
CAC 4

Postwar approaches to culture

OBJECTIVES

- Introduction to important terms: *values, norms, attitudes, beliefs*
 - Introduce dominant approaches in culture-related research
 - Common models of 'culture'
 - Ways to distinguish one 'culture' from another
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OUTLINE

- Culture as shared values
 - Kroeber and Kluckhohn's definition
 - Visualising 'culture'
 - E.T.Hall's 'classic' cultural patterns
 - "Dimensions" of culture (Hofstede)
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Kroeber and Kluckhohn

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditional elements of future action.

Kroeber & Kluckhohn 1952: 181, from Dahl, p2

Or...

“Culture is roughly everything we do and monkeys don't.”

FitzRoy Richard Somerset*

* Major FitzRoy Richard Somerset, 4th Baron Raglan was a British soldier, beekeeper, farmer and independent scholar. He is best known for his book *The Hero*, where he systematises hero myths.

(https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1041000.FitzRoy_Richard_Somerset)

Norms, values, beliefs, symbols

- **Norms:** the way people behave in a society
 - **Values:** what they hold dear
 - **Beliefs:** how they think the universe works
 - **Expressive symbols:** often embodying norms, values or beliefs
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Cultures and Societies in a Changing World, Griswold 2008:4

Value → Norm



Shared values

- Resulting in similar behaviours, similar reactions to the environment and similar artefacts.
 - Contrast with groups who DO NOT share the same values in the same way.
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Patterns of relationships?

- Do certain values always result in the same norms?
 - Might similar norms result from different values?
 - Might certain values result in different behaviour depending on the circumstances?
 - If we want to define a 'culture' are values more important or norms (or something else)?
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Visualizing 'culture'

Try to draw a **diagram** of 'culture' which shows the relationships between its various parts (norms, values, beliefs etc...)

Helen Spencer-Oatey adds...

“Culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural norms, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behaviour and **his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour.**”

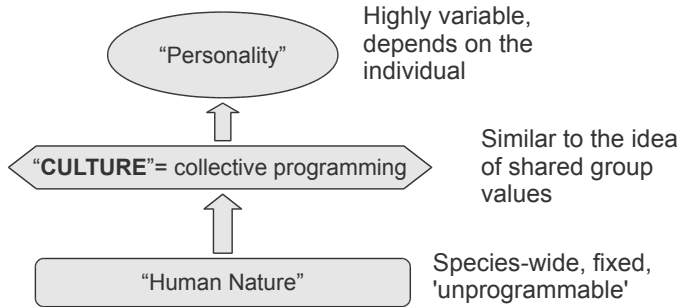
Culturally speaking : Managing rapport through talk across cultures. Spencer-Oatey, 2000

Geert Hofstede: 1

“the **collective programming of the mind** which distinguishes the member of one group or category of people from another”

Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. Hofstede, 1994

Geert Hofstede: 2



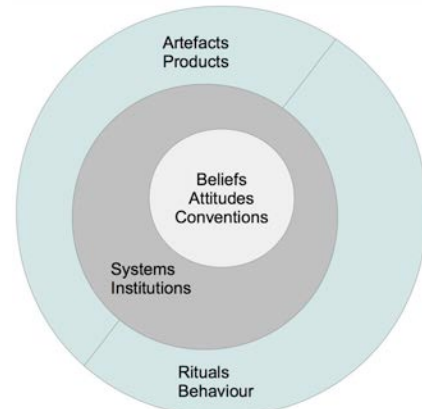
“Cultures are like onions”



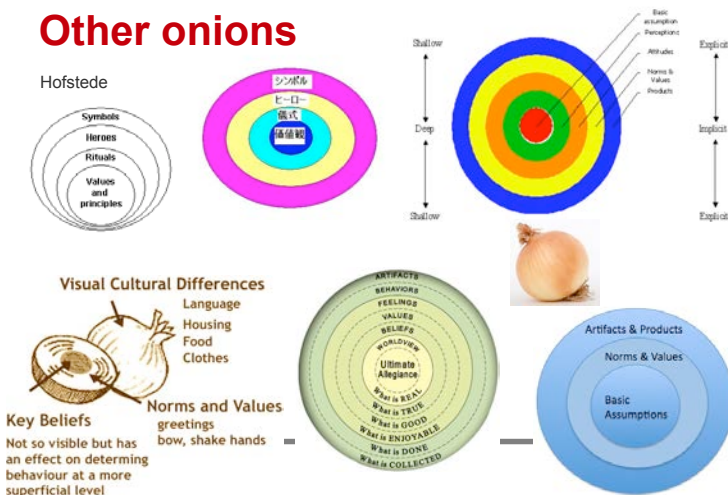
“Cultures are like onions”

- **Donkey:** They stink?
- **Donkey:** Oh, they make you cry?
- **Shrek:** NO! Layers. Onions have layers. Ogres have layers. Onions have layers. You get it? We both have layers.
- **Cultures are like onions**

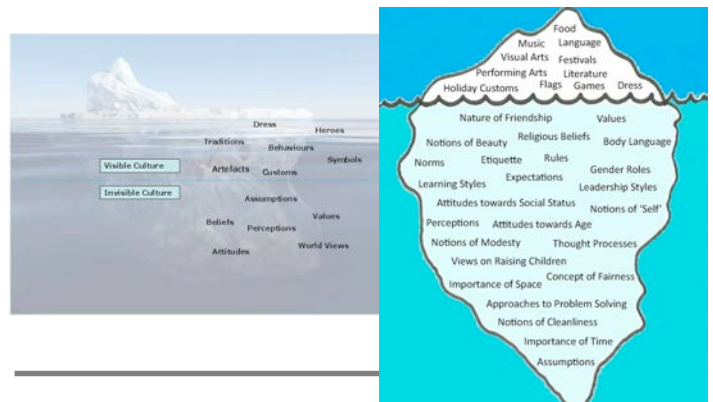
Spencer-Oatey's 'onion'



Other onions



Icebergs of culture



Levels of analysis/applicability

- How many people does it take to make a culture?
 - What is the appropriate 'level of analysis' at which any particular definition is applicable?
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Levels of analysis/applicability

- How many people does it take to make a culture?
 - Asian Culture, Western Culture, Latin Culture
 - National cultures
 - Sub-cultures (Hippies, monks)
 - Institutional / organisational / occupational culture
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Finding a 'measure'...

- To compare and contrast things we must be able to describe them.
 - Describing a 'culture' is difficult...
 - Academics therefore have often focussed on finding some measureable (or at least observable!) phenomenon as a proxy.
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Cultural Patterns

- Behavioural / communicative
 - "Thought patterns": approaches to the world
 - Inductive / deductive (Maletzke 1996)
 - Cognitive styles (logical-emotional)
 - Difficulty of obtaining data makes broad analysis problematic
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Hall's 'classic' patterns: 'Context'

- High-context ↔ Low-context

High context transactions feature **pre-programmed information that is in the receiver and in the setting**, with only minimal information in the transmitted message.

Low context transactions are the reverse. Most of the **information must be in the transmitted message** in order to make up for what is missing in the context.

E.T.Hall, 1976, *Beyond Culture*

Hall's 'classic' patterns: time

	Monochronic Culture	Polychronic Culture
Interpersonal Relations	Interpersonal relations are subordinate to present schedule	Present schedule is subordinate to Interpersonal relations
Activity Co-ordination	Schedule co-ordinates activity; appointment time is rigid.	Interpersonal relations co-ordinate activity; appointment time is flexible
Task Handling	One task at a time	Many tasks are handled simultaneously
Breaks and Personal Time	Breaks and personal time are sacrosanct regardless of personal ties.	Breaks and personal time are subordinate to personal ties.
Temporal Structure	Time is inflexible; time is tangible	Time is flexible; time is fluid
Work/personal time separability	Work time is clearly separable from personal time	Work time is not clearly separable from personal time
Organisational Perception	Activities are isolated from organisation as a whole; tasks are measured by output in time (activity per hour or minute)	Activities are integrated into organisation as a whole; tasks are measured as part of overall organisational goal

(adopted from: Victor, 1992,p.234)

Dimensions of culture

- *Dimension* = “a measurable extent of a particular kind, such as length, breadth, depth, or height” Oxford Dictionary of English
 - **Hofstede** – PD, I/C, M/F, UA, LTO, IN
 - Power Differential, Individual/Collectivist, Male/Female, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long-term Outlook, Indulgence
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 - **“The work of Hofstede is probably the most popular work in the arena of culture research” (Dahl, p14)**
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“Schwartz Value Inventory”

- Survey method based on identifying held values
- Value types then grouped and 'dimensions' assigned

“Values located in the ‘power’ value type represent are likely to indicate an individual that values social status and prestige or control and dominance over people and resources.” (Dahl, 17)

Schwartz Value Inventory Overview: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1116&context=orpc>

Schwartz Value Circumplex



Summary

- Since the 1950s academics have come up with a number of different ways to think about culture
 - Many of these have focussed on ‘values’
 - A variety of attempts have been made to identify cultures’ central/core(?) ‘values’ as a defining (and simplifying) feature
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Next Week

- More on the dimensions of culture

- **To read:**

*“A triumph of faith - a failure of analysis:
Hofstede's model of national cultural”*

McSweeney 2002
