4

I, We, and They

A medium-size Swedish high-technology corporation was approached with a profitable opportunity by a compatriot, a businessman with good contacts in Saudi Arabia. The corporation sent one of its engineers—let us call him Johannesson—to Riyadh, where he was introduced to a small Saudi engineering firm run by two brothers in their mid-thirties, both with British university degrees. The request was to assist in a development project on behalf of the Saudi government. However, after six visits over a period of two years, nothing seemed to happen. Johannesson's meetings with the brothers were always held in the presence of the Swedish businessman who had established the first contact. This annoyed him and his superiors, because they were not at all sure that this businessman did not have contacts with their competitors as well—but the Saudis wanted the intermediary to be there. Dis-

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cussions often dwelt on issues having little to do with the business—for instance, Shakespeare, of whom both brothers were fans.

Just when Johannesson's superiors started to seriously doubt the wisdom of the corporation's investment in these expensive trips, a fax arrived from Riyadh inviting Johannesson for an urgent visit. A contract worth several million dollars was ready to be signed. Back he went. From one day to the next, the Saudis' attitude had changed: the businessman-intermediary's presence was no longer necessary, and Johannesson for the first time saw the Saudis smile and even make jokes.

So far, so good—but the story goes on. Acquiring the remarkable order contributed to Johannesson's being promoted to a management position in a different division. Thus, he was no longer in charge of the Saudi account. A successor was nominated, another engineer with considerable international experience, whom Johannesson personally introduced to the Saudi brothers. A few weeks later another fax arrived from Riyadh; in this one the Saudis threatened to cancel the contract over a detail in the delivery conditions. Johannesson's help was requested. When he arrived in Riyadh, it appeared that the conflict was over a minor issue and could easily be resolved—but only, the Saudis felt, with Johannesson as the corporation's representative. So, the corporation twisted its structure to allow Johannesson to handle the Saudi account even though his main responsibilities were now in a completely different field.

The Individual and the Collective in Society

The Swedes and the Saudis in this true story have different concepts of the role of personal relationships in business. For the Swedes, business is done with a company; for the Saudis, it's done with a person whom one has learned to know and trust. When one does not know another person well enough, it is best that contacts take place in the presence of an intermediary or go-between, someone who knows and is trusted by both parties. At the root of the difference between these cultures is a fundamental issue in human societies: the role of the individual versus the role of the group.

The vast majority of people in our world live in societies in which the interest of the group prevails over the interest of the individual. We

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will call these societies *collectivist*, using a word that to some readers may have political connotations, but the word is not meant here in any political sense. It does not refer to the power of the state over the individual; it refers to the *power of the group*. The first group in our lives is always the family into which we are born. Family structures, however, differ among societies. In most collectivist societies, the "family" within which the child grows up consists of a number of people living closely together: not just the parents and other children but also, for example, grandparents, uncles, aunts, servants, or other housemates. This is known in cultural anthropology as the *extended family*. When children grow up, they learn to think of themselves as part of a "we" group, a relationship that is not voluntary but is instead given by nature. The "we" group is distinct from other people in society who belong to "they" groups, of which there are many. The "we" group (or *in-group*) is the major source of one's identity and the only secure protection one has against the hardships of life. Therefore, one owes lifelong loyalty to one's in-group, and breaking this loyalty is one of the worst things a person can do. Between the person and the in-group, a mutual dependence relationship develops that is both practical and psychological.

A minority of people in our world live in societies in which the interests of the individual prevail over the interests of the group, societies that we will call *individualist*. In these, most children are born into families consisting of two parents and, possibly, other children; in some societies there is an increasing share of one-parent families. Other relatives live elsewhere and are rarely seen. This type is the *nuclear family* (from the Latin *nucleus*, meaning "core"). Children from such families, as they grow up, soon learn to think of themselves as "I." This "I," their personal identity, is distinct from other people's "I"s, and these others are classified not according to their group membership but instead according to individual characteristics. Playmates, for example, are chosen on the basis of personal preferences. The purpose of education is to enable children to stand on their own feet. Children are expected to leave the parental home as soon as this has been achieved. Not infrequently, children, after having left home, reduce relationships with their parents to a minimum or break them off altogether. Neither practically nor psychologically is the healthy person in this type of society supposed to be dependent on a group.

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Measuring the Degree of Individualism in Society

Extreme collectivism and extreme individualism can be considered the opposite poles of a second global dimension of national cultures, after power distance (which was described in Chapter 3). All countries in the IBM studies could be given an individualism index score that was low for collectivist societies and high for individualist societies.

The new dimension is defined as follows: *Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him- or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism* as its opposite pertains to *societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.*

Degrees of individualism obviously vary within countries as well as among them, so it is again important to base the country scores on comparable samples from one country to another. The IBM samples offered this comparability.

The survey questions on which the individualism index is based belong to a set of fourteen *work goals.* People were asked: "Try to think of those factors that would be important to you in an ideal job; disregard the extent to which they are contained in your present job. How important is it to you to . . . " followed by fourteen items, each to be scored on a scale from 1 (of utmost importance to me) to 5 (of very little or no importance). When the answer patterns for the respondents from forty countries on the fourteen items were analyzed, they reflected two underlying dimensions. One was *individualism versus collectivism.* The other came to be labeled *masculinity versus femininity* (see Chapter 5).

The dimension to be identified with individualism versus collectivism was most strongly associated with the relative importance attached to the following work goal items:

For the individualist pole

1. **Personal time:** have a job that leaves you sufficient time for your personal or family life
2. **Freedom:** have considerable freedom to adopt your own approach to the job
3. **Challenge:** have challenging work to do—work from which you can get a personal sense of accomplishment

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For the opposite, collectivist pole

4. **Training:** have training opportunities (to improve your skills or learn new skills)
5. **Physical conditions:** have good physical working conditions (good ventilation and lighting, adequate work space, etc.)
6. **Use of skills:** fully use your skills and abilities on the job

If the IBM employees in a country scored work goal 1 as relatively important, they generally also scored 2 and 3 as important but scored 4, 5, and 6 as unimportant. Such a country was considered individualist. If work goal 1 was scored as relatively unimportant, the same generally held for 2 and 3, but 4, 5, and 6 would be scored as relatively more important. Such a country was considered collectivist.

Obviously, these items from the IBM questionnaire do not totally cover the distinction between individualism and collectivism in a society. They only represent the issues in the IBM research that relate to this distinction. The correlations of the IBM individualism country scores with non-IBM data about other characteristics of societies confirm (validate) the claim that this dimension from the IBM data does indeed measure individualism.

It is not difficult to identify the importance of personal time, freedom, and (personal) challenge with individualism: they all stress the employee's independence from the organization. The work goals at the opposite pole—training, physical conditions, and skills being used on the job—refer to things the organization does for the employee and in this way stress the employee's dependence on the organization, which fits with collectivism. Another link in the relationship is that, as will be shown, individualist countries tend to be rich, while collectivist countries tend to be poor. In rich countries, training, physical conditions, and the use of skills may be taken for granted, which makes them relatively unimportant as work goals. In poor countries, these things cannot at all be taken for granted: they are essential in distinguishing a good job from a bad one, which makes them quite important among one's work goals.

The actual calculation of the individualism index is not, as in the case of power distance, based on simply adding or subtracting question scores after multiplying them by a fixed number. The statistical procedure used to identify the individualism dimension and, in Chapter 5, the masculinity dimension (a *factor analysis* of the country scores for the fourteen work

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goals) produced a *factor score* for each dimension for each country. These factor scores are a more accurate measure of that country's position on the dimension than could be obtained by adding or subtracting question scores. The factor scores for the individualism dimension were multiplied by 25, and a constant number of 50 points was added. This process puts the scores in a range from close to 0 for the most collectivist country to close to 100 for the most individualist one. This manner of calculation was used for the countries represented in the IBM database. For the various follow-up studies, approximation formulas were used in which the individualism index value could be directly computed by simple mathematics from the mean scores of four of the work goals.[1]

The individualism index (IDV) scores are shown in Table 4.1. As in the case of the power distance index in Chapter 3, the scores represent *relative* positions of countries. Table 4.1 confirms that nearly all wealthy countries score high on IDV while nearly all poor countries score low. There is a strong relationship between a country's national wealth and the degree of individualism in its culture; we will come back to this subject later in the chapter.

Sweden scored 71 on IDV, and the group of Arab-speaking countries to which Saudi Arabia belongs scored an average of 38, which demonstrates the cultural roots of Johannesson's dilemma. Of course, the Arab countries differ among themselves, and the Saudis within this region seem to be even more collectivist than some other Arabs, such as the Lebanese and the Egyptians. In the IBM sample, the latter were more strongly represented than the Saudis. Sweden's rank among seventy-six countries and regions is 13–14, and the Arab countries rank 41–42, so there are still a lot of countries scoring more collectivist than the Arab average. As stated earlier, collectivism is the rule in our world, and individualism the exception.

Individualism and Collectivism in the World Values Survey: Universalism Versus Exclusionism

Inglehart's overall analysis of the huge database of the World Values Survey (WVS), described in Chapter 2, produced two statistical factors. One of these, *secular-rational versus traditional authority*, was associated with small versus large power distance, and we encountered it in the previous chapter. The other, *well-being versus survival*, was correlated with IDV, with femininity (see Chapter 5), and with small power distance, in that order.[2]

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TABLE 4.1 Individualism Index (IDV) Values for 76 Countries and Regions Based on Factor Scores from 14 Items in the IBM Database Plus Extensions

RANK	AMERICA C/S	EUROPE S/SE	EUROPE N/NW ANGLO WORLD	EUROPE C/E EX-SOVIET	MUSLIM WORLD M.E & AFRICA	ASIA EAST ASIA SE	INDEX
1			United States				91
2			Australia				90
3			Great Britain				89
4–6			Canada total				80
4–6				Hungary			80
4–6			Netherlands				80
7			New Zealand				79
8			Belgium Nl				78
9		Italy					76
10			Denmark				74
11			Canada Quebec				73
12			Belgium Fr				72
13–14		France					71
13–14			Sweden				71
15–16			Ireland				70
15–16				Latvia			70
17–18			Norway				69
17–18			Switzerland Ge				69
19			Germany				67
20					S Africa (wte)		65
21			Switzerland Fr				64
22			Finland				63
23–26				Estonia			60
23–26				Lithuania			60

continued

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TABLE 4.1 Individualism Index (IDV) Values for 76 Countries and Regions Based on Factor Scores from 14 Items in the IBM Database Plus Extensions, ***continued***

RANK	AMERICA C/S	EUROPE S/SE	EUROPE N/NW ANGLO WORLD	EUROPE C/E EX-SOVIET	MUSLIM WORLD M.E & AFRICA	ASIA EAST ASIA SE	INDEX
23–26			Luxembourg				60
23–26				Poland			60
27		Malta					59
28				Czech Rep.			58
29			Austria				55
30					Israel		54
31				Slovakia			52
32		Spain					51
33						India	48
34	Suriname						47
35–37	Argentina						46
35–37						Japan	46
35–37					Morocco		46
38					Iran		41
39–40	Jamaica						39
39–40				Russia			39
41–42					Arab ctrs		38
41–42	Brazil						38
43		Turkey					37
44	Uruguay						36
45		Greece					35
46				Croatia			33
47					Philippines		32
48–50				Bulgaria			30
48–50	Mexico						30

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48–50			Romania			30
51–53				Africa E		27
51–53		Portugal				27
51–53			Slovenia			27
54					Malaysia	26
55–56					Hong Kong	25
55–56			Serbia			25
57	Chile					23
58–63					Bangladesh	20
58–63					China	20
58–63					Singapore	20
58–63					Thailand	20
58–63					Vietnam	20
58–63				Africa W		20
64	El Salvador					19
65					S Korea	18
66					Taiwan	17
67–68	Peru					16
67–68	Trinidad					16
69	Costa Rica					15
70–71					Indonesia	14
70–71				Pakistan		14
72	Colombia					13
73	Venezuela					12
74	Panama					11
75	Ecuador					8
76	Guatemala					6

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In his 2007 book, Misho analyzed the WVS database in more detail, including its latest additions.[3] He found Inglehart's second dimension conceptually diffuse. In a factor analysis, it split into two components. One reflected, among other things, differences in happiness; it will be described in Chapter 8 as part of the dimension *indulgence versus restraint*. The other component consisted of items dealing with in-group and out-group relationships:

At the positive pole

- Rejection of people of another race as neighbors

plus a number of conservative views on family and gender issues:

- Strong agreement that men make better leaders than women
- Strong agreement that children must always love their parents, even if the parents have deficiencies
- Agreement that a child needs two parents to be happy
- Agreement that a woman needs to have children to be fulfilled

At the negative pole

- Tolerance and respect for everybody

Misho concluded that the positive pole of this dimension reflects strong in-group cohesion and exclusion of members of other groups, whereas the negative pole indicates acceptance of others regardless of the group(s) to which they belong. He labeled it *exclusionism versus universalism*.

Exclusionism can be defined as the cultural tendency to treat people on the basis of their group affiliation and to reserve favors, services, privileges, and sacrifices for friends, relatives, and other groups with which one identifies, while excluding outsiders from the circle of those who deserve such privileged treatment. While exclusionist cultures strive to achieve harmony and good relationships within one's in-group, they may be indifferent, inconsiderate, rude, and sometimes even hostile toward members of out-groups.

Universalism is the opposite cultural tendency: treating people primarily on the basis of who they are as individuals and disregarding their group affiliations.

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Geert had earlier related collectivism to the distinction between in-groups and out-groups, and Misho's WVS dimension of exclusionism versus universalism turned out to be strongly negatively correlated with IDV. For forty-one countries that were part of Geert's original IBM set, IDV predicted 59 percent of universalism in the WVS, thirty-five years later, a strong validation of the IBM database.[4]

The distinction of in-group versus out-group, previously described in Chapter 1, is a central aspect of cultural collectivism. The correlation between exclusionism and IDV is strong but not perfect. A comparison of the rankings of forty-one countries from the IBM database on individualism and on exclusionism finds six countries that score considerably more universalist than could be predicted on the basis of their IDV scores: Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Slovenia, Finland, and Sweden. Their cultures according to their WVS data are more open to out-group members than expected. Five other countries score much more exclusionist than their IDV scores predict: India, Italy, Turkey, Iran, and the Philippines. Their cultures are more hostile to out-group members than expected.

Universalism implies respect for other cultures. The Eurobarometer in 2008 asked representative samples of the population in twenty-six countries to choose "the most important values for you personally" (three out of a list of twelve). One of these values was "respect for other cultures." Differences among countries in percentages of respondents choosing this answer related primarily to IDV.[5]

Individualism and Collectivism in Other Cross-National Studies

Table 2.1 listed six major replications of the IBM research, published between 1990 and 2002. Five of these, covering between fifteen and twenty-eight countries from the IBM set, produced IDV scores significantly correlated with the original IBM scores.[6] As in the case of PDI (Chapter 3), the various replications did not sufficiently agree to justify changing the score of any of the countries. The original IBM set still served as the best common denominator for the various studies.

Bond's Chinese Value Survey study among students in twenty-three countries, described in Chapter 2, produced an *integration* dimension, on which the countries positioned themselves largely in the same way as they

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had done on individualism-collectivism in the IBM studies. The CVS integration dimension resembles the WVS exclusionism dimension.[7] Students from countries scoring individualist answered that the following values were particularly important:

- Tolerance of others
- Harmony with others
- Noncompetitiveness
- A close, intimate friend
- Trustworthiness
- Contentedness with one's position in life
- Solidarity with others
- Being conservative

This was the largest cluster of CVS values associated with any single IBM dimension pole. In the individualist society, relationships with others are not obvious and prearranged; they are voluntary and have to be carefully fostered. The values at the individualist pole of the integration dimension describe conditions for the ideal voluntary relationship.

Students in collectivist societies, instead, answered that the following values were particularly important:

- Filial piety (obedience to parents, respect for parents, honoring of ancestors, financial support of parents)
- Chastity in women
- Patriotism

In the collectivist society, there is no need to make specific friendships: who one's friends are is predetermined by one's family or group membership. The family relationship is maintained by filial piety and by chastity in women and is associated with patriotism. In some versions of the IBM questionnaire, a work goal "serve your country" was included. This too was found to be strongly associated with collectivism.

Chapter 2 mentioned three other cross-national values databases: those of Schwartz, GLOBE, and Trompenaars. All three produced dimensions or categories strongly correlated with IDV. Schwartz identified seven categories of values, from which no fewer than five were significantly correlated with IDV.[8] When Schwartz's seven categories were simplified into three

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clusters, two of these were found to be highly significantly correlated with IDV: *autonomy versus embeddedness*, and *egalitarianism versus mastery*.[9]

The GLOBE study defined and tried to measure two categories of collectivism: *institutional collectivism* and *in-group collectivism*—both "as is" and "should be." Ten out of GLOBE's eighteen dimensions were significantly correlated with IDV, but the dominant correlation was with in-group collectivism "as is." GLOBE's questions in this case dealt with relatively simple aspects of human behavior, which explains why its measure came closer to ours than in the case of the other dimensions. IDV explained 58 percent of the country differences on in-group collectivism "as is."[10] In Chapter 3 we saw that in-group collectivism "as is" was also the strongest correlated GLOBE dimension for PDI, but the correlation with IDV was slightly stronger.

From GLOBE's other three measures of collectivism, only institutional collectivism "should be" was weakly negatively correlated with IDV but more strongly with our uncertainty avoidance index (UAI, Chapter 6). Institutional collectivism "as is" was exclusively correlated with our UAI. In-group collectivism "should be" was correlated with our long-term orientation index (Chapter 7).[11]

Peter Smith's analysis of the Trompenaars database produced two major dimensions. Both were correlated with IDV; the second one was also, and even more, correlated with PDI.[12] However, the correlation with PDI was influenced by the fact that there were no Eastern European, high-PDI countries in the IBM sample. In fact, the second dimension opposed most Eastern European countries to East Asian countries, and the questionnaire items involved focused mainly on teamwork, which received positive associations in China and negative associations in most Eastern European countries.

Subsequently, an ingenious study by Smith compared not the results of the various international studies but rather the degree of *acquiescence* in their answers. Acquiescence occurs in all paper-and-pencil surveys: it is the tendency among respondents to give positive answers regardless of the content of the questions. Smith compared six studies that each covered thirty-four or more countries, including studies by Geert, Schwartz, and GLOBE. For sections of the questionnaires dealing with values, all six studies demonstrated similar acquiescence patterns. Smith showed that the common tendency to give positive answers in the six studies was stronger in countries that, according to our measures, were collectivist and had

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large power distances. Smith's study has supplied us with a nonobtrusive measure of the degree to which respondents in a culture want to maintain formal harmony and respect toward the researchers.[13]

Are Individualism and Collectivism One or Two Dimensions?

A frequently asked question is whether it is correct to treat individualism and collectivism as opposite poles of the same dimension. Shouldn't they be seen as two separate dimensions? The answer is that it depends on whether we compare entire societies (which is what our book is about) or individuals within societies. This is known as the *level of analysis* issue.

Societies are composed of a wide variety of individual members, holding a variety of personal values. Tests have shown that a person can score either high on both individualist and collectivist values, high on one kind and low on the other, or low on both. So, when we compare the values of individuals, individualism and collectivism should be treated as two separate dimensions.[14]

When we study societies, we compare two types of data: average value scores of the individuals within each society and characteristics of the societies as wholes, including their institutions. Research by us and by others has shown that in societies in which people on average hold more individualist values, they also on average hold less collectivist values. Individual persons may differ from this pattern, but those who differ are fewer than those who conform to it. The institutions of such societies reflect the fact that they evolved or were designed primarily for catering to individualists. In societies in which people on average hold more collectivist values, they also on average hold less individualist values. The institutions of such societies assume that people are primarily collectivist. Therefore, at the society (or country) level, individualism and collectivism appear as opposite poles of one dimension. The position of a country on this dimension shows the society's solution for a universal dilemma: the desirable strength of the relationships of an adult person with the group(s) with which he or she identifies.

Collectivism Versus Power Distance

Many countries that score high on the power distance index (Table 3.1) score low on the individualism index (Table 4.1), and vice versa. In other words, the two dimensions tend to be negatively correlated: large-power-

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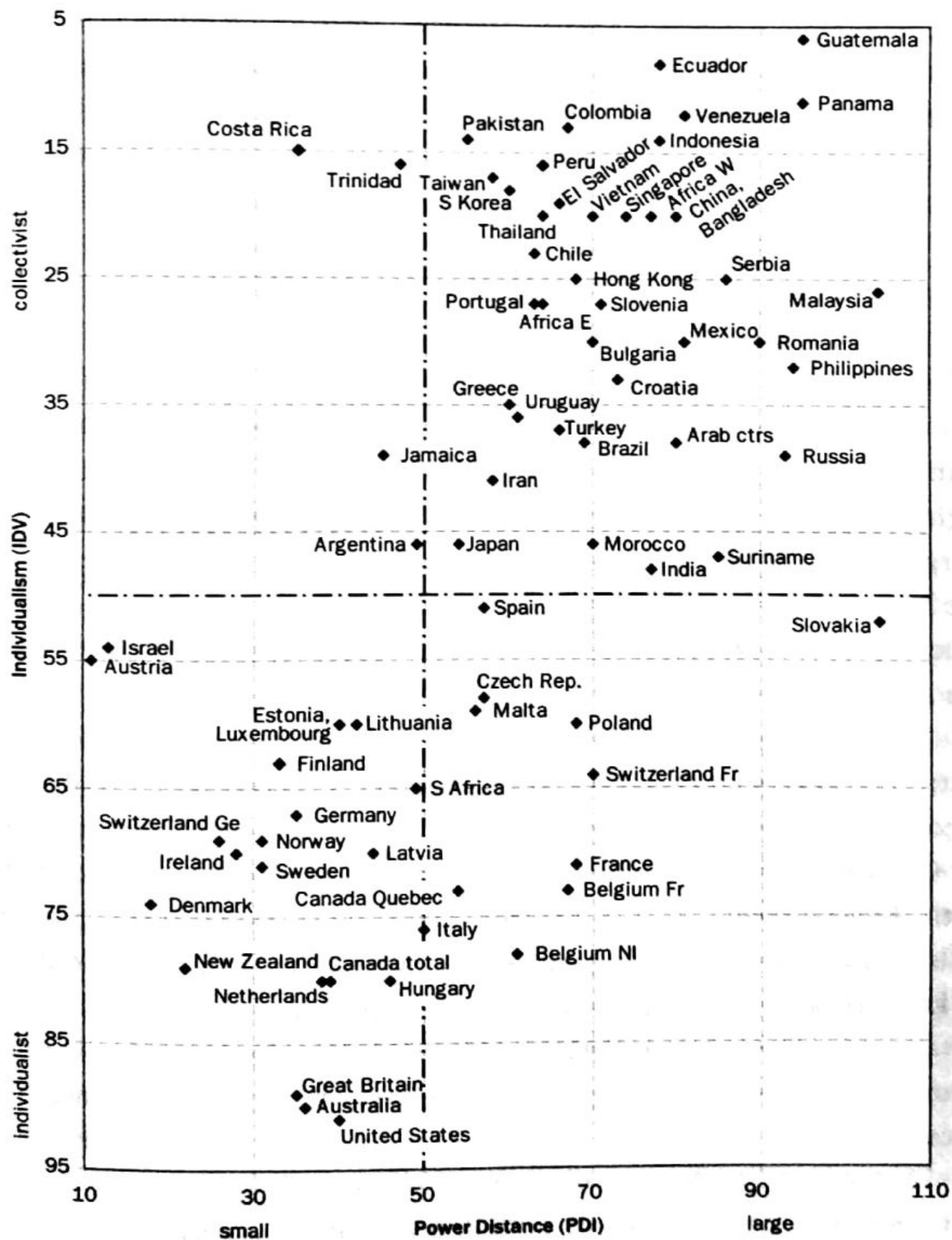
distance countries are also likely to be more collectivist, and small-power-distance countries to be more individualist. The relationship between the two indexes is plotted in Figure 4.1.

In the plot of Figure 4.1, the countries are grouped around a diagonal from lower left to upper right, reflecting the correlation between power distance and collectivism.[15] In cultures in which people are dependent on

FIGURE 4.1 Power Distance Versus Individualism



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in-groups, these people are *usually* also dependent on power figures. Most extended families have patriarchal structures, with the head of the family exercising strong moral authority. In cultures in which people are relatively independent from in-groups, they are *usually* also less dependent on powerful others.

However, there are exceptions. The Latin European countries, and in particular France and Belgium, combined medium power distances with strong individualism. The French sociologist Michel Crozier has described his country's culture as follows:

> *Face-to-face dependence relationships are . . . perceived as difficult to bear in the French cultural setting. Yet the prevailing view of authority is still that of . . . absolutism. . . . The two attitudes are contradictory. However, they can be reconciled within a bureaucratic system since impersonal rules and centralization make it possible to reconcile an absolutist conception of authority and the elimination of most direct dependence relationships.*[16]

Crozier's compatriot Philippe d'Iribarne, in his comparative study of a French, a U.S., and a Dutch organization, describes the French principle of organizing as "the rationale of honor" (*la logique de l'honneur*). This principle, which he finds already present in the French kingdom of the eighteenth century, prior to Napoleon, means that everybody has a rank (large power distance) but that the implications of belonging to one's rank are less imposed by one's group than determined by tradition. It is "not so much what one owes to others as what one owes to oneself."[17] We could call it a *stratified* form of individualism.

The reverse pattern, small power distance combined with medium collectivism, was found in Austria and Israel, and fairly small power distance is combined with strong collectivism in Costa Rica. Costa Rica, one of the six Central American republics, is widely recognized as an exception to the Latin American rule of dependence on powerful leaders, which in Spanish is called *personalismo.* Costa Rica does not have a formal army. It is described as Latin America's "most firmly rooted democracy," in spite of its relative poverty as compared with the industrial market economies of the world. In a comparison between Costa Rica and its larger but much poorer neighbor Nicaragua, U.S. development expert Lawrence E. Harrison has written:

> *There is ample evidence that Costa Ricans have felt a stronger bond to their countrymen than have Nicaraguans. That bond is reflected in Costa*

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Rica's long-standing emphasis on public education and public health; in its more vigorous cooperative movement; in a judicial system notable by Latin American standards for its impartiality and adherence to fundamental concepts of due process; and above all in the resilience of its politics, its capacity to find peaceful solutions, its appreciation of the need for compromise.[18]

Cases such as France and Costa Rica justify treating power distance and collectivism as two separate dimensions, in spite of the fact that for most countries they go together. One reason for the correlation between them is that both are associated with a third factor: national wealth. If national wealth is held constant (that is, if rich countries are compared with rich ones only and poor with poor ones only), the relationship considerably weakens.[19]

Comparisons between the results of the IBM study and other studies support the distinction between power distance and collectivism. Studies dealing with inequality show results that are more correlated with power distance than with individualism-collectivism, and studies dealing with the integration of individuals into groups show results more correlated with collectivism than with power distance.[20]

Individualism and Collectivism According to Occupation

One more argument in favor of distinguishing power distance from collectivism is that while, as Chapter 3 showed, power distance indexes could be computed not only for countries but also for occupations, individualism indexes can be calculated only for countries, not for occupations. In a comparison of how people in different *occupations* answered the fourteen work goal questions from which the IDV was computed, their answers could not be classified in terms of individualist or collectivist. In distinguishing occupations, for example, the importance of challenge and the importance of use of skills go together, while in distinguishing countries they are opposites. Across occupations, when personal time is rated more important, challenge tends to be less important, while across countries the two reinforce each other.[21]

A pair of terms that can be used to distinguish occupations is ***intrinsic*** versus *extrinsic*. These words refer to what motivates people in a job, the work itself (intrinsically motivating jobs) or the conditions and mate-

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rial rewards provided (extrinsically motivating jobs). This distinction was popularized in the late 1950s through the research on work motivation by the American psychologist Frederick Herzberg and his team, who argued that the intrinsic factors are the real "motivators," while the extrinsic ones represent the psychological "hygiene" of the job.[22] People in occupations demanding more education tend to score intrinsic elements as more important, while people in lower-status, lower- education occupations prefer extrinsic elements. The intrinsic-extrinsic distinction, while useful for distinguishing occupation cultures, in its turn is not suitable for comparing countries.

Individualism and Collectivism in the Family

In the beginning of this chapter, individualism was associated with a nuclear family structure and collectivism with an extended family structure, the latter leading to the distinction between in-group and out-groups. The relationship between the individual and the group, as with other basic elements of human culture, is first learned in the family setting. The fact that Japan scores halfway in Table 4.1 (with a rank of 35–37 and an IDV of 46) can at least partly be understood from the fact that in the traditional Japanese family only the oldest son continued to live with the parents, thus creating a lineal structure somewhere in between nuclear and extended.

The child who grows up among a number of elders, peers, and juniors learns naturally to conceive of him- or herself as part of a "we," much more so than does the child in a nuclear family. A child of an extended family is seldom alone, whether during the day or at night. An African student who went to Belgium to attend university told us that this was the first time in her life she had ever been alone in a room for any sizable length of time. Conversely, northern European students returning from internships in Peru or Malaysia complained that they were never left alone by their hosts.

In a situation of intense and continuous social contact, the maintenance of harmony with one's social environment becomes a key virtue that extends to other spheres beyond the family. In most collectivist cultures, direct confrontation of another person is considered rude and undesirable. The word *no* is seldom used, because saying "no" *is* a confrontation; "you may be right" and "we will think about it" are examples of polite ways of turning down a request. In the same vein, the word *yes* should not neces-

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sarily be inferred as an approval, since it is used to maintain the line of communication: "yes, I heard you" is the meaning it has in Japan.

In individualist cultures, on the other hand, speaking one's mind is a virtue. Telling the truth about how one feels is characteristic of a sincere and honest person. Confrontation can be salutary; a clash of opinions is believed to lead to a higher truth. The effect of communications on other people should be taken into account, but it does not, as a rule, justify changing the facts. Adult individuals should be able to take direct feedback constructively. In the family, children are instructed that one should always tell the truth, even if it hurts. Coping with conflict is a normal part of living together as a family.

A former Dutch missionary in Indonesia (a country with an IDV of 14 and a rank of 70–71) told about his parishioners' unexpected exegesis of the following parable from the Bible: "A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today'; he replied, 'I will go, sir,' but he did not go. The man went to the second and said the same to him. He replied, 'I will not,' but afterwards he changed his mind and did go. Which of the two did the will of the father?"[23] The biblical answer is that the last did, but the missionary's Indonesian parishioners chose the first, for this son observed the formal harmony and did not contradict his father. Whether he actually went was of secondary importance. In one of Gert Jan's classes, a Greek student inquired, "Were others present?" If so, the first son would, in the student's opinion, have something going for him, for not shaming his father in public. Greece has a culture of intermediate collectivism.

In the collectivist family, children learn to take their bearings from others when it comes to opinions. Personal opinions do not exist: opinions are predetermined by the group. If a new issue comes up on which there is no established group opinion, some kind of family conference is necessary before an opinion can be given. A child who repeatedly voices opinions deviating from what is collectively felt is considered to have a bad character. In the individualist family, on the contrary, children are expected and encouraged to develop opinions of their own, and a child who always only reflects the opinions of others is considered to have a weak character. The behavior corresponding with a desirable character depends on the cultural environment.

The loyalty to the group that is an essential element of the collectivist family also means that resources are shared. If one member of an extended

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family of twenty persons has a paid job and the others do not, the earning member is supposed to share his or her income in order to help feed the entire family. On the basis of this principle, a family may collectively cover the expenses for sending one member to get a higher education, expecting that when this member subsequently gets a well-paid job, the income will also be shared.

In individualist cultures, parents will be proud if children at an early age take small jobs in order to earn pocket money of their own, which they alone can decide how to spend. In the Netherlands, as in many other individualist Western European countries, the government contributes substantially to the living expenses of students. In the 1980s the system was changed from an allowance to the parents to an allowance directly to the students themselves, which stressed their independence. Boys and girls are treated as independent economic actors from age eighteen onward. In the United States it is normal for students to pay for their own studies by getting temporary jobs and personal loans; without government support they, too, are less dependent on their parents and not at all on more distant relatives.

In individualist cultures, most children expect, and are expected, to move out of their parents' home and live on their own when they start pursuing higher education. In collectivist cultures, this is less the case. Eurobarometer survey data across nineteen relatively wealthy European Union countries show that whether young people use the argument "can't afford to move out" is a matter of collectivism, not of national wealth! Economic arguments are often rationalizations of cultural values.[24]

Obligations to the family in a collectivist society are not only financial but also ritual. Family celebrations and observances such as baptisms, marriages, and, especially, funerals are extremely important and should not be missed. Expatriate managers from individualist societies are often surprised by the family reasons given by employees from a collectivist host society who apply for a special leave; the expatriates think they are being fooled, but most likely the reasons are authentic.

In an individualist culture, when people meet, they feel a need to communicate orally. Silence is considered abnormal. Social conversations can be depressingly banal, but they are compulsory. In a collectivist culture, the fact of being together is emotionally sufficient; there is no compulsion to talk unless there is information to be transferred. Raden Mas Hadjiwibowo, an Indonesian businessman from a Javanese noble family, recalled the family visits from his youth in the 1930s as follows:

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Visits among Javanese family members needed no previous appointment. Actually that could easily be done, for although the telephone had not come into common use yet, one could always send a servant with a letter asking for an appointment. But it was not done; it never occurred to one that a visit would not suit the other party. It was always convenient. Unexpected visitors did not exist. The door was (and still is) always open.

The visitors were welcomed with joyful courtesy and would be asked to take a seat. The host and hostess hurriedly withdrew to change into more suitable attire than their workaday clothes. Without asking, a servant brought in coffee or tea. Cookies were offered, while in the meantime the host and hostess had joined the party.

There we sat, but nobody spoke. We were not embarrassed by this silence; nobody felt nervous about it. Every now and then, thoughts and news were exchanged. But this was not really necessary. We enjoyed being together, seeing each other again. After the first exchange of news, any other communication was utterly redundant. If one did not have anything to say, there was no need to recite platitudes. After an hour or so, the guests would ask permission to leave. With mutual feelings of satisfaction, we parted. In smaller towns on the island of Java life is still like this.[25]

Eurobarometer survey data for nineteen wealthier European countries show striking differences in the extent to which people claim to "visit a restaurant or bar daily": in the more collectivist cultures, this form of socialization is much more normal.[26] In individualist cultures, people prefer to meet at home, if at all: "My home is my castle" is a saying from individualist Britain.

U.S. anthropologist and popular author Edward T. Hall (1914–2009) distinguished cultures on the basis of their way of communicating along a dimension from high-context to low-context.[27] A high-context communication is one in which little has to be said or written because most of the information is either in the physical environment or supposed to be known by the persons involved, while very little is in the coded, explicit part of the message. This type of communication is frequent in collectivist cultures; Hadjiwibowo's family visit is a prime example. A low-context communication is one in which the mass of information is vested in the explicit code, which is typical for individualist cultures. Lots of things that in collectivist cultures are self-evident must be said explicitly in individualist cultures. American business contracts are much longer than Japanese business contracts.

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Along with harmony, another important concept in connection with the collectivist family is *shame*. Individualist societies have been described as *guilt* cultures: persons who infringe on the rules of society will often feel guilty, ridden by an individually developed conscience that functions as a private inner pilot. Collectivist societies, on the contrary, are shame cultures: persons belonging to a group from which a member has infringed on the rules of society will feel ashamed, based on a sense of collective obligation. Shame is social in nature, whereas guilt is individual; whether shame is felt depends on whether the infringement has become known by others. This becoming known is more of a source of shame than the infringement itself. Such is not the case for guilt, which is felt whether or not the misdeed is known by others.

One more concept bred in the collectivist family is *face*. "Losing face," in the sense of being humiliated, is an expression that penetrated the English language from the Chinese; the English had no equivalent for it. David Yau-Fai Ho, a Hong Kong social scientist, defined it as follows: "Face is lost when the individual, either through his action or that of people closely related to him, fails to meet essential requirements placed upon him by virtue of the social position he occupies."[28] The Chinese also speak of "giving someone face," in the sense of honor or prestige. Basically, *face* describes the proper relationship with one's social environment, which is as essential to a person (and that person's family) as the front part of his or her head. The importance of face is the consequence of living in a society that is very conscious of social contexts. The languages of other collectivist cultures have words with more or less similar meanings. In Greece, for example, there is a word *philotimo*; Harry Triandis, a Greek American psychologist, has written:

> *A person is philotimos to the extent in which he conforms to the norms and values of his in-group. These include a variety of sacrifices that are appropriate for members of one's family, friends, and others who are "concerned with one's welfare"; for example, for a man to delay marriage until his sisters have married and have been provided with a proper dowry is part of the normative expectations of traditional rural Greeks as well as rural Indians (and many of the people in between).*[29]

In the individualist society, the counterpart characteristic is self-respect, but this again is defined from the point of view of the individual,

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whereas face and *philotimo* are defined from the point of view of the social environment.

Collectivist societies usually have ways of creating family-like ties with persons who are not biological relatives but who are socially integrated into one's in-group. In Latin America, for example, this can be done via the institution of *compadres* and *comadres* who are treated as relatives even if they are not. The institution of *godfathers* and *godmothers,* which was traditionally strong in the Catholic and Orthodox countries of Europe, is another example. In Japan younger sons in past times became apprentices to crafts masters through a form of adoption. Similar customs existed in medieval central Europe.

Because people in collectivist societies have to respect the opinions of their relatives, selection of marriage partners is a crucial event, not only for the partners but also for both their families. The American David Buss coordinated a survey study of criteria for selecting a potential marriage partner.[50] His respondents comprised almost ten thousand young women and men, with an average age of twenty-three, from thirty-seven countries. Universally desired characteristics of both brides and grooms were mutual love, kindness, emotional stability, intelligence, and health. Other characteristics varied between brides and grooms and across countries. Country differences were primarily related to individualism. In collectivist countries, bridegrooms preferred brides to be younger, and they put more stress on their being wealthy, industrious, and chaste. Brides in collectivist countries wanted their grooms to be older and wealthier, but the groom's industriousness to them played a smaller role, and the groom's chastity none at all.

The bridegrooms' desire for chastity in their brides, however, depended even more on the countries' poverty than on their collectivism. Increasing affluence provides women with more educational opportunities (in any society, when education first becomes available, parents give priority to boys, who are not needed around the house). Girls start to move around more freely and get more opportunities for meeting boys. People have more living space and privacy. Medical care and dissemination of information improve, including know-how about contraception. Young people get more opportunities for sexual exploration, and sexual norms adapt to this situation.

The stress on the brides' industriousness, wealth, and chastity in collectivist societies is a consequence of the fact that marriage is a contract

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between families, not individuals. The bride and groom may have little say in the choice of a partner. This does not mean that such marriages are less happy. Research in India has shown more marital satisfaction in arranged than in love marriages and more in Indian love marriages than in American marriages. While cultural individualism fosters the valuing of romantic love, it can make developing intimacy problematic.[31] In a survey about the role of love in marriage, answered by female and male undergraduate students in eleven countries, one question was: "If a man (woman) had all the other qualities you desired, would you marry this person if you were not in love with him (her)?" The answers varied with the degree of individualism in the eleven societies, from 4 percent "yes" and 86 percent "no" in the United States to 50 percent "yes" and 39 percent "no" in Pakistan.[32] In collectivist societies, other considerations than love weigh heavily in marriage.

In 2005 a New York–based market research company studied the ideals of beauty and body image among fifteen- to seventeen-year-old girls, through telephone interviews in cities in ten countries around the world: Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, and the United States. One question asked who had the most powerful influence on their beauty ideals. In collectivist cultures, the respondents most often referred to girlfriends—their in-group; in individualist cultures, they most often referred to boys (in general).[33]

Table 4.2 summarizes the key differences between collectivist and individualist societies described so far.

Language, Personality, and Behavior in Individualist and Collectivist Cultures

A Japanese-Australian couple, Yoshi and Emiko Kashima, he a psychologist, she a linguist, studied the relationship between culture and language. Among other features of languages, they studied *pronoun drop*, the practice of omitting the first-person singular pronoun ("I") from a sentence (for example, "I love you" in Spanish: *te quiero* rather than *yo te quiero*). They included thirty-nine languages used in seventy-one countries and looked for correlations with a number of other variables. The strongest correlation they found was with IDV.[34] Languages spoken in individualist cultures tend to require speakers to use the "I" pronoun when referring to themselves; languages spoken in collectivist cultures allow or prescribe dropping this pronoun. The

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TABLE 4.2 Key Differences Between Collectivist and Individualist Societies

I: General Norm and Family

COLLECTIVIST	INDIVIDUALIST
People are born into extended families or other in-groups that continue protecting them in exchange for loyalty.	Everyone grows up to look after him- or herself and his or her immediate (nuclear) family only.
Children learn to think in terms of "we."	Children learn to think in terms of "I."
Value standards differ for in-groups and out-groups: exclusionism.	The same value standards are supposed to apply to everyone: universalism.
Harmony should always be maintained and direct confrontations avoided.	Speaking one's mind is a characteristic of an honest person.
Friendships are predetermined.	Friendships are voluntary and should be fostered.
Resources should be shared with relatives.	Individual ownership of resources, even for children.
Adult children live with parents.	Adult children leave the parental home.
High-context communication prevails.	Low-context communication prevails.
Frequent socialization in public places.	My home is my castle.
Trespasses lead to shame and loss of face for self and group.	Trespasses lead to guilt and loss of self-respect.
Brides should be young, industrious, and chaste; bridegrooms should be older.	Criteria for marriage partners are not predetermined.
The most powerful influence on girls' beauty ideals is girlfriends.	The most powerful influence on girls' beauty ideals is boys in general.

English language, spoken in the most individualist countries in Table 4.1, is the only one we know of that writes "I" with a capital letter.

Languages change over time, but only slowly. The first-person singular pronoun was used in Western European languages in medieval poetry. An Arab saying dating from the same period is "The satanic 'I' be damned!"[35]

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The link between culture scores and language features illustrates the very old roots of cultural differences. It is naive to expect present-day differences to disappear over anybody's lifetime.

The Chinese-American anthropologist Francis Hsu has argued that the Chinese language has no equivalent for *personality* in the Western sense. Personality in the West is a separate entity, distinct from society and culture: it is an attribute of the individual. The closest translation into Chinese is *ren*, but this word includes not only the individual but also the intimate societal and cultural environment that makes his or her existence meaningful.[36]

The same point was made by two U.S. psychologists, Hazel Rose Markus and Shinobu Kitayama, the latter of Japanese descent. They argued that many Asian cultures have conceptions of individuality that insist on the fundamental relatedness of individuals to each other, while in America individuals seek to maintain their independence from others by focusing on the self and by discovering and expressing their unique inner attributes. The way people experience the self differs with the culture.[37] In our interpretation, individualist cultures encourage an independent self, while collectivist cultures encourage an interdependent self.

U.S. psychologist Solomon E. Asch (1907–96) designed a rather nasty experiment to test to what extent U.S. individuals would stick to their own judgment against a majority. The subject believed he or she was a member of a group of people who had to judge which of two lines was longer. Unknown to the subject, all other group members were confederates of the experimenter and deliberately gave a false answer. In this situation a sizable percentage of the subjects conformed to the group opinion against their own conviction. Since the 1950s, this experiment has been replicated in a number of countries. The percentage of subjects conforming to the false judgment was negatively correlated with the countries' IDV score.[38]

In Chapter 2 we referred to the relationship between personality and national culture, established by correlating across thirty-three countries the mean "Big Five" personality dimension scores with our culture dimension scores. There were significant correlations between country mean Big Five scores and all four IBM culture dimensions, but the strongest correlation was between extraversion and IDV.[39] Extraversion (as opposed to introversion) combines the following set of self-scored personality facets that tend to go together: warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement seeking, and positive emotions. What the correlations show

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is that on average, people in more individualist cultures rate themselves higher on these facets than people in more collectivist cultures. It may seem surprising that people in cultures that encourage an independent self tend to score themselves higher on gregariousness, but it is precisely when relationships between people are *not* prescribed by the culture that the conscious decision to get together becomes more important.

U.S. psychologist David Matsumoto analyzed a large number of studies of the recognition of emotions in facial expressions. Students classified the emotions from photos of faces into happiness, surprise, sadness, fear, disgust, and anger. For fifteen countries from the IBM set, percentages of observers correctly perceiving happiness were correlated positively with IDV, and those correctly perceiving sadness were correlated negatively. Our interpretation is that individualist cultures encourage the showing of happiness but discourage the sharing of sadness; collectivist cultures do the opposite.[40]

U.S. professor Robert Levine asked his international students to collect data on the pace of life in their hometowns. One measure collected was walking speed, defined as the stopwatch time it took seventy healthy adults (of both genders, fifty-fifty) to cover a distance of sixty feet in one of two uncrowded locations in each city, when walking. Of thirty-one countries covered, twenty-three overlapped with the IBM set. Walking speed turned out to be strongly correlated with IDV. People in individualist cultures tended to walk faster.[41] We interpret this result as a physical expression of their self-concept: people in more individualist cultures are more active in trying to get somewhere.

Powerful information about differences in behavior across countries can be obtained from consumer surveys. Dutch marketing professor and consultant Marieke de Mooij, comparing fifteen European countries, found many meaningful correlations between consumer behavior data and IDV.[42] Persons in high-IDV countries were more likely than those in low-IDV countries to live in detached houses versus apartments or flats. They were more likely to have a private garden and to own a caravan (mobile home) for leisure. They more frequently had dogs as pets and especially cats, as measured by household consumption of pet food. (Cats are more individualistic animals than dogs!) They were more likely to possess home and life insurance. They more often engaged in do-it-yourself activities: painting walls and woodwork, wallpapering, home carpentry, electrical upgrades and repairs, and plumbing projects. In all these cases IDV explained the country differences

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better than national wealth. They all suggest a lifestyle in which the person tries to be self-supporting and not dependent on others.

In matters of information, persons in high-IDV countries read more books, and they were more likely to own a personal computer and a telephone with voice mail. High-IDV country residents more often rated TV advertising useful for information about new products. They relied more on media and less on their social networks.

There is no indication that inhabitants of countries with individualist cultures are healthier or unhealthier than those from countries with collectivist ones, but the fact that people in high-IDV cultures are more focused on the self is visible in a greater concern for their own health than is found in low-IDV cultures. If we limit our analysis to the higher-income countries, where full medical provisions can be assumed to be available, people in countries with a more individualist culture spend a larger share of their private income on their health. Governments of the same countries also spend a larger share of public budgets on health care.[43]

Individualist and collectivist cultures deal differently with disability. A survey among Australian health-care workers showed different reactions to becoming disabled among the Anglo, Arabic-speaking, Chinese, German-speaking, Greek, and Italian immigrant communities. In the individualist communities (Anglo and German), people with disabilities tended to remain cheerful and optimistic, to resent dependency and being helped, and to plan for a future life as normal as possible. In the collectivist communities (Greek, Chinese, Arabic), there would be more expression of grief, shame, and pessimism; family members would be asked for advice and assistance, and they would make the main decisions about the person's future. The Italians tended to be in the middle; northern Italy is more individualist, but a large share of Italian immigrants in Australia are from the collectivist southern region. Another study described the answers of the same panel of health-care workers to questions about the way the different groups dealt with *children* with disabilities. Again in the individualist communities, the dominant philosophy was to treat these children as much as possible like other children, letting them participate in all activities when this was feasible. In the collectivist communities, the disability would be seen as a shame on the family and a stigma on its members—especially if the child was a son—and the child would more often be kept out of sight.[44]

Table 4.3 summarizes the key differences between collectivist and individualist societies from this section.

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TABLE 4.3 Key Differences Between Collectivist and Individualist Societies
II: Language, Personality, and Behavior

COLLECTIVIST	INDIVIDUALIST
Use of the word "I" is avoided.	Use of the word "I" is encouraged.
Interdependent self	Independent self
On personality tests, people score more introvert.	On personality tests, people score more extravert.
Showing sadness is encouraged, and happiness discouraged.	Showing happiness is encouraged, and sadness discouraged.
Slower walking speed	Faster walking speed
Consumption patterns show dependence on others.	Consumption patterns show self-supporting lifestyles.
Social network is primary source of information.	Media is primary source of information.
A smaller share of both private and public income is spent on health care.	A larger share of both private and public income is spent on health care.
People with disabilities are a shame on the family and should be kept out of sight.	People with disabilities should participate as much as possible in normal life.

Individualism and Collectivism at School

The relationship between the individual and the group that has been established in a child's consciousness during his or her early years in the family is further developed and reinforced at school. This is clearly visible in classroom behavior. In the context of development assistance, it often happens that teachers from a more individualist culture move to a more collectivist environment. A typical complaint from such teachers is that students do not speak up, not even when the teacher puts a question to the class. For the student who conceives of him- or herself as part of a group, it is illogical to speak up without being sanctioned by the group to do so. If the teacher wants students to speak up, the teacher should address a particular student personally.

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Students in a collectivist culture will also hesitate to speak up in larger groups without a teacher present, especially if these groups are partly composed of relative strangers: out-group members. This hesitation decreases in smaller groups. In a large, collectivist or culturally heterogeneous class, creating small subgroups is a way to increase student participation. For example, students can be asked to turn around in their seats and discuss a question for five minutes in groups of three or four. Each group is asked to appoint a spokesperson. In this way, individual answers become group answers, and those who speak up do so in the name of their group. Often in subsequent exercises the students will spontaneously rotate the spokesperson role.

In the collectivist society, in-group–out-group distinctions springing from the family sphere will continue at school, so that students from different ethnic or clan backgrounds often form subgroups in class. In an individualist society, the assignment of joint tasks leads more easily to the formation of new groups than in the collectivist society. In the latter, students from the same ethnic or family background as the teacher or other school officials will expect preferential treatment on this basis. In an individualist society, this practice would be considered nepotism and intensely immoral, but in a collectivist environment, it is immoral *not* to treat one's in-group members better than others.

In the collectivist classroom, the virtues of harmony and maintaining face reign supreme. Confrontations and conflicts should be avoided or at least should be formulated so as not to hurt anyone; students should not lose face if this can be avoided. Shaming (that is, invoking the group's honor) is an effective way of correcting offenders: they will be set straight by their in-group members. At all times, the teacher is dealing with the student as part of an in-group, never as an isolated individual.

In the individualist classroom, of course, students expect to be treated as individuals and impartially, regardless of their background. Group formation among students is much more ad hoc, operating according to the task or to particular friendships and skills. Confrontations and open discussion of conflicts are often considered salutary, and face-consciousness is weak or nonexistent.

The purpose of education is perceived differently between the individualist and the collectivist societies. In the former it aims at preparing the individual for a place in a society of other individuals. This means learning to cope with new, unknown, unforeseen situations. There is a basically positive attitude toward what is new. The purpose of learning is

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less to know how to do than to know *how to learn.* The assumption is that learning in life never ends; even after school and college it will continue (for example, through postgraduate courses).

In the collectivist society, there is a stress on adaptation to the skills and virtues necessary to be an acceptable group member. This leads to a premium on the products of tradition. Learning is more often seen as a onetime process, reserved for young people, who have to learn *how to do* things in order to participate in society. It is an extended rite of passage.

The role of diplomas or certificates as a result of successful completion of a study is also different between the two poles of the individualism-collectivism dimension. In the individualist society, the diploma improves not only the holder's economic worth but also his or her self-respect: it provides a sense of achievement. In the collectivist society, a diploma is an honor to the holder (and his or her in-group) and entitles the holder to associate with members of higher-status groups—for example, to get a more attractive marriage partner. It is to a certain extent "a ticket to a ride." The social acceptance that comes with the diploma is more important than the individual self-respect that comes with mastering a subject, so that in collectivist societies, the temptation is stronger to obtain diplomas in some irregular way, such as on the black market.

Individualism and Collectivism in the Workplace

Sons in collectivist societies are more likely than sons in individualist societies to follow in the occupation of their fathers.[45] We noticed that Geert and Gert Jan's operating as a father-and-son author team tends to be admired in collectivist cultures but is sometimes scorned in individualist ones. In more individualist societies, sons of fathers in manual occupations will more frequently move to nonmanual occupations, and vice versa. In more collectivist societies, occupational mobility is lower.

Employed persons in an individualist culture are expected to act according to their own interests, and work should be organized in such a way that this self-interest and the employer's interest coincide. Workers are supposed to act as "economic persons," or as people with a combination of economic and psychological needs, but anyway as individuals with their own needs. In a collectivist culture, an employer never hires just an individual, but rather a person who belongs to an in-group. The employee will act according to the interest of this in-group, which may not always coincide with his or her individual interest: self-effacement in the interest

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of the in-group belongs to the normal expectations in such a society. Often earnings have to be shared with relatives.

The hiring process in a collectivist society always takes the in-group into account. Usually, preference is given to hiring relatives, first of all of the employer, but also of other persons already employed by the company. Hiring persons from a family one already knows reduces risks. Also, relatives will be concerned about the reputation of the family and help to correct misbehavior of a family member. In the individualist society, family relationships at work are often considered undesirable, as they may lead to nepotism and to a conflict of interest. Some companies have a rule that if one employee marries another, one of them has to leave.

The workplace itself in a collectivist society may become an in-group in the emotional sense of the word. This is more the case in some countries than in others, but the feeling that it should be this way is nearly always present. The relationship between employer and employee is seen in moral terms. It resembles a family relationship with mutual obligations of protection in exchange for loyalty. Poor performance of an employee in this relationship is no reason for dismissal: one does not dismiss one's child. Performance and skills, however, do determine what tasks one assigns to an employee. This pattern of relationships is best known from Japanese organizations. In Japan it applies in a strict sense only to the group of permanent employees, which may be less than half of the total workforce. Japan scores halfway on the IDV scale. In individualist societies, the relationship between employer and employee is primarily conceived of as a business transaction, a calculative relationship between buyers and sellers in a labor market. Poor performance on the part of the employee and a better pay offer from another employer are both legitimate and socially accepted reasons for terminating a work relationship.

Christopher Earley, a management researcher from the United States, has illustrated the difference in work ethos between an individualist and a collectivist society very neatly with a laboratory experiment. In the experiment forty-eight management trainees from southern China and forty-eight matched management trainees from the United States were given an "in-basket task." The task consisted of forty separate items requiring between two and five minutes each, such as writing memos, evaluating plans, and rating job candidates' application forms. Half of the participants in each country were given a group goal of two hundred items to be completed in an hour by ten people; participants in the other half were each given an individual goal of twenty items. Also, half of the participants in

each country, both from the group goal subset and from the individual goal subset, were asked to mark each item completed with their names, while the other half turned them in anonymously.

The Chinese collectivist participants performed best when operating with a group goal and anonymously. They performed worst when operating individually and with their names marked on the items produced. The American individualist participants performed best when operating individually and with their names marked but abysmally low when operating as a group and anonymously. All participants were also given a values test to determine their personal individualism or collectivism: a minority of the Chinese scored individualist, and these performed according to the U.S. pattern; a minority of the Americans scored collectivist, and these performed like the Chinese.[46]

In practice there is a wide range of types of employer-employee relationships *within* collectivist and individualist societies. There are employers in collectivist countries who do not respect the societal norm to treat their employees as in-group members, but then the employees in turn do not repay the employers in terms of loyalty. Labor unions in such cases may replace the work organization as an emotional in-group, and there can be violent union-management conflicts, as in parts of India. There are employers in individualist societies who have established strong group cohesion with their employees, with the same protection-versus-loyalty balance that is the norm in the collectivist society. Organization cultures can deviate to some extent from majority norms and derive a competitive advantage from their originality. Chapter 10 will go into these issues more deeply.

Management in an individualist society is management of individuals. Subordinates can usually be moved around individually; if incentives or bonuses are given, these should be linked to an individual's performance. Management in a collectivist society is management of groups. The extent to which people actually feel emotionally integrated into a work group may differ from one situation to another. Ethnic and other in-group differences within the work group play a role in the integration process, and managers within a collectivist culture will be extremely attentive to such factors. It often makes good sense to put persons from the same ethnic background into one crew, although individualistically programmed managers usually consider this practice dangerous and want to do the opposite. If the work group functions as an emotional in-group, incentives and bonuses should be given to the group, not to individuals.

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Within countries with a dominant individualist middle-class culture, regional rural subcultures have sometimes retained strongly collectivist elements. The same applies to the migrant-worker minorities that form majorities among the workforce in some industries in some individualist countries. In such cases a culture conflict is likely between managers and regional or minority workers. This conflict expresses itself, among other ways, in the management's extreme hesitation to use group incentives in cases in which such incentives would suit the culture of the workforce.

Management techniques and training packages have almost exclusively been developed in individualist countries, and they are based on cultural assumptions that may not hold in collectivist cultures. A standard element in the training of first-line managers is how to conduct *appraisal interviews*, periodic discussions in which the subordinate's performance is reviewed. These sessions can form a part of management by objectives,[47] but even where MBO does not exist, conducting performance appraisals and ably communicating bad news are considered key skills for a successful manager. In a collectivist society, discussing a person's performance openly with him or her is likely to clash head-on with the society's harmony norm and may be felt by the subordinate as an unacceptable loss of face. Such societies have more subtle, indirect ways of supplying feedback—for example, by the withdrawal of a normal favor or verbally via an intermediary. We know of a case in which an older relative of a poorly performing employee, also in the service of the employer, played this intermediary role. He communicated the bad news to his nephew, avoiding the loss of face that a formal appraisal interview would have provoked.

For the same reason, training methods based on honest and direct sharing of feelings about other people, which have periodically been fashionable in the United States with labels such as *sensitivity training*, *encounter groups*, or *transactional analysis*, are unfit for use in collectivist cultures.

The distinction between in-groups and out-groups that is so essential in the collectivist culture pattern has far-reaching consequences for business relationships, beyond those between employers and employees. It is the reason behind the cultural embarrassment of Mr. Johannesson and his Swedish superiors in Saudi Arabia, related at the beginning of this chapter. In individualist societies, the norm is that one should treat everybody alike. In sociological jargon this is known as *universalism*. Preferential treatment of one customer over others is considered bad business practice and unethi-

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cal. In collectivist societies, the reverse is true. As the distinction between "our group" and "other groups" is at the very root of people's consciousness, treating one's friends better than others is natural and ethical and is a sound business practice. Sociologists call this way of acting *particularism*; it is similar to what Misho's analysis of the World Values Survey calls *exclusionism*.

A consequence of particularist thinking is that in a collectivist society, a relationship of trust should be established with another person before any business can be done. Through this relationship the other is adopted into one's in-group and is from that moment onward entitled to preferential treatment. In Johannesson's case this process of adoption took two years. During this period the presence of the Swedish businessman as an intermediary was essential. After the adoption had taken place, it became superfluous. However, the relationship was with Johannesson personally and not with his company. To the collectivist mind, only natural persons are worthy of trust, and via these persons their friends and colleagues become worthy, but not impersonal legal entities such as a company. In summary, in the collectivist society, *the personal relationship prevails over the task* and should be established first, whereas in the individualist society, *the task is supposed to prevail over any personal relationships.* The naive Western businessperson who tries to force quick business in a collectivist culture condemns him- or herself to the role of out-group member and to negative discrimination.

Individualism, Collectivism, and the Internet

Surveys and observations about the use of modern information and communication technologies (ICT) show significant differences among countries. Most of these tools originated in a highly individualist society: the United States. ICT tools link individuals, so these tools are more easily, frequently, and eagerly used in individualist societies than in collectivist societies. In the latter, people have more direct ways to relate to their social environment. Along with societal individualism, two other cultural dimensions, masculinity and uncertainty avoidance, play a role in the use of ICT; we will deal with these influences in Chapters 5 and 6.

Eurobarometer surveys have shown that people in more individualist European countries were more likely to have access to the Internet and to use e-mail. They more often used the computer for shopping, banking, and supplying information to public authorities.[48]

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Asked about the effects of the introduction of the Internet, respondents in the *less* individualist European countries stressed that people who do not use the Internet have more time for themselves, their family, and their friends.[49]

Table 4.4 lists the key differences between collectivist and individualist societies related to school, the workplace, and ICT.

TABLE 4.4 Key Differences Between Collectivist and Individualist Societies III: School, Workplace, and ICT

COLLECTIVIST	INDIVIDUALIST
Students speak up in class only when sanctioned by the group.	Students are expected to individually speak up in class.
The purpose of education is learning how to do.	The purpose of education is learning how to learn.
Diplomas provide entry to higher-status groups.	Diplomas increase economic worth and/or self-respect.
Occupational mobility is lower.	Occupational mobility is higher.
Employees are members of in-groups who will pursue the in-group's interest.	Employees are "economic persons" who will pursue the employer's interest if it coincides with their self-interest.
Hiring and promotion decisions take employee's in-group into account.	Hiring and promotion decisions are supposed to be based on skills and rules only.
The employer-employee relationship is basically moral, like a family link.	The employer-employee relationship is a contract between parties in a labor market.
Management is management of groups.	Management is management of individuals.
Direct appraisal of subordinates spoils harmony.	Management training teaches the honest sharing of feelings.
In-group customers get better treatment (*particularism*).	Every customer should get the same treatment (*universalism*).
Relationship prevails over task.	Task prevails over relationship.
The Internet and e-mail are less attractive and less frequently used.	The Internet and e-mail hold strong appeal and are frequently used to link individuals.

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Individualism, Collectivism, and the State

Alfred Kraemer, an American author in the field of intercultural communication, cited the following comment in a Russian literary journal by a poet, Vladimir Korotich, who had completed a two-month lecture tour at American universities:

> *Attempts to please an American audience are doomed in advance, because out of twenty listeners five may hold one point of view, seven another, and eight may have none at all.*[50]

What strikes the Western reader about this comment is not the described attitudes of American students but the fact that Korotich expected otherwise. He was obviously accustomed to audiences in which people would not express a confronting view, a characteristic of a collectivist culture. Table 4.1 shows Russia to score considerably more collectivist than Western countries.

Naive observers of the world political scene often see only the different political systems and are not aware of the different mind-sets of the populations that led to and maintain these different systems. If the commonly held value system is that collective interests should prevail over individual interests, this leads to a different kind of state from the kind that results if the dominant feeling is that individual interest should prevail over collective ones.

In American parlance the term *collectivist* is sometimes used to describe communist political systems. Countries in Table 4.1 that had or still have either communist or state capitalist governments are found on the medium to low IDV—that is, the collectivist side. The weaker the individualism in the citizens' mental software, the greater the likelihood of a dominating role of the state in the economic system.

Since the 1990s increasing individualism has been one of the forces leading to deregulation and reduction of public expenditures in Western countries. Even public monopolies such as energy provision and public transportation have sometimes been privatized at the expense of their performance and reliability, for ideological rather than pragmatic reasons—which shows the power of cultural values.

The capitalist invention of the joint-stock company—an enterprise owned by dispersed shareholders who can trade their shares on a stock

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exchange—was made in individualist Britain and for its functioning supposes an individualist mind-set among its actors.[51] In practice it is regularly threatened by particularist interests, and in a curious paradox, its supposedly free market needs strong regulation by government.

On the other hand, the economic life in collectivist societies, if not dominated by government, is in any case based on collective interests. Family enterprises abound; in the People's Republic of China, after the economic liberalization of the 1980s, villages, the army, and municipal police corps units started their own enterprises.

Individualist countries tend to be wealthier and to have smaller power distances than collectivist ones. This is a statistical relationship that does not hold for all countries, but because of this relationship it is sometimes difficult to separate the effects of wealth, individualism, and smaller power distance on government. For example, political scientists have developed an index of press freedom for a large number of countries. This index is significantly correlated with high IDV and low PDI, but it is most strongly correlated with national wealth. Greater press freedom in wealthier countries is a matter not only of individualism and equality but also of resources such as more newspapers and TV channels and of interest groups with the means to disseminate their opinions.[52]

The right to privacy is a central theme in many individualist societies that does not find the same sympathy in collectivist societies, where it is seen as normal and right that one's in-group can at any time invade one's private life.

The difference between a universalist and a particularist treatment of customers, illustrated by the Johannesson case, applies to the functioning of the state as a whole. In the individualist society, laws and rights are supposed to be the same for all members and to be applied indiscriminately to everybody (whether this standard is always met is another question). In the collectivist society, laws and rights may differ from one category of people to another—if not in theory, then in the way laws are administered—and this is not seen as wrong.

If differences in the political systems found in countries are rooted in their citizens' mental software, the possibility of influencing these systems by propaganda, money, or arms from another country is limited. If the minds are not receptive to the message, propaganda and money are

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mostly wasted. Even the most powerful foreign state cannot brainwash entire populations out of their deeply held values.

A main issue in international politics is national governments' respect for human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations in 1948. Charles Humana, a former researcher for Amnesty International, calculated human rights ratings for a large number of countries on the basis of forty questions derived from UN criteria. Across fifty-two countries from the IBM set, Humana's human rights ratings correlated primarily with gross national income (GNI) per capita, which explained 50 percent of the differences; adding culture scores did not improve the explanation. The picture changed when we looked separately at the twenty-five wealthier countries: now the single explaining variable, accounting for 53 percent of the differences in human rights ratings, became IDV. For the remaining twenty-seven poorer countries, GNI per capita remained the single explaining variable, but it now accounted for only 14 percent of the differences.[53] Our conclusion from these relationships is that respect for human rights as formulated by the United Nations is a luxury that wealthy countries can afford more easily than poor ones; to what extent these wealthy countries do conform to UN criteria, however, depends on the degree of individualism in the culture. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other UN covenants were inspired by the values of the dominant powers at the time of their adoption, and these were individualistic.

Individualism, Collectivism, and Ideas

Individualist societies not only practice individualism but also consider it superior to other forms of mental software. Most Americans feel that individualism is good and that it is at the root of their country's greatness. On the other hand, the late chairman Mao Zedong of China identified individualism as evil. He found individualism and liberalism responsible for selfishness and aversion to discipline; they led people to placing personal interests above those of the group or simply to devoting too much attention to their own things. In Table 4.1 the places with a predominantly Chinese population all score very low on IDV (Hong Kong 25, mainland China 20, Singapore 20, Taiwan 17).

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In the European Values Survey, which preceded the World Values Survey, representative samples of the population in nine European countries in 1981 were asked to choose between the following statements:

> *A: I find that both freedom and equality are important. But if I were to make up my mind for one or the other, I would consider personal freedom more important—that is, everyone can live in freedom and develop without hindrance.*
>
> *B: Certainly both freedom and equality are important. But if I were to make up my mind for one of the two, I would consider equality more important—that is, that nobody is underprivileged and that social class differences are not so strong.*[54]

This is, of course, an ideological choice. In most of the nine European countries, respondents on average preferred freedom over equality. The French sociologist Jean Stoetzel (1910–87), who published a brilliant analysis of the data, has computed a ratio for each country: preference for freedom divided by preference for equality. This ratio runs from about 1 in Spain (equal preference) to about 3 in Great Britain (freedom three times as popular as equality). The values of the freedom/equality ratio for the nine countries were significantly correlated with IDV: the more individualist a country, the stronger its citizens' preference for freedom over equality.[55] Freedom is an individualist ideal, equality a collectivist ideal.

The choice between individualism and collectivism at the society level has considerable implications for economic theories. Economics as a discipline was founded in Britain in the eighteenth century; among the founding fathers, Adam Smith (1723–90) stands out. Smith assumed that the pursuit of self-interest by individuals through an "invisible hand" would increase the wealth of nations. This is an individualist idea from a country that even today ranks high on individualism. Economics has remained an individualist science, and most of its leading contributors have come from strongly individualist nations such as Britain and the United States. However, because of the individualist assumptions on which economic theories are based, these theories as developed in the West are unlikely to apply in societies in which group interests prevail. This point has profound con-

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sequences for development assistance to poor countries and for economic globalization. There is a dire need for alternative economic theories that take into account cultural differences on this dimension.

The degree of individualism or collectivism of a society affects the conceptions of human nature produced in that society. In the United States the ideas of Abraham Maslow (1908–70) about human motivation have been and are still influential, in particular for the training of management students and practitioners. Maslow's famous "hierarchy of human needs" states that human needs can be ordered in a hierarchy from lower to higher, as follows: physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization.[56] In order for a higher need to appear, it is necessary that the lower needs have been satisfied up to a certain extent. A starving person, one whose physiological needs are not at all satisfied, will not be motivated by anything other than the quest for food, and so forth. The top of Maslow's hierarchy, often pictured as a pyramid, is occupied by the motive of *self-actualization*: realizing to the fullest possible extent the creative potential present within the individual. This means doing one's own thing. It goes without saying that this can be the supreme motivation only in an individualist society. In a collectivist culture, what will be actualized is the interest and honor of the in-group, which may very well ask for self-effacement from many of the in-group members. The interpreter for a group of young Americans visiting China in the late 1970s found the idea of "doing your own thing" untranslatable into Chinese. Harmony and consensus are more attractive ultimate goals for such societies than individual self-actualization.

Since *Culture's Consequences* first appeared in 1980, the individualism-collectivism dimension has gained much popularity among psychologists, especially those from the economically emerging Asian nations. The dimension implies that traditional psychology is as little a universal science as traditional economics: it is a product of Western thinking, caught in individualist assumptions. When these assumptions are replaced by more collectivist assumptions, another psychology emerges, and it differs from the former in important respects. For example, as we discussed earlier in this chapter, individualist psychology is universalist, opposing the "ego" to any "other." In collectivist psychology, the ego is inseparable from its social context. People in collectivist societies make exclusionist distinctions: the in-group, which includes the ego, is opposed to all out-groups.

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This means that the results of psychological experiments in a collectivist society depend on whether participants belong to the same in-group.

Table 4.5 is a continuation of Tables 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4: it summarizes the key differences between collectivist and individualist societies from the last two sections.

TABLE 4.5 Key Differences Between Collectivist and Individualist Societies IV: Politics and Ideas

COLLECTIVIST	INDIVIDUALIST
Opinions are predetermined by group membership.	Everyone is expected to have a private opinion.
Collective interests prevail over individual interests.	Individual interests prevail over collective interests.
State has dominant role in the economic system.	State has restrained role in the economic system.
Low per capita GNI	High per capita GNI
Companies are owned by families or collectives.	Joint-stock companies are owned by individual investors.
Private life is invaded by group(s).	Everyone has a right to privacy.
Laws and rights differ by group.	Laws and rights are supposed to be the same for all.
Lower Human Rights rating	Higher Human Rights rating
Ideologies of equality prevail over ideologies of individual freedom.	Ideologies of individual freedom prevail over ideologies of equality.
Imported economic theories are unable to deal with collective and particularist interests.	Native economic theories are based on pursuit of individual self-interests.
Harmony and consensus in society are ultimate goals.	Self-actualization by every individual is an ultimate goal.
Patriotism is the ideal.	Autonomy is the ideal.
Outcome of psychological experiments depends on in-group–out-group distinction	Outcome of psychological experiments depends on ego-other distinction.

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Origins of Individualism-Collectivism Differences

The origins of differences on the individualism-collectivism dimension, just as with those on power distance, are a matter of conjecture. Nevertheless, statistical relationships with geographic, economic, and historic variables can support the guesswork.

It is a common assumption among archaeologists that the development of human societies started with groups of hunter-gatherer nomads; that subsequently people settled down into a sedentary existence as farmers; and that farming communities grew into larger settlements that became towns, cities, and finally modern megalopolises. Cultural anthropologists have compared present-day hunter-gatherer tribes, agricultural societies, and urbanized societies. They have found that from the most primitive to the most modern society, family complexity first increased and then decreased. Hunter-gatherers tend to live in nuclear families or small bands. Sedentary agricultural societies mostly show complex extended families or village community in-groups. When farmers migrate to cities, the sizes of extended families become reduced, and the typical urban family is again nuclear. In most countries today, one finds only agricultural and urban subcultures. For these two types, modernization corresponds to individualization.

Information about one hunter-gatherer society comes from an Australian researcher, Ray Simonsen, who administered the VSM94 (the 1994 improved version of the IBM questionnaire) to aboriginal entrepreneurs in Darwin, Northern Territory, and to a comparable group of white Australians. Aboriginal society is still largely based on hunting and gathering. While unlike the white Australians, the aborigines scored high on power distance, low on masculinity, and high on uncertainty avoidance, on individualism they scored as high as their white compatriots.[57]

In Figure 4.1 we find societies with a large traditional rural sector mostly at the collectivist side and modern industrial societies at the individualist side. There are some exceptions, especially in East Asia, where Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore have retained considerable collectivism in spite of industrialization.

As in the case of PDI in Chapter 3, we used stepwise regression to determine what quantitative information about our countries best explained

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the differences in IDV scores. We found that a country's IDV score can be fairly accurately predicted from two factors:

- The country's wealth (richer countries associated with higher IDV)
- Its geographical latitude (countries closer to the equator associated with lower IDV)

Wealth (GNI per capita at the time of the IBM surveys) explained no less than 71 percent of the differences in IDV scores for the original fifty IBM countries. This finding is amazing in light of the fact that the two measures came from entirely different sources and that both were rather imprecise—subject to measuring error.

A correlation does not show which of two related phenomena is cause and which is effect, or whether both could be caused by a third factor. If individualism were the cause of wealth, one should find that IDV scores relate not only to national wealth per se but also to ensuing *economic growth*. The latter is measured by the World Bank as the average annual percentage increase in GNI per capita during a longer period. If individualism leads to wealth, IDV should be positively correlated with economic growth in the period following the collection of the IDV data. However, the relationship between IDV scores (collected around 1970) and subsequent economic growth was, if anything, negative: the more individualist countries showed *less*, not more, economic growth than the less individualist ones.

We can draw the same conclusion by looking at the correlations of 1970 IDV with country wealth in later years. Wealth differences in 1970 explained 72 percent of IDV differences; wealth in 1980 explained 62 percent; in 1990, 55 percent; and in 2000, 52 percent.[58] If causality went from IDV to subsequent GNI, the correlation should have become stronger over time. The correlation between wealth differences in different periods is much stronger.[59]

The reverse causality, national wealth causing individualism, is therefore more plausible.[60] When a country's wealth increases, its citizens get access to resources that allow them to do their own thing. The storyteller in the village market is replaced by TV sets, first one per village, but soon more. In wealthy Western family homes, every family member may have his or her own TV set. The caravan through the desert is replaced by a number of buses, and these by a larger number of automobiles, until each adult family member drives a different car. The village hut in which the

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entire family lives and sleeps together is replaced by a house with a number of private rooms. Collective life is replaced by individual life. However, the negative relationship between individualism and economic growth for the wealthier countries suggests that this development can lead to its own undoing. The 2008 economic crisis started in very wealthy countries.

Besides national wealth, the only other measure statistically related to IDV was geographic latitude: the distance from the equator of a country's capital city. It explained an additional 7 percent of the IDV differences. In Chapter 3 latitude was the *first* predictor of power distance scores. As we argued there, in countries with moderate and cold climates, people's survival depends more on their ability to fend for themselves. This circumstance favors educating children toward independence from more powerful others (lower PDI). It also seems to favor a degree of individualism.

The size of the population of a country, which contributed significantly to predicting power distance, did not relate to collectivism. The *growth* of the population (average percent per year over a ten-year period) did relate to collectivism, but its first correlation was with country wealth—in poor countries families tend to have more children. There are a number of reasons for this, the most prominent of which are poor education of women and the expectation that children will support their parents in old age. Children in larger families obviously are more likely to acquire collectivist rather than individualist values.

Historical factors, apart from economic ones, can also account for part of the country differences on this dimension, although not as clearly as in the case of the influence of the Roman Empire on power distance. The influence of the teachings of Confucius in the East Asian countries, to which part of Chapter 7 will be devoted, supports the maintenance of a collectivist value system. On the other hand, in parts of Western Europe, in particular in England, Scotland, and the Netherlands, individualist values could be recognized centuries ago, when the average citizen in these countries was still quite poor and the economies were overwhelmingly rural. India is another example of a country with a rather individualistic culture despite poverty.

The Future of Individualism and Collectivism

The deep roots of national cultures make it likely that individualism-collectivism differences, such as power distance differences, will survive for a long time into the future. That said, if there is to be any convergence

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between national cultures, it should be on this dimension. The strong relationship between national wealth and individualism is undeniable, with the arrow of causality directed, as shown earlier, from wealth to individualism. Countries having achieved fast economic development have experienced a shift toward individualism. For example, care for elderly members by the family is becoming less self-evident.

Nevertheless, even at equal levels of per capita income, countries also preserve individualist and collectivist values from their history. East Asian societies such as Japan and Korea do conserve distinctive collectivist elements in their family, school, and work spheres. Among Western countries such as Britain, Sweden, and Germany, in spite of a noticeable convergence toward individualism under the influence of common economic development, relationships between the individual and the group continue to differ. The cultures shift, but they shift together, so that their relative positions remain intact, and there is no reason why differences between them should disappear.

As far as the poor countries of the world are concerned, they cannot be expected to become more individualist as long as they remain poor. Also, if differences in wealth between rich and poor countries continue to increase (as in many instances they do), gaps on the individualism-collectivism dimension can only increase further.

Differences in values associated with the individualism-collectivism dimension will continue to exist and to play a big role in international affairs. Individualism versus collectivism as a dimension of national cultures is responsible for many misunderstandings in intercultural encounters. In Chapter 11 it will be shown that many problems of such encounters can be explained from differences on this dimension.

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