

CULTURE'S CONSEQUENCES

CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY SERIES

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CULTURE'S CONSEQUENCES

International Differences in Work-Related Values

ABRIDGED EDITION

Geert Hofstede



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"Vérité en-deça des Pyrénées,
erreur au-delà"

Blaise Pascal, 1623-1662*

ABOUT THE SERIES

The *Sage Series on Cross-Cultural Research and Methodology* was created to present comparative studies on cross-cultural topics and interdisciplinary research. Inaugurated in 1975, the *Series* is designed to satisfy a growing need to integrate research method and theory and to dissect issues in comparative analyses across cultures. The recent ascent of the cross-cultural method in social and behavioral science has largely been due to a recognition of methodological power inherent in the comparative perspective; a truly international approach to the study of behavioral, social, and cultural variables can be done only within such a methodological framework.

Each volume in the *Series* presents substantive cross-cultural studies and considerations of the strengths, interrelationships, and weaknesses of its various methodologies, drawing upon work done in anthropology, political science, psychology, and sociology. Both individual researchers knowledgeable in more than one discipline and teams of specialists with differing disciplinary backgrounds have contributed to the *Series*. While each individual volume may represent the integration of only a few disciplines, the cumulative totality of the *Series* will reflect an effort to bridge gaps of methodology and conceptualizations across all disciplines and many cultures.

As co-editors, it is our pleasure to present *Culture's Consequences* (Volume 5) by Geert Hofstede, which breaks new ground by moving into the domain of international organizations. Hofstede's book is the result of a prodigious effort in scholarship and methodology, and will be heralded as a major source of information about value differences around the world. Imagine the task which Hofstede took on with such enthusiasm: He analyzes data collected in detailed questionnaire format from hundreds of individuals in 40 countries, and at two points in time. At the same time, he pays attention to all of the attendant methodological pitfalls associated with research of this kind. Finally, he makes the entire effort relevant, understandable, and sound from both a theoretical and practical standpoint. Hofstede has succeeded in doing all of these things, and has uncovered four value dimensions that may be so fundamental to human activity that they will serve as necessary criteria in much future culture-comparative work. The book is an invaluable addition to the *Series* and to a truly international and interdisciplinary audience of cross-cultural researchers.

—Walter J. Lonner
Western Washington University

—John W. Berry
Queen's University

*from *Pensées*, 60 (294). My translation: "There are truths on this side of the Pyrenees which are falsehoods on the other."

me from psychology into sociology and then into political science and anthropology; it also led us to living as a family in three countries, while surviving on money from five. To a large extent it has determined our lives over the past eight years. It was not always smooth and easy, but we have not regretted it. Never a dull moment.

A preface is the place for paying tribute to one's supporters. My primary tribute goes to the HERMES Corporation and its unnamed management, who believed us when we claimed that these were useful data to collect and who afterwards made the data available to general research; while from 1975-1978 they also supplied a research grant to support my work. Then there is a long list of persons who at some time contributed to the progress of the project. Among the pioneers of the HERMES study I must mention David Sirota, who created many of the questions that afterwards proved so important as indicators of culture, and somewhat later Paul de Koninck and Allen Kraut. There are the data processors who managed my requests for handling the unwieldy data bank for the world's largest survey; in particular, Frits Claus and Jack Zandstra. There are the statistics experts who helped with some phases of the analysis: Peter Van Hoesel at Leyden University, Klaus Brockhoff at Kiel University, and Zvi Maimon at Tel Aviv University. There are my colleagues at the European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management at Brussels who stimulated me and acted as critical discussion partners; in particular, Alan Dale, Claude Faucheux, André Laurent, and Bengt Stymne. There are those who critically read through the manuscript and commented upon it: Torbjörn Stjernberg, Steven Velds (who read everything), Harry Triandis, Alberto Marradi, Robert Marsh, Seenun Srinivasan, and Wilfrid Dixon (who read parts). There is the competent staff of the European Institute—in particular Gerry Dirickx, who supplied library assistance, and my most essential supporter, Christiane Merckaert, who first turned 18 almost unreadable manuscripts into working papers and then typed the book.

Finally, there is a team of interested discussion partners and critics, experienced in multicultural living, sharing their observations, the younger among them even willing (if properly compensated) to act as research associate or administrative assistant. I mean Maaïke Hofstede-Van den Hoek, Gert-Jan Hofstede, Rokus Hofstede, Bart Hofstede, and Gideon Hofstede. This is more their book than they will believe.

—Geert Hofstede

Zwijndrecht, Netherlands
Spring 1980

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The survival of mankind will depend to a large extent on the ability of people who think differently to act together. International collaboration presupposes some understanding of where others' thinking differs from ours. Exploring the way in which nationality predisposes our thinking is therefore not an intellectual luxury. A better understanding of invisible cultural differences is one of the main contributions the social sciences can make to practical policy makers in governments, organizations, and institutions—and to ordinary citizens.

Highlighting culture-dependent differences in thinking and acting is not always a welcome intervention. My general experience in discussing the topics of this book 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.

Readers of the book may go through the same kind of experiences. Multicultural readers and those who have earlier gone through one or more culture shocks in their lives may find that the book expresses in formal terms much that they already intuitively knew. For readers whose activities have so far been confined within a single national culture, the book itself may have a certain culture-shock effect: They will find question marks attached to the universal validity of much that they have taken for granted so far and of much that has become dear to them.

Nevertheless, I hope the book will find both multicultural and monocultural readers in many of the countries described and in others as well; and that many of these readers will respond to the author's request of feedback and descriptions of experiences (see Appendix 3). The book aims at a readership of policy makers in public and private organizations and scholars and students from various disciplines: comparative management, anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, sociology, comparative law, history, and social geography.

The research project which forms the basis of this book has a long history, going back to the preparation of the first international HERMES survey in 1966. I could not foresee then that my involvement with this survey should eventually lead to my spending five years, from late 1973 to the end of 1978, on in-depth research on *Culture's Consequences*. Some of us suspected the scientific importance of the HERMES data as early as 1968. My colleagues of those days went on to other tasks; I alone remained to follow the intellectual track offered by this unique data base. It led

PREFACE TO THE ABRIDGED EDITION

The original integral edition of *Culture's Consequences* was put together as a scholarly book, including all source data and statistical proofs for the arguments presented. For those readers who are willing to take both the data and the statistics for granted, this abridged edition limits itself to the arguments, and refers the reader to the integral edition for proof. It has further reduced the length of the text by leaving out some sections more concerned with methodology than with conclusions. Finally, it has reduced the number of literature references and footnotes.

—G. H.

Zwijndrecht, Netherlands
Autumn 1982

SUMMARY OF THE BOOK

This book explores the differences in thinking and social action that exist between members of 40 different modern nations. It argues that people carry "mental programs" which are developed in the family in early childhood and reinforced in schools and organizations, and that these mental programs contain a component of national culture. They are most clearly expressed in the different values that predominate among people from different countries.

Cross-cultural studies proliferate in all the social sciences, but they usually lack a theory of the key variable: culture itself. Names of countries are usually treated as residues of undefined variance in the phenomena found. *Culture's Consequences* aims at being specific about the elements of which culture is composed. It identifies four main dimensions along which dominant value systems in the 40 countries can be ordered and which affect human thinking, organizations, and institutions in predictable ways.

The data used for the empirical part of the research were extracted from an existing bank of paper-and-pencil survey results collected within subsidiaries of one large multinational business organization in 40 countries, and covering among others many questions about values. The survey was held twice, around 1968 and around 1972, producing a total of over 116,000 questionnaires; respondents can be matched by occupation, age, and sex. Additional data were collected among managers participating in international management development courses and unrelated to the first multinational business organization. The four main dimensions on which country cultures differ were revealed by theoretical reasoning and statistical analysis. They were labeled Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism, and Masculinity. Each of the 40 countries could be given a score on these four dimensions.

The book shows that the same four dimensions are reflected in data from completely different sources, both survey studies of various kinds and nonsurvey comparative studies like McClelland's Achievement Motivation Analysis based on a content analysis of children's books. Altogether, data from 38 other studies comparing from five to 39 countries are significantly correlated with one or more of the four dimensions. With few exceptions, these other studies so far had not been related to each other by their authors or by anyone else. In addition, the four dimensions show some significant and meaningful correlations with geographic, economic, demographic, and political national indicators.

The book shows how countries on the basis of their scores on the four dimensions can be divided into culture areas and in some cases is able to point to historical reasons that are likely to have led to the cultural differentiation between the areas.

The fact that the survey data were collected twice over a four-year interval allows an analysis of value developments over this period; it shows no convergence between countries but some worldwide or almost worldwide value shifts.

The differences demonstrated in this book have profound consequences for the validity of the transfer of theories and working methods from one country to another. In the last chapter, the findings are interpreted on behalf of policy makers in national but especially in international and multinational organizations who are confronted daily with the problems of collaboration of members of their staff carrying different culturally influenced mental programs.

Chapter 1

VALUES AND CULTURE

SUMMARY OF THIS CHAPTER

This is an introductory chapter which deals with basic questions of the definition and measurement of "*mental programs*" in people in general, and *values* and *culture* in particular. Mental programs can be found at the universal, the collective, and the individual level. They must be operationalized in order to be measured; four different strategies of operationalization are discussed. Values are distinguished into *values as the desired* and *values as the desirable*. Culture is defined as collective programming of the mind. The word is reserved for describing entire societies; for groups within societies, "subculture" is used. A diagram suggests how culture patterns are rooted in value systems of major groups of the population and how they are stabilized over long periods in history.

The chapter then goes into the study of culture and its specific methodological problems: We change the level of analysis from the individual to society. It refers to the "ecological fallacy" and signals a not infrequent "reverse ecological fallacy." It shows the dangers of ethnocentrism and disciplinary parochialism; and it lists the multitude of different disciplines that can contribute to the comparative study of national cultures. Problems of language and the translation of research instruments are discussed, as well as problems of matching samples in different cultures to obtain functional equivalence. It is shown how marginal phenomena in societies can be as meaningful for comparison as modal phenomena.

The concept of *dimensions of culture* is introduced by an inquiry into the philosophical opposition between the specific and the general, the different and the similar. On the basis of this, four strategies for comparative multisociety studies are dis-

level 7; he is less complex than his object. He can never completely grasp what goes on at the level of social systems, and therefore his perception of them will never be exactly the same as his colleague's perception. I disagree with those authors who describe the social sciences as "not yet" sciences: we can "not yet" reach the same precision, consensus, and understanding as do the physical sciences. I think their "not yet" is naive; the object of the social sciences is different in kind, not in degree. Social scientists approach the social reality as the blind men from the Indian fable approached the elephant; the one who gets hold of a leg thinks it is a tree, the one who gets the tail thinks it is a rope, but none of them understands what the whole animal is like. We will never be more than blind men in front of the social elephant; but by joining forces with other blind men and women and approaching the animal from as many different angles as possible, we may find out more about it than we could ever do alone. In other words, there is no such thing as objectivity in the study of social reality: We will always be subjective, but we may at least try to be "intersubjective," pooling and integrating a variety of subjective points of view of different observers.

What we do, in fact, when we try to understand social systems is use models. Models are lower-level systems which we can understand better and which we substitute for what we cannot understand. We simplify because we have no other choice. It is in this simplification that our subjectivity enters the process. What it means for the use of constructs is that definitions of constructs in social science reflect not only its object, but also the specific mental programming of the scholar who makes or borrows them. Therefore, no single definition of a construct in social science is likely to do justice to its complexity.

Let us come back to the issue of mental programs. Every person's mental programming is partly unique, partly shared with others. We can distinguish broadly three levels of uniqueness in mental programs, as pictured in Figure 1.1. The least unique but most basic is the *universal* level of mental programming which is shared by all, or almost all, mankind. This is the biological "operating system" of the human body, but it includes a range of expressive behaviors such as laughing and weeping and associative and aggressive behaviors which are found in higher animals. This level of our programming has been popularized by ethologists (biologists specialized in animal behavior) such as Morris (1968), Lorenz (1970), and Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1976). The *collective* level of mental programming is shared with some but not with all other people; it is common to people belonging to a certain group or category, but different among people belonging to other groups or categories. The whole area of subjective human culture (called "subjective" to distinguish it from "objective" human artifacts; see Triandis, 1972: 4) belongs to this level. It includes the language in which we express ourselves, the deference we show to our elders, the physical distance from other people we maintain in order to feel comfortable, the way we perceive general human activities like eating, making love, or defecating and the emotions surrounding them.

The *individual* level of human programming is the truly unique part—no two people are programmed exactly alike, even if they are identical twins raised together. This is the level of individual personality, and it provides for a wide range of alternative behaviors within the same collective culture. The borderlines in Figure 1.1 are a matter of debate among anthropologists; it is difficult to draw sharp dividing lines between individual personality and collective culture or to distinguish exceptional

tinguished, of which the search for dimensions of culture represents one particular choice. From the dimensions found in the literature, those suggested by Inkeles and Levinson in a 1969 review article come close to those that have been found empirically in the study on which this book is based.

DEFINITIONS AND DISTINCTIONS

Mental Programs

Social systems can only exist because human behavior is not random, but to some extent predictable. I predict that Mrs. X will be in the office at 8:25 a.m. tomorrow; that the taxi driver will take me to the station and not somewhere else if I ask him; that all members of the family will come if I ring the dinner bell. We make such predictions continuously, and the vast majority of them are so banal that they pass completely unnoticed. But for each prediction of behavior, we try to take both the *person* and the *situation* into account. We assume that each person carries a certain amount of mental programming which is stable over time and leads to the same person showing more or less the same behavior in similar situations. Our prediction may not prove true: Mrs. X may not turn up, the taxi driver may take me to the wrong destination, family member Y may refuse to come for dinner. But the more accurately we know a person's mental programming and the situation, the more sure our prediction will be.

It is possible that our mental programs are physically determined by states of our brain cells. Nevertheless, we cannot directly observe mental programs. What we can observe is only behavior, words, or deeds. When we observe behavior, we infer from it the presence of stable mental programs. This type of inference is not unique to the social sciences; it exists, for example, in physics, where the intangible concept of "forces" is inferred from its manifestations in the movement of objects. Like "forces" in physics, "mental programs" are intangibles, and the terms we use to describe them are *constructs*. Constructs do not "exist" in an absolute sense: We define them into existence.

One unfortunate consequence of our dealing with constructs is that their definition contains of necessity an element of subjectivity on the side of the definer. For the intangibles in the physical sciences there are usually definitions on which there is virtual consensus among scholars. However, in comparison to the physical sciences, the social sciences deal with systems at a much higher level of complexity, where consensus is more difficult. To see why this is so, I find it helpful to refer to the General Hierarchy of Systems (Boulding, 1956: 202-205; Von Bertalanffy, 1968: 28-29). In this General Hierarchy, the "systems" that we find around us and that are studied by the various sciences are ordered in nine levels of complexity: (1) static frameworks; (2) dynamic systems with predetermined motions; (3) closed-loop control or cybernetic systems; (4) homeostatic, self-controlling systems like the biological cell; (5) the living plant; (6) the animal; (7) man; (8) human organizations and society; and (9) transcendental systems. Each higher level adds a dimension of complexity to the previous one.

The object of the social sciences is at level 8, where the complexity is overwhelming (physics deals with levels 1-3, biology with 4-6). Man-the-social-scientist is at

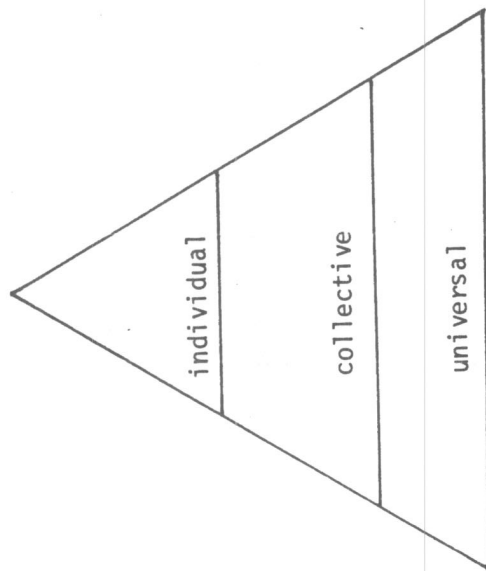


FIGURE 1.1 Three Levels of Uniqueness in Human Mental Programming

individuals from their cultural system. Also still an open issue is which phenomena are culture-specific—that is, collective—and which are human universals.

Mental programs can be inherited—transferred in our genes—or they can be learned after birth. From the three levels in Figure 1.1, the bottom “universal” level is most likely entirely inherited. It is that part of our genetic information which is common to the entire human species. Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1976) calls it our *Vorprogrammierung* (preprogramming). On the top “individual” level at least part of our programming must be inherited; it is difficult to explain otherwise the differences in capabilities and temperament between children of the same parents raised in very similar environments. It is at the middle, collective level that most or all of our mental programming is learned, which is shown by the fact that we share it with people who went through the same learning process but who do not have the same genes. The existence of the American people as a phenomenon is one of the clearest illustrations of the force of learning: With a multitude of genetic roots, it shows a collective mental programming which is striking to the non-American. The transfer of collective mental programs is a social phenomenon which, following Durkheim (1937[1895]: 107), we should try to explain socially and not to reduce to something else like race. Societies, organizations, and groups have ways of conserving and passing on mental programs from generation to generation with an obstinacy which many people tend to underestimate.¹

The learning transferring collective mental programs goes on during our entire lives, but as most of it deals with fundamental facts of life, we tend to learn it when we are very young: When the mind is still relatively empty, programs are most easily registered.²

Operationalizing Mental Programs

In empirical research, we look for measures of the constructs that describe mental programs: that is, we have to *operationalize* them. We need to find observable phenomena from which the construct can be inferred. In some types of research our operationalization leads to quantitative measures; in other types, to descriptive, non-quantitative measures. Whichever we aim for, any operationalization of mental programs has to use forms of behavior or outcomes of behavior. The behavior we use can be either “provoked” (stimulated by the researcher for the purpose of the research) or “natural” (taking place or having taken place regardless of the research and the researcher). Also, the behavior we use can be verbal (words) or nonverbal (deeds). The combination of these two classifications leads to the diagram in Figure 1.2, which pictures four types of strategies of operationalization.

Strategies using provoked behavior inevitably contain a “Heisenberg effect,”³ in that the researcher interferes with the behavior observed. This means that such behavior cannot always be extrapolated to circumstances where the researcher is not present. The general problem of all operationalizations is how to achieve *validity*; that is, correspondence between the observed behavior and the underlying constructs. Some constructs are directly conceptually related to specific behavior: This is in particular the case for *intentions*, people's subjective probabilities that they will perform some behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975: 288). In this case, the operationalization can be subjected to *pragmatic validation*: establishing the relationship between expressed intentions and actual behavior following them. Other constructs, among which are attitudes and values, are not directly conceptually related to specific behavior, but only through other constructs, according to some assumed set of relationships. In this case pragmatic validation is not possible, and we should be satisfied with *construct validation*, which means that the measures used for our construct relate to the measures used for other, related constructs in the way predicted by our theory. To achieve good construct validity we therefore need both good measurements *and* good theory.

From the strategies pictured in Figure 1.2, those in Cell 1 are the easiest and therefore the most frequently used: especially paper-and-pencil “instruments.” These produce provoked verbal behavior, which is used to predict other behavior, both verbal in other situations and nonverbal. Frequently, the validity of these predictions is assumed without further proof, as *face validity*; whereas a rigid test

FIGURE 1.2 Four Available Strategies for Operationalizing Constructs About Human Mental Programs

	Human Mental Programs	
	1) interviews questionnaires projective tests	2) content analysis of speeches discussions documents
words		
deeds	3) laboratory experiments field experiments provoked	4) direct observation use of available descriptive statistics natural

has to include the *predictive validity*; that is, a comparison between predicted and observed behavior.

However, rigid predictive solutions are often not available. The next best solution is to avoid putting all one's eggs into one basket: to use more than one approach to operationalization simultaneously, and look for convergence between these approaches. Webb et al. (1966: 3) call this process "triangulation," a term used in celestial navigation or land surveying. If we want to determine our distance to a point where we cannot go, we choose two base points where we can go and measure the position of the third point from there. The wider apart our base points, the more accurate our measurement. Thus, in social science where we cannot measure constructs directly, we should use at least two measurement approaches as different as possible (with different error sources) and only go ahead if we find convergence in their results. In practice this means that it is undesirable to use Cell 1 measurements like paper-and-pencil instruments (see Figure 1.2) only; where possible, they should be supported by, for example, direct observation or available descriptive statistics (Cell 4). If we have to rely on Cell 1 measurements only, we should try to "triangulate" within them—for example, by approaching the same issue through Cell 1 measurements from different informants.

It is, of course, equally undesirable to use Cell 2, 3, or 4 measurements *only*. Measures based on deeds (actions, nonverbal behavior) have to be interpreted, that is expressed in words, to find the underlying constructs. Measures based on content analysis also have to be interpreted. If we collect nothing else but data about deeds, we should question whether we gain any insight by postulating mental programs at all—whether we cannot keep our analysis entirely at the level of behavior. Cell 1 measurements, once they are collected, speak more for themselves and take less subjective interpretation from the researcher than Cell 2, 3, or 4 measurements. The best strategy, therefore, is to use Cell 1 measurement plus at least one other type.

In this book, I shall make an extensive use of Cell 1 measurements. For validation purposes, I shall use data collected by others: mainly Cell 1 measurements from different informants (various survey data) and Cell 4 measurements (available descriptive statistics).

Values

The key constructs to be used in this book for describing mental programs are *values* and *culture*. Values are an attribute of individuals as well as of collectivities; culture presupposes a collectivity. I define a value as "a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others."

Because our values are programmed early in our lives, they are non-rational (although we may subjectively feel ours to be perfectly rational!). In fact, values determine our subjective definition of rationality. Our values are mutually related and form value systems or hierarchies, but these systems need not be in a state of harmony: Most people simultaneously hold several conflicting values, such as "freedom" and "equality."

The term "value" or "values" is used in all social sciences (anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, and sociology) with different though not completely unrelated meanings; "value" is nearly as much an interdisciplinary term as

"system" and therefore a natural choice as a central construct for a book like this which borrows from several disciplines. Nearly all our other mental programs (such as attitudes and beliefs) carry a value component. Man is an evaluating animal. Christian, Judaic, and Moslem biblical mythology puts the choice between good and evil right at the beginning of mankind's history—with Adam and Eve—thus indicating the fundamental impossibility for man to escape from choice based on value judgments.

Values have both *intensity* and *direction*. Mathematically, values have a size and a sign; they can be represented by arrows along a line. If we "hold" a value, this means that the issue involved has a certain relevance for us (intensity) and that we identify certain outcomes as "good" and others as "bad" (direction). For example, "having money" may be highly relevant to us (intensity) and we consider "more" as good and "less" as bad (direction). Someone else may differ from us as to the intensity, the direction, or both. A person who takes the Christian Bible (St. Mark 10: 21-25) seriously could consider having money equally relevant, but with a reversed direction sign—"more" is bad and "less" is good. For still another person, the entire issue of having money may be less relevant. In some primitive societies, "witchcraft" is both relevant and good; in medieval Europe, it was relevant and bad; to most of us today, it is simply irrelevant.

We should further distinguish between values as the *desired* and the *desirable*: what people actually desire versus what they think ought to be desired. Whereas the two are of course not independent, they should not be equated; equating them is a "positivistic fallacy" and in research leads to a confusion between reality and social desirability. In most of the psychological and sociological research literature, "social desirability" is treated as something undesirable to the researcher. In the study of values, however, asking for the desirable is perfectly respectable; it is part and parcel of the phenomenon studied. So in this case, "social desirability" in our measurements is not undesirable; we should only realize that we deal with values of two different natures.

Avoiding the positivistic fallacy is especially important if we try to relate values to behavior. Responding to questionnaires or interviews is also a form of behavior, but, as argued above, we should distinguish "words" (questionnaires, interviews, meetings, speeches) from "deeds" (nonverbal behavior). Values should never be equated with deeds, for the simple reason that behavior depends on both the person and the situation. However, values as the desired are at least closer to deeds than values as the desirable. The desired-desirable distinction relates to several other distinctions made, listed in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3 refers to *norms* of value. We can speak of norms as soon as we deal with a collectivity. In the case of the desired, the norm is statistical: it indicates the values actually held by the majority. In the case of the desirable, the norm is absolute or deontological (pertaining to what is ethically right). The desired relates more to pragmatic issues, the desirable to ideology.

The association between the various lines in Figure 1.3 should be seen as probabilistic, not rigid: For example, we may approve with deeds rather than words, or what is desired may never become expressed in deeds. There remains a discrepancy between actual behavior (deeds) and the desired, but there is another discrepancy be-

human values presupposes in the student a certain amount of relativism or, at least, tolerance of deviant values.

Culture

Culture has been defined in many ways. Kluckhohn (1951: 86, 5) quotes as a consensus of anthropological definitions:

Culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values.

In this book I treat culture as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another." This is not a complete definition (see Kluckhohn above), but it covers what I have been able to measure. Culture, in this sense, includes systems of values; and values are among the building blocks of culture.

Culture is to a human collectivity what personality is to an individual. Personality has been defined by Guilford (1959) as "the interactive aggregate of personal characteristics that influence the individual's response to the environment." Culture could be defined as the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a human group's response to its environment. Culture determines the identity of a human group in the same way as personality determines the identity of an individual. Moreover, the two interact; "culture and personality" is a classic name for psychological anthropology. Cultural traits sometimes can be measured by personality tests.

In the English language, "culture" has a number of other meanings, all deriving from its original Latin meaning: the cultivation of soil (the same applies in French and German). The other meaning which leads to most confusion, especially in communication with the French is: the training and refining of the mind, manners, taste, etc. or the result of this. "He/she has no culture" is almost as bad as "he/she has no personality." To avoid this confusion, it is necessary to explain that in the social sciences the most humble people and the most menial acts still reflect "culture."

The word "culture" is usually reserved for societies (in the modern world we speak of "nations") or for ethnic or regional groups, but it can be applied equally to other human collectivities or categories: an organization, a profession, or a family. In this book, to avoid confusion I shall reserve the word "culture" for societies and in other cases use "subculture." Societies merit special consideration in the study of cultures because they are the most "complete" human groups that exist; a society is a social system "characterized by the highest level of self-sufficiency in relation to its environments" (Parsons, 1977: 6). Collectivities within societies tend to be more interdependent with other collectivities. The degree of cultural integration varies between one society and another, and may be especially low for some of the newer nations; few of these, however, are in the sample of nations studied in this book. Most subcultures within a society still share common traits with other subcultures, which make their members recognizable to foreigners as belonging to that society.

This book is about differences in national culture among 40 modern nations. It will show evidence of differences and similarities among the culture patterns of

FIGURE 1.3 Distinction Between the Desired and the Desirable and Associated Distinctions

nature of a value	the desired	the desirable
dimension of value	intensity	direction
nature of corresponding norm of value	statistical, phenomenological, pragmatic	absolute, deontological, ideological
corresponding behavior	choice and differential effort allocation	approval or disapproval ^a
dominant outcome	deeds and/or words	words
terms used in measuring instrument	important, successful, attractive, preferred	good, right, agree, ought, should
affective meaning of this term	activity <i>plus</i> evaluation	evaluation only
person referred to in measuring instrument	me, you	people in general

^aThe distinction between approval and choice, etc. is based on Kluckhohn (1951b: 404-405).

tween the desired and the desirable. Norms for the desirable can be completely detached from behavior. The tolerable size of the discrepancies may differ from person to person and from group to group, based on both personality and culture. In Catholicism, the practice of confessing can be seen as a device to cope with both discrepancies and thus make them tolerable. Ideological indoctrination will more easily affect the desirable than the desired; it is possible that it widens the gap between the two without changing the desired.

The inescapability of value judgments applies to the student of values as much as to anyone else. First, we have to distinguish between a phenomenological study of values (which is the area of social science) and a deontological approach (which belongs to ethics, ideology, or theology). But even in purely phenomenological research the values of the researcher determine to a large extent the way he or she observes, describes, classifies, understands, and predicts reality. There is no way out of this dilemma but to (1) expose oneself and one's work to the work of others with different value systems and (2) try to be as explicit as possible about one's own value system. Both, to a certain extent, go against our nature. For the interested reader I have composed a picture of my own value system and its origins in Appendix 2. More about it, however, probably will be readable "between the lines" of the book.

A related issue is whether there are absolute values at all or only relative ones. Anthropologists have tried to identify absolute values in the form of cultural universals from the phenomenological side (Bidney, 1962: 450). The systems philosopher Ervin Laszlo (1973) concludes that such cultural universals exist and argues from the deontological side that "good" in absolute terms is what contributes to the survival of the world system, and that error tolerance for the world has become so small that relativism is obsolete. However, his position itself reflects a value choice. The problem is that man is at the same time the source of values and their instrument; for which, as far as I know, systems theory has no solution. A comparative study of

countries; differences and similarities that have very old historical roots (some, for example, going back as far as the Roman Empire). There must be mechanisms in societies which permit the maintenance of stability in culture patterns across many generations. I suggest that such mechanisms operate like Figure 1.4.⁴

In the center is a system of societal norms, consisting of the value systems (the mental programs) shared by major groups of the population. Their origins are in a variety of ecological factors (in the sense of factors affecting the physical environment). The societal norms have led to the development and pattern maintenance of institutions in society with a particular structure and way of functioning. These institutions include the family, education systems, politics, and legislation. These institutions, once they have become facts, reinforce the societal norms and the ecological conditions that led to them. In a relatively closed society, such a system will hardly change at all. Institutions may be changed, but this does not necessarily affect the societal norms; and when these remain unchanged, the persistent influence of a majority value system patiently smoothes the new institutions until their structure and functioning is again adapted to the societal norms. An example of this process is the history of France since Louis XIV. Change comes mainly from the outside, through forces of nature (changes of climate, silting up of harbors) or forces of man (trade,

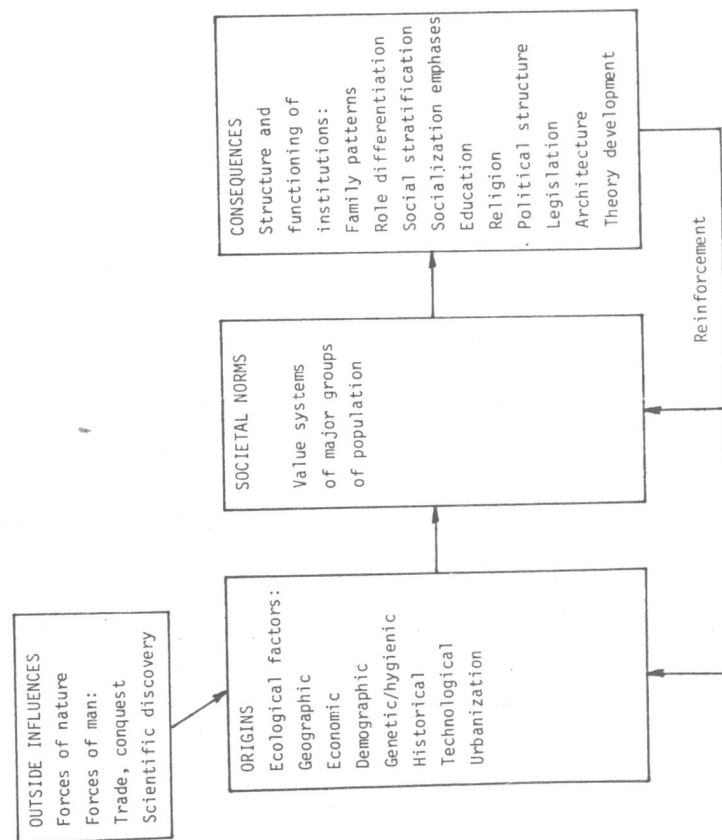


FIGURE 1.4 The Stabilizing of Culture Patterns

conquest, colonization, scientific discovery). The arrow of outside influences is deliberately directed at the origins, not at the societal norms themselves. I believe that norms change rarely by direct adoption of outside values, but rather through a shift in ecological conditions: technological, economical, and hygienic. In general, the norm shifts will be gradual unless the outside influences are particularly violent (such as in the case of military conquest or deportation).

One of the most effective ways of changing mental programs of individuals is changing behavior first (Bem, 1970: 60). That value change has to precede behavior change is an idealistic assumption which neglects the contribution of the *situation* to actual behavior. This applies on the level of societies as well. Kunkel (1970: 76), dealing with the economic development of societies, concludes that "the major problem of economic development is not the alteration of character, values or attitudes, but the change of those selected aspects of man's social environment which are relevant to the learning of new behavior patterns." In this case I would omit the word "social."

The system of Figure 1.4 is in a homeostatic (self-regulating) quasi-equilibrium. History has shown cases of peoples that through such a system have maintained an identity over hundreds and thousands of years, even in the face of such sweeping changes as loss of independence, deportation, or loss of language; examples are Jews, Gypsies, and Basques (Spicer, 1971). Other peoples in similar conditions have disappeared, however, when their self-regulating cycle was too far disturbed by outside influences. Obviously, both the strength of the existing self-regulation and the strength of the outside forces have played a role in these cases.

As nearly all our mental programs are affected by values, nearly all are affected by culture, and this is reflected by our behavior. The cultural component in all kinds of behavior is difficult to grasp for people who remain embedded in the same cultural environment; it takes a prolonged stay abroad and mixing with nationals there to recognize the numerous and often subtle differences in the way they and we behave, because that is how our society has programmed us. If I take the train from Brussels to Rotterdam, I can tell the Belgian passengers from the Dutch; most Dutch people greet strangers when entering a small, closed space like a train compartment, elevator, or doctor's waiting room, but most Belgians do not.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES IN THE STUDY OF CULTURE

Comparing Cultures: Changing the Level of Analysis

In studying "values" we compare individuals; in studying "culture" we compare societies. When we base our study of culture on quantified data which have to be statistically treated, we meet a problem which the study of values of individuals did not present: the simultaneous analysis of data at the individual and at the societal level.⁵ Some data are collected at the level of the society, such as its population density or per capita gross national product. Other data are still collected from individuals, such as responses on questionnaires; these stem from individuals within societies.

Let us suppose we want to study the relationship between two variables which belong to the latter category: stemming from individuals within societies. We want to measure this relationship through a mathematical measure, the correlation coefficient. However, we have the choice between:

- a global correlation between all individuals regardless of the society they are in;
- a number of within-society correlations, one for each society, between those individuals belonging to that society; and
- a between-society correlation, based on the mean scores of the variables for each society.

For data collected at the level of the society, we obviously have only a between-society correlation.

The problem of data from individuals within societies is that the various types of correlations referred to above most likely are not equal. First, the within-society correlations may be significantly different from one society to the other. For example, Kagitcibasi (1970) has shown that questionnaire item scores that correlate in the United States and together form the F-scale (used to determine the "authoritarian personality") are not correlated in Turkey. In societies where the culture imposes strong behavioral norms, certain attitudes and behaviors show such small variance that they do not correlate with other attitudes and behaviors; this is the case for some of the F-scale items in Turkey. It is precisely these differences in within-society correlations which are of interest from a culture point of view; when these exist, the use of global correlations is misleading.

Even if the within-society correlations are not significantly different from each other, they are not at all the same as the between-society correlations. I shall call the latter "ecological correlations": they are calculated either from mean values of variables for each society or (in the case of yes-no variables) from percentages. It is easy to see why ecological correlations are not the same as within-society correlations if we consider some extreme cases. One extreme is that for one of the variables the mean value is the same for any single society; in this case we find only within-society correlations, and the ecological correlation is zero. The other extreme is that one of the variables is a constant for all members within a society, but differs from one society to another. In this case the within-society correlations are all zero, and we find only an ecological correlation. Usually, of course, for neither variable the societies or the people are entirely equal, so we find both types of correlations. However, they are not of equal magnitude; they can even have opposite signs.

A confusion between within-system and ecological correlations is known as the "ecological fallacy." The classical example is from Robinson (1950: 352) and deals with the relationship between skin color and illiteracy in the United States. Between percentages of Negro population and percentages of illiterates across nine geographic divisions of the United States (1930 data) the *ecological* correlation is .95. Across 48 states, the ecological correlation is .77. Across 97 million individuals, the *individual* correlation is .20. The ecological fallacy is committed when authors interpret the ecological correlations (.95 or .77: strong association between skin color and illiteracy) as if they applied to individuals. This is attractive, because ecological correlations are often stronger than individual correlations.

The ecological fallacy is a special temptation for political scientists. In cross-cultural studies by social psychologists, however, I find another type of confusion

between the individual and the ecological level: I shall call it the "reverse ecological fallacy." The reverse ecological fallacy is committed in the construction of ecological *indices* from variables correlated at the individual level. Indices are, for example, constructed by adding the scores on two or more questionnaire items. In constructing indices for the individual level, we make sure (or ought to make sure) that the items correlate across individuals: For example, if we want an overall appreciation index of school results, we may add up the marks obtained for mathematics and language (which are usually positively correlated) but not the marks for mathematics with the number of days of absence (which are, if anything, probably negatively correlated). The reverse ecological fallacy in cross-cultural studies consists in comparing cultures on indices created for the individual level.

The reverse ecological fallacy is not only a matter of inadequate data treatment; this is only its outcome. At the root of it is an inadequate research paradigm,⁶ in which cultures are treated and categorized as if they were individuals. Cultures are not individuals: they are wholes, and their internal logic cannot be understood in the terms used for the personality dynamics of individuals. Eco-logic differs from individual logic.

Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism has been defined as an "exaggerated tendency to think the characteristics of one's own group or race superior to those of other groups or races" (Drever, 1952: 86). Faucheux (1976: 309) compares ethnocentrism with egocentrism: Egocentrism is a phase in the development of a child before it can take the viewpoint of an Other; so Faucheux sees ethnocentrism as a phase in the development of a social science—in the case he refers to, of social psychology. In the history of anthropology there has been an ethnocentric phase which has subsequently been overcome. Other social science disciplines in which cross-cultural contrasts play a less major role than in anthropology are less developed in this respect.

Ethnocentrism is already present in the instruments used for the collection of data. The 1960s and 1970s have seen an increase in comparative research on values by industrial social psychologists and business Ph.D. candidates, which consists of taking a questionnaire designed and pretested in the United States on students or business managers, sometimes translating it, and administering it in other countries. In this case the questions are only about issues raised by the U.S. designers of the instrument which proved relevant to their test population and for which the American language has words.

To avoid ethnocentrism in data collection, instruments for cross-cultural use should be developed cross-culturally. A good example of how an instrument for cross-cultural use can be developed nonethnocentrically is given by Triandis et al. (1972). The purpose of this study was to map cognitive structures in Greece, India, Japan, and the United States. Twenty concepts were selected from a list of culturally unspecific words developed empirically around the world by Osgood et al. (1975): these included "freedom," "power," "respect," and "wealth." The 20 concepts were translated into the four languages and back-translated by others for a check. Then 100 male students in each country wrote down three "antecedents" and three "conse-