needy relatives or nurse your old parents, just as you do not have to look after a stranger if that is not your profession. In the Western world, blood is no longer thicker than water. A good illustration of this was provided by a group of relatives of George W. Bush. During his 2004 election campaign, they launched a website — [www.bushrelativesforkerry.com](http://www.bushrelativesforkerry.com) — in which they attacked him, under the following motto: “*Because blood is thinner than oil!*”

Westerners, including academics, often fail to perceive the clear distinction between in-groups and out-groups in poor societies. There is an abundance of statements in all sorts of publications — academic and popular — according to which collectivists (i.e., people in poor, exclusionist societies) are more considerate toward others than Western individualists.<sup>14</sup> What the authors of these statements often fail to see is that this considerateness normally applies only to in-group members. Those of us, who have been raised outside the West, do not suffer from this grave delusion. There are many testimonies to that effect. On the basis of his own observations, as well as a large literature review, the famous American cross-cultural psychologist Harry Triandis, a Greek by birth, concludes that people in collectivist (exclusionist) cultures are nice to in-group members and strive to maintain harmony with them, but they can be quite rude to outsiders and have no concern about displaying hostility, exploitation, or avoidance of out-group members (Triandis, 1989).

Japanese author Chie Nakane provides the following account of Japanese society before the 1980s, when Japanese culture was still quite exclusionist (Nakane, 1986, p. 186).

The consciousness of “them” and “us” is strengthened and aggravated to the point that extreme contrasts in human behavior can develop in the same society, and anyone outside “our” people ceases to be

---

14. Markus and Kitayama (1991) quote a great number of studies across various collectivist (exclusionist) cultures demonstrating that people there have a higher “responsiveness to the needs of others” than Americans. The studies also report that the ability to share and respect other people’s feelings, to avoid disturbing others, etc., is considered an essential value across many non-Western cultures.

considered human. Ridiculous situations occur, such as that of the man who will shove a stranger out of the way to take an empty seat, but will then, no matter how tired he is, give up the seat to someone he knows, particularly if that someone is a superior in his company.

Differences in the treatment of in-groups and out-groups outside the West and a universalist trend in the Western countries have also been demonstrated in a wide range of psychological studies.<sup>15</sup>

A word of caution needs to be issued here. Nothing in the field of cultural differences is simple, and the effects of exclusionism are no exception. There are various situations in which strangers are obviously in need of help, but whether they will receive it or not cannot be predicted from a culture's exclusionism score. In some cases, people in exclusionist cultures may be as willing to step in and provide assistance as those in universalist societies. In Chapter 4 we saw that people in highly monumentalist cultures (which are often highly exclusionist as well) may gladly offer help to strangers, especially if they estimate that they will receive some sort of public recognition for that. Experiments involving other situations in which strangers may need help are inconclusive, but it is clear that they do not demonstrate a general difference between rich and poor countries.

Researchers have identified countless cultural differences between the rich West and the poorer parts of the world, many of which can be associated with exclusionism versus universalism. Naturally, this book cannot examine all of them. I only look at what I consider important, from the viewpoint of a person who has lived in rich and poor societies but has spent considerably more time in exclusionist environments. I also try to focus on what, in my view, has not received enough attention so far in the scientific literature.

---

15. Gudykunst et al. (1992) studied the attitudes of some 200 Americans, Australians, Japanese, and Hong-Kong Chinese toward related people and friends as opposed to strangers: how inclined they were to talk to members of the two groups, how much interest they showed in them, and how much they trusted them. The results demonstrated that the Hong-Kong Chinese were most likely to display different attitudes toward the two different groups and exclude strangers from the circle of people they trust or are interested in, followed by the Japanese. The Australians were much less likely to exhibit such a discriminatory treatment, whereas the Americans were least likely of all. Tafarodi et al. (2009) also found a relative lack of interest in out-group members in China.

Gudykunst et al. (1987) found that, compared to Americans, Koreans and Japanese were more likely to have different patterns of interaction with in-group and out-group members.

Matsumoto, Kudoh, Scherer, and Wallbott (1988) found that Japanese are more likely to experience anger in dealings with out-group members than in the presence of relatives.

After reviewing the literature on intercultural contacts in the workplace, Sanchez-Burks, Nisbett, and Ybarra (2000) concluded that in settings characterized by in-group versus out-group distinctions researchers often see evidence of a deep level of aversion for out-groups.

## Evidence from the World Values Survey

The WVS has a number of items, asked in different studies, that demonstrate an emphasis on in-group cohesion as a norm in the exclusionist countries. For example, in comparison with universalist societies, exclusionist ones have much greater agreement that divorce is never justifiable, that children must always love their parents regardless of any deficiencies that they might have, or that a child should grow up in a home with a father and a mother to be happy.<sup>16</sup>

The WVS also has items that measure discriminatory attitudes. One of these asks the respondents on what conditions it is justifiable to grant citizenship to foreign nationals: should they have ancestors from the respondents' country? Agreement with this question is very strongly associated with exclusionism.<sup>17</sup> Foreigners who do not have blood ties to an exclusionist society are not particularly welcome there, at least until they prove that they fit in well.

Another item asks whether men make better political leaders than women. Again, respondents in exclusionist societies, especially those that are monumentalist at the same time, express stronger agreement than those in universalist countries.<sup>18</sup>

### “Moral Inclusiveness”

Israeli cross-cultural psychologists Shalom Schwartz constructed a national “moral inclusiveness” index on the basis of data from 66 countries.<sup>19</sup> It reflects the degree to which four values — social justice, broad-mindedness, equality, and world at peace — are viewed as applying to everybody and not just to those of one's in-group. Schwartz explicitly states that his concept of moral inclusiveness can be thought of as referring to the sharpness of the boundaries between the in-group and out-groups in a society. Indeed, with two exceptions, the highest possible score (4) on the moral

---

16. Exclusionism yields the following correlations with these WVS items (latest data from 1994 to 2004,  $n = 74$  in all cases):

A025 (a child must always love his parents, strongly agree)	.79**
F121 (divorce justifiable, mean values)	-.74**
D018 (a child needs two parents, agree)	.70**

These three items also correlate significantly with industry, and the first two correlate with monumentalism, but the correlations are weaker.

17. Exclusionism correlates with the percentages of people who state that having ancestors from their country is a very important requirement for citizenship at .85\*\* ( $n = 42$ ), and with those who state that it is not very important at  $-.86^{**}$ .

18. The correlation between item D059 (men make better political leaders, strongly agree, latest data from 1994 to 2004) and exclusionism is .62\*\* ( $n = 63$ ).

19. Schwartz (2007). The moral inclusiveness index correlates with exclusionism at  $-.56^{**}$  Spearman ( $n = 55$ ).

inclusiveness index was reached only in wealthy countries, most of which have strongly or at least moderately universalist cultures — Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, West Germany (but not the Eastern part), Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and South Korea. The two exceptional countries that also had a score of 4 were Turkey and Costa Rica. Score of 0 on moral inclusiveness were recorded in African, Asian, Arab, and Latin American countries.

## **Hofstede’s “Individualism versus Collectivism” Revisited**

The exclusionism index in Table 6.1 is negatively associated with Hofstede’s individualism index.<sup>20</sup> The correlation is high but not exceptionally strong. This means that the two indices measure different facets of one and the same broad phenomenon, although the signs of the indices are reversed. It is like having one dimension that is called “humid versus dry” and another one that is “arid versus wet.” The rich countries cluster on the individualist pole on Hofstede’s dimension just as they group together on the universalist pole. Conversely, the poor countries gravitate toward Hofstede’s collectivist pole as well as the pole that I call exclusionism. This means that Hofstede and I have measured quite similar phenomena, although not completely identical. The partial conceptual similarity is also clear from Hofstede’s interpretation of his dimension. However, few of the main cultural differences between the West and the rest of the world transpire directly from his research on work-related values in the subsidiaries of IBM. The items that he used to define his individualism dimension do not address cultural differences in the treatment of people.<sup>21</sup>

## **“Integration”**

The Chinese Culture Connection, which we have met on several occasions, described a dimension called “integration.” The most salient cultural traits that it captures reflect relationships: “tolerance of other(s),” “harmony with others,”

---

20. The correlation between the exclusionism index in Table 6.1 and Hofstede’s (2001) individualism is  $-.75^{**}$  ( $n = 52$ ).

21. One of the main differences that Hofstede actually discovered was that IBM employees in the rich (individualist) countries value free time more than those in the poor (collectivist) countries. Besides, this distinction was clearly pronounced only after the raw item scores were standardized. Inversely, Hofstede found that people in poor countries desire good working conditions (which they often do not have) more than people in rich countries. It is hard for many people to see how exactly these findings illustrate individualism versus collectivism differences. As Bond (2002) put it “how the last three work goals [those which according to Hofstede form the collectivist pole of the dimension] described anything resembling collectivism was, however, a mystery to many.” Similar concerns about the face-validity of Hofstede’s individualism dimension were raised by Heine et al. (2002). Yet, face-validity is not as important in studies of nations as it is in studies of individuals.

“non-competitiveness,” “trustworthiness,” and “solidarity with others.”<sup>22</sup> These values were ranked as more important in rich countries than in poor ones. Because of that, and the high negative correlation between integration and exclusionism, it is clear that integration stands for the opposite of exclusionism, which is universalism. The Chinese Culture Connection’s study clearly confirms the crucial cultural difference between rich and poor countries that we discuss in this chapter and dispels some myths about the nature of collectivism as a cultural characteristic of poor nations. Contrary to what some academics and laymen think, the hallmark of the cultures of the poor world is less tolerance than in the rich world, less harmony, less solidarity, less non-competitiveness, and less trustworthiness, especially in dealings with out-group members. Moreover, as we will see later, although people in poor nations do strive to achieve harmony, solidarity, and tolerance within their in-groups, they often fail miserably on this task. In the worst-case scenarios, which are not at all uncommon, the result can be severe abuse and mistreatment of relatives, including wives and children.

### **Empathy for Strangers and Concern for the Welfare of People in Society at Large**

As a young student at a summer school in Norway in 1983, I experienced more than one cultural shock. Most of the participants in the summer program were young Americans. I was amazed to see that whenever a complete stranger walked into a room or a hallway ahead of me, he (and of course she) always held the door until I took hold of it, rather than let it close in my face. I had never experienced that in the two countries where I had grown up — Bulgaria and Tunisia. That was an additional awakening, after the shock that I experienced on the crosswalks of Oslo. It dawned on me that cultures can be very different in the way that they teach their members how to treat strangers in a wide range of situations.

As I noted, people in exclusionist societies can be extremely concerned for their relatives, even to a degree that Westerners may perceive as unnecessary sacrifice. Yet the same societies are characterized by apathy toward out-group members, unless they seem to be in imminent and clearly visible danger. The general lack of empathy for strangers explains the fact that facilities for handicapped people are much less common, sometimes even nonexistent, in developing countries. In some cases, the obvious explanation is poverty. But providing ramps for wheelchairs alongside stairs does not necessarily make the construction more costly.

Parking practices can also be noticeably different. City sidewalks in some exclusionist cultures with lax laws or weak enforcement, such as Bulgaria, can be cluttered with cars, so that pedestrians have to slalom through them or walk on a lane intended for car traffic.

---

22. Chinese Cultural Connection (1987, p. 150). The correlation between exclusionism and integration is  $-.79^{**}$  ( $n = 20$ ).

Noisy neighbors can be a problem anywhere. But in Western residential areas that is usually not as serious an issue as in some Third World cities. Noise can be a particularly nasty problem in urbanized exclusionist cultures. In Bulgaria, neighbors often have heated rows over loud music or repair work. The situation can be much the same in other exclusionist societies that have experienced some urbanization. In their original form, exclusionist cultures did not have this problem as the whole tribe or village would probably be invited to take part in the merry-making and nobody would think of alienating himself by turning in to bed and protesting that there is a festivity going on.

Attitudes toward smoking are also a good illustration of cultural differences in empathy toward strangers. The Western societies are leading a campaign to ban smoking from all public places. In exclusionist cultures, many people will not even ask, "Do you mind if I smoke?" They simply will light up a cigarette. In 2001, some Middle Eastern airlines still allowed smoking onboard, although all Western, and most non-Western, companies had banned that practice even on intercontinental flights.

In 2005, the Bulgarian government banned smoking in all public buildings. Since then, nobody has made any serious attempts to enforce that ban because it is quite unnatural in a culture like Bulgaria's. The ban, signed by the Rector of the University of Sofia, was visible on every wall in the hallways of the main building in 2006. Still, secretaries in offices situated 10 meters from the Rector's chancellery smoked in the presence of visitors.

While dogs litter the sidewalks of non-Western countries without restraint, they are not allowed to relieve themselves even on lawns in British parks. And, most amazingly, I have seen Englishmen pick up the excrements of their pets from the grass without even looking around to see if they are being watched. In Sofia some dog owners just look on as their pets urinate on the fenders of other people's cars. The passers-by do not seem to notice.

Visiting friends and relatives without previous notification is another exclusionist practice. An Englishman who had worked for many years in various West African countries once told me that the local people would not hesitate to drop in on him unannounced, accompanied by a couple of relatives or friends, and stay for weeks. This practice can horrify most Europeans; it would be considered the epitome of rudeness. But for some West Africans it is a normal means of reinforcing personal bonds. When I was a child, Bulgarian adults still considered it acceptable to drop in on friends although the acceptable time limit for a visit was a few hours, not weeks. Nowadays, when everybody has a phone, such a surprise would not be considered nice, at least in the large cities.

Politeness is also an interesting aspect of empathy and considerateness. It is also a very complex phenomenon to discuss as there is no universal agreement on what is polite language and behavior and in what circumstances it should be displayed. Universalist cultures have roughly similar codes of politeness for communication with strangers and friends. Store clerks almost always greet the visitors and thank them for their custom. When repair work is in progress in the middle of a street, there will often be a sign that says something like "sorry for the inconvenience."

Exclusionist cultures may also display amusingly excessive forms of politeness in the eyes of a Western observer. In many of those cultures, people shake hands, and may even hug and kiss at every encounter, inquiring about the health of all close relatives. But strangers are excluded from such ceremonial politeness. The ticket collector may or may not say “good morning” and “thank you”; you may simply be told to “present your ticket.” On a crowded bus in Africa you can hear the conductor issue a command: “Move forward, all of you!” Until recently, the normal way for a Bulgarian store clerk to tell you that your turn has come was to say tersely “Speak up!” And in Beijing, police officers chase people who have trespassed into cordoned-off areas of city squares by hollering and flailing their arms like farmers who are shoing chickens out of their vegetable gardens.

If you push somebody in a British store, you are very likely to hear *that person* say “Sorry!” In the Balkans, even those who do the pushing and shoving often do not say anything. If you are riding in the Beijing subway during rush hours, you had better stand close to the door before the train has reached your station and jump out as soon as the doors have opened. Otherwise, you may be crushed by a crowd of people who will rush into the train without waiting for anybody to get off. I have witnessed similar scenes also in Istanbul. One noticeable difference is that some Turks openly express their indignation at this inconsiderate behavior, whereas the Chinese fail to show any outward emotion.

#### **Scandinavian Boycotts of Goods**

In my student years in Scandinavia, I was shocked to hear about successful popular boycotts of goods from countries with oppressive regimes. Neither could my Bulgarian friends, with whom I shared my experience, believe that somebody could abstain from buying a country’s products because of its undesirable political model. We had been brought up to show considerateness and concern for the needs of our friends and relatives, but wasted no time musing over the troubles of people that we had never seen.

Universalist societies are characterized by greater participation in volunteer projects for the welfare and benefit of society at large. A study by the Johns Hopkins University calculated numbers of full-time-equivalent volunteer workers and the “share of total employment” of the volunteer sector in 26 rich and middle-income countries. The highest scores were obtained in Northwestern Europe; the lowest were in Eastern Europe and Latin America.<sup>23</sup> Once again, we see that the universalist cultures have a higher concern for people who do not belong to one’s in-group. The association with

23. Johns Hopkins University Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (2004). The correlation between exclusionism and the Johns Hopkins University “share of total employment” scores is  $-.80^{**}$  ( $n = 23$ ).

poverty-versus-wealth differences, which are at the core of the exclusionism dimension, is also clear. How can poor Brazilians, Colombians, and Romanians worry about the welfare of strangers when they, themselves, can hardly make ends meet?

## **Domestic Violence**

Relationships between friends and relatives in exclusionist societies may be warm and even involve an element of sacrifice. However, they may also be worse than in the universalist world. Tolerance and respect are not a hallmark of an exclusionist culture. Harmony may be desirable, but in many cases it is not achieved, not even among family members.

Item v208 in the latest wave of the WVS (2005–2008) asks the respondents whether it is justifiable for a man to beat his wife. The western universalist societies have the lowest average agreement on a scale from 1 (never justifiable) to 10 (always justifiable). A few East European and Latin American countries also have very low scores. But elsewhere in the exclusionist world, and especially in Asia and Africa, there is much higher perceived justification of wife battering.<sup>24</sup> Although domestic violence occurs everywhere in the world, it is so endemic in the most exclusionist societies that some less severe versions of it are considered justifiable, even by the potential victims.

### **Extreme Domestic Violence against Women in Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh<sup>25</sup>**

In Pakistan, hundreds of women, of all ages, in all parts of the country, and for a variety of reasons connected with perceptions of “honour,” are killed every year. The victims include young pre-pubescent girls, unmarried young girls and women, old women, including grandmothers, married women, and widows. The alleged misbehavior that is perceived as bringing “dishonour” is usually sexual.

In the Indian subcontinent, numerous women die each year of burns caused by attacks by male partners or relatives using fire or acid. A forensic study of deaths due to burning documented the terrible nature of the practice. The majority of the murdered women were 16–25 years of age at the time of the attack — commonly doused with kerosene and set alight — and sustained more than 70 percent total body surface area burn injuries.

The use of sulfuric or nitric acid to cause appalling injury and suffering on women has been documented in Bangladesh. The motivation for these attacks appears to be revenge for spurned sexual advances or marriage proposal or reasons relating to family conflict.

24. In fact, the highest agreement that it is justifiable for a man to beat his wife, according to the WVS in 2005–2008, is in Slovenia. However, that country’s score is so dramatic that it is most likely a mistake.

25. Excerpt from Amnesty International (2005, pp. 23–24).

## **Protection of the Environment**

Once, in 1983, I went hiking with a group of American students in the Norwegian mountains. A young American woman peeled an orange and threw the skin in the grass. Immediately, another member of the group admonished her, explaining that at that altitude it would take months before the skin rotted completely. Ashamed, the woman picked it up and put it in her bag. I was baffled because I had seen much less degradable garbage being dumped in all kinds of public places in Bulgaria and Tunisia.

The problem of littering public places does not exist in pre-industrial cultures as they do not have plastic bags, glass bottles, newspapers, and cans. Most garbage is biodegradable. Dumping it just outside the village or even in the bushes behind the cottage does not create a serious nuisance. The real problem arises when the economy begins to develop and modernize. The result is plenty of litter that is often disposed of in city streets and squares. These places do not belong to one's in-group; therefore, one does not need to maintain them clean.

In Western countries, littering is definitely not unknown. Yet, it is largely attributable to excessive tourism and immigration. In 2001, in a picturesque, spic-and-span part of Zandam, just outside Amsterdam, the lawn around one apartment building was covered by all kinds of garbage and made quite a contrast with the rest of the neighborhood. The building was inhabited by immigrants who had obviously not internalized some aspects of Dutch culture. A similar situation was visible in 2002 in Paris. The neighborhood east of Place de la Republique, populated by immigrants from poor countries, was considerably more littered than the streets west of it. The area around Gare du Midi in Brussels provided exactly the same example in 2008. In Bulgaria, people who live in large apartment blocks often drop small garbage items on the stairs and toss larger ones out of their windows. In some buildings, they offer shelter to street dogs in the hallways; never mind that they urinate and defecate there.

It takes money to have clean streets and a tidy environment, not just a universalist Western culture. But a comparison of two countries that have had the same GDP per person for many years — Slovenia and Greece — will reveal quite a contrast. During the three years that I spent in Slovenia (1995–1998) and my multiple visits since then, I have seen nothing but tidy cities, green roadsides, and clean lake and sea beaches. But a drive down the Greek peninsula of Sithonia, part of greater Halkidiki, revealed a different picture in 2003: the two sides of the main road were lined with all kinds of small trash that can be tossed out of a car window. The beaches of Halkidiki — including some that had been awarded a Blue Flag environmental distinction — were as littered as those of Bulgaria and Turkey, apart from the areas right in front of the hotels, which are kept clean in all those countries. The litter ranged from shampoo bottles and sneakers to bed mattresses, car tires, and rusty bicycles.

Business consultants Charles Hampden-Turner and Fons Trompenaars quote a 1990 IMD report, featuring a ranking on the “extent to which countries protect environment.” Data are available for 24 developed countries. Those that are most

protective of their environment are the nations with some of the most universalist cultures: the Scandinavian and German-speaking ones. The lowest environment protection was recorded in Greece, Spain, and Italy (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1996, p. 262).

Various other studies have also provided comparisons of attitudes toward the environment. One such study<sup>26</sup> asked students from six countries to report various environment-related behaviors such as recycling objects and picking up other people's litter. Ranked on their reported friendliness toward the environment, the six countries were Germany, New Zealand, Czech Republic, India, Brazil, and Russia.

Based on such evidence, it is easy to stereotype the members of an exclusionist culture as untidy or even dirty. I have heard similar conclusions more than once. The truth is quite different. The gardens and yards around private houses from the Balkans to Indonesia are typically well groomed. People around the world tend to maintain cleanliness (if they can afford it) at home and in the dwellings of their kinfolk and friends. But in exclusionist environments many individuals are simply not taught to adhere to the same standards with respect to what is public property or belongs to out-groups.

## **Xenophobia and Racism**

Xenophobia and racism are more common in exclusionist societies than in universalist ones and are strongest in some parts of Asia and Africa. Some East European countries, in particular some former Yugoslav republics, also harbor quite a lot of these phenomena. On December 31, 2006, just before midnight (Central European Time), the popular Serbian TV entertainment channel Pink Plus aired a fun show with the participation of some of Serbia's most famous entertainers. During the show, a roast pig with brown skin was said to resemble Kofi Annan, the former UN General Secretary from Ghana. Then, an actor, playing the part of a student, was asked to compose a verse. He came up with this: "A Croat is running in the field; I am chasing him with an ax." The teacher failed him. Then, he advised him to catch up with the Croat, rather than just run after him, if he wished to have a better grade.

Although the available paper-and-pencil studies do not place the African societies at the top of any known racism ranking, some of them seem to have so much of that phenomenon that, when it is unleashed in some specific circumstances, the resulting scenes would be deemed too graphic even for a horror movie. Reports of

---

26. Schultz et al. (2005). See "environmental behaviors," Table 2. Of note, the respondents could choose a not-applicable option when a particular behavior was impossible in their environment.

The authors point out that their respondents were students, not nationally representative samples. But precisely the fact that there are such differences in environmental attitudes between the national elites of the future is noteworthy.

unimaginable atrocities during conflicts between warring tribes are regularly reported in *The Economist*. According to an account<sup>27</sup> from 2006, during Sierra Leone's civil war teenage soldiers ripped open pregnant women's wombs after betting on the sex of their fetuses. Women's vaginas were sown up with fishing line. Children were forced to kill their parents and eat their brains. A man was skinned alive and eaten. Another had his heart torn out and stuffed into the mouth of his 87-year-old mother.

In the West, and especially in the United States, sometimes the opposite cultural bias is observed: a desire and an effort to forget about racial differences altogether. This can result in situations that East Europeans might consider comical. On February 3, 2010, Yahoo News published an article by a certain Joanna Douglas, whose title was "*Vanity Fair's* 'New Hollywood' Issue Completely Lacks Diversity." In the view of the author, the problem was that all nine women on the cover of that popular magazine were "extremely thin and very, very white." To avoid such accusations, the American film industry will even distort the legends of European nations and color their personages. This has resulted in a Black Orpheus and a Chinese Snow White.

#### **Hypersensitivity to Racism in the West**

Some time ago, I came across an Internet forum that discussed racism. One of the contributors had posted a text on the popular children's movie personage Shrek — an ogre who turns into a human. But that human happens to be a White man. Why is that so, the author of the message asks, isn't this a hint that Blacks are not human? Why doesn't Shrek turn into an African? However, right after that, the same author thinks of another issue. If Shrek had turned into a Black man, he says, some people might feel that there is some kind of link between monsters and Blacks. No matter how you look at the issue, there is always hidden racism. The confused author conceded in his final sentence that he did not know what to think.

The WVS regularly measures racism by asking the respondents what kind of people they would not like to have as neighbors. "People of another race" is most often chosen in societies that score high on industry (and thus score low on tolerance) and on exclusionism at the same time.<sup>28</sup> Still, the fact that the Western nations score relatively low on racism as a WVS item does not mean that they are completely free of that phenomenon. Racism can be generated not only by deeply rooted intolerance and exclusionism but also by situational factors. In 1999, only 9 percent of all French citizens did not wish to have people of another race as neighbors. By 2006, that percentage had risen to 23. This rise in racism was doubtlessly a response to the frequent rampages and riots by nonintegrated and disaffected youths of African origin and the resulting ethnic

27. *The Economist* (March 11, 2006). Amnesty International (2005) also provides similar accounts.

28. WVS item A125 (respondent does not want to have people of another race as neighbors, latest data from the 1994–2004 period) correlates with industry at .58\*\* ( $n = 42$ ) and with exclusionism at .51\*\* ( $n = 73$ ).

and racial tension that pervaded France after the turn of the millennium. Racism does not always stem from irrational cultural prejudice. It can arise from a clash of values, norms, and behaviors between substantially different cultural groups. What seems like blind hatred of the members of another society may actually be a perception that their culture has unacceptable features.

An American employee of a Japanese company once wished to gain a company pin as those worn by his Japanese peers as a sign of honor and devotion. Yet, he was told by a senior officer of the company that he would never qualify for that distinction. The explanation was shocking: “The situation is very simple. This is a Japanese company and you are not Japanese. Therefore, you are not part of the company though you are an employee of the company” (Viner, 1988, pp. 104–105).

In fact, as the author of that story explains, the Japanese had discovered that he was not eligible for admission into the in-group of company workers not only because he was an American but also because he did not intend to devote his life to the company. In an exclusionist culture, a company can be an extension of one’s in-group or a second family that one has no moral right to desert. Job-hopping is definitely not condoned.

### **Foreigners Are Not Allowed to Go to the Great Chinese Wall by Public Bus**

During a visit in Beijing in 2009, my family and I tried to get to the Chinese Wall by public bus. Following the instructions that we had received, we appeared at the designated bus stop at about 9:00 in the morning. There were many Chinese Wall buses ready for departure, but when we tried to board one, we were not allowed to. We were told in broken English that these buses were not going anywhere; we had missed the last one for the day and had better take a taxi. Meanwhile, Chinese travelers were boarding the buses, which were leaving every five minutes or so. But we were obviously not Chinese.

A young man stepped up and asked us in good English what was our problem. We told him what was going on. He said he was a Korean tourist, experiencing the same difficulty. He had found that the bus drivers and conductors were a sort of local Mafia, operating together with the taxi-drivers. They would never allow foreigners to ride a bus to the Chinese Wall. The young man certainly looked strange for a Korean tourist who was going to the Wall on an extremely hot summer’s day: poorly dressed, without a backpack, and without a camera. Besides, we heard him speak suspiciously fluent Chinese with correct Beijing tones. He was obviously an emissary whose role was to make the reality clear to European-looking tourists.

The easiest, and most incorrect, conclusion from this incident would be that Chinese have racist attitudes toward Europeans. In fact, we had experienced the opposite. In crowded urban buses, conductors always instructed seated passengers to get up and yield their seats to our 10-year old daughter. At least five times a day, we were stopped by smiling strangers who wished to have their picture taken with us. The Chinese Wall bus incident simply shows a logic, found in developing countries far beyond China. Foreign tourists are supposed to have a lot of money, and it is perfectly acceptable to fleece them when the opportunity arises.

## Political Correctness

This phenomenon is relatively new in the Western World. In Victorian Britain it was acceptable to speak of “primitive peoples” or even “savages”. Until the 1960s, Blacks were referred to as “Negroes” even in academic publications. The view that there exist superior and inferior races was acceptable in the West, at least until the World War II.

The change that has happened since those times is spectacular. In the West, it is not only unacceptable to mention racial superiority, but there are massive attempts to discredit the idea that race is an objective category. Gender differences in abilities, personality, or behavior must also be viewed as superficial. If some of them are scientifically shown to be significant, it is politically appropriate to attribute them to different types of upbringing, not to biology. In general, it is poor taste to divide people into any groups and assign group characteristics to them. If such characteristics can be found, they must not be viewed as rooted in anything as durable as genes because this would contradict the universalist principle that group affiliation does not really matter because it is arbitrary, superficial, and temporary. Western universalism accounts for the potentially strong negative reactions in the West to any scientific publication that discusses biological differences across groups of people.

As a result, English and other Western languages have undergone significant changes to cater to the new cultural taste for extreme considerateness toward any group whose members might feel singled out for discrimination. “Somebody” is no longer “he,” but “he or she,” “she” or “they.” There are no handicapped people; those with physical disabilities are simply challenged or — even better — just different. Those who used to be Gypsies are now Roma, never mind that some groups in that ethnicity do not consider themselves Roma and might even be insulted by this lack of differentiation. People who participated in scientific studies used to be “subjects.” Now they are “participants.”

## Corruption

Transparency International is an international organization that monitors corruption practices all over the world. Each year the organization publishes country rankings. Each year the situation is fairly similar. The cleanest and most transparent countries are those in the rich Western world, especially in Scandinavia. Singapore, also a very wealthy country, also scores very high on transparency. In the poor parts of the globe, there is invariably a lot of corruption.<sup>29</sup> But wealth differences between countries would provide a one-sided explanation of differences in transparency.

---

29. The correlation between the Transparency International 1999 transparency versus corruption perceptions index and GDP per person in 1999 is  $-.77^{**}$  ( $n = 92$ ). Comparisons of data from later years yield similar correlations.

Corruption is not just a product of immediate material incentives but is powerfully influenced by culture.<sup>30</sup>

In exclusionist societies, public servants treat people on the basis of group affiliation. They do not necessarily feel an obligation to render any service to out-group members and sometimes refuse to do their duty under various pretexts. They may claim that a form is not filled out properly, that a supervisor, who is impossible to reach, must authorize a transaction or that more certificates are necessary. The only way to cut through the purposefully created red tape is to find what is usually called “a connection” or pay a bribe. In many cases, you have to do both since your connection will expect a favor for a favor.

Corruption is not the prerogative of sleazy politicians, as many Westerners think. In the exclusionist world, it permeates whole societies, including a substantial percentage of ordinary citizens who initiate corrupt transactions, for example by asking a police officer to look the other way when they have been caught out in a traffic violation or by offering a doctor a bribe for a sick leave. A survey of Africa in *The Economist* (January 17, 2004) makes a good point:

“The [African] populace expects to exchange political support for concrete help”, says Jean-Pascal Daloz, a French academic. “That is the only way in which politics makes sense to them”. Often, this means they vote for a member of their own tribe, on the assumption that he will be more likely to share with them what he snaffles from the treasury.”

Therefore, arguing that the fish starts rotting from the head is not very useful. Corruption does not start either from the state officials or from the citizens. It is simply pack and parcel of any poor exclusionist culture and is proportionate to the degree of its poverty and exclusionism.

Some authors are not convinced that corruption is part of a cultural system and attempt to present it as a systemic flaw in any culture (Hooker, 2009). One of the arguments in favor of that view is that people all over the world tend to denounce corruption. This is true but what the denunciation often means is that these critics do not want *others* to be corrupt. I know quite a few individuals from exclusionist societies who loudly lambaste public officials for extorting bribes from the citizens but nevertheless will offer bribes to police officers under the pretext that the official fine for a traffic violation is unfairly high.

Another argument against viewing corruption as part of a cultural system is that it is endemic to developing nations where relationships are important, yet corruption undermines relationships rather than build them. To prove the correctness of this view, those who propose it should show examples of many relationship-based

---

30. See Sandholtz and Taagepera (2004). For analyses of the cultural, economic, and political determinants of corruption, see also Lambsdorff (2006), Paldam (2002), Treisman (2000, 2007). See also Connelly and Ones (2008) who sought a link between corruption levels and national personality traits.

societies where relationships between people have totally collapsed and society has fallen apart precisely because of the impact of corruption. In fact, two societies with a lot of corruption — China and India — are in the process of creating economic miracles. They are on the way of surpassing Europe, rivaling the United States in terms of international importance. China and India are hardly failed societies.

Corruption may be universally unacceptable but not for the reasons that many Westerners put forward. It simply annoys all those who are not adept at it, and there are many such individuals in every country. Therefore, it makes sense to attempt to curtail it. But it cannot be eradicated from countries where it is part of the culture. Yet, in the Western world there is a serious delusion that corruption in the poor, exclusionist world can be tackled successfully and reduced substantially if only there were enough political will. There can never be enough political will for that because there is not enough cultural will. Poor cultures are always exclusionist and always corrupt. Neither characteristic can change substantially without a very significant growth of national wealth.

This being said, I am far from the opinion that exclusionism and poverty are the only determinants of corruption. There must be political and other factors that may account for a country's short-term fluctuations in the Transparency International rankings. But those determinants are harder to discern and prove scientifically. In the long run, they produce a much weaker effect than the powerful cultural and socioeconomic causes: exclusionism and poverty.

## **Rule Orientation and the “Rule of Law”**

One of the first things that a visitor notices in a foreign country is that many rules are different. But that is not all. Attitudes toward rules do not seem the same everywhere, either. Bribing officials is forbidden everywhere in the world, but in many poor countries bribes are given even before witnesses. Traffic regulations are much the same around the globe, yet driving is not. In all poor countries, drivers do things that will horrify the unaccustomed Westerner.

The conclusion to which many Westerners jump is that non-Western societies tend to be characterized by various degrees of chaos. Rules may exist on paper but people break them because they are not rule-oriented. This is a hasty and very naive conclusion. The reality is much more complex than that. There are no rule-oriented and rule-breaking societies in a general sense, just as there are no societies on earth without strict rules. In a discussion of rule orientation and rule breaking, it is essential to distinguish between two types of rules: homemade and imported.

The Balkans may seem like a pretty lawless and rule-free place to Westerners, but that does not mean that the local people do not have a strong sense of order; their own, to be sure. For example, the Bulgarian authorities have never tried to enforce a ban on smoking in Bulgarian buses and movie theaters, yet practically nobody ever smokes in them although smoking is acceptable in various other public places. In the early 1990s, when the first private intercity buses appeared in Bulgaria, smoking was

common in them for about a year or two; then Bulgarian culture stamped out the practice without any law enforcement. Similarly, like any other culture on earth, Bulgaria and the other Balkan societies have their own strict rules about the degree of permissible nudity in public places that only an insane person would break. Another example is the Bulgarian rule that forbids you to give a woman an even number of flowers. One, three, or five is acceptable; two, four, or six is not. Why? Nobody has a clue. Yet, Bulgarians never break this homemade rule.

Likewise, it is unthinkable for a Muslim in an Arab country to eat or drink in public during the month of Ramadan. This rule is enforced vigorously, although some individuals admit in private, especially in conversations with non-Muslims, that they do not approve of it. Arabs and other Muslims would never think of entering a mosque with their shoes on or drawing a picture of Prophet Muhammad, even if it is not a cartoon. In the Indonesian island of Bali, parents still follow name-giving rules very strictly: there are names that can be given only to a first-born child, only to a second-born, only to a third-born, and so forth. During a religious service, nobody is allowed to stand higher than the priest. If you are unaware of that rule and climb up a flight of stairs for a better view, somebody will immediately order you to get down or at least lower your head. The same will happen in Thailand if you try to have your picture taken next to a statue of the Buddha and your head is above his. Arabs and Southeast Asians clearly have an extremely keen sense of order and are strongly rule-oriented.

But if this so, why does their driving often seem suicidal? Because the traffic rules that they are supposed to obey are not those of their own cultures. They come from the universalist West. When foreign rules do not fit the local cultural context, they will be rejected by the population and enforced half-heartedly by the authorities. This is an elementary truth, yet many people seem to forget it and are surprised when they see it at work. Tell your German subordinates that as of tomorrow morning, when your deputy spots your car coming around the corner, they must fall in, stand at attention, and bow to you as you come up the stairs. They will simply answer that you are not in Japan. Your rule will never catch on because it collides with the liberal spirit of German culture.

Traffic rules reflect a universalist principle: people should be considerate and empathetic toward strangers. In exclusionist cultures, this is illogical. The rule that people do respect is different: "You should be considerate toward your friends and relatives, but there is not much need for empathy for strangers." This rule allows you to make U-turns anywhere, burn red lights, double-park, park on sidewalks (and even drive on them), forget to yield when you are supposed to, and ignore the pedestrians. In the Internet, there is an abundance of "driving in India" videos that can shock any Westerner watching them for the first time. I also have my own videos, showing how pedestrians cross streets in Beijing. It does not matter that the lights are red and there is heavy traffic. Crowds of people mingle freely with the cars and buses. At the same time, police officers just stand on the sidewalk, smoking cigarettes.

I have often heard the explanation that the apparent road chaos in poor countries is due to bad law enforcement. Yes it is. But why is the law enforcement bad? Why can Swedish and British police enforce the law, whereas those of China, India, Egypt, and Bulgaria cannot? The answer is that the police officers and their chiefs share the

same national culture as the drivers and the pedestrians. They see no need to enforce what does not make much sense to them.

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank publish a national “rule of law” index, developed by Daniel Kaufmann and Aart Kraay.<sup>31</sup> It is strongly correlated with the Transparency International indices. It yields high correlations with the exclusionism index as well. Exclusionist cultures have less rule of law as defined by Western minds.

Inspired by Hofstede’s research, the Project GLOBE researchers set out to measure what they called “uncertainty avoidance.” This should not to be confused with Hofstede’s homonym because it has nothing to do with it. GLOBE’s dimension reflects something entirely different. GLOBE asked middle managers in 62 societies whether they agreed that orderliness and consistency should be stressed in their societies. The GLOBE researchers did not specify exactly what kind of order they had in mind, yet the respondents — being middle managers — obviously referred to a concept of Western order that is more or less desirable in most modern business enterprises around the world. This is obvious from the fact that the GLOBE index is very strongly and positively associated with exclusionism<sup>32</sup>: middle managers in poor and exclusionist societies wished for more order than those in rich and universalist societies. Conversely, when asked to describe the real situation in their countries, the middle managers in poor countries perceived less orderliness than those in the West. A very similar picture emerged in a study of 49 nations where college students were asked to describe the average national character of their fellow countrymen and women (McCrae et al., 2007). Respondents from poorer countries were more likely to depict their fellow citizens as less orderly and dutiful. The logical conclusion is that the GLOBE respondents wished to have more of what they did not see enough in their societies: Western order.<sup>33</sup>

GLOBE also measured another dimension, called “future orientation.” Its two variants reflect the degree to which it is desirable to plan for the future and the perceived actual planning for the future. The observed situation is the same as in the case of GLOBE’s uncertainty avoidance. People in exclusionist nations wish to see more planning than they actually perceive. In the universalist countries, the situation is normally the opposite.<sup>34</sup>

---

31. At the time of the writing of this text, the latest available Kaufmann–Kraay index was for 2005 (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2007). It correlates with exclusionism at  $-.86^{**}$  ( $n = 82$ ).

32. Uncertainty avoidance data in Sully de Luque and Javidan (2004). The correlation between GLOBE’s uncertainty avoidance “as should be” and exclusionism is  $.88^{**}$  ( $n = 47$ ). Exclusionism correlates with uncertainty avoidance “as is” at  $-.54^{**}$ . Note however that “as is” was measured with questions that elicit national stereotypes that may be partly unfounded.

33. See Maseland and van Hoorn (2009) who explain GLOBE’s results in a more or less similar manner: the respondents wished to have more of what they perceived as insufficient in their societies.

34. Future orientation data in Ashkanasy et al. (2004). Future orientation “as should be” correlates with exclusionism at  $.70^{**}$  ( $n = 47$ ). Future orientation “as is” correlates with exclusionism at  $-.37^{**}$ . This is a low correlation but note that the dimension was measured with questions that elicit national stereotypes.

However, this professed desire for Western orderliness in poor countries does not necessarily make it easy to implement. Many people outside the West, especially intellectuals, and certainly company managers, claim that they want to see more Western order in their environments, but what they mean by that is that they wish that others were more orderly and followed Western rules of conduct, whereas they should be exempted from this obligation. In Bulgaria for instance, many drivers curse others for traffic violations although they behave in exactly the same way. Despite their indignation, they do not do much to initiate Western order. In fact, they often feel very uncomfortable with such order because it is unnatural in their environment. I have heard many East Europeans say that Germans are awful people because they may report you to the police if you have not parked properly or have dumped your garbage in the wrong container. As a result, Western order is still a distant goal outside the West. It cannot be built by expecting others to be orderly. It can only exist when it has become a personal value, guiding one's own behavior, not just a desirable norm for others.

The fact that people in exclusionist cultures actively resist the Western universalist order, although many claim that they wish to have more respect for it (on the part of other citizens), explains why the *rule of law*, or more precisely what Northwestern Europeans and Americans understand by that, seems to be so difficult to implement outside the West. The Western rule of law requires a universalist culture, as it rests on the principle that the laws and their enforcement must be the same for everybody. But this contradicts the non-Western exclusionist principle that in-group members deserve privileged treatment, whereas everybody else could be ignored or even mistreated to some degree. It also clashes with the exclusionist rule that if strangers wish to have a guarantee that they will not be ignored by the system's representatives they must do something to earn that privilege. Westerners call such phenomena nepotism, corruption, and other similar terms. People in the poor world may profess agreement that such practices are unfair and immoral, and many people may indeed abstain from them. But quite a few accept them and help perpetuate them either grudgingly or willingly. In a poor country, there is often no other way to get ahead of the game.

From an exclusionist viewpoint, Western order is illogical because it is largely based on the idea that one should interact with strangers and treat them almost like family. You do not make noise at certain times because somebody — related to you or not — may wish to rest. You do not park your car across the sidewalk because strangers walk there. You do not throw your litter in public places just as you do not dump it in the middle of your cousin's living room. As a government employee, you provide the same service for everybody without asking for an additional compensation.

But people in exclusionist cultures are not used to living with strangers. A traditional exclusionist society is a band, tribe, village, or other formation, where people know each other well. They do respect their own order and do each other all sorts of favors. Yet, their culture does not teach them empathy for strangers. To them that might seem as illogical as for a successful American businessman to give a well-paid job to his completely incompetent cousin.

Apparent chaos may ensue when an exclusionist culture industrializes and urbanizes rapidly. That puts its members in everyday contacts with people they do not know. And they treat each other just like that: as strangers.

## **Safety Measures and Practices**

Accident prevention is a major issue in business and society at large. Attitudes toward it may differ across cultures.

The exclusionism index in this book was measured, among other things, on the basis of national road death tolls statistics. These reflect a degree of neglect for others on the part of drivers and government officials; the police do not enforce stringent traffic regulations but often prefer to collect bribes, thus perpetuating the dangerous situation on the roads. But one hardly needs to look at statistics. Anyone who has traveled in the poor world has noticed that many people seem to ignore certain obvious risks that endanger not only their own lives but also those of others, while the authorities often treat this situation with indifference. Drivers do not always use seatbelts, bikers ride without helmets, and people hang out of bus doors. In some parts of Africa and Asia, passengers may even sit on train and bus roofs. Some of these behaviors clearly have to do with economic problems: if all buses are crowded and you have no other means of transportation, you may decide to ride on the roof, no matter how unsafe the trip will be. But in many cases the reason for this behavior is different.

According to a correspondent of *The Economist* who had spent days on Cameroonian roads and passed through 47 police road blocks, Cameroonian police seemed to be obsessed with road safety, checking all possible parts of the vehicle. Yet, the correspondent says, “oddly, no one asked about seat belts, which Cameroonians wear about as often as fur coats” (*The Economist*, December 21, 2002). The correspondent observed that the checks had nothing to do with any concern for safety but were extortion schemes. The authorities in poor countries are not particularly concerned about the safety of their citizens; therefore, they do not enforce safety measures very enthusiastically.

Safety measures are not always embraced wholeheartedly by Western populations, but enforcement is tougher because of the higher universalism of the West. What happens to the citizens is not viewed as just their own problem but is also the authorities' concern. In 2001, I saw a banner at a construction site in Gatwick Airport, London, saying “NO HELMET, NO JOB.” If there was a need for such a warning, apparently somebody forgot to put on his helmet. But Western authorities are more serious about the enforcement of such bans because the universalist Western culture makes it more difficult for them to get away with negligence and neglect of duty. In exclusionist countries, workers are not necessarily required to wear helmets at construction sites. If something happened to them, neither their company would be in serious legal trouble, nor anybody in the government.

In 2009, some English visitors that I was showing around Sofia were amazed to see the wide open glass doors of stores reaching halfway across crowded streets — a clear

invitation for absent-minded pedestrians to crash through them. This does not mean that a Bulgarian storekeeper would remain unperturbed if somebody walked through the glass door of his store. People in exclusionist cultures are simply not used to giving a lot of preliminary thought to what may be good or bad for the well-being of strangers. Even after a disaster strikes, little is done to prevent recurrences. This makes it possible for some people in exclusionist societies to show utmost disregard for their own safety and that of others. Here is an illustration from a story in a Bulgarian travel magazine. The author describes a taxi ride from downtown Cairo, Egypt, to the hotel where he was staying<sup>35</sup>:

Finally, we found a taxi and started driving back home. At some point, I realized that our man was in the wrong lane. He was honking and flashing his headlights to make his way through. “What’s going on?” I said, “Why are you driving against the traffic?” “Don’t worry,” he said, “Just a few hundred meters; otherwise we have to drive around several kilometers to make a turn”.

The summer of 2005 saw a wave of airplane crashes involving air carriers from developing countries. The situation was so serious that European Union officials launched the idea of drawing up a black list of airlines that should not be allowed to fly to Europe. Some of the accidents had a clear component: they were attributed to the poor training of the pilots and the use of unusable aircraft. On August 31, 2005, French TV channel TV5 showed footage of Spanish officials checking, then grounding, a Venezuelan plane with some 140 passengers on board. As the French reporters put it, it did not take an expert to see that the plane was not airworthy. It showed clear signs of excessive tear and wear: corrosion, large cracks, and loose metal sheets. If the Spanish officials had not stopped the flight, a disaster was very likely to happen only weeks after a Colombian plane had crashed in Venezuela.

Important differences in attitudes toward safety can be observed even among developed countries. Charles Hampden-Turner and Fons Trompenaars quote a 1990 IMD ranking on product safety in 24 wealthy nations. The safest products were produced in German-speaking and Scandinavian countries, followed by North America. The least safe products were produced in southern Europe.<sup>36</sup>

## **Product Quality**

The issue of product safety brings up the broader issue of product quality. In Slovenia, you can order a meal or a snack at any establishment, anywhere in the

---

35. Velichkov (2004), my translation.

36. Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1996, p. 262). The correlation between the product safety index and exclusionism is  $-.67^{**}$  ( $n = 22$ ).

country, including the train station of the remotest village, and be sure that you will get something edible or drinkable. This is not a question of subjective taste. You will never be served anything stale, sour, withered, moldy, burned, unleavened, unchewable, or half-baked, when it is obviously not supposed to be that way. But do not bet on the same quality anywhere east and south of Slovenia, including Greece. Of course, there are superb restaurants in all those countries in which you can get fantastic food. But in a lower-end establishment you can be served a stale gyros, or a raw pizza, or even a burned Big Mac. It is useless to argue that food standards are culture-relative. Nobody likes spoiled, stale, or burned food even if in some places it is easier than elsewhere to get away with serving it.

Consistent high quality in products and services is easier to achieve in a universalist culture. It requires a conviction that your clients, even if they are strangers, are entitled to the same treatment as your close kin, as well an understanding that even if you do not mind eating a stale sandwich, not everybody would agree with you, even in your own society.

The 2000 International Crime Victim Survey studied various types of crime in West European, East European, and some former Soviet Union countries by interviewing samples of at least 1000 individuals per country.<sup>37</sup> One of the questions that the respondents answered was “Last year (in 1999), were you the victim of a consumer fraud? In other words, has someone, when selling something to you or delivering a service, cheated you in terms of quantity or quality of the goods/service?” The highest percentages of respondents who answered in the affirmative were in the former Soviet Union, where they exceeded 50 percent. The lowest percentages were in Northwestern Europe: about 5 percent. Consumers in exclusionist cultures are shortchanged much more often. Business attitudes toward strangers and friends and family are not necessarily the same. It is hardly a surprise then that people in more exclusionist cultures have less trust in people.<sup>38</sup>

## **Adherence to Agreements**

The Western world has a long history of capitalism, an economic system that requires constant transactions. Capitalism cannot function properly without a great deal of certainty that those transactions will take place as planned and promised. In the Western world, when a promise is made or an agreement is concluded, it is expected that action will be taken as stated. Of course, agreements are broken quite

---

37. Alvazzi del Frate and van Kesteren (2004). The correlation between consumer fraud (national percentages of people who have been cheated) and exclusionism is .82\*\* ( $n = 21$ ).

38. The national percentages of respondents who say they do not trust much the people that they know (item v127 in the 2005–2008 study of the WVS) correlates with exclusionism at .72\*\* ( $n = 48$ ). Apparently what the respondents have in mind in this case are acquaintances that are not part of their close in-groups. The correlation between the national percentages of people who say that most people can be trusted (item v23 in the same study) and exclusionism is  $-.61^{**}$  ( $n = 53$ ).

often. But that normally does not go unsanctioned one way or another. The spectrum of potential penalties can range from loss of respect, destruction of a relationship, or failure of a business, to a lawsuit, and a huge financial penalty, especially in the United States. The idea that agreements must be kept has actually become so deeply ingrained in Western culture that many people take it for granted and consider it a matter of honor to stand by their word even in the absence of a legal threat. Interestingly, this attitude is exhibited with respect to everybody; Western societies do not teach their members to distinguish between strangers and friends in professional matters.

If an agreement is concluded with an out-group member, people in the exclusionist world may view it as a loose arrangement whose conditions can be changed at any time. There is an abundance of examples of frustrated American and West Europeans who believed they had made a deal with a Chinese partner, or even had a written contract, only to discover that it was not worth the paper that it was written on. Similar situations are common also in Eastern Europe and the Arab world. What seems like an arrangement for a future activity may simply be an indication of vague potential interest in some sort of partnership. A statements such as “I will come to your office on Friday to discuss this matter,” may actually mean, “If this is very important to me, I will definitely come, but if I decide that it is not, I will not even call you on the phone to cancel the appointment. Also, when I see you next time I will act as if no appointment had ever been made.”

Of course, people who systematically behave in that way, wherever in the world they are, not just in the West, will lose the respect of their partners, associates, or friends. But in the exclusionist world, there are various degrees of a feeling that if one breaks an agreement the other party must show understanding and forgiveness for the sake of maintaining a good relationship. What are friends for if they cannot forgive? This creates a cultural difference that exasperates both sides. In the view of business people from the developed world, those from the developing countries often lack seriousness or even cheat. On the contrary, Westerners can be considered rigid and unwilling to show understanding.

These cultural peculiarities definitely have a circumstantial element. In poor countries, agreements can be difficult to keep. Phones do not always work properly, vehicles break down, and government officials invent obstacles, often for the sole purpose of collecting bribes. Besides, third parties do not keep *their* part of the bargain, which impacts on everybody. If your local supplier fails to deliver the goods that you need to execute a business order, what could you say to your Western partner but “It was not my fault” and “I want to renegotiate the contract”? If the Westerner retorts that, nevertheless, you are to blame because you have chosen such a bad supplier, that statement would probably be interpreted as astoundingly rude obstinacy.

But eventually the excuse that the environment prevents people from keeping agreements can become a deeply rooted philosophy. Agreements can be broken for no apparent reason. Such behavior is not considered reproachable if it is exhibited toward strangers. They are not part of the in-group; therefore, they are excluded from the circle of people toward whom strong moral obligations exist.

Agreements are often disregarded in the exclusionist world even between in-group members. Bulgarian parents promise things to their children that they do not intend to deliver. This is how a culture of unreliability is created from an early age.

## **Punctuality and Perception of Time**

Hava parasızdır (“Time costs no money”)

An Ottoman Turkish saying

One of the things that perplexed me during a visit to a high school in Long Island, New York, was the behavior of the students at the end of the class. As soon as the bell rang, they all bolted out. I was intrigued and discovered that classes at American schools and universities are supposed to start and end precisely on time. In Bulgarian schools, that is largely up to the teacher. Pupils are usually reprimanded for not coming to class on time, but the teacher may decide to prolong the session and use much of the break. At universities, both professors and students have accepted a concept of “academic tolerance” that allows anybody to be up to 15 minutes late. In fact, students often come to class at any time. Some professors try to discourage this practice while others do not mind it as they themselves sometimes show up nearly half an hour late. Some do not come to class at all.

Punctuality, defined as starting or finishing an activity at a previously specified time, is a phenomenon that appeared during the Industrial Revolution. When one day in the 1860s the owner of a textile mill in Lowell, Massachusetts, announced that all workers must report for work at the same time, the weavers were outraged (Zuboff, 1982). At that time, the idea was still novel in America. Punctuality cannot exist in a preindustrial society as it makes sense only when technological processes are involved. You do not have to be out in the field and start plowing at exactly 5:30 AM, because 5:16 or 5:42 would do just as well.

Punctuality is expected, and usually observed, in economically developed societies. Elsewhere, there are various degrees of disrespect for it. This has to do with exclusionism versus universalism differences, although there is significant individual variation within any society.

When discussing this issue with my Bulgarian students, many of whom are often late for class, I ask them to think of situations when they would always be on time. Yes, there are situations in which Bulgarians are normally so punctual that even a German would be impressed or amused. My students are quick to provide examples: “When we are going to an exam. When we are going to a job interview.”

In exclusionist cultures, relationships are often more important than professional tasks. To maintain a good relationship with a student or a business partner, you have to treat them almost as an in-group member. This means excusing their lack of punctuality. Otherwise, not only the personal relationship may suffer but also the professional one. Yet, a person who goes to a job interview has not established any degree of personal proximity with the interviewers and has no reason to expect any

leniency. After an exam starts, the doors may be closed by an unfamiliar invigilator. The list of similar situations can be expanded: Bulgarians are hardly ever late for trains because there is nobody to delay the departure for them. But they can be late for flights. Flights wait for people and make “final calls,” sometimes mentioning passengers’ names. Trains do not.

Furthermore, keeping others waiting is a form of disrespect and lack of empathy. According to Dutch business consultant Fons Trompenaars, a French acquaintance of his once stated that “the problem of being late is actually the problem of those who are on time” (Trompenaars, 2003). A lack of punctuality can reflect a relaxed attitude toward agreements, which is typical of exclusionist cultures.

Some authors speak of “synchronic” or “polychronic” versus “sequential” cultures.<sup>39</sup> They suggest that there may be different conceptions or perceptions of time in different societies: a line of sequential events versus cyclical and repetitive. But there is no factual evidence of such a contrast between Western and non-Western cultures.<sup>40</sup>

Many Western observers have noted — sometimes with an overtone of dismay or even irritation — that Latin Americans, Africans, Asians, and East Europeans sometimes do several things at the same time, which a Westerner would not combine in the same way. For example, a travel agent may be chatting with a friend while making a reservation for you. There is no need to speak of any differences in time conception here. As many Bulgarians will tell you, what this behavior means is that the friend is more important to the travel agent than the customer. Nowadays, serious private companies in Eastern Europe are beginning to discourage this attitude because they simply realize that it is not good for their business.

Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden Turner make an interesting comparison: in the Netherlands and Britain people wait dutifully in line, whereas in Italy customers might ask for service before their turn has come (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1999, pp. 123–124). I would add that in Bulgarian stores until recently it was not uncommon to hear customers say: “I just want a loaf of bread; may I skip the line?” Sometimes they would not even bother to ask anybody but head straight toward the clerk.

My most dramatic experiences in this respect occurred in Beijing city buses. The fact that I was standing right in front of the conductor’s counter and it was obviously my turn to buy a ticket meant nothing to some Chinese passengers. Those who were behind me would hand the conductor their money over or around my shoulder.

---

39. For example Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1999), who have borrowed these concepts from Hall (1959).

40. Some scholars have made attempts to defend the opposite view. For example Benjamin Whorf claimed that the Hopi Indians of North America had a very different conception of time from that of Western cultures. Among other things, in his view, they do not objectify time since units of times are not aggregated in the plural. Later, Whorf’s ideas were disproved by scholars who demonstrated that Whorf’s knowledge of the Hopi language was deficient and that “Whorf’s claim about Hopi time conception being radically different from ours does...not hold” (Brown, 1991, pp. 30, quoting Malotki).

Some would jump onboard, put their money on the counter, and blurt out something in Chinese. I seemed to be invisible.

This Southeast European and Chinese behavior does not mean that we perceive time or conceive of it differently from Northwest Europeans, nor is it grounds for postulating an independent cultural dimension. To put it simply, in exclusionist societies, many people lack some types of empathy toward strangers and exclude them from the circle of those who are eligible for special considerateness. Britons, Dutchmen, and Scandinavians have orderly lines because they have been brought up to be more considerate toward unknown people, at least in some specific social situations.

## **Extroversion**

During my first contacts with Americans, I was impressed with the strong extroversion of that nation. I could not understand why during social gatherings everybody seemed to be so keen on meeting me, talking to me, and asking me all kinds of questions that I considered personal. Once, taking a boat trip with some university students, I sat alone on the lower deck, while almost everybody else was upstairs, chatting and laughing. An elderly American lady came up to me, smiled nicely, and asked me in a joking manner whether I was “antisocial.” At first, I was amused, but later I began to find American sociability a bit too strong for my cultural taste. In Bulgaria and elsewhere in Eastern Europe it is perfectly possible to spend a whole evening at a party, listening to music, dancing, and eating, without exchanging a word with anybody, especially with people that you do not know. But those inquisitive Americans, I thought, would clearly not leave me alone.

I am not the only Bulgarian to be baffled by the extroversion of Americans. This is what Bulgarian publicist Marko Semov wrote after his visit to the United States<sup>41</sup>:

Americans have the strange habit of saying “Good afternoon”, “Good evening”, “Good morning” or just “Hi” when they run across somebody. This is kind of all right when people know each other, but the thing is that even strangers exchange greetings. It is hard to believe even when you see it. You step into the hotel elevator and see a guy or a lady standing there, and before you know it they nod their heads and you hear that “Good morning” ... Oh, man, I think to myself, did we have coffee together this morning? Did we go boozing late last night? Is it because you owe me money that you are so considerate? In our country we not only do not greet anybody — be they acquaintances or strangers — but we do not normally miss a chance to cuss each other out.

---

41. Semov (1991, p. 89), my translation.

Bulgaria is a country of relative introverts even in comparison with nearby Slovenia, where children like to greet passing strangers, and passengers say “bye” to drivers as they get off intercity buses. In Bulgaria, people who live in large apartment buildings may not know and greet each other, while children most often do not say “good morning” even to adults who live next door. This Bulgarian reluctance to communicate with strangers, unless there is a special reason for doing so, was noted more than a century ago by Czech ethnographer and historian Konstantin Jirecek (Jirecek, 1997, p. 161) who lived in Bulgaria from 1879 to 1884, served as minister of education in the newly formed Bulgarian state, and toured the whole country. There is research showing that people in Western nations tend to show more interest in strangers compared to the members of exclusionist cultures, where contacts are most often limited to one’s in-group (Gudykunst et al., 1992).

“Extraversion” (usually spelled like this in the academic literature, rather than “extroversion”) is one of the five personality dimensions in the Big-Five or five-factor model, the most popular personality descriptor at present. Some of the main facets of extraversion are “gregariousness” and “altruism.”<sup>42</sup> Obviously, this dimension has something to do with sociability and a concern for other people. We can expect higher national extraversion scores to be associated with higher universalism.

Robert McCrae has published average Big-Five scores for 36 nations and ethnic groups.<sup>43</sup> The Westerners in that study topped the extraversion ranking. The lowest level of extraversion was recorded in East Asia. This means that higher extraversion is associated with higher universalism, whereas lower extraversion reflects higher exclusionism.

These correlations confirm the link between universalism and extroversion/extraversion.<sup>44</sup> Westerners feel that they need to make new acquaintances. They are more likely to be sociable and altruistic with respect to strangers and more prone to seeking new social contacts.

## Direct versus Oblique Communication

American sociologist Edward Hall introduced the notion of “high” and “low-context” cultures, which refers to a contrast between indirect and direct communication. After

---

42. McCrae and Terracciano (2005, Table 6.1).

43. McCrae (2002). The correlation between the national extraversion scores in that study and exclusionism is  $-.62^{**}$  ( $n = 31$ ). Robert McCrae and his associates have also published the results of another study — the Personality Profiles of Cultures Project — in which 79 scholars studied 12,156 individuals from 51 cultures (McCrae & Terracciano, 2005). The extraversion scores in that study are significantly and negatively correlated with industry ( $r = -.52^{**}$ ,  $n = 26$ ). They also yield a significant Spearman correlation with exclusionism ( $r = -.59^{**}$ ,  $n = 43$ ), although the Pearson correlation is weak and insignificant.

44. Hofstede and McCrae (2004) reported a positive correlation between extraversion and Hofstede’s individualism.

Hall's publication, the issue has been addressed by various other authors as well.<sup>45</sup> There is some agreement among the experts on this matter that communication in Western societies is more precise and less roundabout. Outside the West, a lot may have to be guessed from the context, but that is often difficult for the inexperienced listener.

One reason for this cultural contrast is the existing difference in exclusionism versus universalism. In exclusionist societies, people are more likely to communicate with individuals that they know than with strangers. If their language is imprecise and roundabout, that does not necessarily create a breakdown in communication because their interlocutors are familiar with the peculiarities of their expression and know how to decipher the hidden message. Besides, empathy is not a priority and even if the listener has not fully grasped the meaning, that is not a matter of great concern to the speaker.

The preference for clear language in Western communication stems, among other things, from the stronger tendency to feel empathy and show concern for strangers. Modern Western communicators make conscious or subconscious efforts to express themselves in such a way that their unfamiliar interlocutor or reader will have as little trouble understanding them as possible. But such concerns are not typical in exclusionist societies. Bulgarian media often feature headlines such as "Two kidnappers captured the police in Sofia." Unlike the other Slavic languages, Bulgarian does not have noun inflections and nothing in this sentence — except common sense — suggests that it should be interpreted as "The police in Sofia captured two kidnappers," which is its true meaning.

The following excerpt, with a literal rendering of the word order, is from a newspaper published in the Republic of Macedonia in the official language of that country. It is not an isolated example but a typical illustration of Balkan journalese<sup>46</sup>:

Knowledgeable sources say that the DUI's exaggerated tactical games — whose liaison for pacifying the remaining group in Kondovo, since the attempts of assembly deputy Rafiz Aliti failed, is UVK deputy director Fatmir Dehari — can generate the first problems for the new government.

Some decades ago, few linguists were interested in the link between culture and language structure, but there is now a growing interest in that issue (Everett, 2005; Givon, 1979; Kashima & Kashima, 1998, 2003; Newmeyer, 2002; Perkins, 1992; etc.). It appears that the universalist concern for greater empathy and clarity in communication has affected not only the style of the Germanic languages

---

45. Hall (1959). See also Hofstede (2001), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1999).

46. Djamtoska (December 1, 2004, p. 7), my translation.

and French, but also their grammars. They do not allow sentences without subjects.<sup>47</sup>

Subjects are not the only parts of speech that can be dropped in languages spoken in exclusionist societies. In Bulgarian and Russian it is perfectly normal to ask “You where?” (meaning “Where are you going,” “Where are you planning to go?” “Where would you like to go?” etc.), “You how?” (“How can you act like this?” “How could you think of this?” “How do you think you will manage to do this?” etc.), “He why?” “They when?” “You which?” etc. The meaning must be deduced from the context.

Similar examples can be provided from various languages spoken in collectivist societies. The following is from the Qur’an. The translator has followed the Arabic original, providing the missing parts of the message in parentheses (Qur’an, n.d., XXXV; 18):

And no burdened soul can bear another’s burden, and if one heavy laden crieth for (help with) his load, naught of it will be lifted even though he (unto whom he crieth) be of kin.

Communication in exclusionist cultures is not only less empathic and clear; it may fail to occur at all. At the entrance to the buildings of many Bulgarian institutions, you will see a plate that says “THIS IS NO INFORMATION DESK,” which means that the doorman hates to be asked any questions by strangers.

Doctor–patient communication can also be quite different in universalist and exclusionism cultures. In the former, detailed explanations of the patient’s situation are the norm. In the latter, communication is reduced to a minimum. The following

---

47. Some linguists, such as Chomsky (1981), tried to explain this phenomenon by means of a purely linguistic analysis: when a language has verb endings that mark the person (as in Italian, Spanish, or Russian), subjects can be dropped because it is clear who the agent is. When the system of personal endings is poor (as in French), or practically nonexistent (as in the continental Scandinavian languages and English), subjects cannot be dropped because it would not be clear who the agent is. However, this purely linguistic explanation has been challenged on the grounds that many Asian languages, such as Chinese, do not have any verbal endings and do not mark the subject, yet they allow sentences without subjects (Huang, 1984, 1989). The same situation is typical of many languages spoken in the Pacific Ocean and the Amazon region (Everett, 2005). On the contrary, modern German and Icelandic have differentiated verb endings for five of the six verb persons but allow sentences without subjects rarely and only with impersonal verbs. Decades of attempts to explain through purely linguistic analyses why languages have different rules concerning the use of subjects have not produced a convincing explanation and some linguists have admitted that one possible solution is simply to give up this search (Neeleman & Szendroi, 2005).

In my doctoral dissertation (Minkov, 2006), I demonstrate that the degree of freedom in the use of subjects across over 40 languages for which there are reliable linguistic studies is strongly correlated with the exclusionism score of the societies where they originally developed and are still spoken today. The reason that English, Dutch, and Danish require subjects is not simply their impoverished verb endings. It also has to do with the culture of the societies where they are spoken. That culture teaches greater empathy for strangers, translating into clear communication that does not leave the unfamiliar listener confused.

statement by a Japanese physician summarizes the typical situation in Japan in the recent past (Nippoda, 2002):

The doctors diagnose the patient's illness and prescribe medicine. The patient just listens to the doctor without questioning. There are more doctors who explain the details of the patient's illness recently, but the traditional dynamics of the relationship still remain. In the worst case, doctors sometimes do not even tell the patients about their diagnosis, but just prescribe medicine.

Exactly the same situation prevails in Eastern Europe. Even when doctors know that the patients are well educated, or are physicians themselves, they may not explain much. In some cases, which I have witnessed personally, even when a person dies in a hospital, the relatives may not be notified; they may be expected to find that out themselves after spending hours in the hospital, asking questions in all possible wards and departments, where officials keep saying that they have no idea where the patient is and how she is doing. Some Bulgarian doctors admit overtly that people in their profession do not like to give explanations. But that has nothing to do with the profession; this trait affects large sections of the whole society. One reason for that is that people in exclusionist cultures are less extroverted than in universalist ones and are not used to communicating much with out-group members.

## Life Satisfaction

Considering all these differences between universalist and exclusionist cultures, it is hardly a surprise to hear that people in universalist cultures report greater average satisfaction with their personal lives. We observed already that life satisfaction is associated with a culture of indulgence. But it also has a lot to do with universalism.<sup>48</sup> The fact that universalist cultures are richer may sound like a simple explanation of their higher life satisfaction. But that is not the whole story. A few years ago, I was contacted by a consulting company that was working with a large multinational corporation. The corporation was experiencing a serious problem: many of their East European managers refused to return to their home countries after their training in Western Europe. Most perplexingly, their new jobs in the West

---

48. The correlations between the exclusionism index and the latest available measures of average national life satisfaction in the WVS (item v22, data from 2005 to 2008, and item A171, latest data for each country from 1994 to 2004) are:

v22	-.60** (n = 49)
A171	-.60** (n = 75)

did not give them a higher purchasing power or greater social status. So what motivated them to stay and could anything be done so that they returned home? This is what the multinational corporation wanted to know, and the consultancy asked me whether I could find the answer.

The answer was simple but there was nothing that the multinational could do about it. Life satisfaction is not derived simply from what you can buy. If you live in a country with crummy hospitals, chaotic driving, pot-holed roads, bad public transportation, streets and parks with mangy street dogs and garbage, unreliable or nonexistent social services, disagreeable neighbors, water shortages, and rude, inefficient or corrupt state employees, it does not matter much that your income is comparable to that of your Western peers. You are likely to start thinking how to emigrate due West.

### **Exclusionism versus Universalism as a Cultural Dimension: Definition and Summary**

On the basis of all the evidence presented so far, exclusionism can be defined as a single bipolar cultural dimension in the following way:

Exclusionism is the cultural tendency to treat people on the basis of their group affiliation and reserve favors, privileges, and sacrifices for friends, relatives, or other groups that one identifies with, while excluding outsiders from the circle of those who deserve such privileged treatment. While members of exclusionist cultures often strive to achieve harmony and good relationships within their own group, they may be indifferent or even inconsiderate and rude toward members of other groups.

Universalism is the opposite cultural tendency: treating people primarily on the basis of who they are as individuals and disregarding their group affiliation.

Some of the main contrasts between the highly exclusionist and highly universalist societies are presented in [Table 6.2](#).

### **Origins of the Cultural Differences in Exclusionism versus Universalism**

Since strong individualism is mostly a Western phenomenon and the West has more material wealth, many authors, including Geert Hofstede, have stressed the link between the two, as well as a possible cause-and-effect relationship. The same can be said of exclusionism versus universalism. The former is typical of the poor world, and the latter is common in the rich countries. It is then normal to speculate that rich societies provide ample opportunities for the acquisition of individual skills for personal advancement; therefore, privileged support from an in-group of relatives and friends is not necessary. Even traditional nuclear families, consisting of husband, wife, and children, may disintegrate because they are not considered absolutely

Table 6.2: Main contrasts between highly exclusionist and highly universalist societies.

<b>Highly exclusionist societies</b>	<b>Highly universalist societies</b>
People are treated primarily on the basis of their group membership	People are treated primarily as individuals; group membership is far less important
Family and kin must be close-knit	Partial disintegration of family and kin is viewed as acceptable
In principle, strangers who are not visibly in need of help are treated with indifference or even neglect	The perceived distance between strangers and friends is short, and the two groups are often treated with similar considerateness
Racism, sexism, and other forms of group-based discrimination are common	Group-based discrimination is rare
Promises are not necessarily perceived as binding, especially by those who make them	Agreements are usually kept
Product quality is inconsistent and unpredictable	Product quality is consistent and predictable
Poor safety measures	Sophisticated and strictly enforced safety measures
A general lack of concern for the environment	Business interests may damage the environment, but the citizens typically have a strong environmental consciousness
Communication is meant to be clear to an inner circle of initiated interlocutors but allows ambiguity even in that case	Communication is meant to be clear to everybody and efforts are made to avoid ambiguity

essential for survival. But how do people develop a universalist attitude toward strangers?

Strong universalism seems to be a result of specific economic developments: large-scale retail trade and a service economy. Before the emergence of capitalism, people were hunter-gatherers, pastoralists, horticulturalists, and agriculturalists. They lived in relatively capsulated communities and had little interaction with out-groups. Such interaction existed only in merchant societies, such as those of ancient Greece and Carthage, and must have been quite limited, compared to the situation in modern commerce. People in antiquity, including traders, traveled very little by modern

standards and did not meet many strangers. Isolated social groups were the norm. Their members helped each other with their daily tasks because they realized that individual survival depended on the welfare of the group but saw no reason to be concerned about members of other tribes, clans, or villages.

For that reason, universalism did not exist anywhere before the end of the Middle Ages. The Icelandic sagas are clear testimony to the fact that medieval Scandinavians could not care less about the welfare of those who were not their close kinsmen. Strangers were treated with indifference at best or derision, hostility, and cruelty at worst. Some other indicators of exclusionism are the communication style and grammar of Old Norse that allowed even greater ambiguity and imprecision than the modern Slavic languages or Chinese. And nobody bothered to standardize the spelling, never mind that the readers would have trouble reading texts with messy orthographies.

The same situation prevailed in medieval English. Consider the following English law from the 8th century<sup>49</sup>:

XLVI. A child must be baptized within 30 nights [of its birth?]. If it is not, 30 shillings must be paid [by the father?]. If it dies without being baptized, he [the child's father?] must pay for that with everything that he owns.

Sentences without subjects were used in Scandinavian and German prose at least until the end of the 14th century. In English, around 1600, Shakespeare's Hamlet still drops subjects and asks "Didst perceive?"

Since the beginning of the 12th century, North European merchants engaged in international commerce. The German commercial association Hansa traded goods from the Baltic countries and Russia to England and Norway. After the great geographic discoveries at the end of the 15th century, commerce became a global affair in which the Dutch played the most important role. After the Industrial Revolution, Britain became the leading international force, and its commercial ships plied all oceans. Doing business across diverse cultures and with countless different individuals requires empathy, tolerance, and respect for their needs and tastes. Racism, xenophobia and other forms of group-based discrimination are counterproductive in large-scale international business. Northwest Europeans gradually realized this. By the 19th century, they started acquiring universalist values and attitudes and eventually abolished slavery.

This process is continuing today. Modern capitalism promotes the philosophy that the customer is king. The service industry that prevails in the most universalist societies relies heavily on empathy for all customers and a conviction that nearly all

---

49. Whitelock (1967, p. 52). Original Old English text: "XLVI. Cild binnan ðritegum nihta sie gefulwad. Gif hit swa ne sie, XXX scillinga gebete. Gif hit ðonne sie dead butan fulwihte, gebete he hit mid eallum ðam ðe he age."

their whims must be satisfied, that individual tastes should be encouraged rather than suppressed, that diversity should be seen as a competitive advantage and a marketing niche rather than a nuisance. This capitalist philosophy continues to breed universalism and stamp out exclusionism.

This process is plainly visible in my native Bulgaria as we speak. Store clerks and front-desk personnel in the service industry are becoming far more polite toward strangers than they used to be 20 years ago. These behaviors are gradually spreading across the whole population. Around 1990, the idea of yielding to a pedestrian at a street intersection without traffic lights was absolutely alien to all Bulgarian drivers. Nowadays, this considerate behavior is still not the norm but it is not unheard of either. Modern economic development and large-scale commerce and services gradually create a universalist society.

### **The Emergence of Universalism in Bulgaria**

Until the end of the 1990s, the practice of greeting customers was virtually unknown in Bulgarian stores. Then, the Austrian food retailer Billa set up its first hypermarket in Sofia. Since day 1, all customers were greeted with “Good morning” or “Good evening” at the checkout counters. Evidently, the Bulgarian clerks had received instructions from their Austrian managers.

For several years after that, no other retailer followed suit. But in 2006, I was unexpectedly greeted by a clerk at my local, Bulgarian-owned food supermarket. At first I thought that this was an isolated occurrence, but it soon became clear that the greeting had become a norm. The store managers were trying not to fall behind the competition.

By now, all large food stores in Sofia, as well as in other towns, have enforced the greeting rule. Amusingly, one of them — ProMarket — has been distributing leaflets to its customers in which the company explains its universalist orientation. A customer who is not greeted should report that to a manager and will receive a free bottle of wine. A customer who finds any product, on any shelf, that is past its best-before date, will immediately receive a fresh version of the same product free of charge.

When children grow up in an environment where they are constantly surrounded with such attention and considerateness by strangers, they will accept these attitudes and behaviors as normal. As adults, they will not need much special company training to be polite and empathetic toward people that they have never met before. Exclusionism will eventually yield to universalism.

## Chapter 7

# A Cultural Map of the World

The four dimensions that we discussed in this book are not the only way to approach and explain the world's cultural complexity. A four-dimensional cultural model is bound to be an instance of reductionism that misses various interesting cultural characteristics. Other dimensions, some of which have already been introduced in the academic literature, can provide additional insights that consumers of cross-cultural research might find interesting. It is usually Hofstede's dimensions that come to mind in such cases because they have a strong reputation and have achieved great international popularity, especially in cross-cultural management studies but also in other fields. Still, other models of national culture are also possible. The issue is not which of them is better in a general sense (a meaningless question) but which would be useful to students of culture for particular purposes. Some dimensions address some phenomena better than others but fail to explain other domains of culture. How many dimensions we need, and what they should reflect, is a question that cannot have a single answer.

I believe that the four dimensions of national culture that are presented in this book will prove useful to many because they address crucially important issues. Further, they partition the world into regions of shared cultural characteristics that are easy to remember because they more or less correspond to known geographic regions. This chapter is devoted to the topic of cultural geography: what clusters the world's cultures form and how distant they are from each other.

To draw a map, one needs a coordinate system with something like latitude and longitude. If we know how far north and east any given American city is, this information can be used to produce a map that will correctly reflect the distance between New York and Washington DC, or between Las Vegas and San Francisco. Similarly, it is possible to calculate distances between countries on the basis of their scores on cultural dimensions and make a map that reflect these distances. The four dimensions that we discussed in this book seem suitable for that purpose.

The relationships between the four dimensions are complex. Yet, they are reducible to two mega dimensions. Country scores on those two dimensions can be used to draw a cultural map of the world — at least for those countries that are

represented on all four dimensions.<sup>1</sup> Graph 7.1 shows a two-dimensional cultural map of the world built on the basis of the two mega dimensions. A three dimensional map would be even more reliable, but it cannot be represented on paper.

It is clear at first glance that cultural similarity tends to reflect geographic similarity. Economic development is also an important factor: Japan is culturally far closer to Germany and France than to Korea and China.

Another observation is that emigrants carry their culture with them and transmit it to the next generations. They also transmit that culture horizontally even if many newcomers no longer originate from the same country. This explains why the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand cluster so closely together. The United States is not very far from them either. Yet that country is equally close to Argentina. In terms of monumentalism (religiousness and national pride), the United States resembles the Latin American countries more than any Anglo nation.

There are various statistical tools that can be used to produce country clusters. As there is no one best method for clustering countries or other objects of study, it makes sense to draw the boundaries of the world's cultural regions in such a way that some recognizable patterns emerge. With this method, the clustering of the countries with extreme scores on some indices (those situated in the map's corners) is quite uncontroversial, but those in the center (Argentina, Turkey, Poland, and others) must be done along geographic and historical lines, which involves a degree of subjectivity.

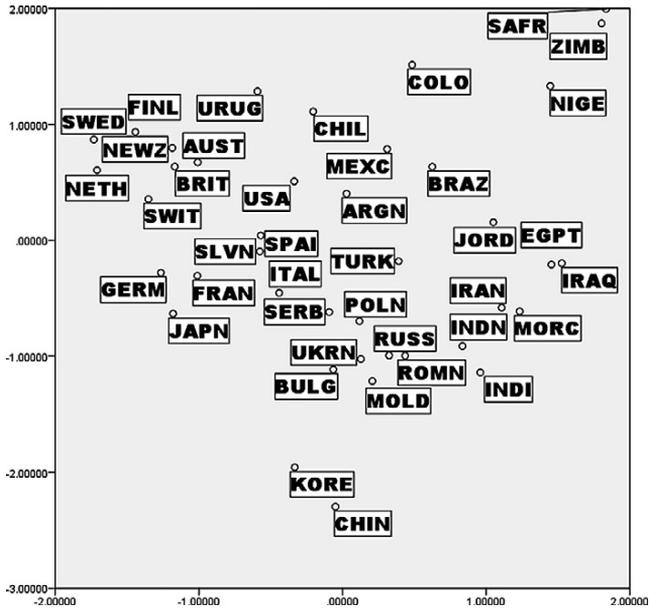
1. The correlations between the four dimensions discussed in this book are:

	Monumentalism	Hypometropia	Exclusionism
Industry	.06 ( <i>n</i> = 43)	.01 ( <i>n</i> = 40)	.67** ( <i>n</i> = 42)
Monumentalism		.42** ( <i>n</i> = 40)	.65** ( <i>n</i> = 42)
Hypometropia			.36** ( <i>n</i> = 71)

When the four dimensions are factor-analyzed together, they yield two factors with eigenvalues over 1.00, plus a third factor with an eigenvalue of only .59, which however explains 14.8 of the variance. Still, a two-dimensional map requires a two-dimensional solution. The factor loadings of the four dimensions on the two unrotated factors are:

	Factor 1	Factor 2
Exclusionism	.94	-.22
Monumentalism	.78	.40
Industry	.62	-.72
Hypometropia	.51	.66

Graph 7.1 is based on county's scores on these two unrotated factors. The horizontal axis stands for factor 1, whereas the vertical one is for factor 2. A map based on varimax rotated factors produces identical country clusters, yet differently arranged in the two-dimensional space. A multidimensional scaling solution also yields a very similar result.



Graph 7.1: A cultural map of the world. Note: The map is based on the four cultural dimensions discussed in this book, reduced to two mega dimensions so that they can be used as coordinates in a two-dimensional space. See the research notes chapter at the end of the book for expansions of all country name abbreviations.

## Region 1: Sub-Saharan Africa

The three sub-Saharan African countries that are represented on the map cluster separately from the rest of the world. The nations south of the Sahara desert share some characteristics that give them a clear cultural identity. They have the highest adolescent fertility rates and the highest incidence of HIV (reaching 30 percent of the population in some southern African countries), the earliest sexual initiation, the lowest educational achievement scores, and the shortest life spans in the world. They all have a lot of violence. Barring a few cases, the African countries are also the poorest. This combination is sufficient reason to expect some cultural exceptionalism in Africa.

Sub-Saharan Africa is the only large part of the world where draft animals were never domesticated locally, although some were introduced from Asia. For thousands of years, the region relied mainly on combinations of horticulture, pastoralism, and hunting-gathering, rather than intensive agriculture. Under these conditions, large cities and states with sophisticated administrative systems were impossible. Excluding Ethiopia, sub-Saharan Africa is also the only large region that did not develop an alphabet, either its own or a modification of a borrowed one.

Today, the sub-Saharan African countries bear the imprint of this economic, political, and historical legacy. They have highly hypometropic cultures, often characterized by a motivation to preserve the community rather than the life and welfare of a particular individual. Fast and intense reproduction is still important, and this may involve sexual networking, despite any potential danger that it might pose to the individuals involved in it. Murder rates are not reliably reported in most countries, but there is little doubt that the violent crime in almost all of them is dramatic. In many sub-Saharan countries, 30–60 people per 100,000 become homicide victims each year, versus one or two in most of West and Central Europe, East Asia, and the Arab world.

High exclusionism is the norm throughout Africa — a continent where tribalism is still strong and the treatment that one receives from outsiders can depend on the tribe that one comes from. With the exception of relatively wealthy Botswana and South Africa, corruption levels are some of the highest in the world, as are road death tolls, despite the fact that many people are too poor to own a car and cannot afford to drive as much as the citizens of a rich country. Annually, 30–50 people per 100,000 die on African roads, versus no more than 5 in the Scandinavian countries and Japan.

The only sub-Saharan African nations that have been studied in more than one WVS study are Nigeria, South Africa, and Ghana, although the Ghanaian data from the 1990s were later deleted from the association's website. Consequently, conclusions about some of the industry-related values and self-descriptions of sub-Saharan Africans need to be guarded. Nigeria and Ghana clearly gravitate toward indulgence. Although hard work for children is deemed essential, thrift is not and the percentages of people who say that leisure is very important to them reaches 50 percent in both countries — among the highest in the world. The same percentages of respondents in both nations state that they are very happy, which is close to a world record, shared with the northern Latin American countries. On these measures, South Africa gravitates in the same direction as Nigeria and Ghana, although it is a somewhat more moderate case.

The other sub-Saharan African countries, for which only single-study data are available, show considerable diversity and inconsistency: a low score on thrift does not necessarily mean a high importance of leisure or high happiness and vice versa. Situational factors, such as the carnage in Rwanda and the long-lasting economic disaster in Zimbabwe, probably distort the cultural picture in some sub-Saharan countries.

On the monumentalism dimension, the situation in sub-Saharan Africa is far less controversial. Religiousness has been studied not only by the WVS but also by the Pew Research Center and the results are remarkably consistent: Africans are some of the most religious people in the world, although some Arabs surpass them. Much of sub-Saharan Africa is also characterized by strong pride — national and parental. Suicide rates are not reported reliably, but the scant data suggest that they are low: below 15 per 100,000 inhabitants. Educational achievement is dismal and the lowest on the globe; this is the case also in relatively well-to-do South Africa. Poverty and government neglect are certainly crucial factors here but cultural factors such as monumentalism and hypometropia also appear to account for the enormous

educational gap between Africans and others. These cultural characteristics are also associated with the large in-country economic inequality found in African countries that have registered some economic growth.

## **Region 2: The Arab World and the Middle East**

This region can be subdivided into two. In [Graph 7.1](#), the Arab countries and Iran, cluster somewhat separately from Turkey. The Arab world has a long history of widespread nomadic desert pastoralism and intensive agriculture in the fertile regions bordering on rivers and seas. This combination is atypical of other parts of the world and may account for some of the salient features of Arab culture: low hypometropia, at least by the standards of developing nations, and very high monumentalism. Direct competition for women is practically impossible. HIV rates are very low and so are murder rates. Adolescent fertility is relatively low, at least by the standards of developing countries with poorly educated populations.

Arab monumentalism is the strongest in the world and comes together with the lowest suicide rates (approaching 0 in some Arab countries) and the lowest educational achievement, after sub-Saharan Africa, in modern subjects such as mathematics and science. On the contrary, there is a vivid interest in religious subjects, as evidenced by the fact that Islamic texts normally occupy central positions in Arab bookstores.

Being strongly monumentalist, Arab culture emphasizes obedience. Figures with authority must not only be obeyed but also venerated. Portraits of national leaders adorn all sorts of public places in the Arab world, despite the blatant conflict with the old Middle-Eastern religious principle that man shall have no idols and shall worship only God.

Many North African and Middle Eastern societies have strong social polarizations: high percentages of citizens have strong political opinions, clashing with those of other citizens who are also a high percentage. This does not bode well for the future of democracy in the Arab world. In fact, past experience shows that whenever an Arab country allowed some real political plurality, the result was a bloodbath, as in Lebanon, Algeria, and Iraq, or very serious clashes, as in the Palestine territory. At the present stage of its cultural development, Afghanistan also has a very infertile soil for democracy. Although that country has never been studied in any cross-cultural survey, its culture is most likely as monumentalist as that of the Arab countries. Its society places the same strong emphasis on obedience, while abhorring plurality.

The strong cultural, religious, and personal identity that most Arabs hold often remains intact when they immigrate to other countries. Quite a few adopt local customs and values but others view that as apostasy. Remaining one's self is an important goal for some Arabs regardless of the country where they live.

Industry is moderately high in the Arab world. Hard work is valued to some extent but thrift may yield to ostentatious spending for the purpose of status-seeking. Only 10–20 percent of the populations of the economically poor Arab countries state

that they are very happy. Saudi Arabia was studied only once by the WVS, yielding 44 percent of very happy people — an impressive figure by universal standards.

The Arab countries are highly exclusionist. Many people live with extended families with strong bonds among their members. Corruption is very common in the poor nations, much less in rich ones like Qatar. Road death tolls are the same as in sub-Saharan Africa — the highest in the world — suggesting a lack of empathy for out-group members who do not seem to be in some sort of trouble. Public places that are not maintained by the government or private companies are often littered — another indication of neglect for what does not belong to one's in-group. However, it is relatively easy to form close friendships with out-group members in an Arab society. One can also be accepted as an in-group member, especially after conversion to Islam. Followers of other faiths — especially Jews and Christians — have traditionally been treated with tolerance.

Similar to its position on a geographic map, Turkey is culturally in-between the Arab world and Eastern Europe. It is somewhat less religious than most Arab countries, yet definitely not as secular-minded as any East-European society.

### **Region 3: South Asia**

There are only two countries in this region on the map in [Graph 7.1](#): India and Indonesia. The available WVS data for Pakistan, Bangladesh, Vietnam, and the Philippines suggest that these countries gravitate toward the same cluster despite all the cultural differences between them.

Although the region is geographically diverse, it shares a long history of intensive agriculture and statehood, as well as a lack of fast economic development until the past few decades. As a result, a number of cultural traits are shared as well. Free competition for women is suppressed. Murder rates are relatively low in India and Indonesia, higher in the Philippines. Thrift is highly valued throughout the region whereas the importance of leisure is the lowest recorded anywhere. The percentages of very happy people vary between 10 and 20, which is low by international standards.

The region as a whole, and especially Southeast Asia, is characterized by very low tolerance of deviations from established norms and very harsh punishments of what other nations may view as minor offenses.

This region is moderately monumentalist. But there are important differences within the region and even within some countries. Data for Pakistan from 1997 and 2001 resemble those from the Arab world and there is little reason to assume that the situation has changed appreciably since then. Pakistan is one of the most religious countries in the world, with a strongly proud population that values tradition rather than cultural change. The 2002–2003 studies of the Pew Research Center across more than 40 countries on all continents ([Pew Research Center, 2002, 2003](#)) showed that Pakistanis had some of the most negative attitudes toward Western cultural artifacts, such as films and music. Southeast Asia is more moderate in this respect. Vietnam is

an interesting case, combining very low religiousness with strong national pride. Suicide rates range between moderate in India (about 20 per 100,000 inhabitants) to twice as high in Sri Lanka.

India deserves some special attention. A comparison of the different Indian states that were studied by the World Values Survey (WVS) in 2006 shows that those that border on Pakistan, and especially Gujarat and Rajasthan, have the most religious and tradition-oriented populations, whereas the Eastern and Southeastern states score considerably lower on measures of religiousness and tradition.

The region is strongly exclusionist, with chaotic driving and high road death tolls, somewhat below African levels, as well as rampant corruption. Like in Africa, policemen in Indonesia regularly extort money from drivers who have not violated any traffic rules and the extortion can happen in front of several witnesses, some of whom can be government employees. Cheating of tourists outside high-end establishments is a firmly established practice that takes place in countless forms.

#### **Region 4: Eastern Europe**

This region shares a long history of intensive agriculture and dictatorial governance: under the Russian tsars or the Turkish sultans. There appears to be a difference between its sub-regions, although it is not reflected in [Graph 7.1](#). The northern sub-region, which is the Eastern part of the former Soviet Union, has far higher murder rates and HIV incidence than the Balkans. In Russia, some 20 to 25 people per 100,000 get murdered annually, versus 3–4 in Bulgaria.

There is some uniformity across the whole region on other cultural measures. An obsessive desire to become quickly as rich as West Europeans, by whatever means it takes, looms large. Scores on the industry dimension are high, which means that, after all, most people choose legitimate and legal pathways toward enrichment. East Europeans have the lowest happiness and life satisfaction levels in the world, persisting despite the strong economic growth from 1998 to 2008. In the European part of the Soviet Union and in Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia, the percentages of very happy people are consistently about 10. Tolerance and respect for those who are different are very low.

The region — and especially the Western part of the former Soviet Union — boasts world records in another macabre statistics: suicide rates. Each year, 40–70 people per 100,000 inhabitants take their own lives in Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, and the Baltics, but also in Hungary and Slovenia. Consistent with this, monumentalism is low: East Europeans are unreligious and not very proud to be citizens of their countries. Parental pride is not important either. Humility is strongly encouraged at the expense of any demonstration of personal superiority. This trait has nothing to do with the legacy of the Communist rule as it is shared with all East Asian countries, including Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea. Educational achievement in mathematics and science is high, especially in the Baltics, Russia, Slovakia, and Hungary.

East Europeans are not strongly attached to an immutable identity. Outward identification with the West, expressed in terms of fashion or adoption of personal names, is widespread. In Bulgaria, many traditional personal names with no clear Western equivalents are nowadays viewed as a sign of backwardness and treated with derision. American holidays, especially Saint Valentine's Day, and Halloween, are increasingly gaining ground. About half of the graffiti, even in small towns, are in the Latin alphabet, not the Cyrillic. This is so even when the text is entirely in Bulgarian and reflects personal issues, such as "X is in love with Y."

The poor parts of Eastern Europe are fairly exclusionist. In-group favoritism is the norm, although it is slowly beginning to fade in large companies. Corruption is widespread. Western visitors describe East European driving practices as suicidal, although they are not as dangerous as those in developing Asia. Fake or dangerous products, manufactured without any concern for the consumers' health, were very common until recently and can still be found in many stores. Like in all other poor countries, safety measures are hardly ever enforced at many hazardous places, such as construction sites. If an accident happens, it is the victim's fault.

Slovenia, which is nearly as rich as a Western country, is culturally distinct from Eastern Europe. Its culture is more similar to those of its Western neighbors.

## **Region 5: East Asia**

Graph 7.1 shows a cluster of only two East Asian countries: China and Korea. If more data were available about Taiwan, it would certainly be placed nearby, whereas Singapore would gravitate toward Japan. Some 50–60 years ago, all of these countries were probably in one and the same cultural neighborhood but the fantastic economic development of Singapore and Japan has in many respects pushed their cultures toward those of the richest European nations.

All East Asian peoples have relied on wet rice cultivation for millennia. This extremely time and effort-consuming type of subsistence has not failed to impact traditional East Asian culture. Free competition for women and early sexual initiation are atypical. HIV rates are low. Violent crime is rare. East Asians, as well as Ashkenazi Jews, have the highest performance on IQ tests.

Industry is the highest in the world. Thrift is extremely important in words and in deeds. Instilling the value of hard work in children is considered essential, whereas leisure is unimportant. Chinese and Koreans are ready to work very long hours, although they do not necessarily enjoy themselves while doing that. Tolerance of deviations is extremely low. Happiness and life satisfaction are unimpressive, although they do not reach East European lows.

The East Asians countries, including Japan, have the lowest monumentalism levels in the world. Religion is felt as an unnecessary distraction from the more important goal: modernization and economic growth. Children are taught humility whereas demonstrations of pride and personal superiority are vigorously suppressed

if they ever occur. Adaptability to shifting circumstances and an ability to assume multiple roles and identities are key features of East Asian culture. There is a strong desire to identify with the West. Traditions are maintained only if they mean fun. These include festivals with dragons, samurai pageants, and tea rituals. Customs and institutions that inhibit the transition toward Western modernity are wiped out, sometimes by force. Examples are foot-binding in China and the samurai institution in Japan.

The East Asian flexumility comes with relatively high suicide rates, especially in Korea and Japan: 40–50 per 100,000 inhabitants annually. The Chinese rate is about 30 and rising.

East Asians consistently have the highest educational achievement in international comparisons, especially in mathematics. They maintain the same advantage when they emigrate to Western countries, where they are typically the most diligent students, surpassing the local populations in scholastic aptitude.

The developing parts of East Asia have strongly exclusionist cultures. Driving is chaotic and corruption is rampant. Fake or poorly produced Chinese goods, made without any considerateness for their consumers, are sold all over the world but especially in the poor countries. Western executives who work in China observe that no trick is considered too mean if it can help hurt the competition, while no contract will be respected as soon as one of the parties no longer needs its partner. As Chinese businesses develop at neck-breaking speed, there are indications that these behaviors are slowly being phased out and replaced with practices that Westerners are more familiar with.

## **Region 6: Western Europe and the Anglo World**

There is some heterogeneity in this region. The Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands are in the corner of the map because they are somewhat distinct from the rest of the group. The German and English speaking countries come close to them on practically all cultural measures but do not merge with them on most.

Northwestern Europe and the United States industrialized early and by now have predominantly service economies. The cultural legacy of agriculture is all but forgotten. These factors account for a peculiar culture that is not found in such a pronounced form anywhere else on earth.

Western Europe and the Anglo world allow relatively free competition for women but reproduction is suppressed and delayed. Prudence and the welfare of the individual are emphasized in sexual matters, which is what one can expect in societies where one can realistically hope to become an octogenarian. Murder rates and the incidence of HIV are low, except in Finland which has twice as many homicides per 100,000 inhabitants as the other Scandinavian countries. Adolescent fertility is relatively high in the English-speaking countries and parts of Scandinavia, at least by the standards of developed countries, and so are reported rape rates.

The most distinguishing feature of this region, particularly strong in Europe's northwestern parts, is its extreme universalism. Treating people on the basis of what group they belong to is considered a cardinal sin. Corruption, nepotism and racism are relatively rare, at least in comparison to the situation anywhere else in the world, with the exception of a few other very rich countries, such as Singapore and possibly Japan. There is an obsession with safety measures and consumer rights. Being different in a way that is one's own business is tolerated to an extent that people in many developing societies find pathological; think of the legalization of gay marriages in a number of European countries. Being different in a dangerous way is also treated with some lenience: serial killers and fathers who keep their daughters in the basement for decades to rape them on a regular basis are said to have an inalienable right to life, much to the dismay of some other nations.

The Northwest European cultures are among the most indulgent in the world. Hard work is not valued much, but creative and interesting work that can give one a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction is appreciated. Leisure and fun are important, thrift is not. Northwest Europeans know that they can rely on generous welfare systems when they cannot generate much personal income. This is one of the factors that kills people's incentive to save money. Happiness levels in Scandinavia and throughout the Anglo world are some of the highest in the world (40–50 percent say they are very happy), surpassed only by those of some northern Latin American countries and perhaps a few African ones. However, the German-speaking nations and Latin Europe are considerably less happy.

Monumentalism is low in Northern Europe, somewhat higher in Southwestern Europe and the Anglo world. Despite some myths, the Germanic Scandinavian countries do not have high suicide rates: less than 25 people per 100,000 inhabitants kill themselves in each of them annually. The highest suicide rates in Western Europe are in Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, and Switzerland, where 30–35 people per 100,000 take their own lives each year.

The United States and Japan are on the fringes of this region. American culture is different from that of most European societies not only in terms of the pop-culture artifacts that it swamps the world with, but also in terms of its relatively high religiousness and general pride. Among Western nations, the United States is a leader in hypometropia. This is partly accounted for by the exorbitant murder rates in poor Black neighborhoods. On the contrary, Hofstede's classic study is the only one in which the United States has the highest score on individualism or any strongly related dimension, such as universalism. In other studies, that country scores somewhat below Scandinavia on measures of that type. Notably, the United States has more corruption and higher road death tolls. Its values also show a slightly less advanced stage of in-group disintegration.

Japan is close to Germany and France on the cultural map and shares many cultural traits with them. Of note, people in these three rich countries do not feel very happy and healthy and are less convinced than Scandinavians and Americans, as well as Latin Americans, that they control their own lives. At the same time, Japan has retained some typical Asian characteristics: thrift is valued more than in any European or Anglo nation.

## **Region 7: Latin America**

This region shares a history of Amerindian civilizations and colonization by Spanish and Portuguese conquerors. There are basically two Latin Americas: northern and southern. The northern part has a high percentage of indigenous people whose ancestors were mainly horticulturalists and hunter-gatherers for thousands of years. Semi-intensive agriculture was practiced in a few places: some populations used artificial irrigation but not draft animals. The Southern Latin American countries — Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay — are populated mostly by descendants of Southwestern Europeans. Yet, these three nations also have some Amerindian admixtures.

Northern Latin America shares some world records with Africa. First, it has the highest murder rates in the world, fluctuating between 30 and 60 per 100,000 inhabitants in Colombia, Honduras, Venezuela, and El Salvador. High murder rates are also typical of countries in that region that do not have Amerindian populations but are populated by English- and French-speaking Africans: Jamaica and Haiti. In general, Southern Latin America is a more moderate case in terms of violent crime. The whole region also has the second highest HIV rates and adolescent fertility rates after sub-Saharan Africa.

The second Latin American record, partly shared with some African countries, is in happiness. About 50–60 percent of Colombians and Mexicans consistently report that they feel very happy and there is reason to believe that the same situation is typical of countries that have been studied less regularly: El Salvador, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela. In Southern Latin America, Brazil, and Peru, the confirmed percentage of very happy people is about 30. Unsurprisingly, most Latin Americans report that they are masters of their own lives — an indisputable fact that shocks some psychologists who believe that only Americans and West Europeans should feel that way because a perception of strong life control is supposedly associated with Western individualism. Latin Americans also attach a high importance to leisure and fun and a relatively low importance to thrift. There is relative tolerance of deviant behaviors, which also translates into soft legal punishments.

The region is characterized by strong pride and somewhat less strong religiousness. The richer countries, such as Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Uruguay, are less religious than the poorer ones. Educational achievement in mathematics and science is low in the few countries where it has been measured. Suicide rates range between 7 per 100,000 inhabitants in Venezuela and 20 in Chile.

The richer Latin American countries are moderately universalist, whereas the poor ones lean toward exclusionism, with close-knit in-groups, nepotism, corruption and high road death tolls.



## Chapter 8

# Conclusions and Final Remarks

This chapter presents a brief recapitulation of some main points raised previously in this book and the conclusions that they lead to. I believe that those who are interested in the subject of culture should give some thought to all these remarks.

1. Culture is a complex phenomenon that can be studied scientifically as a subject in its own right. Cultural differences across human populations cannot be described appropriately and understood satisfactorily without a sound scientific approach, involving modern statistical analyses. When such analyses are performed, the findings can be used to make valid predictions about societies all over the globe. Although there will inevitably be an error margin of varying magnitude in all predictions, those that are based on a good scientific study will generally prove true to a reasonable extent.
2. Culture is both stable and changeable. It can be quite steady in the absence of economic development. As a society gets richer, or switches from one type of economy to another, it inevitably experiences significant cultural change in many domains.
3. If all poor countries were developing fast, whereas all rich ones were stagnating, we could expect significant economic and cultural convergence in the foreseeable future. But the reality is different. In the past few decades, only some East Asian and some oil-rich Middle Eastern countries have caught up economically with the West and, as a consequence, their cultures — especially the East Asian ones — have shifted westwards in a number of ways. Barring these exceptional cases, there has not been much economic and cultural convergence across the world.
4. Even those countries that have caught up economically with the West have not achieved full cultural convergence with it. Differences have remained even in terms of many values and beliefs that appear to be strongly susceptible to the effect of wealth accumulation. For example, Japan is as rich as a Northwest European country but has a somewhat less universalist culture. In principle, cultural development falls behind economic development. Also, the former is not fully dependent on the latter. Neither the direction of the cultural shift nor the intensity of the change can be fully predicted solely on the basis of economic growth.
5. Although economic growth is not an absolute predictor of cultural change, it is a relatively safe assumption that as a country develops economically, its society will become more indulgent, less monumentalist, less hypometropic, and more universalist.

6. Important as economic development is as a determinant of culture, it is not the only force that shapes it. The type of subsistence that has prevailed in a particular society for hundreds or thousands of years is still a factor, especially in the developing world. Stark cultural differences are observed between equally poor societies because some of them used to be predominantly horticulturalist or pastoralist until recently, while others still bear the mark of intensive agriculture, practiced by large segments of their populations.
7. A country's culture is far harder to manage than its economy. Cultural traits cannot change by government decree. The Russian and East European experience shows that even massive political indoctrination, in the form of school sermons and media slogans, is unlikely to bring about a radically new culture over a relatively short time. People do not change their outlook dramatically as a response to decrees and speeches. Their values, beliefs, norms, and self-perceptions can change substantially only in a radically altered physical or economic environment, exerting an influence on their culture over a long period.
8. Some cultural traits change faster than others. Probably the most resilient cultural value known so far is religiousness. Although it is not completely immune to change, it is considerably more resistant to external influences than other values. This makes religiousness one of the most important subjects of study in large-scale cross-cultural analyses.
9. Because many important cultural differences are here to stay for a long time, we have to be prepared to deal with them in a functional manner. This involves preference for accommodation and compromise rather than strong direct confrontation. In the best possible scenario, a latent conflict between the carriers of two different cultures can be transformed into a win-win situation for both parties by creating a synergy between the two.
10. To avoid the almost natural reaction of dismissing the traits of a foreign culture as inferior, stupid, or even pathological, it is necessary to gain a profound knowledge of it. However, simply learning many superficial facts is not enough. One needs to delve much deeper into the foreign culture to understand the logic of what seems strange and unacceptable. That logic is most likely associated with a survival strategy, dictated by environmental and historical factors. Typically, that particular survival strategy is the best, if not the only one possible, in a particular environment during a given historical period. Various features of the cultures of Inuits, Tuaregs, and Yanomamos may seem strange and unacceptable to a European or a Japanese, but they probably ensure the best chances of survival for the respective community, if not for all of their individual members, in the Arctic, Sahara, and the Amazon.
11. Unfortunately, there is no one-size-fits-all magical recipe that works whenever a conflict starts simmering in a cross-cultural encounter. Individual differences can complicate any given situation, and some individuals are more flexible and open to foreign cultures than others. But there is also another important point to remember. Some cultural values seem nonnegotiable. Despite all the talk about tolerance and celebration of cultural diversity in the West, I do not see how the

Western view that women must be equal to men can be reconciled with the existing norms in some developing countries, particularly those of the Middle East. The only road to reconciliation of such diametrically opposed beliefs, values, and practices goes through slow cultural evolution that could eventually bring the two cultural camps closer together. This is likely to take several generations at best.

12. It is true that there is no such thing as a good or bad culture in a general sense, just as time is a meaningless concept in the absence of moving or changing objects whose positions or transformations can be used to measure it. But once some criterion and a historical period are chosen as a coordinate system, it is possible to evaluate the desirability of specific cultural features. Some are currently better than others in terms of fostering economic growth. But they are worse in a different coordinate system: the carriers of those cultures are less happy and less satisfied with their lives. If educational achievement is taken as a criterion, some cultures are more likely nowadays to promote success in modern education than others. But the same cultures have higher suicide rates. Ultimately, how good or bad a particular culture is is a matter of individual perception and judgment.



# Research Notes

## Abbreviations of Country Names Used in the Graphs

ALBN	Albania
ARGN	Argentina
ARMN	Armenia
AUST	Australia
AZER	Azerbaijan
BAHM	Bahamas
BAHR	Bahrain
BANG	Bangladesh
BARB	Barbados
BELG	Belgium
BELR	Belarus
BELZ	Belize
BOLV	Bolivia
BOSN	Bosnia
BOTS	Botswana
BRAZ	Brazil
BRIT	United Kingdom
BRUN	Brunei
BULG	Bulgaria
BURK	Burkina Faso
CANA	Canada
CHIL	Chile
CHIN	China
COLO	Colombia
COST	Costa Rica
CROA	Croatia
CYPR	Cyprus
CZEC	Czech Republic
DENM	Denmark
DOMN	Dominican Republic
ECUA	Ecuador

EGPT  
ESTN  
ETHI  
FIJI  
FINL  
FRAN  
GEOR  
GERM  
GHAN  
GREE  
GUAT  
GUYA  
HUNG  
ICEL  
INDI  
INDN  
IRAN  
IRAQ  
IREL  
ISRA  
ITAL  
IVOR  
JAMC  
JAPN  
JORD  
KAZK  
KENY  
KORE  
KUWA  
KYRG  
LATV  
LEBN  
LESO  
LITH  
LUXM  
MADG  
MALD  
MALI  
MALS  
MALT  
MAUS  
MEXC  
MOLD  
MONG  
MORC  
MYAN

Egypt  
Estonia  
Ethiopia  
Fiji  
Finland  
France  
Georgia  
Germany  
Ghana  
Greece  
Guatemala  
Guyana  
Hungary  
Iceland  
India  
Indonesia  
Iran  
Iraq  
Ireland  
Israel  
Italy  
Ivory Coast  
Jamaica  
Japan  
Jordan  
Kazakhstan  
Kenya  
Korea  
Kuwait  
Kyrgyzstan  
Latvia  
Lebanon  
Lesotho  
Lithuania  
Luxemburg  
Madagascar  
Maldives  
Mali  
Malaysia  
Malta  
Mauritius  
Mexico  
Moldova  
Mongolia  
Morocco  
Myanmar

NAMB	Namibia
NEPL	Nepal
NETH	Netherlands
NEWZ	New Zealand
NICR	Nicaragua
NIGE	Nigeria
NORW	Norway
OMAN	Oman
OSTR	Austria (Oesterreich)
PAKI	Pakistan
PANM	Panama
PAPU	Papua New Guinea
PARG	Paraguay
PERU	Peru
PHIL	Philippines
POLN	Poland
PORT	Portugal
QATR	Qatar
RMAC	Republic of Macedonia
ROMN	Romania
RUSS	Russia
RWAN	Rwanda
SALV	El Salvador
SAFR	South Africa
SARB	Saudi Arabia
SENE	Senegal
SERB	Serbia
SING	Singapore
SLVK	Slovakia
SLVN	Slovenia
SPAI	Spain
SRIL	Sri Lanka
SUDN	Sudan
SURI	Surinam
SWAZ	Swaziland
SWED	Sweden
SWIT	Switzerland
SYRI	Syria
TAIW	Taiwan
TAJI	Tajikistan
TANZ	Tanzania
THAI	Thailand
TRIN	Trinidad and Tobago
TUNS	Tunisia
TURK	Turkey
TRKM	Turkmenistan

UAE	United Arab Emirates
UGAN	Uganda
UKRN	Ukraine
URUG	Uruguay
USA	United States
UZBK	Uzbekistan
VENZ	Venezuela
VIET	Vietnam
YEMN	Yemen
ZAMB	Zambia
ZIMB	Zimbabwe

### **Exclusionism Index**

An exclusionism factor was obtained in the factor analysis described under the Hypometropia index section in this chapter. However, that method produced scores for only 57 countries. In view of the extreme popularity of the collectivism versus individualism dimension, which is a variant of exclusionism versus universalism, I selected the three variables which:

- had loadings exceeding .80 on factor 1 (exclusionism);
- captured the conceptual essence of the exclusionism dimension; and
- did not load highly on factor 2 (hypometropia).

Those three variables are:

- The transparency versus corruption perception index for 2006 ([Transparency International, 2006](#)).
- Road death tolls — number of people per 100,000 inhabitants who die annually in road accidents, either as drivers or as pedestrians, latest data from the [World Health Organization \(2009a, 2009b\)](#).
- Percentages of World Values Survey respondents who live with their parents, average scores from the 2005–2008 study (item v240) and the latest data from 1994 to 2004 (item X026).

Factor-analyzed together, these three variables yielded a single factor, with an eigenvalue of 2.20, explaining 73.33 percent of the variance. The three items had the following loadings:

Transparency	– .91
Percentage living with their parents	.84
Road death tolls	.82

The factor scores were plotted on a scale from 0 to 1000. They correlate with the exclusionism factor scores described in the Hypometropia index section at .98\*\* ( $n = 57$ ), which means that there is practically no difference between the two measures.

### **GDP per Person (Raw)**

Data from the [UN Statistics Division \(2009\)](#). GDP per person growth was calculated by dividing a later figure by an earlier one. For example, dividing GDP per person in 2007 by GDP per person in 1990 provides and estimates of GDP per person increase from 1990 to 2007.

### **GNI per Person at Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)**

Data from the [World Bank Group \(2009\)](#). GNI per person at PPP growth was calculated by dividing a later figure by an earlier one. For example dividing GNI per person at PPP in 2008 by GNI per person at PPP in 1998 provides an estimate of GNI per person increase from 1998 to 2008.

### **Hypometropia Index**

The index for this dimension is based on a factor analysis of the following items:

- Adolescent fertility rates ([UN Statistics Division, 2008](#))
- HIV rates, high estimates for all countries ([World Health Organization, 2010](#))
- Murder index (see the section in this chapter)
- The transparency versus corruption perception index for 2006 ([Transparency International, 2006](#))
- Road death tolls — number of people per 100,000 inhabitants who die annually in road accidents, either as drivers or as pedestrians, latest data from the [World Health Organization \(2009a\)](#)
- Percentages of World Values Survey respondents who live with their parents, average scores from the 2005–2008 wave (item v240) and the latest data from 1994–2004 (item X026)
- Average national IQs ([Lynn & Vanhanen, 2002](#)); dropping all countries for which no study-based scores are available

The factor analysis produced two factors with eigenvalues over 1.00. The first factor had an eigenvalue of 4.27 and explained 61.05 percent of the variance. The second factor had an eigenvalue of 1.18 and explained 16.81 percent of the

variance. A varimax rotation showed that some items loaded highly on both factors. This means that a solution with strictly orthogonal factors would amount to an artificial separation of two entities that share some communalities. In this situation, it may be preferable to adopt a solution with weakly correlated factors. Another strength of a model with oblique factors is that their item loadings are higher than those after varimax rotation, which creates a sharper image. Thus, a promax rotation with kappa 2 was performed, resulting in the following structure matrix (factor loadings or Pearson's correlations between the items and the factors):

	<b>Factor 1</b>	<b>Factor 2</b>
Transparency	– .90	– .40
Road death tolls	.85	.49
Percentage living with parents	.85	.17
IQ	– .79	– .74
Adolescent fertility	.62	.77
Murder	.37	.87
HIV	.20	.87

The factor analysis produced scores for 57 countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, the United States, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Across the 57 countries in the matrix, the two factors correlated at .35.

The first factor served as a basis for the calculation of the exclusionism index (see earlier discussion). The hypometropia index is based on the second factor. In order to expand the index with scores for countries with missing values, the factor 2 scores were used as a dependent variable in linear regression. The independent variables were the same items with two exceptions:

- The percentage living with parents item was dropped because of its many missing values and its low loading on factor 2.
- The IQ item was dropped for the same reason and replaced with the Math achievement index (see the later discussion) with which it correlates at .94\*\*.

The regression model had a highly reliable  $R^2$  value of .97. It provided predicted scores for 23 countries. The predicted scores were added to the index and all scores were plotted on a scale from 0 to 1000.

The final hypometropia index yields the following correlations with the variables that define it:

Murder index	.85** ( $n = 80$ )
HIV rates	.85** ( $n = 80$ )
Adolescent fertility	.75** ( $n = 80$ )
IQ	-.72** ( $n = 60$ )

The factor structure described here is somewhat reminiscent of the findings by [Rushton and Templar \(2009\)](#). They factor-analyzed 10 societal variables of mixed nature and proposed a one-factor solution and a two-factor solution. In the two-factor solution, the second factor was defined by the following items (loadings indicated in parentheses): rape (.98), HIV/AIDS (.72), serious assault (.63), homicide (.58), IQ (-.30), skin color (.28), life expectancy (-.26), birth rate (-.07), national wealth (.04), and infant mortality (.00). However, many of the variables in their analysis (rape rates, serious assault, and skin color) are of dubious reliability. Also, their murder index is based on official statistics only, which are not fully reliable in some nations.

## Industry and Monumentalism Indices

The indices for the industry and monumentalism dimensions were obtained by means of a factor analysis of six items, all of which occur in the latest World Values Survey study (2005–2008) and once again in the studies between 1994 and 2004. The six items were chosen on the basis of [Dornbusch et al.'s \(2004\)](#) explanation of the East Asian economic success and were expected to be associated with hard work, saving, and educational achievement. The selection of religiousness and pride items as potential predictors of educational achievement was based on [Minkov \(2008\)](#).

The country scores for each item that was used in the factor analysis were obtained using the following formula:

(country score from the 2005–2008 period + latest country score from the 1994–2004 period): 2

The items in the factor analysis were:

- Percentages of respondents who mention “hard work” as an important trait for children (item A030 in 1994–2004 and v13 in 2005–2008).
- Percentages of respondents who mention “thrift” as an important trait for children (item A038 in 1994–2004 and v17 in 2005–2008).
- Percentages of respondents who state that leisure is very important to them (item A003 in 1994–2004 and v6 in 2005–2008).
- Percentages of respondents who mention “religious faith” as an important trait for children (item A040 in 1994–2004 and v19 in 2005–2008).

- Percentages of respondents who are very proud to be citizens of their countries (item G006 in 1994–2004 and v209 in 2005–2008).
- Percentages of respondents who agree strongly that one of the main goals in their lives is to make their parents proud (item D054 in 1994–2004 and v64 in 2005–2008).

The factor analysis yielded two factors. The first factor (monumentalism) had an eigenvalue of 2.50, explaining 41.80 percent of the variance. The second factor (industry) had an eigenvalue of 2.11, explaining 35.25 percent of the variance. The factor loadings after varimax rotation were as follows:

	<b>Factor 1 (monumenatalism)</b>	<b>Factor 2 (industry)</b>
Parental pride	<b>.92</b>	.22
Faith	<b>.90</b>	.01
National pride	<b>.79</b>	–.32
Leisure	–.10	– <b>.87</b>
Hard work	.14	<b>.85</b>
Thrift	– <b>.42</b>	– <b>.72</b>

The fact that the thrift item loads significantly on both factors, albeit more on factor 2, justifies the selection of factor analysis as a tool for the extraction of these two dimensions. Thrift is associated with both dimensions and the variance in that variable is accounted for by both factors, albeit to different degrees.

The factor analysis produced scores for 33 countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Egypt, Finland, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Jordan, South Korea, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, Ukraine, the United States, and Vietnam.

Additional scores were obtained by means of linear regression for another seven countries: Colombia, France, Georgia, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Uruguay. The dependent variables were five of the items in the factor analysis, dropping the parental pride item, which had missing values. The  $R^2$  values for both regression models were highly reliable: .97 for monumentalism and .99 for industry.

Scores for Iraq were obtained by means of linear regression, dropping the hard work item, on which Iraq is not represented, and using the other five items as dependent variables.

Adding further predicted scores would mean using only data from 1994 to 2004 or, even less acceptably, only from 2005 to 2008. Nevertheless, because sub-Saharan Africa was severely underrepresented, it seemed reasonable to accept the danger of suboptimal statistical reliability and add predicted scores for two more countries — Nigeria and Zimbabwe — on the basis of their latest scores in 1994–2004. I chose

those two countries because they were studied independently by the [Chinese Culture Connection \(1987\)](#) and the results seemed meaningful. On the contrary, Tanzania was not a good choice because of the various problems associated with that country in several studies.<sup>1</sup>

After the addition of all predicted scores, the two indices (43 countries each) yielded the following correlations with the items that define them:

	Monumenatalism	Industry
Parental pride	<b>.89**</b>	.36
Faith	<b>.88**</b>	.30
National pride	<b>.84**</b>	– .14
Leisure	– .03	– <b>.88**</b>
Hard work	.04	<b>.85**</b>
Thrift	– <b>.50**</b>	<b>.64**</b>

When hard work, thrift and leisure are factor-analyzed separately, thrift has a higher loading on the single factor. Its exact value depends on the country sample but it usually exceeds .70. Thrift and hard work are not significantly correlated in the 2005–2008 studies of the World Values Survey but the average scores for the two items from 1994–2004 and 2005–2008 correlate at  $.45^{**}$  ( $n = 43$ ). The average scores for thrift and leisure correlate at  $-.45^{**}$  ( $n = 44$ ). The average scores for hard work and leisure correlate at  $-.62^{**}$  ( $n = 43$ ).

Both dimension indices were plotted on a scale from 0 (lowest score) to 1000 (highest score) as presented in Tables 3.1 and 4.1.

## Math Achievement Index

The data are from [Mullis et al. \(2000\)](#) and [Mullis et al. \(2005, 2007\)](#). The index stands for average national achievement in mathematics in the 8th grade after averaging the

1. Tanzania presented serious problems in a study by [Schimmack et al. \(2002\)](#), where it was a strong outlier and dropped from the study, in another study by [Schmitt and Allik \(2005\)](#), where the Tanzanian respondents produced puzzling item correlations, etc. Some other African countries have also created difficulties in some paper-and-pencil studies. For instance Burkina Faso is represented in the 2005–2008 wave of the World Values Survey. Although life satisfaction and life control are positively correlated across individuals in other countries, they are negatively (albeit insignificantly) correlated across Burkina Faso respondents. This brings up a serious question: how reliable are paper-and-pencil studies in Africa? [Schwartz et al. \(2001\)](#) provide a partial answer to this question: they have found that the answer depends on the measurement instrument. Some instruments generate bizarre results in Africa while others work better.

national scores in 1999, 2003, and 2007. The math achievement index correlates with each of these three sets of scores at .99\*\*. The index is provided below:

---

Singapore	601
South Korea	591
Taiwan	589
Hong Kong	580
Japan	573
Belgium	548
The Netherlands	538
Canada, Estonia	531
Hungary	526
Slovakia	521
Finland	520
Russia	515
Czech R.	512
Australia, Slovenia	508
Latvia	507
United States	505
Malaysia	500
Sweden	499
Lithuania	498
New Zealand	493
Malta	488
Slovenia, Spain	487
Armenia	486
Bulgaria	484
Serbia	482
Italy	481
Israel	475
Romania	469
Cyprus	467
Moldova, Norway	465
Ukraine	462
United Arab Emirates	461
Bosnia	456
Thailand	454
Lebanon, R. Macedonia	441
Turkey	431
Jordan, Tunisia	426
Iran	412
Georgia	410
Indonesia	404
Bahrain	400

Egypt	399
Syria	395
Chile	390
Algeria	389
Colombia	380
Morocco	368
Palestine	367
Botswana	365
Philippines	362
Kuwait	354
El Salvador	340
Saudi Arabia	331
Qatar	307
Ghana	293
South Africa	261

---

## Murder Index

The murder index is a national index calculated on the basis of data provided to the United Nations and published by the [UN Office on Drugs and Crime \(2010\)](#): number of murders per 100,000 inhabitants annually, excluding warfare and political violence, such as terrorism. The data are for various years in the 2003–2008 period. The observed fluctuations in the reported murder rates in one and the same country are usually small.

The data come from two types of sources: police records and public health organizations whose records are endorsed by the World Health Organization. In many countries, the two types of sources provide similar data but in some — especially in Africa — the differences are drastic. African police records typically show much lower murder rates than the public health organizations.

My guiding principle was to adopt the highest figures reported for any country by any source. My assumption is that if the public health organizations report higher figures, this is so because police departments (as in Africa) are either negligent or follow a political agenda of underreporting crime. If however police records provide slightly higher figures, as in the case of some Latin American countries, they are trustworthy because governments have no interest in overreporting serious crime.

For some countries whose records show unusual fluctuations across the 2003–2008 period, a median rate was adopted for the murder index. The index is provided below. In order to avoid decimals, it was multiplied by 10. Thus, the data represent annual number of murders per 1 million people.

---

South Africa	680
El Salvador	646
Honduras	609
Colombia	525

Ivory Coast	508
Jamaica	499
Venezuela	475
Guatemala	452
Lesotho	441
Angola	386
Burundi	374
Sierra Leone	372
Congo (Dem.)	350
Belize, Zimbabwe	343
Brazil	331
Guyana	294
Central Africa	289
Ecuador	284
Rwanda	273
Sudan	272
Tanzania	258
Uganda	254
Dominican Republic	252
Russia	249
Benin	228
Zambia	225
Bahamas	224
Haiti	218
Botswana	215
Swaziland	211
Kenya	207
Philippines	208
Ethiopia, Niger	205
Puerto Rico	204
Paraguay	203
Mozambique	200
Congo (Rep.), Trinidad	199
Chad	192
Equatorial Guinea	191
Nicaragua	188
Cambodia	186
Burkina Faso	184
Namibia	179
Nigeria	178
Mali	176
Malawi	175
Barbados, Liberia	174
Guinea	169
Gabon	162

Cameroon, Eritrea	161
Kazakstan	160
Myanmar	156
Mauritania, Papua New Guinea	151
Senegal	149
Gambia, Togo	143
Mongolia	140
Panama	138
Bermuda, Suriname	137
Nepal	136
Chile	125
Madagascar, Mexico	124
Seychelles	121
Ghana	119
Cape Verde	113
Ukraine	111
Estonia	109
Lithuania	108
Latvia	106
Dominica	103
Thailand	100
Belarus	99
Algeria	96
Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia	94
Indonesia	93
Turkmenistan	88
Moldova	86
Antigua	85
Costa Rica	80
Bangladesh	78
Georgia	76
Argentina, Iraq	73
Sri Lanka	71
Jordan, Pakistan	68
Cuba	65
Uruguay	61
United States	60
Peru	56
India	55
Albania	54
Laos, R. Macedonia	52
Israel	47
Yemen	45
Bhutan, Turkey	43
Serbia	41

Bosnia, Romania	39
Vietnam	38
Montenegro, Uzbekistan	37
Afghanistan, Djibuti	34
Bulgaria, Saudi Arabia, Somalia	32
Fiji	31
Syria	30
Bolivia, Libya, Tadjikistan	29
Finland	28
Mauritius, Slovakia	27
Azerbaijan, Belgium	26
Armenia, Iran, Lebanon	25
Czech Republic, Hungary	23
China, South Korea	22
Australia, Ireland, Oman	20
Croatia, Cyprus, Slovenia	19
Canada, Portugal	18
Maldives, Malta, Poland, Tunisia, United Kingdom	17
France	16
Denmark, Luxembourg, New Zealand	15
Brunei, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Spain	14
Andorra, Italy, Singapore	13
Egypt, Sweden, United Arab Emirates	12
Bahrain, Greece, Morocco, Norway	11
Germany, Iceland, Qatar, Switzerland	10
Austria	8
Hong Kong	7
Japan	5

---

## Rape Index

The rape index is based on data mostly from the [UN Office on Drugs and Crime \(2010\)](#), expanded with data from the [UN Office on Drugs and Crime \(2004\)](#). The data from the first source are closest to the median rates reported by national police departments for 2003–2008. The data from the second source are the latest from the 1998–2000 period.

## Rich Countries

Rich countries are defined as those which in 1998 had a raw GDP per person exceeding 10,000 USD: Andorra, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Brunei, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Iceland, Ireland,

Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea (South), Kuwait, Luxembourg, Macao, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Qatar, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

## **Statistical Significance**

Throughout this book, \*\* denotes a correlation that is significant at the 0.01 level, \* denotes a correlation that is significant at the 0.05 level.

## **World Values Survey (WVS)**

This is a longitudinal survey of national values, beliefs, norms, and perceptions, covering more than 90 nations on all continents. It is coordinated by the US political scientist Ronald Inglehart. The data are freely available on-line in the project's official site: <http://worldvaluessurvey.org>. I collected most of the data from a version of the site that I refer to as *World Values Survey (2006)*. Subsequently, that version has been reorganized and expanded.

The surveys were conducted from 1981 to 2008. The WVS web site separates the surveys into “waves” but the time boundaries between the waves are arbitrary. Measures of one and the same item from the 1994–2004 period and in the 2005–2008 wave typically correlate at about .80. This is a strong correlation, meaning that between 1994 and 2008 there has been relatively little change in world rankings on WVS items. Consequently, the dimensions that these items define are quite stable.



## References

- Abraham, L. (2003). Risk behaviour and misperceptions among low-income college students of Mumbai. In: S. Bott, S. Jejeebhoy, I. Shah & C. Puri (Eds), *Towards adulthood: Exploring the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents in South Asia* (pp. 73–77). World Health Organization Available at [http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/towards\\_adulthood/9.pdf](http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/towards_adulthood/9.pdf). Retrieved on October 15, 2007.
- Agnew, R. (1992). Foundation for a general strain theory. *Criminology*, 30(1), 47–87.
- Agnew, R. (1999). A general strain theory of community differences in crime rates. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 36(2), 123–155.
- Agnew, R., & White, H. (1992). An empirical test of general strain theory. *Criminology*, 30(4), 475–499.
- Agyei, W. K., Mukiza-Gapere, J., & Epema, E. J. (1994). Sexual behaviour, reproductive health and contraceptive use among adolescents and young adults in Mbale District, Uganda. *The Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, 97(4), 219–227.
- Ajayi, A. A., Marangu, L. T., Miller, J., & Paxman, J. M. (1991). Adolescent sexuality and fertility in Kenya: A survey of knowledge, perceptions, and practices. *Studies in Family Planning*, 22(4), 205–216.
- Albores-Gallo, L., Fernandez-Guasti, A., Hernandez-Guzman, L., & List-Hilton, C. (2009). 2D:4D finger ratios and language development. *Revista de Neurologia*, 48(11), 577–581.
- Ali Mohamed, F. (1992). Les campagnes cyreneennes. *Les dossiers d'archeologie*, 167, 50–53.
- Allen, R. (2000). *An introduction to Arabic literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Allik, J., & McCrae, R. R. (2004). Towards a geography of personality traits: Patterns of profiles across 36 cultures. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 35(1), 13–28.
- Al-Qaradawi, Y. (2002). *The lawful and prohibited in Islam*. Witness-Pioneer. Available at [http://www.witness-pioneer.org/vil/Books/Q\\_LP/](http://www.witness-pioneer.org/vil/Books/Q_LP/). Retrieved on October 29, 2006.
- Alvazzi del Frate, A., & van Kesteren, J. (2004). *Criminal victimization in urban Europe: Key findings of the 2000 international crime victim surveys* (Available at <http://www.unicri.it>. Retrieved on January 8, 2007). United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.
- American Anthropological Association. (1998). *American Anthropological Association statement on "Race"*. Available at <http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/racepp.htm>. Retrieved on August 5, 2006.
- Amnesty International. (2005). *Women, violence and health*. Available at <http://www.amnesty.org>. Retrieved on June 18, 2010.
- Amnesty International. (2009). *Abolitionist and retentionist countries*. Available at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/death-penalty/abolitionist-and-retentionist-countries>. Retrieved on April 1, 2010.
- Amuyunzu-Nyamongo, M., et al. (1999). Barriers to behaviour change as a response to STD including HIV/AIDS: The East African experience. In: J. C. Caldwell, et al. (Eds), *Resistances to behavioural change to reduce HIV/AIDS infection in predominantly heterosexual epidemics in Third World countries* (pp. 1–11). Canberra: Australian National University.
- Aplasca, M. R., et al. (1995). Results of a model AIDS prevention program for high school students in the Philippines. *AIDS*, 1(9 (Suppl)), 7–13.

- Arrindell, W. A. (1998). Femininity and subjective well-being. In: G. Hofstede (Ed.), *Masculinity and femininity: The taboo dimension of national cultures* (pp. 44–52). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Arvey, R., et al. (1994). Mainstream science on intelligence. *Wall Street Journal*, December 13, p. A18.
- Ashkanasy, N. M., Gupta, V., Mayfield, M. S., & Trevor-Roberts, E. (2004). Future orientation. In: R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies* (pp. 282–342). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Avison, W. R., & Loring, P. L. (1986). Population diversity and cross-national homicide: The effects of inequality and heterogeneity. *Criminology*, 24(4), 733–749.
- Awusabo-Asare, K., Abane, A. M., Badasu, D. M., & Anarfi, J. (1999). “All die be die”: Obstacles to change in the face of HIV infection in Ghana. In: J. C. Caldwell, et al. (Eds), *Resistances to behavioural change to reduce HIV/AIDS infection predominantly heterosexual epidemics in Third World countries* (pp. 125–132). Canberra: Australian National University.
- Bailey, A. A., & Hurd, P. L. (2005). Finger length ratio (2D:4D) correlates with physical aggression in men but not in women. *Biological Psychology*, 68(3), 215–222.
- Bang, A. K., et al. (2005). A study of finger lengths, semen quality and sex hormones in 360 young men from the general Danish population. *Human Reproduction*, 20(11), 3109–3113.
- Barber, N. (2006). Why is violent crime so common in the Americas? *Aggressive Behavior*, 32, 442–450.
- Barber, N. (2007). Evolutionary explanations for societal differences and historical change in violent crime and single parenthood. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 41(2), 123–148.
- Barber, N. (2008). Explaining cross-national differences in polygyny intensity: Resource-defense, sex ratio, and infectious diseases. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 42(2), 103–117.
- Barber, N. (2009). From steroids to nation states: An integrated evolutionary approach to violent crime. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 14(5), 415–422.
- Baron, R., & Byrne, D. (1991). *Social psychology*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Bastos-Rodriguez, L., Pimenta, J. R., & Pena, S. D. J. (2006). The genetic structure of human populations studied through short insertion-deletion polymorphisms. *Annals of Human Genetics*, 70, 658–665.
- Batty, D. G., Deary, I. J., Tengstrom, A., & Rasmussen, F. (2008). IQ in early adulthood and later risk of death by homicide: Cohort study of 1 million men. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 193, 461–465.
- Batzler, M. A., et al. (1996). Genetic variation of recent Alu insertions in human populations. *Journal of Molecular Evolution*, 42(1), 22–29.
- Beach, H. (1999). Tips on tipping. *Time Asia*. November, 1999. Internet publication. Available at [www.time.com/time/asia/money/1999/three/tipping.html](http://www.time.com/time/asia/money/1999/three/tipping.html). Retrieved on March 10, 2005.
- Bembenutty, H. (2002). Self-regulation of learning and academic delay of gratification: Individual differences among college students. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA, April 1–5, 2002. Internet publication. Available at [http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content\\_storage\\_01/0000000b/80/27/bd/d6.pdf](http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/27/bd/d6.pdf). Retrieved on November 20, 2006.
- Bempechat, J., Graham, S. E., & Jimenez, N. V. (1999). The socialization of achievement in poor and minority students. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 30(2), 139–158.
- Bertolote, J. M., & Fleischmann, A. (2002). A global perspective in the epidemiology of suicide. *Suicidologi*, 7(2), 6–8.
- Bhattacharyya, S. (2004). Deep determinants of economic growth. *Applied Economic Letters*, 11, 587–590.

- Blanchflower, D. G., & Oswald, A. J. (2008). Hypertension and happiness across nations. *Journal of Health Economics*, 27(2), 218–233.
- Bond, M. H. (2002). Reclaiming the individual from Hofstede's ecological analysis – A 20-year odyssey: Comment on Oyserman et al. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(1), 73–77.
- Bond, M. H., et al. (2004). Culture-level dimensions of social axioms and their correlates across 41 cultures. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 35(5), 548–570.
- Boring, E. G. (1923). Intelligence as the tests test it. *New Republic*, June, pp. 35–37.
- Boster, J. S., & Maltseva, K. (2006). A crystal seen from each of its vertices: European views of European national characters. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 40(1), 47–64.
- Bosworth, B. (2006). *United States savings in a global context*. Testimony of B. Bosworth before the Committee on Finance, US Senate, April 6, 2006. US Senate. Internet publication. Available at <http://www.senate.gov/~finance/hearings/testimony/2005test/040606abbtest.pdf>. Retrieved on January 8, 2007.
- Brahmajala sutta*. (2003). Nibbana.com. Internet publication. Available at <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/theravada/brahmal.htm>. Retrieved on November 5, 2006 (original work composed 400–200 BC, recorded about 100 BC).
- Braithwaite, J., & Braithwaite, V. (1980). The effect of income inequality and social democracy on homicide: A cross-national comparison. *British Journal of Criminology*, 20(1), 45–53.
- Brown, D. E. (1991). *Human universals*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Buga, G. A., Amoko, D. H., & Ncayiyana, D. J. (1996). Adolescent sexual behaviour, knowledge and attitudes to sexuality among school girls in Transkei, South Africa. *East African Medical Journal*, 73(2), 95–100.
- Buss, D. M. (1989). Sex differences in human mate preferences: Evolutionary hypotheses tested in 37 cultures. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 12, 1–49.
- Buss, D. M., & Duntley, J. D. (2004). Homicide: An evolutionary psychological perspective and implications for public policy. In: R. W. Bloom & N. Dess (Eds), *Evolutionary psychology and violence*. Westport, CT and London: Praeger.
- Caldwell, J. C. (2000). Rethinking the African AIDS epidemic. *Population and Development Review*, 26(1), 117–135.
- Caldwell, J. C. (2002). The African AIDS epidemic: Reflections on a research program. *Journal of Population Research*, 19(2), 173–190.
- Carus, P. (Ed.) (1995). *The gospel of Buddha*. Twickenham, UK: Senate.
- Cavalli-Sforza, L. L., Menozzi, P., & Piazza, A. (1996). *The history and geography of human genes*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Chanaiwa, D. S. (1980). The Zulu revolution: State formation in a pastoralist society. *African Studies Review*, 23(3), 1–20.
- Chang, F. M., Kidd, J. R., Livak, K. J., Pakstis, A., & Kidd, K. K. (1996). The world-wide distribution of allele frequencies at the human dopamine D4 receptor locus. *Human Genetics*, 98(1), 91–101.
- Chiao, J. Y., & Ambady, N. (2007). Cultural neuroscience: Parsing universality and diversity across levels of analysis. In: S. Kitayama & D. Cohen (Eds), *Handbook of cultural psychology* (pp. 237–254). New York: Guildford Press.
- Chiao, J. Y., & Blizinsky, K. D. (2009). Culture–gene coevolution of individualism–collectivism and the serotonin transporter gene. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*. Internet publication. Available at <http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/early/2009/10/27/rspb.2009.1650.full>. Retrieved on March 3, 2009.
- Chinese Culture Connection (1987). Chinese values and the search for culture-free dimensions of culture. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 18(2), 143–164.

- Choi, I., & Choi, Y. (2002). Culture and self-concept flexibility. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28(11), 1508–1517.
- Chomsky, N. (1981). *Lectures on government and binding*. Dordrecht: Foris.
- Cochran, G., Hardy, J., & Harpending, H. C. (2005). Natural history of Ashkenazi intelligence. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 38(5), 659–693.
- Cohen, P. T., & Pearson, R. E. (1998). Communal irrigation, state, and capital in the Chiang Mai Valley (Northern Thailand): Twentieth-century transformations. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 29, 86–110.
- Connelly, B. S., & Ones, D. S. (2008). The personality of corruption: A national-level analysis. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 42(4), 353–385.
- Corr, P. (2006). *Understanding biological psychology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Cousins, A. J., Fugere, M. A., & Franklin, M. (2009). Digit ratio (2D:4D), mate guarding, and physical aggression in dating couples. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 46(7), 709–713.
- Cula-Mahunkiyovada sutta. (2005). Access to insight. Internet publication. Available at <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/index.html>. Retrieved on November 5, 2006 (original work composed 400–200 BC, recorded about 100 BC).
- Cuneo, P. (2001). *Ethnic minorities' economic performance. Surveying literature to emphasize facts, analysis, and likely patterns for the future*. UK Cabinet Office, Performance and Innovation Unit. Internet publication. Available at <http://www.strategy.gov.uk/downloads/files/ethnic.pdf>. Retrieved on November 1, 2006.
- Darwin, C. (1871). *The descent of man and selection in relation to sex*. London: John Murray.
- De Munck, V. C., & Korotayev, A. V. (2007). Wife husband intimacy and female status in cross-cultural perspective. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 41(4), 307–335.
- Diamond, J. M. (1986). Variation in human testis size. *Nature*, 320(10), 488–489.
- Diamond, J. M. (1987). The worst mistake in the history of the human race. *Discover*, May, pp. 64–66.
- Diamond, J. M. (1997). *Guns, germs, and steel*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Diener, E., & Diener, M. (1995). Cross-cultural correlates of life-satisfaction and self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68(4), 653–663.
- Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Lucas, R. E. (2003). Personality, culture, and subjective well-being: Emotional and cognitive evaluations of life. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 54, 403–425.
- Diener, E., & Suh, E. M. (Eds). (2000). *Culture and subjective well-being*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Diener, E., & Tov, W. (2007). Culture and subjective well-being. In: S. Kitayama & D. Cohen (Eds), *Handbook of cultural psychology* (pp. 691–713). New York: Guilford.
- Divale, W. (1999). Climatic instability, food storage, and the development of numerical counting: A cross-cultural study. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 33(4), 341–368.
- Djamtoska, S. (2004). Pakt so gyavolot [A pact with the devil]. *Večer*, December 1, p. 7.
- Dorfman, P. W., & House, R. J. (2004). Cultural influences on organizational leadership: Literature review, theoretical rationale, and GLOBE project goals. In: R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies* (pp. 51–73). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dornbusch, R., Fischer, S., & Startz, R. (2004). *Macroeconomics*. New York: McGraw Hill Irwin.
- Dreber, A., et al. (2009). The 7R polymorphism in the dopamine receptor D4 gene (DRD4) is associated with financial risk taking in men. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 30(2), 85–92.
- Duntley, J. D., & Buss, D. M. (2004). The evolution of evil. In: A. G. Miller (Ed.), *The social psychology of good and evil* (pp. 102–123). New York and London: The Guildford Press.

- Dweck, C. S. (2007a). The perils and promises of praise. *Educational Leadership*, 65(2), 34–39.
- Dweck, C. S. (2007b). Boosting achievement with messages that motivate. *Education Canada*, 47(2), 6–10.
- Edgerton, R. B. (1974). Pastoral-farming comparisons. In: R. A. Levine (Ed.), *Culture and personality: Contemporary readings* (pp. 345–368). Chicago: Aldine Transaction.
- Elias, N. (1995). Technization and civilization. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 12(3), 7–42.
- Ember, C. R., & Ember, M. (1992). *Anthropology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Ember, M., Ember, C. R., & Low, B. S. (2007). Comparing explanations of polygyny. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 41(4), 428–440.
- Esau, L., Kaur, M., Adonis, L., & Arieff, Z. (2008). The 5-HTTLPR polymorphism in South African healthy populations: A global comparison. *Journal of Neural Transmission*, 115(5), 755–760.
- Esmer, Y. (2002). Is there an Islamic civilization? World Values Survey. Available at <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>. Retrieved on February 28, 2010.
- Everett, D. (2005 draft). Cultural constraints on grammar and cognition in Piraha. Another look at the design features of human language. Draft version of Everett (2005). Available from Everett's personal website: <http://www.llc.ilstu.edu/dlevere/>. Retrieved on March 18, 2006.
- Everett, D. (2005). Cultural constraints on grammar and cognition in Piraha: Another look at the design features of human language. *Current Anthropology*, 46(4), 621–646.
- Eysenck, H. J., & Fulker, D. W. (2007). *The structure and measurement of intelligence*. Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers (original publication in 1979).
- Fajnzylber, P., Lederman, D., & Loayza, N. (1998). *Determinants of crime rates in Latin America and the world: An empirical assessment*. Washington, DC: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.
- Fajnzylber, P., Lederman, D., & Loayza, N. (2002). Inequality and violent crime. *Journal of Law and Economics*, 45(1), 1–40.
- Fang, T. (2003). A critique of Hofstede's fifth national culture dimension. *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management*, 3(3), 347–368.
- Faurie, C., & Raymond, M. (2005). Handedness, homicide and negative frequency-dependent selection. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 272(1558), 25–28.
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (2010). *Uniform crime reports; preliminary semiannual uniform crime report, January–June 2010; Table 4: January–June 2010: Offenses reported to law enforcement by state by city 100,000 and over in population*. Internet publication. Available at [http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/preliminary-crime-in-the-us-2009/prelimiucrjan-jun\\_10\\_excels/table-4](http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/preliminary-crime-in-the-us-2009/prelimiucrjan-jun_10_excels/table-4). Retrieved on February 12, 2011.
- Ferrari, A. (2004). Cinque ragazze morte e le ambizioni turche [Five dead girls and the Turkish ambitions]. *Corriere della Sera* (Internet version), July 30, pp. 1, 9. Available at <http://www.corriere.it/>. Retrieved on July 30, 2004.
- Fincher, C. L., Thornhill, R., Murray, D. R., & Schaller, M. (2008). Pathogen prevalence predicts human cross-cultural variability in individualism/collectivism. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, 275, 1279–1285.
- Findlay, A. M. (1994). *The Arab world*. London: Routledge.
- Fink, B., Thanzami, V., Seydel, H., & Manning, J. T. (2006). Digit ratio and hand-grip strength in German and Mizos men: Cross-cultural evidence for an organizing effect of prenatal testosterone on strength. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 18(6), 776–782.
- Fischer, R., et al. (2009). Individualism-collectivism as descriptive norms: Development of a subjective norm approach to culture measurement. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 40(2), 187–213.

- Fischer, R., Vauclair, M. C., Fontaine, J. R. J., & Schwartz, S. H. (2010). Are individual-level and country-level value structures different? Testing Hofstede's legacy with the Schwartz Value Survey. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *41*(2), 135–151.
- Fisher, H. (1992). *Anatomy of love*. London: Simon and Schuster.
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2004). *All about rice: Rice and water*. Available at <http://www.fao.org/rice2004/en/factsheets.htm>. Retrieved on February 28, 2006.
- Fordham, S., & Ogbu, J. (1986). Black students' school success: Coping with the burden of "acting white". *Urban Review*, *18*(3), 176–206.
- Fortune. (1999). Mr Sony's struggle. *Fortune*, November 22, p. 120.
- Freedland, S. J., & Isaacs, W. B. (2005). Explaining racial differences in prostate cancer in the United States: Sociology or biology? *Prostate*, *62*(3), 243–252.
- Fu, P. P., Wu, R., Yang, Y., & Ye, J. (2008). Chinese culture and leadership. In: J. S. Chhokar, F. C. Brodbeck & R. J. House (Eds), *Culture and leadership across the world: The GLOBE book of in-depth studies of 25 societies* (pp. 877–908). New York: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Furnham, A., Kirkcaldy, B., & Lynn, R. (1994). National attitudes to competitiveness, money and work amongst young people: First, second, and third world differences. *Human Relations*, *47*(1), 119–132.
- Gallimore, R., Weiss, L. B., & Finney, R. (1974). Cultural differences in delay of gratification: A problem of behavior classification. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *30*(1), 72–80.
- Gallup, J. L., & Sachs, J. (1998). Geography and economic growth. Paper prepared for the annual World Bank conference on development economics, Washington DC, April 20–21, 1998. The World Bank. Available at [www.worldbank.org/html/rad/abcde/sachs.pdf](http://www.worldbank.org/html/rad/abcde/sachs.pdf). Retrieved on September 18, 2005.
- Garelli, S. (2009). Competitiveness of nations: The fundamentals. *IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook*. Available at <http://www.imd.ch/research/centers/wcc/upload/Fundamentals.pdf>. Retrieved on October 8, 2009.
- Gelderblom, O. (2000). *Merchants from the southern Netherlands and the rise of the Amsterdam staplemarket (1578–1630)*. Netherlands Institute for Scientific Information Services, Department of History. Netherlands Historical Data Archive. Available at <http://192.87.107.12:8080/kooplieden/frameset.html>. Retrieved on January 20, 2005.
- Gelfand, M., Bhawuk, D., Nishii, L. H., & Bechtold, D. (2004). Individualism and collectivism. In: R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies* (pp. 437–512). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Geschwind, N., & Galaburda, A. M. (1985). Cerebral lateralization: biological mechanisms, associations, and pathology: II. A hypothesis and a program for research. *Archives of Neurology*, *42*(6), 521–552.
- Givon, T. (1979). *On understanding grammar*. New York: Academic Press.
- Godman, D. (Ed.), (2005). *The teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi*. Understanding Hinduism. Available at <http://www.hinduism.co.za/god.htm>. Retrieved on September 21, 2005.
- Gordon, P. (2004). Numerical cognition without words: Evidence from Amazonia. *Science*, *306*(5695), 496–499.
- Gottfredson, M. R., & Hirschi, T. (1990). *A general theory of crime*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Green, E. G. T., Deschamps, J. C., & Paez, D. (2005). Variation of individualism and collectivism within and between 20 countries: A typological analysis. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *36*(3), 321–339.

- Gudykunst, W. B., et al. (1992). The influence of individualism-collectivism, self-monitoring, and predicted outcome value on communication in ingroup and outgroup relationships. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 23(2), 196–213.
- Gudykunst, W. B., Yang, S. M., & Nishida, T. (1987). Cultural differences in self-consciousness and self-monitoring. *Communication Research*, 14(1), 7–34.
- Gunthert, K. C., Conner, T. S., Armeli, S., Tennen, H., Covault, J., & Kranzler, H. R. (2007). Serotonin transporter gene polymorphism (5-HTTLPR) and anxiety reactivity in daily life: A daily process approach to gene-environment interaction. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 69, 762–768.
- Guss, C. D. (2002). Planning in Brazil, India, and Germany: A cross-cultural study, a cultural study, and a model. In: W. J. Lonner, D. L. Dinnel, S. A. Hayes, & D. N. Sattler (Eds), *Online readings in psychology and culture*. Internet publication. Available at <http://www.wvu.edu/culture>. Retrieved on July 5, 2005.
- Gutchess, A. H., Hedden, T., Ketay, S., Aron, A., & Gabrieli, J. D. E. (2010). Neural differences in the processing of semantic relationships across cultures. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 5(2–3), 254–263.
- Hall, E. T. (1959). *The silent language*. Doubleday, NY: Anchor Press.
- Hampden-Turner, C., & Trompenaars, F. (1996). *The seven cultures of capitalism: Value systems for creating wealth in the United States, Japan, Germany, France, Britain, Sweden, and the Netherlands*. London: Piatkus.
- Han, S., Choe, M. K., Lee, M. S., & Lee, S. H. (2001). Risk-taking behavior among high school students in South Korea. *Journal of Adolescence*, 24(4), 571–574.
- Harris, M. (1992). Explaining the pig taboo. In: J. J. Macionis & N. V. Benokraitis (Eds), *Seeing ourselves: Classic, contemporary, and cross-cultural reading in sociology* (pp. 47–51). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Harrison, L. E. (1992). *Who prospers? How cultural values shape economic and political success*. New York: Basic Books.
- Harrison, L. E., & Huntington, S. P. (Eds). (2000). *Culture matters: How values shape human progress*. New York: Basic Books.
- Hatfield, R., & Davies, J. (2006). *Global review of the economics of pastoralism*. World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism. Available at [http://www.iucn.org/wisp/documents\\_english/global\\_review\\_ofthe\\_economicsof\\_pastoralism\\_en.pdf](http://www.iucn.org/wisp/documents_english/global_review_ofthe_economicsof_pastoralism_en.pdf). Retrieved on February 25, 2008.
- Haviland, W. A. (1990). *Cultural anthropology*. Orlando, FL: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Hayes, R. H., & Clark, K. (1981). *Sanyo Manufacturing Corporation – Forest City*, Arkansas. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.
- Hayward, R. D., & Kimmelmeier, M. (2007). How competition is viewed across cultures: A test of four theories. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 41(4), 364–395.
- Heckelman, J. C., & Powell, B. (2008). Corruption and the institutional environment for growth. *Research Working Paper No 2008-6*. Department of Economics, Suffolk University, Boston, MA.
- Heine, S. J. (2001). Self as cultural product: An examination of East Asian and North American selves. *Journal of Personality*, 69(6), 881–906.
- Heine, S. J. (2003). An exploration of cultural variation in self-enhancing and self-improving motivations. In: V. Murphy-Berman & J. J. Berman (Eds), *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* (Vol. 49). *Cross-cultural differences in perspectives on the self* (pp. 101–128). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Heine, S. J., & Hamamura, T. (2007). In search of East Asian self-enhancement. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 11(1), 4–27.

- Heine, S. J., & Lehman, D. R. (1997). The cultural construction of self-enhancement: An examination of group-serving biases. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72(6), 1268–1283.
- Heine, S. J., Lehman, D. R., Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1999). Is there a universal need for positive self-regard? *Psychological Review*, 106(4), 766–794.
- Heine, S. J., Lehman, D. R., Peng, K., & Greenholtz, J. (2002). What is wrong with cross-cultural comparisons of subjective Likert scales: The reference-group problem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(6), 903–918.
- Heine, S. J., Takata, T., & Lehman, D. R. (2000). Beyond self-presentation: Evidence for self-criticism among Japanese. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26(1), 71–78.
- Helle, S., & Laaksonen, T. (2009). Latitudinal gradient in 2D:4D. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 38(1), 1–3.
- Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world? *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 33, 61–135.
- Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Hofstede, G. (1996). Riding the waves of commerce; A test of Trompenaars' "model" of national differences. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 20(2), 189–198.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hofstede, G. (2006). What did GLOBE really measure? Researchers' minds versus respondents' minds. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 37(6), 882–896.
- Hofstede, G., & Bond, M. H. (1988). The Confucian connection: From cultural roots to economic growth. *Organizational Dynamics*, 16(4), 5–21.
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Hofstede, G., & McCrae, R. R. (2004). Personality and culture revisited: Linking traits and dimensions of culture. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 38(1), 52–88.
- Honekopp, J., Voracek, M., & Manning, J. T. (2006). 2nd to 4th digit ratio (2D:4D) and number of sex partners: Evidence for effects of prenatal testosterone in men. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 31(1), 30–37.
- Hooker, J. (2009). Corruption from a cross-cultural perspective. *Cross-Cultural Management*, 16(3), 251–267.
- House, R. J. (2004). Introduction. In: R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies* (pp. 1–8). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- House, R. J., & Hanges, P. J. (2004). Research design. In: R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies* (pp. 95–101). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (Eds). (2004). *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hsing, A. W., et al. (2000). Polymorphic CAG and GGN repeat lengths in the androgen receptor gene and prostate cancer risk: A population-based case-control study in China. *Cancer Research*, 60(18), 5111–5116.
- Huang, J. C. T. (1984). On the distribution and reference of empty pronouns. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 15(4), 531–574.
- Huang, J. C. T. (1989). Pronoun drop in Chinese; A generalized control theory. In: O. Jaeggli & K. S. Safir (Eds), *The null subject parameter; Studies in natural language and linguistic theory* (pp. 185–214). Dordrecht: Kluwer.

- Inglehart, R., Basanez, M., & Moreno, A. (1998). *Human values and beliefs; A cross-cultural sourcebook*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Inglehart, R. (1997). *Modernization and postmodernization: Cultural, economic and political change in 43 societies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Inglehart, R. (2005). *The worldviews of Islamic publics in global perspective*. World Values Survey. Internet publication. Available at <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.com/>. Retrieved on February 18, 2010.
- Inglehart, R. (2008). Changing values among Western publics from 1970 to 2006. *West European Politics*, 31(1–2), 130–146.
- Inglehart, R., & Baker, W. E. (2000). Modernization, cultural change, and the persistence of traditional values. *American Sociological Review*, 65(1), 19–51.
- Inglehart, R., Foa, R., Peterson, C., & Welzel, C. (2008). Development, freedom, and rising happiness; A global perspective (1981–2007). *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3(4), 264–285.
- Inglehart, R., & Klingemann, H. D. (2000). Genes, culture, democracy, and happiness. In: E. Diener & M. E. Suh (Eds), *Culture and subjective well-being* (pp. 165–184). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Inglehart, R., & Norris, P. (2003). *Rising tide: Gender equality and cultural change around the world*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank (2007). *Global monitoring report 2007; Millennium development goals: Confronting the challenges of gender equality and fragile states*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.
- International Women's Health Coalition. (2007). Overlooked and uninformed: Young adolescents' sexual and reproductive health and rights. Internet publication. Available at [www.iwhc.org](http://www.iwhc.org). Retrieved on August 16, 2007.
- Jahoda, G. (1984). Do we need a concept of culture? *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 15(2), 139–151.
- Javidan, M. (2004). Performance orientation. In: R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies* (pp. 239–281). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Jirecek, K. (1997). *Pytuvane po Bylgaria* [A trip around Bulgaria]. Bulgarian language translation by S. Argirov. Sofia: Nauka i Izkustvo (original title: *Cesty pro Bulharsku*, published in 1888).
- Johns Hopkins University Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project. (2004). *Global civil society at a glance*. Johns Hopkins University; Institute for Policy Studies, Center for Civil Society Studies. Internet publication. Available at <http://www.jhu.edu/~cnp/pdf/glance.pdf>. Retrieved on June 5, 2005.
- Johnson, T., Kulesa, P., Lic, I., Cho, Y. I., & Shavitt, S. (2005). The relation between culture and response styles; Evidence from 19 countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 36(2), 264–277.
- Joiner, T. E. (2005). *Why people die by suicide*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Jorde, L. B., & Wooding, S. P. (2004). Genetic variation, classification, and 'race'. *Nature Genetics*, 36(11), 528–533.
- Kaljee, L. M., et al. (2007). Sexual stigma, sexual behaviors, and abstinence among Vietnamese adolescents: Implications for risk and protective behaviors for HIV, sexually transmitted infections, and unwanted pregnancy. *Journal of the Associations of Nurses in AIDS Care*, 18(2), 48–59.
- Kashima, E. S., & Kashima, Y. (1998). Culture and language: The case of cultural dimensions and personal pronoun use. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 29(3), 461–486.

- Kashima, Y., & Kashima, E. S. (2003). Individualism, GNP, climate, and pronoun drop. Is individualism determined by affluence and climate or does language use play a role? *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *34*(1), 125–134.
- Katsuragi, S., et al. (1999). Association between serotonin transporter gene polymorphism and anxiety-related traits. *Biological Psychiatry*, *45*(3), 368–370.
- Kelley, M. L., & Tseng, H. M. (1992). Cultural differences in child rearing: A comparison of immigrant Chinese and Caucasian American mothers. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *23*(4), 444–455.
- Kemmelmeier, M., et al. (2003). Individualism, collectivism, and authoritarianism in seven societies. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *34*(3), 304–322.
- Kim, J., Kim, M. S., Kam, K. Y., & Shin, H. C. (2003). Influence of self-construals on the perception of different self-presentation styles in Korea. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, *6*(2), 89–101.
- Kitayama, S., Markus, H. R., Matsumoto, H., & Norasukkunkit, V. (1997). Individual and collective processes in the construction of the self: Self-enhancement in the United States and self-criticism in Japan. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *72*(6), 1245–1267.
- Konstantinov, A. (1967). Bay Ganyo. In: *Bay Ganyo, razkazi, feiletoni, pytepisi*. Sofia: Bulgarski Pisatel (original work written in 1895).
- Krohn, M. D. (1976). Inequality, unemployment and crime: A cross-national analysis. *Sociological Quarterly*, *17*(3), 303–313.
- Kuepper, Y., & Henning, J. (2007). Behavioral aggression is associated with the 2D:4D ratio in men but not in women. *Journal of Individual Differences*, *28*(2), 67–72.
- Kuhnen, C. M., & Chiao, J. Y. (2009). Genetic determinants of financial risk-taking. *Public Library of Science ONE*, *4*(2). Internet publication. Available at <http://mpira.ub.uni-muenchen.de/13429/>. Retrieved on August 20, 2009.
- Kuppens, P., Ceulemans, E., Timmerman, M. E., Diener, E., & Kim-Prieto, C. (2006). Universal intracultural and intercultural dimensions of the recalled frequency of emotional experience. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *37*(5), 491–515.
- Lafferty, K. D. (2006). Can the common brain parasite, *Toxoplasma gondii*, influence human culture? *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, *273*, 2749–2755.
- Laland, K. N., Odling-Smee, J., & Myles, S. (2010). How culture shaped the human genome: Bringing genetics and the human sciences together. *Nature Reviews Genetics*, *11*, 137–148.
- Lambsdorff, J. G. (2006). Causes and consequences of corruption: What do we know from a cross-section of countries? In: S. Rose-Ackerman (Ed.), *International handbook on the economics of corruption*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Landes, D. (2000). Culture makes almost all the difference. In: L. E. Harrison & S.P. Huntington (Eds), *Culture matters: How values shape human progress* (pp. 2–13). New York: Basic Books.
- Lee, D. M., et al. (2010). Endogenous hormones, androgen receptor CAG repeat length and fluid cognition in middle-aged and older men: Results from the European Male Ageing Study. *European Journal of Endocrinology*, *162*(6), 1155–1164.
- Lee, R. B. (1979). *The !Kung San: Men, women, and work in a foraging society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Leigh, B. C., Morrison, D. M., Trocki, K., & Temple, M. T. (1994). Sexual behavior of American adolescents: Results from a U.S. national survey. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *15*(2), 117–125.

- Leung, K., et al. (2002). Social axioms: The search for universal dimensions of general beliefs about how the world functions. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 33(3), 286–302.
- Levine, R. V., & Norenzayan, A. (1999). The pace of life in 31 countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 30(2), 178–205.
- Levine, R. V., Norenzayan, A., & Philbrick, K. (2001). Cross-cultural differences in helping strangers. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32(5), 543–560.
- Lewis, R. D. (2006). *When cultures collide: Leading across cultures* (3rd ed.). Boston and London: Nicholas Brealy.
- Li, J. (2002). A cultural model of learning: Chinese “heart and mind for wanting to learn”. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 33(3), 248–269.
- Lim, F., Bond, M. H., & Bond, M. K. (2005). Linking societal and psychological factors to homicide rates across nations. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 36(5), 515–536.
- Lindberg, J., et al. (2005). Selection for tameness has changed brain gene expression in silver foxes. *Current Biology*, 15(22), 915–916.
- Littrell, R. F. (2008). Book review: Minkov, M. (2007). *What makes us different and similar: A new interpretation of the World Values Survey and other cross-cultural data*. Sofia, Bulgaria: Klasika y Stil Publishing House. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 39(5), 654–658.
- Liu, H., et al. (1998). A study of sexual behavior among rural residents of China. *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes and Human Retrovirology*, 19(1), 80–88.
- Loehlin, J. C., McFadden, D., Medland, S. E., & Martin, N. G. (2006). Population differences in finger-length ratios: Ethnicity or latitude? *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 35(6), 739–742.
- Lotrich, F. E., Pollock, B. G., & Ferrell, R. E. (2003). Serotonin transporter promoter polymorphism in African Americans: Allele frequencies and implications for treatment. *American Journal of Pharmacogenomics*, 3(2), 145–147(3).
- Lynn, M. (1997). Tipping customs and status seeking: A cross-country study. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 16(2), 221–224.
- Lynn, M. (2000). National character and tipping customs: The needs for achievement, affiliation and power as predictors of the prevalence of tipping. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 19(2), 205–210.
- Lynn, M., & Steel, P. (2006). National differences in subjective well-being: The interactive effects of extraversion and neuroticism. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 7(2), 155–165.
- Lynn, R., & Vanhanen, T. (2002). *IQ and the wealth of nations*. Westport, London: Praeger.
- Mankiw, G. (1995). The growth of nations. In: G. L. Perry & W. C. Brainard (Eds), *Brookings papers on economic activity 1995:1, Macroeconomics* (pp. 275–326). Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press.
- Manning, J. T. (2002). *Digit ratio: A pointer to fertility, behavior, and health*. Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Manning, J. T. (2007). The androgen receptor gene: A major modifier of speed of neuronal transmission and intelligence? *Medical Hypotheses*, 68, 802–804.
- Manning, J. T., Bundred, P. E., & Mather, F. M. (2004). Second to fourth digit ratio, sexual selection, and skin colour. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 25(1), 38–50.
- Manning, J. T., Bundred, P. E., Newton, D. J., & Flanagan, B. F. (2003). The second to fourth digit ratio and variation in the androgen receptor gene. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 24(6), 399–405.
- Manning, J. T., et al. (2000). The 2nd:4th digit ratio, sexual dimorphism, population differences, and reproductive success: Evidence for sexually antagonistic genes? *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 21(3), 163–183.

- Manning, J. T., Henzi, P., Venkatramana, P., Martin, S., & Singh, D. (2003). Second to fourth digit ratio: Ethnic differences and family size in English, Indian and South African populations. *Annals of Human Biology*, *30*(5), 579–588.
- Manning, J. T., Scutt, D., Wilson, J., & Lewis-Jones, D. I. (1998). The ratio of 2nd to 4th digit length: A predictor of sperm numbers and concentrations of testosterone, luteinizing hormone, and oestrogen. *Human Reproduction*, *13*(11), 3000–3004.
- Manning, J. T., Stewart, A., Bundred, P. E., & Trivers, R. L. (2004). Sex and ethnic differences in 2nd to 4th digit ratio of children. *Early Human Development*, *80*(2), 161–168.
- Marin, G., Gamba, R. J., & Marin, B. V. (1992). Extreme response style and acquiescence among Hispanics: The role of acculturation and education. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *23*(4), 498–509.
- Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, *98*(2), 224–253.
- Marlowe, F. W. (2000). Paternal investment and the human mating system. *Behavioral Processes*, *51*(1–3), 45–61.
- Marlowe, F. W. (2003). The mating system of foragers in the standard cross-cultural sample. *Cross-Cultural Research*, *37*(3), 282–306.
- Marlowe, F. W. (2004). Mate preferences among Hadza hunter-gatherers. *Human Nature*, *15*(4), 365–376.
- Maseland, R., & van Hoorn, A. (2009). Explaining the negative correlation between values and practices: A note on the Hofstede-GLOBE debate. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *40*(3), 527–532.
- Matasha, et al. (1998). Sexual and reproductive health among primary and secondary school pupils in Mwanza, Tanzania: Need for intervention. *AIDS Care*, *10*(5), 571–582.
- Matsumoto, D., Kudoh, T., Scherer, K., & Wallbott, H. (1988). Antecedents of and reactions to emotions in the United States and Japan. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *19*(3), 267–286.
- Mauro, P. (1995). Corruption and growth. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *110*, 681–712.
- Mawson, A. R., & Jacobs, K. W. (1978). Corn consumption, tryptophan and cross-national homicide rates. *Orthomolecular Psychiatry*, *7*(4), 227–230.
- McArthur, R. H., & Wilson, E. O. (2001). *The theory of island biogeography*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- McClelland, D. C. (1961). *The achieving society*. New York: The Free Press.
- McCrae, R. R. (2002). NEO-PI-R data from 36 cultures: Further intercultural comparisons. In: R. R. McCrae & J. Allik (Eds), *The five-factor model of personality across cultures* (pp. 105–126). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- McCrae, R. R. (2009). Cross-cultural research on the five-factor model of personality (Version 2). *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture* (Unit 6, Chapter 1/V2). Internet publication. Retrieved July 24, 2010 from <http://orpc.iaccp.org>.
- McCrae, R. R., & Terracciano, A. (2005). Personality profiles of cultures; Aggregate personality traits. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *89*(3), 407–425.
- McCrae, R. R., Terracciano, A., Realo, A., & Allik, J. (2007). Climatic warmth and national wealth: Some culture-level determinants of national character stereotypes. *European Journal of Personality*, *21*(8), 953–976.
- McCrae, R. R., Terracciano, A., Realo, A., & Allik, J. (2008). Interpreting GLOBE societal practices scales. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *39*(6), 805–810.
- McIntyre, M. H., Barrett, E. S., McDermott, R., Johnson, D. D. P., Cowden, J., & Rosen, S. P. (2007). Finger length ratio (2D:4D) and sex differences in aggression during a simulated war game. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *42*(4), 755–764.

- Medland, S. E., et al. (2005). Opposite effects of androgen receptor CAG repeat length on increased risk of left-handedness in males and females. *Behavior Genetics*, 35(6), 735–744.
- Meon, P. G., & Sekkat, K. (2005). Does corruption grease or sand the wheels of growth? *Public Choice*, 122, 69–97.
- Merati, T. P., Ekstrand, M. L., Hudes, E. S., Suarmiartha, E., & Mandel, J. S. (1997). Traditional Balinese youth groups as a venue for prevention of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. *AIDS*, 1(Suppl), 111–119.
- Merton, R. K. (1938). Social structure and anomie. *American Sociological Review*, 3, 672–682.
- Messner, S. F., Raffalovich, L. E., & Shrok, P. (2002). Reassessing the cross-national relationship between income inequality and homicide rates: Implications of data quality control in the measurement of income distribution. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 18(4), 377–395.
- Minkov, M. (2006). *Otrazhenia na kulturata vyrhu srednovkovnia scandinavski i angliiski ezik i tehните syvremenni varianti. [Culture's impact on medieval Scandinavian languages and English and their modern variants]*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Sofia University Sv. Kliment Ohridski, Department of Germanic and Scandinavian Studies.
- Minkov, M. (2007). *What makes us different and similar: A new interpretation of the World Values Survey and other cross-cultural data*. Sofia, Bulgaria: Klasika i Stil.
- Minkov, M. (2008). Self-enhancement and self-stability predict school achievement at the national level. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 42(2), 172–196.
- Minkov, M. (2009a). Predictors of differences in subjective well-being across 97 nations. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 43(2), 152–179.
- Minkov, M. (2009b). Nations with more dialectical selves exhibit lower polarization in life quality judgments and social opinions. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 43(3), 230–250.
- Minkov, M. (2009c). Risk-taking reproductive competition explains national murder rates better than socioeconomic inequality. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 43(1), 3–29.
- Minkov, M. (2010). Predictors of national suicide rates: A reply to Voracek (2004, 2006, 2009). *Psychological Reports*, 106(3), 718–720.
- Minkov, M., & Blagoev, V. (2009). Cultural values predict subsequent economic growth. *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management*, 9(1), 5–24.
- Montesquieu, C. L. S. (1748). *De l'esprit des lois*. Geneva: Barillot & Fils.
- Moor, N., Ultee, W., & Need, A. (2009). Analogical reasoning and the content of creation stories: Quantitative comparisons of preindustrial societies. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 43(2), 91–122.
- Moore, A. R., & Oppong, J. (2006). Sexual risk behavior among people living with HIV/AIDS in Togo. *Social Science and Medicine*, 64(5), 1057–1066.
- Morris, L., Nunez, L., de Velasco, A. M., Bailey, P., Cardenas, C., & Whatley, A. (1988). Sexual experience and contraceptive use among young adults in Mexico City. *International Family Planning Perspectives*, 14(4), 147–152.
- Mullis, I. V. S., et al. (2000). *TIMSS 1999: International mathematics report. Findings from IEA's Repeat of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study at the eighth grade*. Chestnut Hill, MA: International Study Center, Lynch School of Education, Boston College.
- Mullis, I. V. S., Martin, M. O., & Foy, P. (2005). *IEA's TIMSS 2003 international report on achievement in the mathematics cognitive domains: Findings from a developmental project*. Chestnut Hill, MA: TIMSS and PIRLS International Study Center.
- Mullis, I. V. S., Martin, M. O., & Foy, P. (2007). *TIMSS 2007 international mathematics report: Findings from IEA's Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study at the fourth and eighth grades*. Chestnut Hill, MA: TIMSS and PIRLS International Study Center.

- Murray, D. R., & Schaller, M. (2010). Historical prevalence of infectious diseases within 230 geopolitical regions: A tool for investigating origins of culture. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 41*(1), 99–108.
- Nakane, C. (1986). Criteria of group formation. In: T. Sugiyama Lebra & W. P. Lebra (Eds), *Japanese culture and behavior. Selected readings*. (Rev. ed., pp. 171–187) Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Neckebrouck, V. (1993). Resistant peoples; The case of the pastoralist Maasai of East Africa. *Inculturation. Working Papers on Living Faith and Cultures. XIV*. Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana.
- Neeleman, A., & Szendroi, K. (2005). Pro drop and pronouns. In: J. Alderete, et al. (Eds), *Proceedings of the 24th West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics* (pp. 229–307). Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.
- Neisser, U., et al. (1996). Intelligence: Knowns and unknowns. *American Psychologist, 51*(2), 77–101.
- Nelson, E., & Shultz, S. (2010). Finger length ratios (2D:4D) in anthropoids implicate reduced prenatal androgens in social bonding. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 141*(3), 395–405.
- Newmeyer, F. J. (2002). Uniformitarian assumptions and language evolution research. In: A. Wray (Ed.), *The transition to language* (pp. 359–375). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nippoda, Y. (2002). Japanese culture and therapeutic relationship. In: W. J. Lonner, D. L. Dinnel, S. A. Hayes, & D. N. Sattler (Eds), *Online readings in psychology and culture*. Available at <http://www.wvu.edu/culture>. Retrieved on November 20, 2006.
- Nisbett, R. E. (1996). *Culture of honor: The psychology of violence in the South*. Denver, CO: Westview Press.
- Nisbett, R. E. (2003). *The geography of thought: How Asians and Westerners think differently... and why*. New York: The Free Press.
- Nisbett, R. E. (2005). Heredity, environment and race differences in IQ: A commentary on Rushton and Jensen (2005). *Psychology, Public Policy and Law, 11*, 302–310.
- Nisbett, R. E., Peng, K., Choi, I., & Norenzayan, A. (2001). Culture and systems of thought: Holistic versus analytic cognition. *Psychological Review, 108*(2), 291–310.
- Noorderhaven, N. G., & Tidjani, B. (1998). *The link between culture and governance: An explorative study with a special focus on Africa*. Tilburg, Netherlands: Tilburg University.
- Noorderhaven, N. G., & Tidjani, B. (2001). Culture, governance, and economic performance: An explorative study with a special focus on Africa. *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management, 1*(1), 31–52.
- Obolensky, D. (1948). *The Bogomils: A study in Balkan neo-Manichaeism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- OECD. (June 26, 2009). LMF7.1: Usual working hours per week by gender, 2007. *OECD Family Database*. OECD – Social Policy Division – Directorate of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs. Internet publication. Available at [www.oecd.org/els/social/family/database](http://www.oecd.org/els/social/family/database). Retrieved on November 20, 2009.
- OECD PISA. (2003). *PISA 2003 database*. Internet publication. Available at [http://pisaweb.acer.edu.au/oecd\\_2003/oecd\\_pisa\\_data\\_s2.php](http://pisaweb.acer.edu.au/oecd_2003/oecd_pisa_data_s2.php). Retrieved on November 2, 2007.
- Ogliastri, E. (2008). Colombia: The human relations side of enterprise. In: J. S. Chhokar, F.C. Brodbeck & R. J. House (Eds), *Culture and leadership across the world; The GLOBE book of in-depth studies of 25 societies* (pp. 689–722). New York: Taylor & Francis Group.

- Ohara, K., Nagai, M., Suzuki, Y., Ochiai, M., & Ohara, K. (1998). Association between anxiety disorders and a functional polymorphism in the serotonin transporter gene. *Psychiatry Research, 81*(2), 277–279.
- Oishi, S., Diener, E. F., Lucas, R. E., & Suh, E. M. (1999). Cross-cultural variation in predictors of life satisfaction: Perspectives from needs and values. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 25*(8), 980–990.
- Oladipo, G. S., Fawehinmi, H. B., Edibamode, E.-E., Osunwoke, E., & Ordu, K. S. (2009). Second to fourth digit ratio in Nigerian Igbos and Yorubas. *Scientific Research and Essay, 4*(10), 1146–1148.
- Orubuloye, I. O., Caldwell, J. C., & Caldwell, P. (1992). Diffusion and focus in sexual networking: Identifying partners and partners' partners. *Studies in Family Planning, 23*(6 Pt 1), 343–351.
- Orubuloye, I. O., Caldwell, J. C., & Caldwell, P. (1997). Perceived male sexual needs and male sexual behaviour in southwest Nigeria. *Social Science and Medicine, 44*(8), 1195–1207.
- Oswalt, W. H. (1986). *Life cycles and lifeways: An introduction to cultural anthropology*. Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield.
- Ouweneel, P., & Veenhoven, R. (1991). Cross-national differences in happiness. Cultural bias or societal quality? In: N. Bleichrodt & P. J. Drenth (Eds), *Contemporary issues in cross-cultural psychology* (pp. 168–184). Amsterdam: Sweets & Zeitlinger.
- Oyserman, D., Coon, H. M., & Kimmelmeier, M. (2002). Rethinking individualism and collectivism: Evaluation of theoretical assumptions and meta-analyses. *Psychological Bulletin, 128*(1), 3–72.
- Paik, Y. S., & Derick Sohn, J. H. (1998). Confucius in Mexico: Korean MNCs and the maquiladoras. *Business Horizons, 41*(6), 25–33.
- Paldam, M. (2002). The cross-country pattern of corruption: Economics, culture and the seesaw dynamics. *European Journal of Political Economy, 18*, 215–240.
- Park, U. I., Sneed, C. D., Morisky, D. E., Alvear, S., & Hearst, N. (2002). Correlates of HIV risk among Ecuadorian adolescents. *AIDS Education and Prevention, 14*(1), 73–83.
- Peng, K., & Nisbett, R. E. (1999). Culture, dialectics, and reasoning about contradiction. *American Psychologist, 54*(9), 741–754.
- Peng, K., Spencer-Rodgers, J., & Nian, Z. (2006). Naive dialecticism and the Tao of Chinese thought. In: U. Kim, K. S. Yang & K. K. Huang (Eds), *Indigenous and cultural psychology: Understanding people in context* (Chap. 11, pp. 247–262). New York: Springer.
- Perkins, R. D. (1992). *Deixis, grammar, and culture*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Peterson, M. F. (2003). Book review: Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations (2d ed). Geert Hofstede, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001, *Administrative Science Quarterly, 48*(1), 127–131.
- Peterson, M. F., & Fanimokun, A. (2008). National subculture differences in use of social structures for four Nigerian ethnic groups. Paper presented at the International Congress of Cross Cultural Psychology, Bremen, July 2008.
- Peterson, M. F., Fanimokun, A., Mogaji, A., & Smith, P. B. (2006). National subculture differences in use of social structures: A comparison of Nigerian Hausa, Yoruba and Ibo managers. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management, Atlanta, August 2006.
- Pew Research Center. (2002). *What the world thinks in 2002. How global publics view their lives, their countries, the world, America*. Internet publication. Available at <http://people-press.org/reports> (Survey results in <http://people-press.org/reports/pdf/165topline.pdf>). Retrieved on November 8, 2005.

- Pew Research Center. (2003). *Views of a changing world 2003*. Available at <http://people-press.org/reports> (survey results in <http://people-press.org/reports/pdf/185topline.pdf>). Retrieved on November 8, 2005.
- Pew Research Center. (2006). *Muslims in Europe: Economic worries top concerns about religious and cultural identity: Few signs of backlash from Western Europeans*. Internet publication. Available at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/254.pdf>. Retrieved on November 20, 2006.
- Pew Research Center. (2007). *Global opinion trends 2002-2007*. Available at <http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/257.pdf> and <http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/257topline-trend.pdf>. Retrieved on February 20, 2008.
- Phillips, D. J. (2001). *Peoples on the move: Introducing the nomads of the world*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.
- Price-Williams, D. R., & Ramirez, M., III. (1974). Ethnic differences in delay of gratification. *Journal of Social Psychology, 93*(1), 23–30.
- Putz, D. A., Gaulin, S. J. C., Sporter, R. J., & McBurney, D. H. (2004). Sex hormones and finger length: What does 2D:4D indicate? *Evolution and Human Behavior, 25*, 182–199.
- Qur'an* (n.d.). Published as *The meaning of the glorious Qur'an*. English language translation by M. Pickthall. Cairo/Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Masri, Dar al-Kitab al-Lubnani.
- Ramirez, S. (1991). Early sexual experience and traditional values in Colombia. *Newsletter (Women's Global Network on Reproductive Rights), 36*, 30–31.
- Read, A. F. (1991). Passerine polygyny: A role for parasites? *American Naturalist, 138*(2), 434–459.
- Rice, T. W., & Steele, B. J. (2004). Subjective well-being and culture across time and space. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 35*(6), 633–647.
- Richardson, K. (2002). What IQ tests test. *Theory and Psychology, 12*(3), 283–314.
- Robbins, S. P. (1998). *Organizational behavior: Concepts, controversies, applications* (8th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Rosenberg, N. A., et al. (2002). Genetic structure of human populations. *Science, 298*, 2381–2385.
- Rotenberg, K. J., & Mayer, E. V. (1990). Delay of gratification in native and white children: A cross-cultural comparison. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 13*(1), 23–30.
- Rushton, J. P. (2000). *Race, evolution, and behavior: A life history perspective (2nd special abridged edition)*. Port Huron, MI: Charles Darwin Research Institute.
- Rushton, J. P., & Jensen, A. R. (2005). Thirty years of research on race differences in cognitive ability. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 11*, 235–294.
- Rushton, J. P., & Jensen, A. R. (2006). The totality of available evidence shows the race IQ gap still remains. *Psychological Science, 17*, 921–922.
- Rushton, J. P., & Jensen, A. R. (2008). James Watson's most inconvenient truth: Race realism and the moralistic fallacy. *Medical Hypotheses, 71*, 629–640.
- Rushton, J. P., & Templar, D. I. (2009). National differences in intelligence, crime, income and skin color. *Intelligence, 37*, 341–346.
- Rushton, J. P., & Whitney, G. (2002). Cross-national variation in violent crime rates: Race, r-K theory, and income. *Population and Environment, 23*(6), 501–511.
- Sabbasava sutta*. (1997). Access to insight. Internet publication. Available at <http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/dn/index.html>. Retrieved on November 5, 2006 (original work composed 400–200 BC, recorded about 100 BC).
- Sachs, J. D., & Warner, A. (1995). Economic reform and the process of global integration. *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, 1*, 1–118.
- Sakado, K., Sakado, M., Muratake, M., & Someya, T. (2003). A psychometrically derived impulsive trait related to a polymorphism in the serotonin transporter gene-linked

- polymorphic region (5-HTTLPR) in a Japanese nonclinical population: Assessment by the Barratt impulsiveness scale (BIS). *American Journal of Medical Genetics, Part B, Neuropsychiatric Genetics*, 121(1), 71–75.
- Sanchez-Burks, J., Nisbett, R. E., & Ybarra, O. (2000). Cultural styles, relational schemas, and prejudice against out-groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(2), 174–189.
- Sandholtz, W., & Taagepera, R. (2004). Corruption, culture, and communism. *International Review of Sociology*, 15(1), 109–131.
- Sartor, O., Zheng, Q., & Eastham, J. A. (1999). Androgen receptor gene CAG repeat length varies in a race-specific fashion in men without prostate cancer. *Urology*, 53(2), 378–380.
- Sasagawa, I., Suzuki, Y., Tateno, T., Nakada, T., Muroya, K., & Ogata, T. (2000). CAG repeat lengths of the androgen receptor gene in Japanese males with cryptorchidism. *Molecular Human Reproduction*, 6(11), 973–975.
- Schimmack, U., Oishi, S., & Diener, E. (2002). Cultural influences on the relation between pleasant emotions and unpleasant emotions: Asian dialectic philosophies or individualism-collectivism? *Cognition and Emotion*, 16(6), 705–719.
- Schimmack, U., Oishi, S., & Diener, E. (2005). Individualism: A valid and important dimension of cultural differences between nations. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 9(1), 17–31.
- Schimmack, U., Radhakrishnan, P., Oishi, S., Dzokoto, V., & Ahadi, S. (2002). Culture, personality, and subjective well-being: Integrating process models of life satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(4), 582–593.
- Schmitt, D. P. (2005). Sociosexuality from Argentina to Zimbabwe: A 48-nation study of sex, culture, and strategies of human mating. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 28, 247–311.
- Schmitt, D. P., & Allik, J. (2005). Simultaneous administration of the Rosenberg self-esteem scale in 53 nations: Exploring the universal and culture-specific features of global self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 89(4), 623–642.
- Schmitt, D. P., Allik, J., McCrae, R. R., & Benet-Martinez, V. (2007). The geographic distribution of Big Five personality traits: Patterns and profiles of human self-description across 56 nations. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 38(2), 173–212.
- Schmitt, D. P., et al. (2004). Patterns and universals of mate poaching across 53 nations: The effect of sex, culture, and personality on romantically attracting another person's partner. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 86(4), 560–584.
- Schultz, P. W., et al. (2005). Values and their relationship to environmental concern and conservation behavior. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 36(4), 457–475.
- Schwartz, R. S. (2001). Racial profiling in medical research. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 344(18), 1392–1393.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1994). Beyond individualism/collectivism: New cultural dimensions of values. In: U. Kim, C. Kagitcibasi, H. C. Triandis, S. C. Choi & G. Yoon (Eds), *Individualism and collectivism: Theory, method, and application* (pp. 85–119). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Schwartz, S. H. (2007). Universalism values and the inclusiveness of our moral universe. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 38(6), 711–728.
- Schwartz, S. H., & Bardi, A. (2001). Value hierarchies across cultures; Taking a similarities perspective. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32(3), 268–290.
- Schwartz, S. H., Melech, G., Lehman, A., Burgess, S., Harris, M., & Owens, V. (2001). Extending the cross-cultural validity of the theory of basic human values with a different method of measurement. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32(5), 519–542.

- Schwartz, S. H., & Sagiv, L. (1995). Identifying culture-specifics in the content and structure of values. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 26(1), 92–116.
- Scolon, C. N., Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2004). Emotions across cultures and methods. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 35(3), 304–326.
- Semov, M. (1991). *I za America kato za America*. [About America the way you would write about America]. Sofia: Peyo K. Yavorov.
- Serre, D., & Paabo, S. (2004). Evidence for gradients of human genetic diversity within and among continents. *Genome Research*, 14(9), 1679–1685.
- Simon, H. (2009). Hidden champions of the 21st century. Presentation at *Role models of leadership beyond the crisis*. Annual Presidents' Forum, October 16, 2009. IEDC – Bled School of Management, Bled, Slovenia.
- Singh, K. S. (1992). *People of India: An introduction*. Calcutta: Anthropological Survey of India.
- Smith, A. (1777). *An inquiry into the nature of causes of the wealth of nations*. London: Strahan & Cadell.
- Smith, P. B. (2004). Acquiescence response bias as an aspect of cultural communication style. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 35(1), 50–61.
- Smith, P. B. (2006). When elephants fight, the grass gets trampled: The GLOBE and Hofstede projects. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 37(6), 915–921.
- Smith, P. B. (2008). Book review: Michael Minkov, what makes us different and similar: A new interpretation of the World Values Survey and other cross-cultural data. Bulgaria: Klasika y Stil Publishing House, 2007. *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management*, 8(1), 110–112.
- Smith, P. B., Dugan, S., & Trompenaars, F. (1996). National culture and the values of organizational employees: A dimensional analysis across 43 nations. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 27(2), 231–264.
- Smith, P. B., Peterson, M. F., & Schwartz, S. H. (2002). Cultural values, sources of guidance, and their relevance to managerial behaviour: A 47-nation study. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 33(2), 188–208.
- Smith, P. B., Trompenaars, F., & Dugan, S. (1995). The Rotter locus of control scale in 43 countries: A test of cultural relativity. *International Journal of Psychology*, 30(3), 377–400.
- Snir, R., & Harpaz, I. (2009). Cross-cultural differences concerning heavy work investment. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 43(2), 309–319.
- Spencer-Rodgers, J., Peng, K., Wang, L., & Hou, Y. (2004). Dialectical self-esteem and East-West differences in psychological well-being. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30(11), 1416–1432.
- Steel, P., & Ones, D. S. (2002). Personality and happiness: A national-level analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(3), 767–781.
- Sternberg, R. J. (2002). Cultural explorations of human intelligence around the world. In: W. J. Lonner, D. L. Dinnel, S. A. Hayes, & D. N. Sattler (Eds), *Online readings in psychology and culture* (unit 5, chap. 1). Internet publication. Available at <http://www.wvu.edu/culture>. Retrieved November 18, 2008.
- Sternberg, R. J. (2005). There are no public-policy implications: A reply to Rushton and Jensen (2005). *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 11, 295–301.
- Suh, E. M., & Oishi, S. (2002). Subjective well-being across cultures. In: W. J. Lonner, D. L. Dinnel, S. A. Hayes, & D. N. Sattler (Eds), *Online readings in psychology and culture* (unit 7, chap. 1). Internet publication. Available at <http://www.wvu.edu/culture>. Retrieved November 18, 2008.

- Sully de Luque, M., & Javidan, M. (2004). Uncertainty avoidance. In: R. J. House, P. J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P. W. Dorfman & V. Gupta (Eds), *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies* (pp. 602–653). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Svensson, J. (2005). Eight questions about corruption. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 19, 19–42.
- Tafarodi, R. W., et al. (2009). Disregard for outsiders: A cultural comparison. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 40(4), 567–583.
- Tajman, A., Belo, M. T., Teixeira, E. G., Dantas, V. C. S., Salomao, F. M., & Cunha, A. J. L. A. (2003). Knowledge about STD/AIDS and sexual behavior among high school students in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. *Cadernos de Saude Publica*, 19(1), 127–133.
- Tang, H., et al. (2005). Genetic structure, self-identified race/ethnicity, and confounding in case-control association studies. *American Journal of Human Genetics*, 76(2), 268–275.
- Taras, V., Kirkman, B. L., & Steel, P. (2010). Examining the impact of *Culture's Consequences*: A three-decade, multilevel, meta-analytic review of Hofstede's cultural value dimensions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 95(3), 405–439.
- Tatsuro, S. (2006). Labor exchange systems in Japan and DR Congo: Similarities and differences. *African Studies Quarterly*, 9(1–2), 55–65.
- Templer, D. I., Connelly, H. J., Lester, D., Arikawa, H., & Mancuso, L. (2007). Relationship of IQ to suicide and homicide rate: An international perspective. *Psychological Reports*, 100(1), 108–112.
- Terracciano, A., et al. (2005). National character does not reflect mean personality trait levels in 49 cultures. *Science*, 310(5745), 96–100.
- The Economist*. (2001). Between here and there. *The Economist*, July 7, pp. 29–30.
- The Economist*. (2002). Book learning. Box, *The Economist*, September 14, p. 71.
- The Economist*. (2002). The road to hell is unpaved. *The Economist*, December 21, p. 66.
- The Economist*. (2003). The curse of westoxification. In *A survey of Iran*. *The Economist*, January 18, p. 9.
- The Economist*. (2003). Can oil ever help the poor? *The Economist*, December 6, p. 37.
- The Economist*. (2004). The rule of big men or the rule of law. In *A survey of sub-Saharan Africa*. *The Economist*, January 17, p. 6.
- The Economist*. (2004). The 'Jews' of Africa. *The Economist*, August 21, p. 34.
- The Economist*. (2005). Ghettos of the mind. *The Economist*, September 10, p. 41.
- The Economist*. (2006). Bringing the wicked to the dock. *The Economist*, March 11, p. 21.
- The Economist*. (2009). Laggards trying to catch up. *The Economist*, October 17, pp. 47–48.
- Thomas, A. (2006). *The tank man* (A TV film episode). Frontline: WGBH Educational Foundation. Aired on the History Channel, August, 12, 2009, 21:00–22:00 EET.
- Thomas, D. C. (1999). Cultural diversity and work group effectiveness: An experimental study. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 30(2), 242–263.
- Thorgilsson, A. (1981). Libellus islandorum. In: E. V. Gordon. (Ed.), *An introduction to Old Norse* (pp. 34–38, 2nd ed. revised by A. R. Taylor). Oxford: Clarendon Press (original work composed 1122–1133 AD).
- Tochigi, M., et al. (2006). Association between dopamine D4 receptor (DRD4) exon III polymorphism and neuroticism in the Japanese population. *Neuroscience Letters*, 398(3), 333–336.
- Transparency International. (1998). *The corruption perceptions index 1998*. Internet publication. Available at [http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi/previous\\_cpi/1998](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/previous_cpi/1998). Retrieved on November 8, 2009.

- Transparency International. (2006). *Corruption perceptions index 2006*. Internet publication. Available at [http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi/2006](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2006). Retrieved on November 20, 2006.
- Treisman, D. (2000). The causes of corruption: A cross-national study. *Journal of Public Economics*, 76, 399–457.
- Treisman, D. (2007). What have we learned about the causes of corruption from ten years of cross-national empirical research? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 10, 211–244.
- Triandis, H. C. (1989). The self and social behavior in differing cultural contexts. *Psychological Review*, 96(3), 506–520.
- Triandis, H. C. (2000). Cultural syndromes and subjective well-being. In: E. Diener & M.E. Suh (Eds), *Culture and subjective well-being* (pp. 13–36). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Triandis, H. C. (2002). Generic individualism and collectivism. In: M. J. Gannon & K. L. Newman (Eds), *The Blackwell handbook of cross-cultural management* (pp. 16–45). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Triandis, H. C., Bontempo, R., Villareal, M. J., Asai, M., & Lucca, N. (1988). Individualism and collectivism: Cross-cultural perspectives on self-ingroup relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54(2), 323–338.
- Triandis, H. C., Chen, X. P., & Chan, D. K. S. (1998). Scenarios for the measurement of collectivism and individualism. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 29(2), 275–289.
- Triandis, H. C., et al. (1993). An etic-emic analysis of individualism and collectivism. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 24(3), 366–383.
- Trompenaars, F. (2003). Presentation at the Presidents' Forum, October 2003, International Executive Development Center, Bled, Slovenia.
- Trompenaars, F., & Hampden-Turner, C. (1999). *Riding the waves of culture*. London: Nicholas Brealy.
- UK Home Office. (2005). *Statistics on race and the criminal justice system – 2004*. Available at [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk). Retrieved on January 20, 2005.
- UN Development Program. (2007/2008). Human development reports. Internet publication. Available at <http://hdrstats.undp.org/indicators/147.html>. Retrieved on March 14, 2008.
- UN Office on Drugs and Crime. (2004). *Seventh United Nations survey of crime trends and operations of criminal justice systems, covering the period 1998–2000*. Internet publication. Available at [http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/seventh\\_survey/7sv.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/seventh_survey/7sv.pdf). Retrieved on January 20, 2006.
- UN Office on Drugs and Crime. (2010). Crime statistics: UNODC crime and criminal justice statistics. Internet database. Available at <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/crimedata.html>. Retrieved on August 20, 2010.
- UN Statistics Division. (2007). Common database. Internet publication. Available at <http://unstats.un.org>. Retrieved on March 30, 2007.
- UN Statistics Division. (2008). UN Statistical databases: Social indicators. Statistics and indicators on women and men. Internet publication. Available at <http://unstats.un.org>. Retrieved on October 12, 2008.
- UN Statistics Division. (2009). Statistical databases: National accounts main aggregates database. Internet publication. Available <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/snaama/Introduction.asp>. Retrieved on September 5, 2009.
- US Department of State. (March 2, 2009). Botswana-country specific information: Crime. Internet publication. Available at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1071.html#crime](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1071.html#crime). Retrieved on February 6, 2010.

- Uskul, A. K., Kitayama, S., & Nisbett, R. E. (2008). Ecocultural basis of cognition: Framers and fishermen are more holistic than herders. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, *105*(25), 8552–8556.
- Van de Vliert, E. (2009). *Climate, affluence, and culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Van de Vliert, E., & Janssen, O. (2002). Competitive societies are happy if the women are less competitive than the men. *Cross-Cultural Research*, *36*(4), 321–337.
- Van Herk, H., Poortinga, Y. H., & Verhallen, T. M. M. (2004). Response styles in rating scales: Evidence of method bias in data from six EU countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *35*(3), 346–360.
- Veenhoven, R. (1991). Is happiness relative? *Social Indicators Research*, *24*(1), 1–34.
- Veenhoven, R. (2007). Measures of gross national happiness. Munich Personal RePEc Archive. Munich University Library. Internet publication. Available at <http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/11280/>. Retrieved on November 10, 2008.
- Veenhoven, R., & Hagerty, M. (2006). Rising happiness in nations 1946–2004: A reply to Easterlin. *Social Indicators Research*, *79*(3), 421–436.
- Velichkov, G. (2004). Izgubeni v Kairo. [Lost in Cairo]. *Odyseji*, *8*(35), 86–92.
- Viner, A. (1988). *The emerging power of Japanese money*. Homewood, IL: Dow Jones Irwin.
- Von Echarstein, S., Syska, A., Gromoll, J., Kamischke, A., Simoni, M., & Nieschlag, E. (2001). Inverse correlation between sperm concentration and number of androgen receptor CAG repeats in normal men. *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, *86*(6), 2585–2590.
- Von Horn, A., Backman, L., Davidsson, T., & Hansen, S. (2010). Empathizing, systemizing and finger length ratio in a Swedish sample. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, *51*(1), 31–37.
- Voracek, M. (2004). National intelligence and suicide rates: An ecological study of 85 countries. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *37*(3), 543–553.
- Voracek, M. (2009). National intelligence, suicide rate, and subjective well-being. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, *109*(3), 718–720.
- Voracek, M., Bagdonas, A., & Dressler, S. G. (2007). Digit ratio (2D:4D) in Lithuania once and now: Testing for sex differences, relations with eye and hair color, and a possible secular change. *Collegium Antropologicum*, *31*(3), 863–868.
- Voracek, M., & Dressler, S. G. (2006). High (feminized) digit ratio (2D:4D) in Danish men: A question of measurement method? *Human Reproduction*, *21*(5), 1329–1331.
- Voracek, M., Manning, J. T., & Ponocny, I. (2005). Digit ratio (2D:4D) in homosexual and heterosexual men from Austria. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *34*(3), 335–340.
- Warren, C. W., et al. (1998). Sexual behavior among U.S. high school students, 1990–1995. *Family Planning Perspectives*, *30*(4), 170–172, 200.
- Watkins, D., McInerney, D., Akande, A., & Lee, C. (2003). An investigation of ethnic differences in the motivation and strategies for learning of students in desegregated South African Schools. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *34*(2), 189–194.
- Watkins, S. W., et al. (2003). Genetic variation among world populations: Inferences from 100 alu insertion polymorphisms. *Genome Research*, *13*(7), 1607–1618.
- Way, B. M., & Lieberman, M. D. (2010). Is there a genetic contribution to cultural differences? Collectivism, individualism and genetic markers of social sensitivity. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, *5*(2-3), 203–211.

- Weber, M. (1930). *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (T. Parsons & A. Giddens, Trans.). London/Boston: Unwin Hyman. Internet publication by *American Studies at the University of Virginia*. Available at <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/WEBER/toc.html>. Retrieved on October 10, 2004.
- Welkenhuysen-Gybels, J., Billiet, J., & Cambre, B. (2003). Adjustment for acquiescence in the assessment of the construct equivalence of Likert-type score items. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 34(6), 702–722.
- Welzel, C. (2010). How selfish are self-expression values? A civicness test. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 41(2), 152–174.
- White, D. R. (1988). Rethinking polygyny: Co-wives, codes and cultural systems. *Current Anthropology*, 29(4), 529–572.
- Whitelock, D. (Ed.) (1967). *Sweet's Anglo-Saxon reader in prose and verse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wilkinson, R. G., Kawachi, I., & Kennedy, B. P. (1998). Mortality, the social environment, crime and violence. *Sociology of health and illness*, 20(5), 578–597.
- Wilson, M., & Daly, M. (1997). Life expectancy, economic inequality, homicide, and reproductive timing in Chicago neighbourhoods. *British Medical Journal*, 314(7089), 1271–1274.
- Wilson, M., Daly, M., & Pound, N. (2002). An evolutionary psychological perspective on the modulation of competitive confrontation and risk-taking. In: D. W. Pfaff, A. P. Arnold, A. M. Etgen, S. E. Fahrback & R. T. Rubin (Eds), *Hormones, brain and behavior* (Vol. 5, pp. 381–408). San Diego: Academic Press.
- Wilson, W. J. (1987). *The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Woods, G. (1999). World competitiveness: Australia fair to middling. *Current issues brief No 6 1998–99*. Parliament of Australia. Internet publication. Available at <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/Pubs/CIB/1998-99/99cib06.htm>. Retrieved on October 8, 2009.
- World Bank Group. (2009). *World development indicators database*. The World Bank. Internet publication. Available at <http://web.worldbank.org>. Retrieved on March 10, 2009.
- World Bank Research Advisory Staff (1999). Why do savings rates vary across countries? *World Bank Policy and Research Bulletin*, 10(1). Internet publication. Available at <http://www.worldbank.org/html/dec/Publications/Bulletins/prb10,1.html>. Retrieved on November 1, 2006.
- World Health Organization (2009a). *Global status report on road safety: Time for action*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- World Health Organization. (2009b). *Suicide rates per 100,000 by country, year and sex. Most recent year available as of 2009*. Internet publication. Available at [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/prevention/suicide\\_rates/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide_rates/en/index.html). Retrieved on January 11, 2010.
- World Health Organization. (2010). *HIV/AIDS estimates 2005, 2003* (high estimates). UNAIDS/WHO Global Online Database. Internet publication. Available at <http://apps.who.int/globalatlas/dataQuery/default.asp>. Retrieved on April 16, 2010.
- World Values Survey. (2006). *On-line data analysis*. Available at [comwww.worldvaluessurvey.com](http://comwww.worldvaluessurvey.com). Retrieved in June–November 2006
- World Values Survey Association. (2008). World Values Survey 2005 official data file, v.20081015. Madrid: ASEP/JDS. Available at <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.com>. Retrieved on November 12, 2008.

- Wu, W., & Bond, M. (2006). National differences in predictors of suicide among young and elderly citizens: Linking societal predictors to psychological factors. *Archives of Suicide Research, 10*(1), 45–60.
- Zhivotovsky, L. A., Rosenberg, N. A., & Feldman, M. W. (2003). Features of evolution and expansion of modern humans, inferred from genomewide microsatellite markers. *American Journal of Human Genetics, 72*(5), 1171–1186.
- Zuboff, S. (1982). New worlds of computer-mediated work. *Harvard Business Review, 60*(5), 142–152.



## About the Author

Michael Minkov was born in 1959 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. He spent his childhood in his native country and his adolescence at the French Lyceum of La Marsa in Tunisia. He holds a master's degree in linguistics and a PhD in social anthropology and theory of culture from Sofia University St. Climent Ohridski, Bulgaria. During his student years, he studied and worked in Norway, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and the United Kingdom, and lived with American families in the United States.

Minkov started his academic career studying Old Germanic languages. He translated Old Icelandic texts into Bulgarian and poems from Old English (Anglo-Saxon) into French, subsequently published in Belgium. He is also the world's only author of a grammar of literary Erilia Romani — the Indic language of the West Bulgarian city-dwelling Roma (Gypsies) — published in the United States.

In the mid-1990s, Minkov studied management at the International Executive Development Center in Slovenia and was Secretary General of the Central and Eastern European Management Development Association (CEEMAN). It was at that time that he discovered Hofstede's classic model of cultural dimensions and soon afterwards became his disciple. In 2000, Minkov became the editor of the Bulgarian edition of Hofstede's classic book *Cultures and Organizations; Software of the Mind*. Ten years later, he co-authored the book's third edition, as Hofstede expanded and enriched his model with Minkov's work.

Academic versions of Minkov's main analyses have been published or are to appear in a number of peer-reviewed journals, such as *Asia Pacific Business Review*, *Cross-Cultural Research*, *Cross-Cultural Management*, *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management*, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, and *Psychological Reports*. Some of these were jointly written by Minkov and Hofstede.

Currently, Minkov teaches Cross-Cultural Awareness and Organizational Behavior on collaborative programs of International University, Sofia, with the University of Portsmouth and the University of Cardiff in the United Kingdom. Together with Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede, Mark Peterson, and Mikael Sondergaard, he teaches a summer course for PhD graduates in cross-cultural studies, held at the University of Aarhus, Denmark, and the University of Maastricht, the Netherlands. Minkov is also an active provider of executive programs in cultural awareness and organizational culture for multinational companies. His clients include Avon, Epiq, IBM, Italcementi, Lukoil, NetInfo, Nestle, Mondi International, Shared Services for Coca Cola Hellenic, Unicoms, and a number of Bulgarian companies.



# Author Index

- Abane, A. M., 137, 155  
Abraham, L., 156  
Adonis, L., 91  
Agnew, R., 139  
Agyei, W. K., 156  
Ahadi, S., 79  
Ajayi, A. A., 156  
Akande, A., 124  
Albores-Gallo, L., 172  
Ali Mohamed, F., 132  
Allen, R., 113  
Allik, J., 9–10, 20, 22, 36, 48, 50, 84, 91, 208, 249  
Al-Qaradawi, Y., 113–114  
Alvazzi del Frate, A., 212  
Alvear, S., 156  
Ambady, N., 91  
Amoko, D. H., 156  
Amuyunzu-Nyamongo, M., 155  
Anarfi, J., 137, 155  
Aplasca, M. R., 156  
Arieff, Z., 91  
Arikawa, H., 108  
Armeli, S., 91  
Aron, A., 134  
Arrindell, W. A., 80  
Arvey, R., 159, 161, 177  
Asai, M., 68, 181  
Ashkanasy, N. M., 71, 103, 208  
Avison, W. R., 138  
Awusabo-Asare, K., 137, 155
- Backman, L., 172  
Badasu, D. M., 137, 155  
Bagdonas, A., 172  
Bailey, A. A., 172  
Bailey, P., 156  
Baker, W. E., 29, 34, 49, 73, 104  
Bang, A. K., 172  
Barber, N., 138, 141, 169–170
- Bardi, A., 5, 47  
Baron, R., 137  
Barrett, E. S., 172  
Basanez, M., 49  
Bastos-Rodriguez, L., 38  
Batty, D. G., 142  
Batzer, M. A., 38  
Beach, H., 106  
Bechtold, D., 42, 179, 181, 186  
Belo, M. T., 156  
Bembenutty, H., 89  
Bempechat, J., 124, 127  
Benet-Martinez, V., 50, 84, 91  
Bertolote, J. M., 107  
Bhattacharyya, S., 59  
Bhawuk, D., 42, 179, 181, 186  
Biswas-Diener, R., 83  
Blagoev, V., 57, 59  
Blanchflower, D. G., 80  
Blizinsky, K. D., 36, 42  
Bond, M. H., 17, 47, 53, 57, 69, 107, 138–139, 186, 195  
Bond, M. K., 138–139  
Bontempo, R., 68, 181  
Boring, E. G., 3  
Boster, J. S., 10, 86  
Bosworth, B., 71  
Braithwaite, J., 138  
Braithwaite, V., 138  
Brown, D. E., 1, 19, 36, 215  
Buga, G. A., 156  
Bundred, P. E., 41, 172, 174  
Burgess, S., 5, 22, 47, 249  
Buss, D. M., 141, 157  
Byrne, D., 137
- Caldwell, J. C., 142, 154–155  
Caldwell, P., 154  
Cardenas, C., 156  
Cavalli-Sforza, L. L., 38

- Ceulemans, E., 50, 83  
 Chan, D. K. S., 180  
 Chanaiwa, D. S., 132  
 Chang, F. M., 91  
 Chen, X. P., 180  
 Chiao, J. Y., 36, 42, 91  
 Cho, Y. I., 20  
 Choe, M. K., 156  
 Choi, I., 95  
 Choi, Y., 95  
 Chomsky, N., 219  
 Clark, K., 72  
 Cochran, G., 177  
 Cohen, P. T., 131  
 Connelly, B. S., 205  
 Connelly, H. J., 108  
 Conner, T. S., 91  
 Coon, H. M., 179–182  
 Corr, P., 90  
 Cousins, A. J., 172  
 Covault, J., 91  
 Cowden, J., 172  
 Cula-Malunkyovada sutta, 120  
 Cuneo, P., 152  
 Cunha, A. J. L. A., 156
- Daly, M., 138–139, 142, 144, 152  
 Dantas, V. C. S., 156  
 Darwin, C., 36  
 Davidsson, T., 172  
 Davies, J., 132  
 de Velasco, A. M., 156  
 Deary, I. J., 142  
 Derick Sohn, J. H., 72  
 Deschamps, J. C., 68, 181–182  
 Diamond, J. M., 51, 90, 175  
 Diener, E. F., 50, 79–80, 83, 90, 95, 180, 249  
 Diener, M., 79–80  
 Divale, W., 176  
 Djamtoska, S., 218  
 Dorfman, P. W., 14  
 Dornbusch, R., 53, 55–56, 58, 61, 247  
 Dreber, A., 91  
 Dressler, S. G., 172  
 Dugan, S., 47, 180
- Duntley, J. D., 141  
 Dweck, C. S., 95  
 Dzokoto, V., 79
- Eastham, J. A., 41  
 Edgerton, R. B., 132  
 Edibamode, E. E., 172  
 Ekstrand, M. L., 156  
 Elias, N., 184  
 Ember, C. R., 89, 141, 168  
 Ember, M., 89, 141, 168  
 Epema, E. J., 156  
 Esau, L., 91  
 Esmer, Y., 30  
 Everett, D., 88, 90, 162, 218–219  
 Eysenck, H. J., 159
- Fajnzylber, P., 138, 151  
 Fang, T., 103  
 Fanimokun, A., 18  
 Faurie, C., 139  
 Fawehinmi, H. B., 172  
 Fernandez-Guasti, A., 172  
 Ferrell, R. E., 91  
 Fincher, C. L., 35  
 Findlay, A. M., 132  
 Fink, B., 172, 174  
 Finney, R., 89  
 Fischer, R., 123, 182  
 Fischer, S., 53, 55–56, 58, 61, 247  
 Fisher, H., 141, 168  
 Flanagan, B. F., 41  
 Fleischmann, A., 107  
 Foa, R., 79  
 Fontaine, J. R. J., 123  
 Food, 131  
 Fordham, S., 126  
 Fortune, 114  
 Foy, P., 100, 249  
 Franklin, M., 172  
 Freedland, S. J., 41  
 Fu, P. P., 70  
 Fugere, M. A., 172  
 Fulker, D. W., 159  
 Furnham, A., 57

- Gabrieli, J. D. E., 134  
 Galaburda, A. M., 171  
 Gallimore, R., 89  
 Gallup, J. L., 53, 55, 60  
 Gamba, R. J., 20  
 Garelli, S., 59  
 Gaulin, S. J. C., 41  
 Gelderblom, O., 54  
 Gelfand, M., 42, 179, 181, 186  
 Geschwind, N., 171  
 Givon, T., 218  
 Godman, D., 119  
 Gordon, P., 160  
 Gottfredson, M. R., 142  
 Graham, S. E., 124, 127  
 Green, E. G. T., 68, 181–182  
 Greenholtz, J., 111, 195  
 Gromoll, J., 175  
 Gudykunst, W. B., 111, 193, 217  
 Gunthert, K. C., 91  
 Gupta, V., 71, 103, 208  
 Guss, C. D., 118  
 Gutchess, A. H., 134
- Hagerty, M., 79  
 Hall, E. T., 215, 218  
 Hamamura, T., 96  
 Hampden-Turner, C., 48, 164, 201, 211, 215,  
 218  
 Han, S., 156  
 Hanges, P. J., 4  
 Hansen, S., 172  
 Hardy, J., 177  
 Harpaz, I., 73  
 Harpending, H. C., 177  
 Harris, M., 5, 10, 22, 47, 249  
 Harrison, L. E., 53  
 Hatfield, R., 132  
 Haviland, W. A., 1, 16, 132, 141, 168–169  
 Hayes, R. H., 72  
 Hayward, R. D., 180–181  
 Hearst, N., 156  
 Heckelman, J. C., 58  
 Hedden, T., 134  
 Heine, S. J., 3, 94–96, 111, 195
- Helle, S., 172  
 Henning, J., 172  
 Henrich, J., 3  
 Henzi, P., 172  
 Hernandez-Guzman, L., 172  
 Hirschi, T., 142  
 Hofstede, G., 9, 20, 33, 42, 45–46, 48, 53,  
 55–57, 69, 80–81, 90, 95, 103–104, 179,  
 195, 217–218  
 Honekopp, J., 172  
 Hooker, J., 205  
 Hou, Y., 96  
 House, R. J., 4, 14  
 Hsing, A. W., 41  
 Huang, J. C. T., 219  
 Hudes, E. S., 156  
 Hurd, P. L., 172
- Inglehart, R., 29, 34, 41–43, 49, 73, 79–80,  
 104  
 Isaacs, W. B., 41
- Jacobs, K. W., 138  
 Jahoda, G., 1  
 Javidan, M., 53, 59, 208  
 Jensen, A. R., 177  
 Jimenez, N. V., 124, 127  
 Jirecek, K., 217  
 Johnson, D. D. P., 172  
 Johnson, T., 20  
 Joiner, T. E., 107  
 Jorde, L. B., 36, 38–39
- Kaljee, L. M., 156  
 Kam, K. Y., 94  
 Kamischke, A., 175  
 Kashima, E. S., 218  
 Kashima, Y., 218  
 Katsuragi, S., 91  
 Kaur, M., 91  
 Kawachi, I., 138  
 Kelley, M. L., 76  
 Kemmelmeier, M., 31, 179–182  
 Kennedy, B. P., 138  
 Ketay, S., 134

- Kidd, J. R., 91  
 Kidd, K. K., 91  
 Kim, J., 94  
 Kim, M. S., 94  
 Kim-Prieto, C., 50, 83  
 Kirkcaldy, B., 57  
 Kirkman, B. L., 16  
 Kitayama, S., 94, 133, 192  
 Klingemann, H. D., 41, 79–80  
 Konstantinov, A., 134  
 Kranzler, H. R., 91  
 Krohn, M. D., 138  
 Kudoh, T., 193  
 Kuepper, Y., 172  
 Kuhnen, C. M., 91  
 Kulesa, P., 20  
 Kuppens, P., 50, 83  
  
 Laaksonen, T., 172  
 Lafferty, K. D., 35  
 Laland, K. N., 36  
 Lambsdorff, J. G., 205  
 Landes, D., 85  
 Lederman, D., 138, 151  
 Lee, C., 124  
 Lee, D. M., 175  
 Lee, M. S., 156  
 Lee, R. B., 51–52, 88–89, 139  
 Lee, S. H., 156  
 Lehman, A., 5, 22, 47, 249  
 Lehman, D. R., 94, 111, 195  
 Leigh, B. C., 156  
 Lester, D., 108  
 Leung K., 7  
 Levine, R. V., 49, 105  
 Lewis, R. D., 116  
 Lewis-Jones, D. I., 40  
 Li, J., 124  
 Lic, I., 20  
 Lim, F., 138–139  
 Lindberg, J., 52  
 List-Hilton, C., 172  
 Liu, H., 156  
  
 Livak, K. J., 91  
 Loayza, N., 138, 151  
 Loehlin, J. C., 172  
 Loring, P. L., 138  
 Lotrich, F. E., 91  
 Low, B. S., 141  
 Lucas, R. E., 80  
 Lucca, N., 68, 181  
 Lynn, M., 80, 90, 106  
 Lynn, R., 22, 57, 108, 143, 161, 177, 245  
  
 Maltseva, K., 10, 86  
 Mancuso, L., 108  
 Mandel, J. S., 156  
 Mankiw, G., 61  
 Manning, J. T., 40–41, 172, 174–175  
 Marangu, L. T., 156  
 Marin, B. V., 20  
 Marin, G., 20  
 Markus, H. R., 94, 192  
 Marlowe, F. W., 141–142, 168  
 Martin, M. O., 100, 249  
 Martin, N. G., 172  
 Martin, S., 172  
 Maseland, R., 208  
 Matasha, 156  
 Mather, F. M., 174  
 Matsumoto, D., 193  
 Matsumoto, H., 94  
 Mauro, P., 58  
 Mawson, A. R., 138  
 Mayer, E. V., 89  
 Mayfield, M. S., 71, 103, 208  
 McArthur, R. H., 147  
 McBurney, D. H., 41  
 McClelland, D. C., 53  
 McCrae, R. R., 5, 9–10, 20, 22, 36, 48, 50, 84,  
     90–91, 208, 217  
 McDermott, R., 172  
 McFadden, D., 172  
 McNerney, D., 124  
 McIntyre, M. H., 172  
 Medland, S. E., 172, 175

- Melech, G., 5, 22, 47, 249  
 Menozzi, P., 38  
 Meon, P. G., 58  
 Merati, T. P., 156  
 Merton, R. K., 139  
 Messner, S. F., 138  
 Miller, J., 156  
 Minkov, M., 11, 21, 45–46, 55–57, 59, 80–82, 91, 100–101, 103–104, 108, 115, 124, 145, 219, 247  
 Mogaji, A., 18  
 Montesquieu, C. L. S., 33, 51, 54  
 Moor, N., 134  
 Moore, A. R., 155  
 Moreno, A., 49  
 Morisky, D. E., 156  
 Morris, L., 156  
 Morrison, D. M., 156  
 Mukiza-Gapere, J., 156  
 Mullis, I. V. S., 100–101, 249  
 Muratake, M., 91  
 Muroya, K., 41  
 Murray, D. R., 35, 167  
 Myles, S., 36
- Nagai, M., 91  
 Nakada, T., 41  
 Nakane, C., 192  
 Ncayiyana, D. J., 156  
 Neckebrouck, V., 133  
 Need, A., 134  
 Neeleman, A., 219  
 Neisser, U., 159, 177  
 Nelson, E., 172  
 Newmeyer, F. J., 218  
 Newton, D. J., 41  
 Nian, Z., 95  
 Nieschlag, E., 175  
 Nippoda, Y., 220  
 Nisbett, R. E., 95, 132–133, 177, 193  
 Nishida, T., 111, 193  
 Nishii, L. H., 42, 179, 181, 186  
 Noorderhaven, N. G., 56, 123
- Norasukkunkit, V., 94  
 Norenzayan, A., 3, 49, 95, 105  
 Norris, P., 49, 73  
 Nunez, L., 156
- Obolensky, D., 135  
 Ochiai, M., 91  
 Odling-Smee, J., 36  
 Ogata, T., 41  
 Ogbu, J., 126  
 Ogliastri, E., 70  
 Ohara, K., 91  
 Oishi, S., 50, 79–80, 83, 95, 180, 249  
 Oladipo, G. S., 172  
 Ones, D., 205  
 Ones, D. S., 80, 90  
 Oppong, J., 155  
 Ordu, K. S., 172  
 Orubuloye, I. O., 154  
 Osunwoke, E., 172  
 Oswald, A. J., 80  
 Oswald, W. H., 132, 141, 168  
 Ouweneel, P., 80  
 Owens, V., 5, 22, 47, 249  
 Oyserman, D., 179–182
- Paabo, S., 38  
 Paez, D., 68, 181–182  
 Paik, Y. S., 72  
 Pakstis, A., 91  
 Paldam, M., 205  
 Park, U. I., 156  
 Paxman, J. M., 156  
 Pearson, R. E., 131  
 Pena, S. D. J., 38  
 Peng, K., 95–96, 111, 195  
 Perkins, R. D., 218  
 Peterson, C., 79  
 Peterson, M. F., 18, 45, 50  
 Philbrick, K., 49, 105  
 Phillips, D. J., 132  
 Piazza, A., 38  
 Pimenta, J. R., 38

- Pollock, B. G., 91  
 Ponocny, I., 172  
 Poortinga, Y. H., 20  
 Pound, N., 138–139, 142, 152  
 Powell, B., 58  
 Price-Williams, D. R., 89  
 Putz, D. A., 41
- Radhakrishnan, P., 79  
 Raffalovich, L. E., 138  
 Ramirez, M., 89  
 Ramirez, S., 156  
 Rasmussen, F., 142  
 Raymond, M., 139  
 Read, A. F., 170  
 Realo, A., 9–10, 20, 48, 208  
 Rice, T. W., 79  
 Richardson, K., 3  
 Robbins, S. P., 7, 73  
 Rosen, S. P., 172  
 Rosenberg, N. A., 38  
 Rotenberg, K. J., 89  
 Rushton, J. P., 138, 144, 147, 174, 177, 247
- Sabbasava sutta, 120  
 Sachs, J. D., 53, 55, 56, 60  
 Sagiv, L., 47  
 Sakado, K., 91  
 Sakado, M., 91  
 Salomao, F. M., 156  
 Sanchez-Burks, J., 193  
 Sandholtz, W., 205  
 Sartor, O., 41  
 Sasagawa, I., 41  
 Schaller, M., 35, 167  
 Scherer, K., 193  
 Schimmack, U., 50, 79, 83, 95, 180, 249  
 Schmitt, D. P., 22, 50, 84, 91, 141, 155, 157, 249  
 Schultz, P. W., 201  
 Schwartz, R. S., 37  
 Schwartz, S. H., 5, 18, 22, 30, 47, 50, 123, 194, 249  
 Scolon, C. N., 83  
 Scutt, D., 40
- Sekkat, K., 58  
 Semov, M., 11, 75, 216  
 Serre, D., 38  
 Seydel, H., 172, 174  
 Shavitt, S., 20  
 Shin, H. C., 94  
 Shrok, P., 138  
 Shultz, S., 172  
 Simon, H., 85  
 Simoni, M., 175  
 Singh, D., 172  
 Singh, K. S., 118  
 Smith, A., 51  
 Smith, P. B., 6, 9, 18, 20, 47, 50, 180  
 Sneed, C. D., 156  
 Snir, R., 73  
 Someya, T., 91  
 Spencer-Rodgers, J., 95–96  
 Sporter, R. J., 41  
 Startz, R., 53, 55–56, 58, 61, 247  
 Steel, P., 16, 80, 90  
 Steele, B. J., 79  
 Sternberg, R. J., 163, 177  
 Stewart, A., 172  
 Suarmiarta, E., 156  
 Suh, E. M., 79–80  
 Sully de Luque, M., 208  
 Suzuki, Y., 41, 91  
 Svensson, J., 58  
 Syska, A., 175  
 Szendroi, K., 219
- Taagepera, R., 205  
 Tafarodi, R. W., 193  
 Tajman, A., 156  
 Takata, T., 94  
 Tang, H., 38  
 Taras, V., 16  
 Tateno, T., 41  
 Tatsuro, S., 132  
 Teixeira, E. G., 156  
 Temple, M. T., 156  
 Templer, D. I., 108, 144, 174, 247  
 Tengstrom, A., 142  
 Tennen, H., 91

- Terracciano, A., 9–10, 20, 22, 48, 50, 91, 208, 217  
Thanzami, V., 172, 174  
Thomas, A., 85  
Thorgilsson, A., 135  
Thornhill, R., 35  
Tidjani, B., 56, 123  
Timmerman, M.E., 50, 83  
Tochigi, M., 91  
Tov, W., 90  
Treisman, D., 205  
Trevor-Roberts, E., 71, 103, 208  
Triandis, H. C., 68, 74, 80, 179–181, 191–192  
Trivers, R. L., 172  
Trocki, K., 156  
Trompenaars, F., 47–48, 164, 180, 201, 211, 215, 218  
Tseng, H. M., 76  
  
Ultee, W., 134  
Uskul, A. K., 133  
  
Van Herk, H., 20  
van Hoorn, A., 208  
van Kesteren, J., 212  
Vanhanen, T., 22, 108, 143, 161, 177, 245  
Vauclair, M. C., 123  
Veenhoven, R., 79–80  
Velichkov, G., 211  
Venkatramana, P., 172  
Verhallen, T. M. M., 20  
Villareal, M. J., 68, 181  
Viner, A., 203  
  
Von Echarstein, S., 175  
Von Horn, A., 172  
Voracek, M., 108, 172  
  
Wallbott, H., 193  
Wang, L., 96  
Warner, A., 56  
Warren, C. W., 156  
Watkins, D., 124  
Weber, M., 29, 32, 53, 55  
Weiss, L. B., 89  
Welzel, C., 50, 79  
Whatley, A., 156  
White, D. R., 141  
White, H., 139  
Whitney, G., 138  
Wilkinson, R. G., 138  
Wilson, E. O., 147  
Wilson, J., 40  
Wilson, M., 138–139, 142, 144, 152  
Wilson, W. J., 126  
Wooding, S. P., 36, 38–39  
Woods, G., 59  
Wu, R., 70  
Wu, W., 107  
  
Yang, S. M., 111, 193  
Yang, Y., 70  
Ybarra, O., 193  
Ye, J., 70  
  
Zheng, Q., 41  
Zuboff, S., 214



# Subject Index

- 2D:4D ratios / finger ratios, 40–41, 171–174
- adherence to agreements, 212
- adolescent fertility, 8, 17, 137, 140, 142–145, 147, 155–156, 162, 165–167, 185, 227, 229, 233, 235, 245–247
- androgene receptor gene, 41, 175
- attitudes, 7, 12, 16, 21, 27, 30–31, 40–43, 47, 51, 56–57, 61, 68, 96, 123–124, 144, 151, 154–156, 185, 193–194, 197, 201, 203, 206, 210, 211–212, 223–224, 230
- behaviors, 8, 10, 12, 16, 31, 39, 40, 42, 49, 61, 72, 92, 96, 123, 143–147, 151, 156, 165, 181, 185, 187, 201, 203, 210, 224, 233, 235
- beliefs, 2, 6, 7, 10, 12, 16, 20, 27, 29, 30, 31, 40, 41–43, 47–49, 52, 55, 61, 95–96, 96, 97, 111, 123, 129, 144, 151, 185, 237–239, 255
- Bogomilism, 135
- CAG: see “androgen receptor gene”, 41, 175
- cognitive ability, 8, 10, 16, 39, 61, 96, 123, 144, 151, 185
- collectivism, 3–4, 33, 35–36, 42, 45–48, 80, 179–182, 186–187, 195–196, 244
- Confucian dynamism, 68, 69, 104
- corruption, 27, 57–59, 80, 84, 144, 179, 186–187, 204–206, 209, 228, 230–235, 244–245
- culture, 1–5, 7, 9–13, 15–19, 21, 23, 25, 27–31, 33–37, 39, 41–43, 45–49, 51–57, 59, 60–63, 68–72, 74–76, 78, 81, 84–86, 88, 92–93, 103–106, 109, 111–115, 123–126, 129, 133, 138, 143–144, 146, 151, 154–155, 159–165, 171, 175–176, 179–181, 183, 185, 187, 192–193, 195, 196–197, 199, 200–201, 203, 205, 206–210, 212–214, 218–221, 225–226, 229, 232–234, 237–239, 249, 281
- cultural distance, 27–28, 30
- data reduction, 22–23, 27
- delay of gratification, 88, 158, 166
- direct versus oblique communication, 217
- domestic violence, 199
- economic growth, 27, 33, 46, 51, 53–61, 65–69, 81, 84–86, 93, 127–129, 179, 229, 231–232, 237, 239
- educational achievement, 5, 21, 27, 62, 93, 96, 100–101, 103, 123, 125–127, 130, 158, 161–162, 227–229, 231, 233, 235, 239, 247
- extroversion, 179, 216–217
- face (as a cultural concept), 94, 103–105, 127, 133
- factor analysis, 104, 144, 244, 245, 246–248
- female-to-male ratios, 169
- future orientation (GLOBE’s concept), 208
- gender inequality, 121–122
- handedness, 171
- happiness, 21, 35, 41–42, 51, 79–84, 87, 90, 107, 228, 231–232, 234–235
- HIV, 17, 137, 140, 142–144, 146, 153, 155, 157, 166–167, 169, 185, 227, 229, 231–233, 235, 245–247
- intelligence, 2–4, 26, 41, 95–96, 108, 137, 142–143, 158–159, 161–163, 166, 175–177
- individualism, 3–4, 17, 31, 33, 35–36, 42, 45–48, 80, 179–182, 186–187, 195, 217, 221, 234–235, 244
- integration (as a cultural dimension), 181, 195–196
- intolerance, 76, 81, 121, 202
- karoshi, 72–73

## 292 *Subject Index*

- life satisfaction, 79, 81–82, 84, 87, 107, 220, 221, 231–232, 249
- life control, 79, 81–82, 91, 235, 249
- life expectancy, 144, 147, 158, 166–167, 170, 247
- looseness (as a cultural dimension): see “tightness“, 82, 86, 123, 129, 165, 176, 221
- mating competition, 141–142, 145, 147, 151, 165–167, 170, 172–176
- moral discipline, 68–69
- moral inclusiveness, 194–195
- multidimensional scaling, 24–25, 28, 226
- murder, 8, 11, 28, 85, 138–145, 151–153, 162, 165–166, 167, 169, 171, 173–174, 185, 228–231, 233–235, 245–247, 251
- national culture, 16–18, 30, 46–47, 57, 59, 62, 72, 81, 103, 123, 208, 225
- norms, 6, 10, 16, 20, 27, 30–31, 40–43, 47–49, 52, 55–56, 61, 74, 80, 96–97, 110, 113, 123, 144, 151, 154–155, 181, 185, 187, 203, 230, 238–239, 255
- origins of culture, 28
- personal pride, 105–106, 109
- political correctness, 40, 137, 204
- political freedoms, 77, 80, 87
- polygyny, 16, 141, 154, 168–170, 174
- product quality, 179, 211, 222
- protection of the environment, 179, 200
- punctuality, 179, 184, 214–215
- racism, 48, 163, 170, 175, 179, 184, 201–203, 222–234
- rape, 138, 141, 144, 151, 153, 166, 173, 233–234, 247, 254
- religion, 5–6, 17, 20–21, 29–30, 62, 67, 96, 116–120, 126, 130, 185, 195, 232
- response style, 20–21
- road death tolls, 5, 8, 144–145, 184–186, 210, 228, 230–231, 234–235, 244–246
- rule orientation, 206
- rule of law: see “rule orientation“, 58–59, 80–81, 144, 179, 206, 208–209
- safety measures, 179, 184, 210, 222, 232, 234
- self-effacement, 94, 104, 124
- self-enhancement, 94, 96, 98, 101, 104, 106, 124, 127, 131
- self-perceptions, 8, 10, 16, 21, 27, 49, 61, 96, 123, 144, 151, 185, 238
- self-reliance, 68, 182
- service to others, 20, 104
- sexual networking, 142, 153, 154–155, 166–168, 170, 228
- skin color, 174, 247
- social polarization, 130, 229
- socio-economic inequality, 138–139, 141–142, 165–166
- sociosexuality, 156, 157
- spouse age preference, 157
- stereotypes, 9–10, 16, 48–49, 61, 86, 96, 123, 144, 151, 173, 181–182, 185, 208
- strain theory, 139
- subjective health, 79, 82, 108
- subjective well-being, 35, 79–82, 84, 90–91, 107–108, 138
- suicide rates, 5–8, 21–24, 93, 107–109, 130, 138, 228–229, 231, 233–235, 239
- testosterone, 40–41, 171–172, 174–175
- tightness (as a cultural dimension), 74–75, 81–82, 86, 123, 129, 165, 176, 221
- tipping practices, 106
- thrift and saving, 69
- twinning rates, 175
- uncertainty avoidance, 6, 16, 53, 59, 70, 80, 181, 186, 208
- universal culture, 19

values, 1–2, 5–10, 12–14, 16, 18–22, 25–27,  
29–33, 40–43, 45–47, 49, 52–53, 55–57,  
60–62, 65, 67–68, 71–73, 77, 86, 88,  
90–92, 95–97, 103–104, 113, 123, 126,  
129, 144, 151, 163–164, 172, 181, 185,  
187, 194–196, 199, 203, 223, 228–231,  
234, 237–239, 244–249, 255

workaholism: see “karoshi”,  
72–73

xenophobia: see “racism”, 48, 163,  
170, 175, 179, 184, 201–203,  
222–223, 234