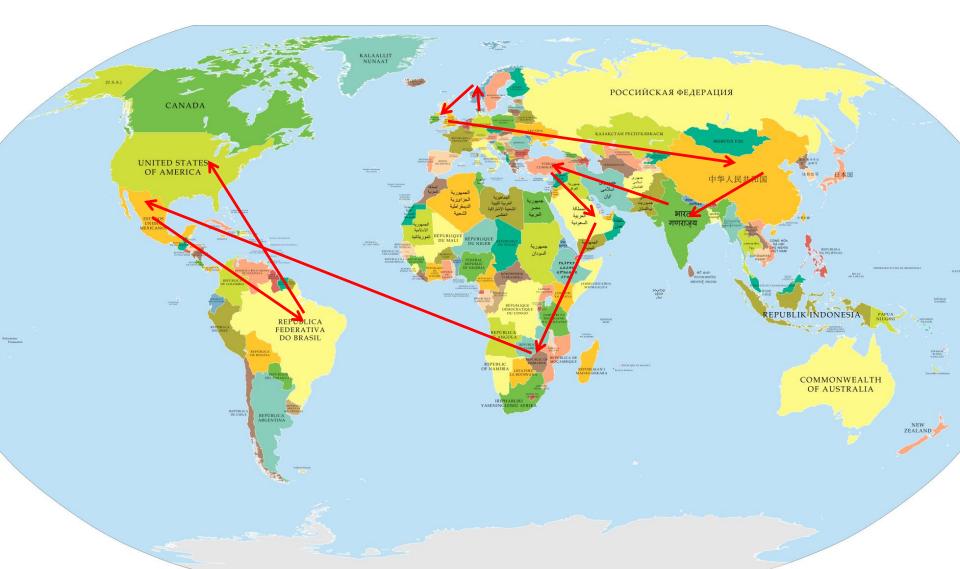


# Cultural Basics

Understanding World Cultures Osher course, January 2021 John Hooker, Carnegie Mellon University, USA



# Travel plan





#### Popular view:

Culture is about food, language, dress, customs, holidays.











#### What if all Chinese ate Sauerbraten and Käsespätzle





...rather than *jiǎo zi* and *bāo zi*?







#### It would be the same culture!

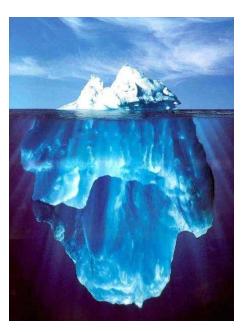




### Culture is the thought system we live in.

- Culture determines our deepest assumptions, most of which we are not even aware of.
  - Like an iceberg, culture lies mostly beneath the surface.







### Culture vs. personality

#### Culture is not about personalities or "national character."

- It doesn't "stereotype" individuals.
- Every culture has the **full range** of personalities.
- Culture is learned.
- Personality is genetics + learning.
- Culture is the **system** in which personalities exist.
- Individuals may or may not fit in the system
- Culture:personality as climate:weather



It can get hot in Alaska. Anchorage record = 90 deg F



# Just to clarify...

### This course makes no judgments about cultures.

#### It only tries to understand them.

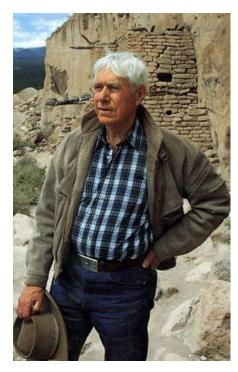
• This is already the task of a lifetime, or more.





# Intellectual background

Many of the ideas presented here are based on the work of
 Edward T. Hall and Geert Hofstede





Geert Hofstede 1928-2020

Edward T. Hall 1914-2009





# Relationships vs. Rules



# Two types of cultures

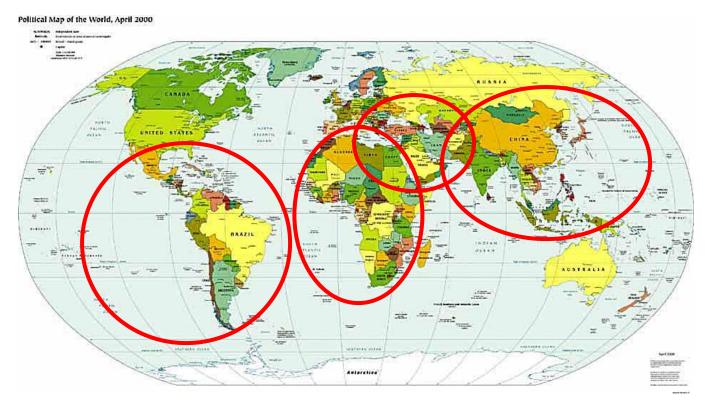
- There are 5000+ cultures in the world, all very different.
- But they can be classified roughly as:
  - relationship-based
  - **rule-based.**
- Note color code:
   Red vs blue





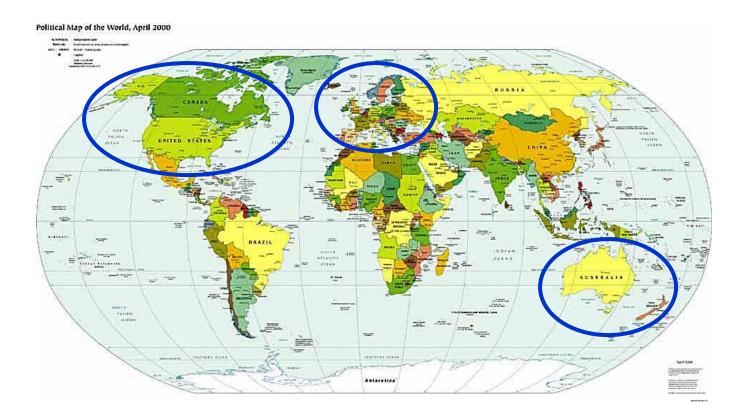
# *Relationship-based* = life is organized primarily around **personal relationships**.

Africa, Asia, Middle East, South America



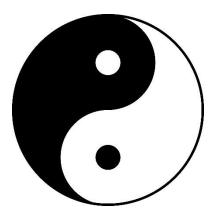


# *Rule-based* = life is organized primarily by **rules**. Australia, Europe, North America





- No culture is purely rule-based or relationship-based.
  - Nonetheless, one system tends to dominate.





### Getting things done

- Work through personal connections
- **Go** by the **book**
- Business
  - It's all about forming a relationship.
  - Trust the **person**, not the system.
  - It's all about making deals.
  - Rely on the system to enforce the deal.







### Traffic

### Negotiate

your way through it.

Follow traffic laws.



#### Intersection in Varanasi, India



### Dealing with stress

- Rely on family & friends for support.
- **Rely on the system and oneself** 
  - Medical technology, social services, psychiatry
  - Individual responsibility (even for illness)



#### Filipino family



### Concept of self.

#### I am part of a larger unit (collectivism)

- Family, village, company, nation
- We responsible for each other.
- **I** am an autonomous individual (**individualism**)
  - I am responsible for myself.





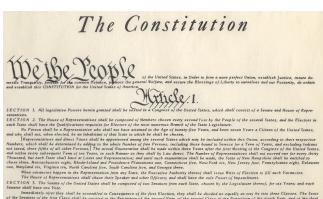


### Concept of authority.

- Authority rests in the **person**.
- Authority derives from **rules**.



Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud



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The United States is tried, the Chile Justice shall perside that the use shall be on Cash to Affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chile Justice shall be present.

the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: And no Person shall be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present. Judgment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualifications boild and enjoy any Office of homor, Trust or Profit multer the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Trail, Judgment and Pumilent, according to

### Supreme Law of the Land U.S. Constitution



Mohammed bin Salman



# Implication for ethics

### Source of authority.

- Because we are a collective, someone must have authority to coordinate us.
  - We **must respect** parents, grandparents, ancestors, boss, ruler
  - Or society will break down.
- Because we are autonomous individuals, no one has inherent authority over another.
  - We **must respect** the **rules**.
  - The rules must be inherently **logical** and reasonable, because only logic and reason are **universal**.



# Implication for ethics

- Relationship-based ethics
  - Care and respect.
  - Ethics flows from the necessity of maintaining relationships.
    - We must care for family, friends.
- Rule-based ethics
  - **Equality** and **fairness**
  - Ethics is based on rules we can agree upon as reasonable.
    - We must reach rational consensus.



Many cultural traits correlate with the rule-based, relationship-based distinction.

<b>Relationship-Based</b>	Rule-Based
Polychronic	Monochronic
High power distance*	Low power distance*
Shame-based	Guilt-based
High context	Low context
Collectivist*	Individualist*
Masculine*	Feminine*
Uncertainty tolerant*	Uncertainty avoiding*
Dionysian	Apollonian

\*Hofstede's categories



### **Cultural Classification**

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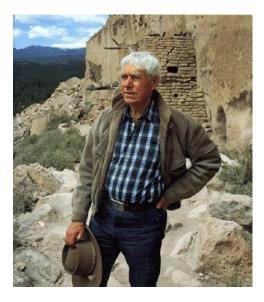
\*Hofstede's categories



# Monochronic and polychronic

- A culture's sense of **time** affects every aspect of daily life.
  - Edward Hall classified cultures as monochronic and polychronic.



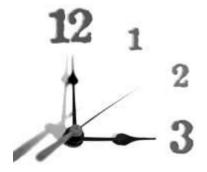




# Monochronic and polychronic

### Monochronic cultures – one thing at a time.

- People like to finish one task
   before moving to another and are generally punctual.
- Rule-based cultures are monochronic.
  - **U.S.** is strongly monochronic.
  - Japan, Singapore and (to some extent) China are **punctual** but **polychronic**.





# Monochronic and polychronic

### Polychronic cultures – juggling tasks.

- People are comfortable with being involved in several tasks at once.
- Relationship-based cultures are polychronic.
  - Punctually generally **not important**.
  - Except in Japan, Singapore and (to some extent) China.





### Monochronic cultures

- People organize and structure time.
  - Time is partitioned into intervals, each devoted to one task.
  - Appointments are made and punctuality important.
  - Orderly **queues** form.







### Monochronic cultures

### Time is a measurable substance.

- It can be spent, saved, wasted.
- Idleness wastes time.
- Activity **fills time**.
- Having to wait is **boring**.





## Monochronic cultures

- Travel arrangements.
  - Made far in advance.
  - E.g., Scandinavia
- Deadlines.
  - **Time is money**.
  - People get **nervous** and **speed up** as the deadline approaches.







## Polychronic cultures

### People work on several tasks at once.

- You may be **kept waiting** 45 minutes for an appointment.
- But don't keep the **boss** waiting!
- Clerk may serve3 or 4 people at once.
- No orderly queues, except at international airports, hotels, etc.





# Polychronic cultures

### Time is not measured.

- Idleness stops time.
- Activity makes time.
- Having to wait is no big deal.







# Polychronic cultures

### Travel arrangements.

- Made at the last minute.
- 🛚 E.g., India.

### Deadlines.

- People switch to another task when delayed.
- No one speeds up as the deadline approaches.





### Stress management

### Rule-based cultures structure their environment.

- As a **stress management** mechanism.
- **Monochronic** time consciousness is a special case of this.
- Structured time gives a sense of predictability and control.
  - Used in **day care** to calm children down.
  - Can be used **at home** now!
- Relationship-based cultures don't need this.
  - Family/friend support and authority figures provide sense of predictability and control.
  - So time consciousness remains **polychronic**.



### **Cultural Classification**

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\*Hofstede's categories



### Power distance

- Power distance is the degree to which less powerful people accept their subordinate position.
  - Fundamental problem: how do people get power?
  - At some point, others mustgrant them power.





- Relationship-based countries tend to be **high** power distance.
  - Behavior is regulated by people with authority.
  - Rules are legitimated and enforced by authority figures.
  - Leaders are expected to be wise and caring.
  - Example: Deng Xiaoping



Deng Xiaoping De facto leader of China 1978-1992



- Rule-based countries tend to be **low** power distance.
  - People respect the **rules** more than superiors.
  - Example: Sweden.



Karl XVI Gustaf Swedish King since 1973



- High power distance:
  - Children obey and respect parents, teachers.
  - Employees are reluctant to challenge the boss or discuss problems.
  - Ideal boss is **benevolent** but **authoritarian**.
  - Possibly large **differences** in salary/skills.
  - Possibly class differences, limited upward mobility.
  - Because authority must reside in the **person**, certain individuals have authority based on who they are.



- Low power distance:
  - Children are allowed to contradict their parents.
  - **Two-way** discussion in classroom.
  - Discipline may be a problem; parents side with child rather than teacher.
  - **No** corporal punishment.
  - Less need for certain individuals to have authority based solely on who they are (with exceptions, e.g. parents to some extent)





- Low power distance:
  - **Consultative** management.
  - Employees bring concerns and grievances to the boss.
  - Ideal boss inspires workers.
  - Possibly smaller salary differences; workers may resent executive perks.
    - Scandinavia & U.S. (salary & offices)





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## Shame and guilt

# Shame and guilt are mechanisms for enforcing behavior norms.







## Shame and guilt

### Relationship-based cultures enforce behavior norms by shame.

- Loss of face.
- Humiliation.
- Punishment on the spot.
- Direct and constant supervision.



## Shame and guilt

#### Key point for shame-based cultures:

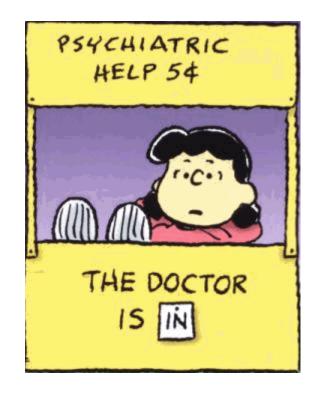
- Failure to supervise **gives permission** to break the "rules."
  - Public transit.
  - Exam cheating.
  - Government regulation.





### Guilt is more important in rule-based cultures.

- Guilt encourages obedience to rules without supervision.
- But it may be a poor motivator and carry high psychological cost.
  - Ein gutes Gewissen ist an sanftes Ruhekissen.
- Guilt is reinforced by fear of punishment.
- Support for monochronic time consciousness.
- Contrast with punctuality in Japan.





### Humor...

- Based on jokes and irony in guilt-based cultures.
  - Relief from rules, logic
- Based on **amusement** in shame-based cultures.
  - Diversion from daily routine.







Mr. Bean breaking the rules



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### In low-context cultures,

- There any many signs, timetables, maps.
- Contracts are written, long, and detailed.
  - Fixed once signed.
  - Disputes resolved by lawsuits.
- People expect the rules to be in writing.
- People pay attention to written rules.
  - Example: restroom sign.





### In high-context cultures,

- People already know what to do.
- **Contracts** are vague, verbal, or nonexistent.
  - Except in "low uncertainty tolerance" cultures, e.g. Latin America.
  - Agreements evolve with the situation.
  - Legal system weak.
  - Disputes resolved by negotiation.
- People may not pay attention to written rules.



### In low-context cultures,

- Disagreements are resolved by **open discussion**.
- It is OK to say "no".
- You can **disagree** with company policy.





### In high-context cultures,

- Communication is indirect.
- One rarely says "no," may say "yes" to be polite.
- Don't **criticize company policy** in front of the boss.





#### Cultural adjustment

- **It is easier to adjust to a low-context culture.**
- The information you need is widely available.





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### Collectivist and individualist

### Collectivist cultures

- Primary loyalty is to the **group**.
  - Usually the **family**, sometimes the village, company, or nation.
- People rely on the **group** for support, security, predictability.





### Collectivist and individualist

### Individualist cultures

- Primary loyalty is to **oneself**.
  - People are held **individually responsible** for their own welfare.
  - People are expected to show **individual initiative**.
- People rely on themselves and an impersonal system for support, security, predictability.





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## Masculine/feminine

# The distinction can be understood in two ways...





## Masculine/feminine

### Attitude toward masculine values.

- Masculine: Men are expected to be **tough**.
- **Feminine:** Men & women more **similar**.



#### Attitude toward competition.

- Masculine: competition valued.
- **Feminine: cooperation** valued.





#### Masculine values

Masculine

Feminine

<i>iiveness</i> Masculine	Japan USA, UK, Ireland Philippines India	
<i>Competitiiveness</i> Feminine Mascu	East African cultures Arab cultures Eastern Slavic cultures <i>Machismo</i> cultures	Scandinavia Western Slavic cultures Thailand



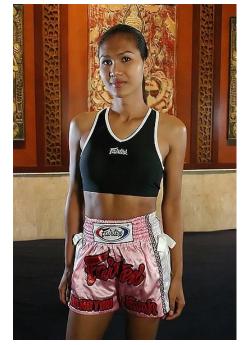
#### Thailand: A Feminine Culture?



Thai soldier during 2006 military coup



Military crackdown on protestors in Bangkok, May 2010



Nong Tum, well-known kathoey (portrayed in film *Beautiful Boxer*)



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\*Hofstede's categories

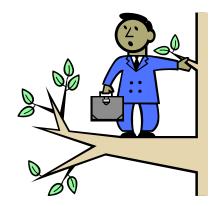


 Attitudes toward unpredictability in life...





- Uncertainty tolerant:
  - Willing to take risks.
  - Entrepreneurial in business.
  - Comfortable with travel, relocation.





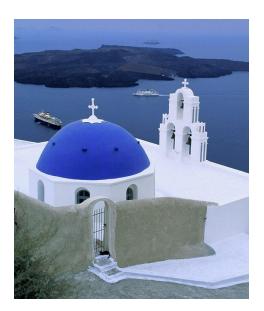
- Uncertainty avoiding:
  - Prefer familiar surroundings.
  - Risk-averse in business.
  - Dysfunctional bureaucracy serves as ritual.





### Some uncertainty avoiding cultures:

- Greece.
- Latin America.
- Western Slavic cultures.
- Belgium.
- France.





### Some uncertainty tolerant cultures:

- 🛚 U.K.
- 🛚 USA.
- Hong Kong & coastal Chinese.
- Singapore.





### Case study: United Kingdom

- Masculine culture
  - Militaristic
  - Stiff upper lip
  - Competitive
- Uncertainty tolerant culture
  - Love to travel, resettle anywhere.
  - Former British colonies tend to be more livable than most, because the British lived there themselves.
- Former colonies include U.S., Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Hong Kong, Kenya, Zimbabwe.

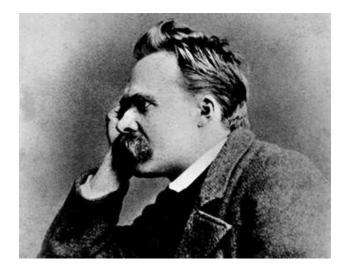


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## Dionysian/Apollonian

- Introduced by Friedrich Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy.* 
  - To describe two sides of classical Greek culture.





## Dionysian/Apollonian

- Anthropologist Ruth Benedict used the distinction to describe native American cultures.
  - Beneficial Patterns of Culture (1934).
  - Pueblo vs. plains Indians.
    - Pueblo: orderly lifestyle
    - Plains: extreme experience
  - Two ways of handling stress, uncertainty, joy, and grief.





## Dionysian/Apollonian



Funeral, Norway Apollonian



Funeral, Palestine Dionysian



## Hofstede's Classification

- The best known classification.
  - From Geert Hofstede, Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind (3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2010).
    - Based on a worldwide survey of employees of IBM subsidiaries in 50 countries.





## Hofstede's Classification

## The best known classification.

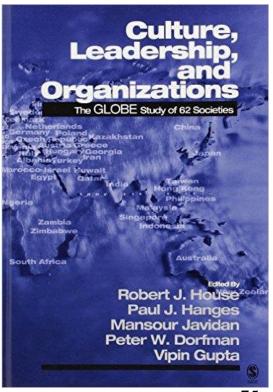
- From Geert Hofstede, Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind (3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2010).
  - Based on a worldwide survey of employees of IBM subsidiaries in 50 countries.
- Often covered in executive workshops.
  - See as legitimate in the West due to its basis in quantifiable responses to surveys.





## Hofstede's Classification

- More recent surveys in *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies.* 
  - These are summarized here, in case you are curious.
  - Hofstede's original classification seems more useful.





					a) air	
	East Asia	Latin America	Other	Southern Europe	Other Western	2
Power Distance (Hofstede)	Malaysia Philippines Indonesia Singapore Hong Kong Thailand S. Korea Taiwan Japan	Guatemala Panama Mexico Venezuela Ecuador Brazil Colombia El Salvador Peru Chile Uruguay Argentina Costa Rica	Arab countries India West Africa Turkey East Africa Iran Pakistan S. Africa Jamaica	Yugoslavia Belgium Portugal Greece Spain Italy	France USA Canada Netherlands Australia W. Germany U.K. Switzerland Finland Norway Sweden Ireland New Zealand Denmark Austria	

East AsiaLatin AmericaOtherSouthern EuropeOther WesternIndonesiaGuatemala Ecuador Panama Nenezuela Colombia Costa Rica Parama S. Korea Thailand Singapore Hong Kong MalaysiaGuatemala Ecuador Pakistan Collectivism (Hofstede)Other WesternOther WesternCollectivism (Hofstede)Taiwan S. Korea Thailand S. Korea Thailand S. Korea Thailand S. Korea Thailand S. Korea Taiwan BalaysiaPakistan Peru El SalvadorPortugal Yugoslavia Greece Jamaica Iran India Israel S. AfricaPortugal Yugoslavia Greece Arab countries Jamaica Iran India Israel S. AfricaPortugal Yugoslavia Greece Finland W. Germany Switzerland Norway Iral Israel S. Africa								
CollectivismEcuador Panama Venezuela Costa RicaPakistanIndonesiaColombia Costa Rica Thailand Singapore Hong Kong MalaysiaPeru El SalvadorPakistan(Hofstede)Singapore MalaysiaChileW. AfricaPhilippinesMexico Uruguay BrazilE. Africa Turkey Arab countries JamaicaPortugal Yugoslavia GreeceJapanArgentinaIran Israel S. AfricaSpain Finland W. Germany Switzerland Norway		East Asia		Other				
CollectivismHong Kong MalaysiaPortugal Viruguay(Hofstede)PhilippinesMexico UruguayE. Africa Turkey BrazilPortugal GreeceJapanArgentinaIran IndiaSpainJapanArgentinaIran IsraelAustria FinlandS. AfricaSpainMexica YugoslaviaJapanArgentinaIran IsraelAustria FinlandJapanFranceFranceJapanIran IsraelSovitzerland SwitzerlandJapanArgentinaIran IsraelJapanFranceIreland Sweden		Taiwan S. Korea Thailand	Ecuador Panama Venezuela Colombia Costa Rica Peru El Salvador					
Uruguay BrazilTurkey Arab countries JamaicaGreeceJapanArgentinaIran IsraelAustriaIsraelSpainKiriaS. AfricaFinland W. Germany Switzerland NorwayNorwayFranceIreland SwedenSweden	Collectivism	Hong Kong	Chite	w. Africa	Portugal			
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Italy Denmark Italy New Zealand Netherlands Canada U.K. Australia USA 77					Belgium Italy	Netherlands Canada U.K. Australia		

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	East Asia	Latin America	Other	Southern Europe	Other Western	
	Japan	Venezuela Mexico	Inmaica	Italy	Austria Switzerland	
			Jamaica		Ireland U.K.	
	Philippines	Colombia Ecuador	S. Africa		W. Germany USA	
Masculine/ feminine	Hong Kong Malaysia	Argentina	India Arab countries	Greece Belgium	Australia New Zealand Canada	
(Hofstede)	Singapore Indonesia	Brazil	Pakistan Israel W. Africa			
	Taiwan	Panama	Turkey Iran	France		
	S. Korea	Peru El Salvador Uruguay	E. Africa	Spain		
	Thailand	Guatemala Chile		Portugal Yugoslavia	Finland	
		Costa Rica		-	Denmark	
					Netherlands Norway	
					Sweden	

	- L   /				
	East Asia	Latin America	Other	Southern Europe	Other Western
	Japan	Guatemala Uruguay El Salvador Peru Chile Costa Rica		Greece Portugal Belgium Yugoslavia France Spain	
Uncertainty avoidance	S. Korea	Panama Argentina Colombia	Turkey Israel		
(Hofstede)	Taiwan Thailand	Venezuela Brazil Ecuador	Pakistan Arab	Italy	Austria W. Germany
			countries Iran W. Africa E. Africa		Finland Switzerland Netherlands
	Indonesia		S. Africa		Australia Norway New Zealand
	Philippines Malaysia		India		Canada USA U.K.
	Hong Kong Singapore		Jamaica		Ireland Sweden Denmark

					*
	East Asia	Latin America	Other	Southern & Eastern Europe	Other Western
	Thailand S. Korea	El Salvador Argentina Guatemala Ecuador Colombia	Morocco Nigeria Zimbabwe Turkey	E. Germany Hungary	
Power Distance	Philippines	Venezuela	India Russia Iran	Spain Portugal Italy Greece	
(GLOBE)		Brazil Mexico	Zambia Kazakhstan Namibia	Slovenia France	W. Germany
	Taiwan Indonesia Malaysia		Georgia S. Africa (white)		England
	Japan China Singapore		Kuwait	Poland	Ireland
	Hong Kong		Egypt		Austria Switzerland Sweden Canada
		Costa Rica Bolivia	Qatar Israel S. Africa (black)	Albania	Australia Netherlands Denmark



	East Asia	Latin America	Other	Southern & Eastern	Other Western	
In-group Collectivism (GLOBE)	Philippines China Thailand Indonesia Singapore Taiwan S. Korea Malaysia Hong Kong		Georgia Iran India Turkey Morocco Zambia Kuwait Egypt Russia Zimbabwe Nigeria Kazakhstan S. Africa (black)			
	Japan		Qatar Israel Namibia S. Africa (white)	Italy E. Germany France	Austria Canada USA Australia England Finland W. Germany Switzerland Netherlands New Zealand Sweden Denmark	01



Male

domination

(GLOBE)

	East Asia	Latin	Other	Southern &	Other
		America		Eastern	Western
	S. Korea		Kuwait	Europe	
	J. Norea		Egypt		
			Morocco		
			Zambia		
			Turkey		
			India		Switzerland
I			Iran	Spain	
		Guatemala	Nigeria		
	China Taiwan	Ecuador El Salvador	Zimbabwe Israel	E. Germany	Austria
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	Indonesia	Brazil	S. Africa (white)	Italy	New Zealand
	Thailand	DIGER	S. Antea (milee)	reaty	USA
	Hong Kong	Argentina		Greece	Australia
	Malaysia	Bolivia	Georgia		Netherlands
		Costa Rica			
		Venezuela	Qatar	_	
	Philippines	Mexico	S. Africa (black)	France	
	Singapore	Colombia		Portugal	England
			Kazakhstan	Albania	Canada Sweden
			Namibia	Slovenia	Denmark
			Russia	Poland	Definitarik
				Hungary	
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	East Asia	Latin America	Other	Southern & Eastern	Other Western
			Nigeria	<i>Europe</i> Albania Hungary	
	Hong Kong	El Salvador	S. Africa (white)	E. Germany	Austria
				Greece	W. Germany
			Turkey		USA
			Morocco		Switzerland
Assertiveness	S. Korea	Mexico	Kazakhstan	Spain	
		Venezuela	S. Africa (black)		Netherlands
(GLOBE)		Argentina Brazil	Israel		Australia
	Singapore	Colombia	Georgia	France	England
		Ecuador	Qatar		
			Zambia	Italy	
	DL III I		Zimbabwe	Poland	Canada
	Philippines		Iran	Slovenia	Ireland
	Taiwan	Guatemala	Namibia		
	Malaysia Indonesia	Gualemala	Egypt		Finland
	China	Bolivia			Denmark
	Crima	Costa Rica	India		Deninark
	Thailand		Russia	Portugal	
	Japan		Kuwait	, or tagat	New Zealand
					Sweden

	East Asia	Latin America	Other	Southern & Eastern	Other Western
		Ecuador Colombia	Philippines	Europe	USA Canada Ireland
	Indonesia	Brazil	Israel	E. Germany	England Australia
		El Salvador Argentina		Spain Italy	New Zealand Austria
Performance oriented	Singapore	Costa Rica Mexico	Zimbabwe Namibia	Portugal Hungary	
(GLOBE)	Malaysia	Guatemala	Zambia Kuwait		W. Germany Switzerland
	Thailand	Venezuela Bolivia	S. Africa (white) Nigeria		Denmark Finland
			Kazakhstan India Georgia		Sweden Netherlands
	Hong Kong		Russia Turkey Egypt	Poland Greece Slovenia	
	Japan Taiwan China		Iran	Albania	
	S. Korea		S. Africa (black) Morocco Qatar	France	84

	East Asia	Latin America	Other	Southern Europe	Other Western	
	Singapore				Switzerland Sweden Denmark	
Uncertainty					W. Germany Austria	
avoidance -	China			E. Germany	Finland	
conceived as	Malaysia				New Zealand Netherlands	
orderliness			S. Africa (black)		England	
	Taiwan			Albania France	Canada Australia	
and/or high	Hong Kong		Nigeria	Trance	Ireland	
context	la den este		Kuwait			
and/or high	Indonesia	Mexico	Namibia Zimbabwe			
power			India		USA	
distance	Japan		Zambia S. Africa (white)			
			Egypt			
(GLOBE)	Thailand		Israel Qatar	Spain		
	Philippines	Costa Rica		Portugal Italy		
		Ecuador	lran Kazakhstan	Slovenia		
		Argentina	Morocco			
		El Salvador Brazil	Turkey	Poland		
	S. Korea	Colombia	Georgia	Creater		
		Venezuela Bolivia		Greece		
		Guatemala	Russia	Hungary	8	5