Motivation and Cognition Across Cultures

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This handbook has its historical roots in the late 1970, early 1980 period. During that time social cognition was in its heyday and social motivation was flat on its back. The reason for this, according to Sorrentino and Higgins (1986, Chapter 1) can perhaps be traced back to the rise of behaviorism in North American psychology. Until that point, various views relating motivation and/or cognition to behavior were flourishing. Darwin (1872) carried considerable weight, as did Freud (1917/1955) and McDougall (1908), in putting forth instinct as the underlying motivational force accounting for behavior. On the other hand, others were putting forth a primarily cognitive and/or rational viewpoint as the basis for behavior. James (1890), for example, stressed the importance of will and the self in determining what he called voluntary behavior. The structuralists and functionalists as well as the phrenologists (e.g., Galton, 1883; Titchener, 1899), argued that the mind and various streams of consciousness were all that were worthy of study. There was, however, a third and ultimately, overwhelming, viewpoint that won the day – behaviorism. This school of thought rejected all other approaches – or any approach that focussed on the internal machinations of the individual. Watson (1930, p. 5) the “father of behaviorism” said:

The Behaviorist began his own formulation of the problem of psychology by sweeping aside all medieval conceptions. He dropped from his scientific vocabulary all subjective terms such as sensation, perception, image, desire, purpose, and even thinking, and emotion as they were subjectively defined.
This statement, which reflected the predominant feeling among North American psychologists at the time, obviously did little to promote the fields of motivation, cognition, and social psychology. It is interesting that cognition was the last of the three areas to fully recover from the attack of the behaviorists.

The behaviorist program and the issues it spawned all but eliminated any serious research in cognitive psychology for 40 years. The rat supplanted the human as the principal laboratory subject, and psychology turned to finding out what could be learned by studying animal learning and motivation.

Anderson (1980, p. 9)

Motivation, however, could not be swept aside as a by-product of learning principles, as Hull (1943) had hoped to do. Tolman’s (1932, 1959) empirical demonstrations of purposive behavior in animals met the rat behaviorists head on, until they were forced to embrace the concept of motivation as something other than a learning phenomenon. Social psychology was also soon to re-emerge, largely through the influence of Lewin (1935, 1951), whose field theory had concepts that were strikingly similar to those of Tolman (see Atkinson, 1964).

It is important to note that these theories were not motivational or cognitive, but both. The expectancy-value theories of Tolman and Lewin took account of both motivational and cognitive factors when attempting to predict behavior. Tolman, in predicting maze behavior, spoke of the expectancy of the goal and the demand for the goal. Lewin, in research on level of aspiration and decision making, spoke in terms of potency and valence. When a rat moves through a maze or a human moves through his or her life space, it is done purposively, and both motivation and cognition are important elements in accounting for this behavior.

Although Tolman’s points were well taken, prompting Hull and the neo-Hullians (e.g., Miller, 1948; Spence, 1956) to modify their viewpoint, the influence of B. F. Skinner (e.g., Skinner, 1953), a staunch theoretical behaviorist, continued to dominate in that area. Within social psychology, however, models involving the interactive effects of motivation and cognition flourished well into the early 1970s. This was a direct consequence of Lewin’s charismatic appeal, which enabled him to pass many of his theoretical ideas to his students and associates and to their students (e.g., Festinger, Cartwright, Zander, Back, Atkinson, Deutsch, Kelley, Schachter, Zajonc). Indeed, much of social psychology up to that point could be traced to Lewin and others (e.g., Bruner, Heider, Newcomb) who saw the importance of both motivation and cognition in their theories.

In the 1970s, a major shift in emphasis began occurring in social psychology; cognition emerged as the dominant force, and motivation declined to a secondary element. This reversal may be directly attributable to the rejection of motivational concepts in the study of cognition and perceptual processes in general psychology. As Anderson (1980) pointed out, cognitive psychology did not begin to emerge from the attack of the behaviorists until this time. He cited three areas that account for the information-processing approach that emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s: human factors research in World War II (see Broadbent, 1958; Atkinson & Schiffrin, 1968), interest in artificial intelligence
(e.g., Newell & Simon, 1972), and psycholinguistics (e.g., Chomsky, 1957). Anderson cited Neisser’s (1967)-*Cognitive Psychology* as the book that gave “a new legitimacy to the field.” Motivation had little place in these three areas. These nonmotivational information-processing concepts began to influence research and theory in social psychology in the late 1970s, with the premise that cognition can account for many behaviors that others claimed to be motivated.

In an earlier period, the premise had been quite the opposite. The “New Look” argued that motivation could account for many responses that others claimed to be strictly perceptual. Bruner (1957, p. 123), for example, wrote:

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> About ten years ago I was party to the publication of an innocent enough paper entitled, ‘Value and Need as Organizing Factors in Perception.’ It was concerned with what at that time was the rather obscure problem of how extra-stimulus factors influenced perception, a subject then of interest to only a small band of us – Gardner Murphy, Nevitt Sanford, Muzafer Sherif, and a few others. Obviously, Professor Boring is quite right about the mischievousness of the Zeitgeist, for the appearance of this paper seemed to coincide with all sorts of spirit-like rumbling within the world of psychology that were soon to erupt in a most unsprit-like torrent of research on this very topic – perhaps three hundred research reports and theoretical explications in the ten years since then.

Bruner then went on to present, in this classic article, his views on perceptual readiness, in which the New Look plays an important role. His notion regarding category accessibility, for example, was that it was determined by learning and by “the requirements of search dictated by need states and the need to carry out habitual enterprises such as walking, reading, or whatever it is that makes up the round of daily, habitual life” (Bruner, 1957, pp. 148–149). He concluded his article with the following statement:

In conclusion, it seems appropriate to say that the ten years of the so-called New Look in perception research seem to be coming to a close with much empirical work accomplished – a great deal of it demonstrational, to be sure, but with a promise of a second ten years in which hypotheses will be more rigorously formulated and, conceivably, neural mechanisms postulated, if not discovered. The prospects are anything but discouraging.

The New Look is gone. Bruner was correct in that the New Look carried on for 10 years and, indeed, might have had its heyday in the 1960s. The notion of motivational influences on perception and cognition was highly discussed, though always controversial in perception (e.g., Dember, 1960) and cognition (e.g., Harper et al., 1964). In the Harper et al. (1964) book, there is a section of particular relevance to the present volume. It is entitled, *Cognition, Motivation and Personality*, and it includes articles that deal with effects of motivational processes on cognition (Henle, 1964) and cognitive aspects of motivation (Prentice, 1964) as well as some very interesting contributions by investigators of social behavior. Here we have Schachter and Singer’s (1962) classic article on cognitive, social, and physiological determinants of emotional state; Festinger’s articles on the motivating effects of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1958) and the psychological effects of insufficient rewards (Festinger, 1961); and many others (e.g., Pettigrew, 1958; Berkowitz, 1960; Secord & Backman, 1960).
Hence, as a consequence of the New Look, there was a very rich sense of the interplay among motivation, cognition, and social behavior.

In the early 1980s, all of this camaraderie between motivational and cognitive theorists faded. In books on sensation and perception (e.g., Levine & Shefner, 1981; Coren et al., 1984), the New Look and motivation are mentioned rarely if at all. Similarly, no mention of the New Look or motivation is made in Anderson’s (1980) cognitive psychology book, *Cognitive Psychology and Its Implications*. When it comes to social psychology, the situation was similar. For example, in a highly influential book by Nisbett and Ross (1980), the New Look is discussed, as is motivation, but both are treated as peripheral to central human inference processes. In much of psychology, then, the New Look and its impact were no longer felt. Indeed, in some areas of social cognition, there was evidence of hostility toward anyone who would dare use the term “motivation” in anything other than a pejorative manner. One of our undergraduate students, for example, on arriving at a graduate center well known for social cognition, proudly presented the results of his honors thesis (subsequently published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*) at a conference. The student was cautioned by his new advisor not to mention the study “around here” – the reason being that since the study involved a motivational construct, the student might jeopardize his standing with the faculty.

What appears to account for the demise of the New Look is the fact that motivation was seen as an alternative explanation for a cognitive process. Rather than studying the interaction of motivational and cognitive processes, a battle developed regarding which of the two, motivation or cognition, was a better explanation for the phenomenon. Dember (1960), for example, pointed out that in the classic experiment by Bruner and Goodman (1947), in which children overestimated the size of coins compared to neutral discs, the results might not be due to motivation, as was originally proposed, “but more simply by a culturally acquired association between value and size” (Dember, 1960, p. 340). Research on perceptual defense (e.g., Postman et al., 1948; Blum, 1954) also fell under heavy criticism, mostly because of methodological shortcomings.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, social psychologists were quick to jump on the bandwagon. Social-cognitive theorists also attempted to put motivational theories to rest with alternative explanations. Thus, for Nisbett and Ross (1980, p. 247), biases and problems in inference or behavior are often due to information-processing errors and cognitive limitations – the notion of “people as faulty computers.” Self-serving biases in attribution and prejudice, for example, may not be at all motivational:

In both cases nonmotivational factors seem sufficient to account for most of the phenomena. In the case of so-called ego-defensive biases in attribution, it is clear that actors usually hold preconceptions and possess evidence that on purely intellectual grounds would seem to justify, if not demand, asymmetric responses to success and failure. In the case of prejudice, it seems clear that stereotypes of ethnic or racial groups are similar to the schemas or theories that encapsulate socially based knowledge of many other categories of people, objects, or events.
A similar “faulty computer” perspective on judgmental errors and biases may be found in the works of Cantor and Mischel (1977), Dawes (1976), Markus (1977), Hamilton (1979), and Miller and Ross (1975).

Contrary to the history of research and theory in social psychology, and in spite of the teachings of many current practitioners’ advisers whose lineage could be traced back to Heider and Lewin, the “cold” approach became the predominant theme in the study of social behavior. Indeed, even motivational theories of achievement behavior were under attack from cognitive theorists. Trope (1975) argued that differences in behavior as a function of achievement-related motives are primarily due to differences in cognitive information seeking, not affective arousal. He and Weiner (1972) argued that preferences for tasks of intermediate difficulty on the part of success-oriented persons (see Atkinson, 1964; Atkinson & Raynor, 1974) are due to the fact that such tasks are most diagnostic of the person’s ability, rather than being due to the interaction of motivational and situational components that the affective theory specifies. In the area of social behavior, then, cognitive theories became the Weltanschaung.

It was during this time that one of the most cognitive of cognitive social psychologist, Tory Higgins, arrived at my (RMS) university and remained there for a few years before moving on. Whereas Tory was a strict cognitive theorist at the time, I was trying to defend motivational theorists. Before long, we began trying to convince the other that our field was more important than the other’s. It did not take long for us to realize that both motivation and cognition were not only important, but also must be considered together. In so doing, we developed the notion of the Warm Look. We argued that just as “hot” cognitions are insufficient explanations for information processing and perceptual processes, so, too, is the “cold” approach an inadequate explanation for social phenomena. The Warm Look reflects the blending of “cold” cognitive and “hot” motivational processes; motivation and cognition are, in fact, inseparable. Sorrentino and Higgins (1986, Chapter 1, p. 8) wrote,

Behavior is not a product of hot cognitions, as suggested by the New Look perspective, nor of cold cognitions, as suggested by the ‘faulty computer’ perspective. In addition, it is not simply that cognition leads to motivation and motivation leads to cognition. Rather, each is a property or facet of the other. They are synergistic in that they operate together to produce combined effects. What we are saying, then, is that whatever determines behavior is neither hot nor cold – it is warm.

Following our synthesis of ideas, it became apparent that we should try to do what we can to help bring the two fields back together. In order to accomplish this, we decided that we would come up with the first handbook of motivation and cognition. We contacted the best people we could think of who were experts in either motivation or cognition and asked them if they would be willing to write a chapter emphasizing the synergism of motivation and cognition. The original Handbook of Motivation and Cognition (Sorrentino & Higgins, 1986) was highly cited and became so successful that two more volumes were produced (Higgins & Sorrentino, 1990, Vol. 2; Sorrentino & Higgins, 1996, Vol. 3).
The present handbook is a natural extension of this series. Recognizing the importance of motivation and cognition to the study of cross-cultural research, Susumu and I contacted some of the people that contributed to the original series and asked them to write a chapter stating how their current research and theory was affected by differences across cultures. As a result, we got some very interesting chapters in the current volume. These chapters are included in the first part of the book, where we have loosely clustered together those chapters which attempt to show the importance of motivation and cognition for the study of cultural differences and similarities. In the original volume, Julius Kuhl (1986, p. 407) nicely defined affect, motivation, and cognition:

It is assumed that cognitive, emotional, and motivational subsystems relate to the world in three different ways. The term cognition is reserved for those processes that mediate the acquisition and representation of knowledge about the world, i.e., processes that have a representative relation to the world of objects and facts. Emotional (affective) processes evaluate the personal significance of those objects and facts. Motivational processes relate to the world in an actional way, e.g., they relate to goal states of the organism in its attempt to produce desired changes in its environment.

Kuhl went on to discuss some interesting interactions among the three subsystems in terms of three motivational phenomena: choice, persistence, and effort. His discussion is a tour de force that shows why each of these subsystems must be taken into account in any theory of human behavior. In Chapter 2 of this volume, he and Heidi Keller aim to improve our understanding of the role of emotion across cultures by taking a closer look at the cognitive, emotional, and developmental differences that have been observed in cross-cultural research on independent and interdependent orientations; providing a theoretical explanation for the observed pattern of cognitive, emotional, and developmental differences between cultures that lean more toward individualistic or interrelated orientations; elaborating the role that affect regulation plays in modulating the interaction between diverging cognitive processing styles; and deriving from this theoretical analysis an elaborated model extending the framework of independence and interdependence to overcome some conceptual difficulties involved in this contrast.

In the original volume, Judy Short and I (Sorrentino & Short, 1986) presented our initial theory of uncertainty orientation. We tried to show that previous research and theory on achievement behavior may have confused information value with affective value. We introduced our views on uncertainty orientation with the notion that uncertainty orientation is primarily an informational variable, whereas achievement-related motives are primarily affective variables. Thus, all those aspects of achievement situations that are informational in nature (e.g., information about the self or the environment) are related to individual differences in uncertainty orientation. All those aspects that are related to affective arousal (feeling good or bad about the self or the environment) are due to achievement-related motives (as well as to any other source of motivation aroused by the situation). In Chapter 2 of the present volume, I, along with Andrew Szeto, John Nezlek, Satoru Yasunaga, Sadafusa Kouhara, and Yasunao Ohtsubo extend this theory to
cross-cultural studies. We present research suggesting that although controversy currently rages regarding whether individualism and collectivism truly distinguish Eastern and Western societies, or whether it may be more meaningful to speak of an independent versus interdependent self, or whether people have or do not have self-esteem, a plausible major distinction may be that most East–West differences might be a function of how these societies cope with uncertainty, and how this shapes the behavior of its constituent members. We also show that so-called differences in emotional responding and self-esteem may be a function of underlying individual differences in achievement-related motives and whether the individual’s means of handling uncertainty are consistent with his or her culture’s method of resolving uncertainty.

Perhaps one of the most provocative chapters in the original series was that by Bargh (1990). There he presented one of his most complete statements regarding nonconscious motivation and cognition. Bargh raised the issue of how much control a person exercises over his or her own thought and behavior in social situations. What other agents of control exist and what is the extent of their influence? Bargh argues that while responses may be strongly influenced by the environment and preconscious processes, an intervening intention is required to make the response itself. Intentional, goal-directed responding can overcome automatic tendencies in information processing and action. Bargh suggests that the key question then becomes, “Where do goals come from?” He proposes that instead of being under “executive” control, much goal-setting activity may be initiated by patterns of environmental features. It may be the environment itself that activates the goal or intent. More specifically, chronic representations of goals (or intents) and those environmental features with which they are frequently and consistently associated (e.g., because these are the situations in which the goals are typically pursued) may become interconnected in memory. Thus, goals or intentions would be automatically activated whenever relevant situational features were present in the environment. And these goals and intentions can guide thought and behavior outside of awareness in the service of the individual and not simply to satisfy the desires or demands of the social environment.

John, along with Eric Uhlmann, and Andrew Poelhman, continues to be provocative in Chapter 4 of this handbook. These co-authors tackle the fascinating topic of the universality of religion, but from an implicit motivation and cognitive framework. Rather than attempt a comprehensive theory of the ultimate origins of religious faith, they discuss evidence for two classes of empirically supported psychological contributors: cognitive defaults and existential needs. Both of these sets of variables exert a profound yet largely implicit (i.e., intuitive, unconscious) influence on the development, content, transmission, and maintenance of religious faith. Theistic cognition is so deeply ingrained that even atheists, agnostics, and less religious people display implicit responses consistent with religious beliefs.

William Swann was also a contributor to the original series (Swann, 1990). Swann considers the interplay of self-enhancement and self-verification. He asks, “What do people want to believe about themselves?” He argues that both self-enhancement
and self-verification processes are sufficiently robust that neither can be ruled out. It is true both that people like to be liked and that people are motivated to maintain an idea about themselves. And these motivations can work together (e.g., high self-esteem persons) or be in conflict (e.g., low self-esteem persons). With respect to social feedback in particular, people are motivated both to receive positive feedback about themselves (because of their need for praise and love) and to receive feedback that is consistent with their self-beliefs (because of their need to believe that the social world is predictable and controllable). Swann proposed that the process of self-enhancement requires only that the feedback be identified as favorable or unfavorable. In contrast, the process of self-verification requires identification of the self-attribute contained in the feedback, accessing stored beliefs about one’s self-attributes, and comparing these self-attributes. Swann suggests that this difference means that self-verification has more complex conditional rules for approaching and avoiding feedback than does self-evaluation, which, in turn, means that self-verification requires additional mental work. He then described a variety of motivational implications of this difference in mental effort, such as the effects of depriving people of cognitive resources or manipulating the accessibility or certainty of people’s self-beliefs.

In this handbook, the goal of Chapter 6 by Tammy English, Serena Chen, and William Swann is to assess the likelihood that self-verification is a cultural general phenomenon. To this end, they first provide an overview of self-verification theory and research, and then discuss whether the roots of self-verification extend to cultures outside of North America and, if so, what form self-verification strivings would take in these cultures. Ultimately, they propose that self-verification strivings are universal, although cross-cultural differences in conceptions of the self may result in cultural variation in the ways they are pursued.

Weiner (1986) developed his ideas concerning the importance of attributional theory to the study of motivation and emotion. In Chapter 7 of this handbook, he contends that attribution theory as a theory, that is, as a set of interrelated constructs, is not in need of alteration. However, one must be very careful in the assumptions being made when contrasting ethnic groups, cultures, genders, and so forth. Success for one may be failure for another; causal information for one may be perceived as useless for another; causes salient to one group may be in the far background for the other; and so on. That is, content must be distinguished from process inasmuch as content may be culturally specific whereas process is culturally general. This means that the theorist must be alert for differences between cultures. However, one must be equally alert to convert phenotypic disparities into genotypic similarities. What appears to be a qualitative difference between cultures may be subject to a similar conceptual analysis. That is, the unique is nonetheless included within more general laws.

Tory Higgins along with his students (Higgins et al., 1986) presented the initial formulation of self-discrepancy theory. This evolved into regulatory-focus theory (see Chapter 8) and Tory, along with, Antonio Pierro and Arie Kruglanski (another contributor to the series, see Kruglanski 1990, 1996), in Chapter 8, expand this
theory across cultures. They consider how the regulatory focus distinction between promotion concerns with accomplishment and aspirations and prevention concerns with safety and responsibilities, and the regulatory mode distinction between locomotion concerns with movement from state to state and assessment concerns with making comparisons, could provide a new perspective on cultural differences in trait strength. From this self-regulatory perspective, traits like extraversion or conscientiousness are conceptualized as strategic conduits or channels in the service of promotion, prevention, locomotion, or assessment orientations. That is, rather than themselves reflecting something basic about individuals’ motivational predispositions, such traits are considered as providing support for more fundamental and general self-regulatory concerns. This conceptualization includes a new perspective on why Japan and USA, for example, vary in self-esteem levels.

Gollwitzer (1990), then working with Heinz Heckhausen prior to Heckhausen’s passing, asked the question, “How do people choose, plan, enact, and evaluate actions?” Four distinct phases in the course of action were described: deliberation, implementation, goal achievement, and evaluating outcomes of the action. Peter Gollwitzer suggests that the concept of “mind-set” can be used to specify the distinct tasks or demands to be solved at each of the four phases. In this handbook, Peter Gollwitzer, along with Gabrielle Oettingen and Timur Sevincer (Chapter 9) state that the role of culture in goal pursuit may be discussed at various levels of analysis, and that cultural norms and values might affect the determinants of goal setting and goal striving, desirability, and feasibility. They then address the following questions. Does culture affect what future outcomes and behaviors are perceived as desirable and thus qualify as potential aspired – to goal states? And does culture affect how people perceive the feasibility of realizing these desired futures? They also examine whether and how culture influences the processes that lead people to commit to goals, and whether it influences the translation of set goals into action (i.e., goal striving).

Along with contributors to the original series, we sought out others who had something to say about the influence of motivation and cognition across cultures. In Chapter 5, Jan Hofer and Michael Bond make a case for using implicit measures in cross-cultural psychology. They argue that implicit measures may be even more useful in such investigations because they rely less heavily on the sophisticated cognitive processes that compromise the validity of explicit measures when used cross-culturally. Implicit measures alert psychologists to the power of situations in evoking the constructs being implicitly tapped. Their cross-cultural consideration of implicit measures leads into a discussion of culture’s role in infusing situations with shared meaning, “the very stuff of social psychology.” This shared meaning interacts with the personalities of cultured carriers of that meaning to yield predictable behavior.

Michelle Gezensvey and Colleen Ward, Chapter 10, attempt to synthesize theory, concepts and models from two domains of psychological research: motivation and acculturation. From the cross-cultural vantage point, a motivational analysis offers a new perspective on the acculturation process. From the motivational
vantage point, the chapter demonstrates that key theoretical constructs and processes can be extended to a new area of investigation – culture contact and change.

In Chapter 11, Daphna Oyserman and Spike Lee point out that, although the correlational evidence supports the claims made by individualism and collectivism models of culture, without experimental evidence, the process by which culture matters remains hidden. In this chapter, their goal is to illuminate at least part of this hidden process, focussing on how individualism and collectivism as cultural syndromes likely influence cognitive content, procedures, and motivations. By articulating what turns on culturally characteristic motivations and studying the extent that these motivations map on to individualism and collectivism or other cultural syndrome models, research on the interface between culture and motivational processes provides a new frontier on cultural psychology.

Bertram Malle (Chapter 12) argues that, in response to the variety of tasks and demands in social life, humans have evolved a suite of interrelated subsystems that together form what may be called the social-cognitive toolbox. This toolbox contains abstract concepts (e.g., agency and intentionality); processes of gaze following, automatic empathy, mimicry, and joint attention; and increasingly complex functions of imaginative simulation and mental state inference. These tools belong together not because they form a module or are implemented in the same brain areas; what unites them is their responsiveness to the social environment with its challenges of ambulant intentional agents-minded, intelligent, and unique individuals. In this chapter, Malle discusses extant knowledge on each social-cognitive tool and asks whether there are compelling data for or against universality of that tool.

Rounding out this section of the book, Bertram Gawronski, Kurt Peters, and Fritz Strack, Chapter 13, tackle cognitive dissonance theory. They provide a conceptual reanalysis of inconsistency processes that aims at specifying different sources of cross-cultural differences in dissonance-related phenomena. The central claim of their reanalysis is that the general processes associated with cognitive inconsistency are universal, even though cross-cultural differences pertaining to the contents of belief systems may function as important moderators of the outcomes of these processes.

Part II of the book consists of leading cross-cultural researchers for whom we asked the question, “How does culture affect the way people think and act?” Minoru Karasawa and Anne Maass (Chapter 14) kick off this part by discussing three functions of language in social cognition. First, they analyze the way in which language drives attention, arguing that subtle differences in language use determine what the listeners will focus on, what will attract their attention, and also what they may overlook or ignore. Second, they review research showing that linguistic choices of the speaker affect inferences that the listener is likely to draw about the speaker as well as the object of the conversation. Finally, taking an embodiment perspective, they argue that our perception and imagery of social reality is, in a subtle manner, influenced by the way in which language is written.
Chapter 15 by Denis Hilton and James Liu explicates their use of the concept of social representations of history, and show how it can function with respect to group identity construction and agenda setting. They speculate that these representations include “charters” that serve a normative function of warranting group attitudes and actions by explaining them in terms of key events in the group’s history. They also discuss other ways in which charters can be changed or contested, and conclude by reviewing studies that show the relevance of representations of history for group identities and collective emotions, such as collective guilt.

In Chapter 16, Susumu Yamaguchi, Hiroaki Morio, and Chunchi Lin challenge the self-criticism view of self-esteem among Japanese citizens. They point out that cross-cultural differences in self-evaluations and self-esteem, especially between Japan and North America, fit very well with the self-criticism hypothesis at the country level. However, if one takes a closer look at the individual level data and analyze them as such, the attractiveness of the self-criticism hypothesis fades away. At the individual level, available evidence indicates that high self-esteem is associated with higher academic achievement, higher expectation of performance, and more persistent both in Japan and North America. High self-esteem people among Japanese also show more confidence in their social skills and initiate contacts more easily than their low self-esteem counterparts, like high self-esteem people in North America. Furthermore, high self-esteem is strongly associated with higher expressed psychological well-being again like in North America.

Chapter 17 by Yoshihisa Kashima, Kim Peters, and Jennifer Whelan points out that culture is part of human nature. *Homo sapiens* have evolved to construct culture. Human ontogeny presupposes cultural input; children become fully human to the extent that they are enculturated into the meaningful world of the human social reality. Whereas culture may influence genetic evolution in the long run, cultural evolution proceeds much more quickly than biological evolution. Much of human adaptation (or otherwise) to our natural and social environment has to be driven by cultural evolution. In this sense, human agency, either individual or collective, is fundamentally cultural. A question they address in this chapter, however, is how such enculturated agency is possible.

Chapter 18 by Justin Levinson states that the collaboration between psychological and legal scholarship is only just beginning. Recent interdisciplinary projects have demonstrated that an important accomplishment – the building of an accurate and culturally competent legal behavioral model – is within reach. Building such a model has major societal ramifications, from protecting victims of racial and cultural discrimination to ensuring a behaviorally and economically efficient system of rules. This chapter brings up to date legal scholarship incorporating cognitive, social and cultural psychology, highlights new interdisciplinary research directions, and challenges psychologists and legal scholars to increase collaborations.

In Chapter 19, Emiko Kashima argues that, given the overwhelming advantage of culture for individual and group survival, a psychological mechanism
that ensured the individual’s adherence to, and within-group maintenance of, the shared knowledge would have been critical. While some animal species including humans physically threaten others to dominate and gain own advantages, humans are unique in their ability to threaten self as well as others by using culturally shared meanings. Likewise, humans are capable of symbolically alleviating the psychological injuries experienced by self and other. In other words, culture is both an antecedent and a consequence of threat for an individual, with an important group-level implication of knowledge preservation. The more the given meaning is activated, used, and encoded in the memory of the people who participated in the event, the more likely it becomes that this meaning is used in the future of people.

Chapter 20, by Kwok Leung and Fan Zhou, provides a critical analysis of the relationships between two classes of generalized motivational and cognitive constructs: values and social axioms. Different from previous works on motivational and cognitive processes, research on these two constructs has taken into account the influence of culture, and their cultural generality has been demonstrated by large-scale cross-cultural research. The chapter also explores the interplay between values and social axioms in influencing behavior, and presents a number of directions for future research.

Uichol Kim and Young-Shin Park, in Chapter 21, discuss differences between Korean and other East Asian cultures with the United States and other Western cultures. They see basic differences in attitudes and goals with regard to academic achievement as strongly rooted in Confucianism and Buddhist beliefs in the former and more individualist attitudes in the latter groups. Findings from quantitative and qualitative analyses lead them to question the validity of Western theories that focus narrowly on individualistic values.

Chapter 22 by Jennifer Goetz, Julie Spencer-Rodgers, and Kaiping Peng, discusses how culture influences the experience and regulation of emotional complexity, or the co-occurrence of positive and negative emotions. Research in this chapter suggests that beliefs about the nature of contradiction, interconnections, and change in the world relate to the subjective experience of complex emotions. Individuals from dialectical cultures that tolerate contradiction report feeling emotional complexity more frequently, are more comfortable with emotional complexity, and may be less likely to regulate it. These findings raise questions about emotional co-occurrence, as well as the role of culture in emotional experience.

In Chapter 23, David Matsumoto and Jessie Wilson describe a theory of how emotions serve as one important source of motivation by priming individuals to behave in certain ways. They also argue that the functions of culture – as a meaning and information system – are to prevent social chaos, maintain social order, and ensure group efficiency, given the ecological environment and the resources available in it to survive. They believe that when emotions are elicited, culture calibrates the primed individual to the behavioral repertoires available and necessary
in that culture as identified by the social roles, norms, and expectations in order to serve as motivators for desired behaviors. They also believe that culture calibrates the behaviors of the perceivers of emotion, thereby ensuring the regulation of social interaction.

Finally, in Part III (Chapter 24), Ron Fischer and Vivian Miu-Chi Lun state that we need to address to what extent existing psychological tests are adequate and can be used with culturally diverse populations. The aim of their chapter is therefore to (a) outline criteria and principles for assessing equivalence and bias (or cultural fairness) of psychological tests, (b) provide a brief review of methods that could be used for examining the applicability of tests, (c) provide a selected review of specific tests and domains and their cross-cultural applicability, and (d) present some avenues for further research.

REFERENCES


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