



Section One

Basic Concepts

Chapter 1

Culture

A study of this chapter will help you master:

- 1) Definition of culture;
- 2) Categories of culture;
- 3) Characteristics of culture;
- 4) Cultural identity.



Part I Presentation Topic

Conduct research on the following topic and then present it to your classmates.

Globalization and its cultural implications



Part II Activities

Activity 1

Brainstorming

Most people in China say it is important to study Western culture along with English. Why is culture so important? Make a list of reasons and be ready to share them with the class.

Step 1: Write your reasons here.

Step 2: Discuss with your partner(s) to see if you share the same idea.



Passage 1

Activity 2

Pair Work or Small Group Work

In pairs or small groups, discuss the question: What is “culture”? First list the things



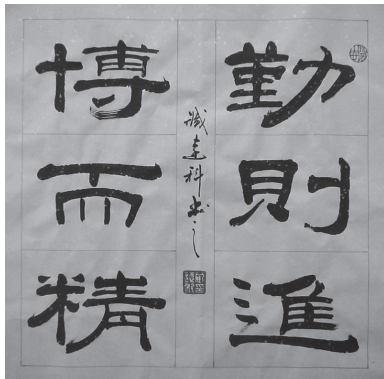
that can be included under the word “culture”. Then write a definition of the word.

Activity 3

Discussion

Step 1: Read Passage 2 and then look at the list of things you have listed in Activity 2. Match them with the definitions from various perspectives.

Step 2: Match the following pictures with the definitions mentioned in Passage 2.



Passage 2

Activity 4

Discussion

There is much we can learn about Western cultures by reading Western newspaper or magazine articles. The following is an article from Reader’s Digest. Read the article and see what you can learn about American culture.



How to Deal with Difficult House Guests

Know How to Say Good-Bye

The holidays are here, and there will be lots of comings and goings — and perhaps a bit too much of staying. Sometimes friends and family are having such a good time at your celebration that they forget to go home. If guests won't leave after a party, it's perfectly acceptable to suggest politely that it's time to go. Practice these phrases from expert socialites¹.

“Oh, dear, just look at the time! I didn't realize it was so late. I'm going to let you nice people go home, so you can retire.”

“It's been wonderful having you. We really enjoyed it. I'll get you the train schedule. Will you need a ride to the station?”

You've been waiting an hour to eat breakfast but your guests are still snoozing.

“Unless you coordinated² a time for breakfast the evening before, let your guests sleep-in and enjoy your breakfast without them. If possible, keep their breakfast warm.

Your visitors don't have a car and demand that you drive them everywhere.

“If you've invited them, then you should at least offer to pick them up and return them to the airport. But draw the line there. It's time to remove your chauffeur's³ hat. If you have a second car not in use, you could offer them the keys after you confirm they are insured. Or, keep the chauffeur's hat on and offer to drive them to the nearest rental car agency due to their busy schedule.”

(Adapted from Reader's Digest)

Language Notes:

1 socialite: 上流社会人士, 社交界头面人物

2 coordinate: 安排, 协调

3 chauffeur: 受雇于私人的司机

Activity 5

Survey

Survey several of your classmates by asking the following question: Imagine that you have been invited to give a speech on “Chinese culture” to a group of foreigners who have never been to China before, what are the main things you would talk about? Write down the answers here.



Passage 3

Activity 6

Discussion

Passage 6 is about Chinese culture written by a foreigner who stayed in China for some time. Read it and discuss with your partner(s) to see if you agree on what the writer describes.

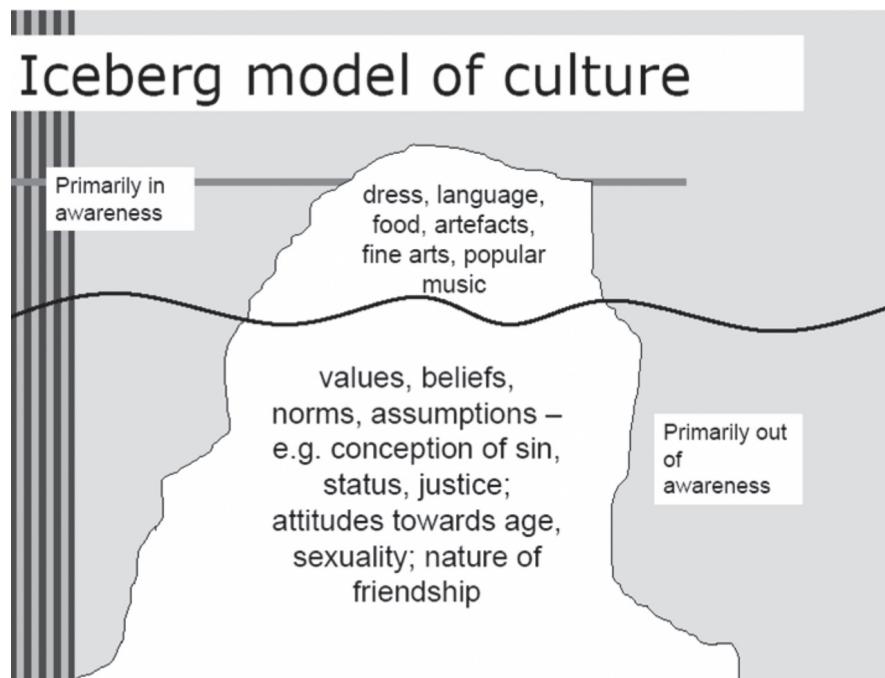


Passage 6

Activity 7

Brainstorming

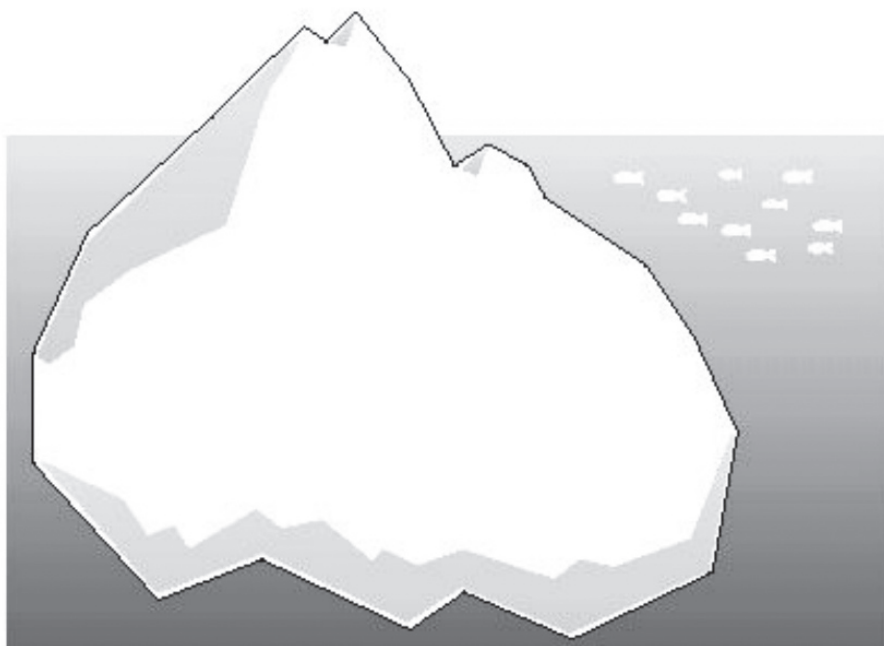
Step 1: Look at the picture below. What can you infer from it?



Step 2: The items that appear below are all features of culture. Keep in mind that observable behaviors are above the surface of the water, while the invisible aspects of culture are below the surface. Fill these items into the following figure.



| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Facial expressions | Gestures | Paintings | Values |
| Holiday customs | Food | Concept of beauty | Eating habits |
| Music | Work ethic | Concept of fairness | Concept of self |
| Childraising beliefs | Styles of dress | Religious rituals | |
| Religious beliefs | Literature | Notion of modesty | |
| Importance of time | | Concept of leadership | |
| Nature of friendship | | General world view | |
| Rules of social etiquette | | Understanding the natural world | |
| Concept of personal space | | | |



Passage 4

Activity 8

Case Study

Read the following story and decide what caused the difficulties in communication.

古时候有个不学无术的人，好不容易用钱买了个县官，却不会“官话”，上任之后，照例要去拜访顶头上司——知府，在闲聊中知府问：“贵县风土怎样？”

县官答道：“并没有大风，更少尘土。”

知府又问：“春花怎样？”

回答说：“今年棉花二百八。”

又问：“百姓怎样？”



答曰：“白杏只有两棵，红杏不少。”

“我问的是梨庶！”

“梨树很多，结的果实很小。”

知府动气了：“我不是问什么梨树，我是问你的小民！”

县官见上司生气，急忙站起来回答道：“卑职的小名叫狗儿。”

Activity 9

Case Study

Read the following story and think about what happened. Then write to explain your first and last choice. Next, think about what makes you rank them so. Do you think the values that guide your choices are personal or cultural or both? Share your opinions in pairs or in small groups.

Alligator River

Characters

Rosemary: Main Character

Geoffrey: Rosemary's fiancé

Sinbad: Boat owner

Frederick: Rosemary's acquaintance

Dennis: Rosemary's second friend

Rosemary is a woman of about 21. For several months she has been engaged to a young man named Geoffrey. The problem she faces is that between her and her fiancé there lies a river. No ordinary river, but a deep, wide river filled with hungry alligators.

Rosemary wonders how she can cross the river. She remembers Sinbad, who has the only boat in the area. She then approaches Sinbad, asking him to take her across. He replies, “Yes, I’ll take you across if you’ll spend the night with me.” Shocked at this offer, she turns to another acquaintance, Frederick, and tells him her story. Frederick responds by saying, “Yes, Rosemary, I understand your problem — but it’s your problem, not mine.” Rosemary decides to return to Sinbad, spends the night with him, and in the morning he takes her across the river.

Her meeting with Geoffrey is warm. But on the evening before they are to be married, Rosemary feels she must tell Geoffrey how she succeeded in getting across the river. Geoffrey responds by saying, “I wouldn’t marry you if you were the last woman on earth.”

Finally, Rosemary turns to her friend Dennis. Dennis listens to her story and says, “Well, I don’t love you ... but I will marry you.” And that’s all we know of the story.

Step 1: Rank the characters according to whom you approve of most and whom you approve of least. Use five rankings (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). Then write a sentence or two explaining your first and last choice.



(1= most approve of; 5 = least approve of)

Ranking

- _____ Rosemary
- _____ Geoffrey
- _____ Sinbad
- _____ Frederick
- _____ Dennis

First choice: Why?

Last choice: Why?

Step 2: Divide into groups of four or five. Share your rankings and explain your first and last choices. Allow time for each member to contribute to the discussion.

Step 3: Individually think about why you make such choices. Can you identify where you learned the values that caused you to rank the characters as you did? Try to write a paragraph explaining those values and where you learned them. Discuss what you wrote. Do you think the values that guided your choices are personal or cultural or both?

Activity 10

Pair Work or Group Work

Step 1: Where are you from? List some cultural features that are special to your home town.

Step 2: Divide into pairs or small groups. Discuss with your partner(s) to see if they share the same features with you.

Activity 11

Brainstorming

Match the behaviors below with the appropriate value/belief. Put the numbers in the brackets.



Value/Belief

Directness (); Centrality of family (); External control (); Saving face ();
 Respect for age (); Informality (); Deference to authority ();
 Indirectness (); Self-reliance (); Egalitarianism ()

Behavior

1. Use of understatement.
2. Asking people to call you by your first name.
3. Taking off from work to attend the funeral of an aunt.
4. Not helping the person next to you on an exam.
5. Disagreeing openly with someone at a meeting.
6. Not laying off an older worker whose performance is weak.
7. At a meeting, agreeing with a suggestion you think is wrong.
8. Inviting the teaboy to eat lunch with you in your office.
9. Asking the headmaster's opinion of something you're an expert on.
10. Accepting, without question that something cannot be changed.



Passage 5

Activity 12

Discussion

When we talk about identity we often think of an identity card, on which personal information such as our name, place of birth, birth date, etc. are listed. But what's your cultural identity? What does it mean when we say that "I'm a Chinese" or why do we call ourselves Chinese?



Passage 7 & 8



Part III Readings

Passage 1

Why Is It Important to Study Culture?

By Don Snow*

Most teachers and students of English agree that knowing about Western cultures makes it easier for students to communicate effectively with Westerners. Some reasons

* This passage is taken from *Learning English: A Textbook for English Teachers*.



for this are quite obvious. For one thing, knowing about Western culture helps students better understand English. For example, it can be hard to understand Americans if you don't know anything about baseball because you may not understand what expressions like "strike out"¹ and "throw a curve ball"² mean. For another, understanding Western culture helps students avoid doing or saying things that would be offensive to a Westerner. For example, students are less likely to offend Westerners if they know that Westerners don't consider it polite to ask a woman's age or to ask people how much money they make.

However, there are also other less obvious reasons why it is important to learn about Western culture. The first of these is that, in order to explain things effectively to Western people, it helps to have some idea of what they are likely to already know. Imagine the following conversation between a Western tourist and a Chinese tour guide, and ask yourself whether or not the tour guide's explanation is effective:

Tourist: Who was "Zhuge Liang"?

Tour guide: He was one of Liu Bei's generals during the Three Kingdoms period.

If the Westerner has heard of Liu Bei, or knows roughly when the Three Kingdoms period was, the guide's explanation will help. But if the Western tourist has no idea who Liu Bei was or when the Three Kingdoms period was, the explanation doesn't help at all.

A good explanation needs to be based on what the listener already knows. For example, in the situation above, the tour guide's explanation should start with things the tourist already knows; otherwise, the listener won't understand the explanation and will quickly lose interest. Also, however, an explanation shouldn't repeat too much of what the listener already knows; otherwise, it will be boring. For example, if the tour guide starts by explaining that China is a large country with a long history and so forth, the tourist may soon lose interest. So one reason Chinese students need to know about Westerners and their culture is that it helps Chinese students know how to give better explanations to Westerners.

A second reason it is good for students to know about Western culture has to do with persuasion. In order to effectively persuade a person to believe something, you need to base your argument on what they already believe. For example, imagine a student who is trying to persuade a Western tourist that Chinese medicine is good. If the student argues that Chinese medicine must be good because many old Chinese doctors say so, the argument isn't likely to be very effective. (The Westerners may not believe in old Chinese doctors.) However, if the student says many of these medicines have been scientifically tested, Westerners are more likely to be persuaded. (Most Westerners trust scientific

testing.) So students who know what most Westerners believe are more likely to be effective in persuading them.

For the reasons above — and many more — students who know as much as possible about Western culture will be able to communicate with Westerners more effectively.

Language Notes:

1 strike out: 三击不中出局。引申为多次没有把握住机会。

2 throw a curve ball: (棒球术语) 投曲线球; 引申为出其不备刁难某人或设计陷害人。

Passage 2

Culture

Culture is a complicated and inclusive¹ concept, and it is not easy to define. However, scholars have put forward many definitions for culture. These definitions are formulated from different perspectives and range from macro ones to narrower ones. In this passage, several definitions are examined in order to help you better understand the term — culture.

From Intellectual Perspective

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, culture is “the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively”. It refers to intellectual perspective, such as music, art, exhibition, dance, etc. When you talk about Picasso, Beethoven, etc., you are talking about culture.

From Anthropologic² Perspective

The Parthenon^{*}, at the Acropolis in Athens, Greece, has become a symbol of the Greek culture. From anthropologic perspective, culture is “the customs, civilizations, and achievements of a particular time or people”. This is an anthropologist’s definition. For instance, we have Greek culture, Egyptian culture, etc. When we say Greek culture, we mean the customs, civilizations, and achievements of Greeks about 2,000 years ago.

From Social Perspective

Edward Sapir defines culture from social perspective. He notes “Culture may be defined as what a society does and thinks. Language is a particular way of thought”. That’s to say, culture covers everything of a society. He also adds “Culture is the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives”.

From Psychological Perspective

Geert Hofstede views culture from a psychological perspective, defining it as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of

* Parthenon: 帕台农神庙。



people from another”. Culture is “software of the mind”.

From Intercultural Communication Perspective

In this textbook, culture is defined from the intercultural communication perspective: Culture is a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, and norms, which affect the behavior of a relatively large group of people.

Culture can also be defined from the following perspectives:

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Topical: | Culture consists of everything on a list of topics, or categories, such as social organization, religion, or economy. |
| Historical: | Culture is social heritage, or tradition, that is passed on to future generations. |
| Behavioral: | Culture is shared, learned human behavior, a way of life. |
| Normative: | Culture is ideals, values, or rules for living. |
| Functional: | Culture is the way humans solve problems of adapting to the environment or living together. |
| Mental: | Culture is a complex of ideas, or learned habits, that inhibit impulses and distinguish people from animals. |
| Structural: | Culture consists of patterned and interrelated ideas, symbols, or behaviors. |
| Symbolic: | Culture is based on arbitrarily assigned meanings that are shared by a society. |

Language Notes:

1 inclusive: 包含广阔的, 范围广泛的

2 anthropologic: 人类学的

Passage 3

Culture Is Too Familiar to Be Noticed

We interpret the world through a cultural lens. We observe and filter¹ the sensory stimuli through a set of acquired cultural patterns. Because cultural values, attitudes, and behavior are the habitual responses of a group to its environment, the values, the attitudes, and their resulting behaviors are often beneath consciousness. Our culture surrounds us, like the air we breathe. Our culture is like the mineral content of a municipal water supply, invisible and often unnoticed until someone points it out.

As Fons Trompenaars, a Dutch sociologist, said, “Culture is beneath awareness, yet it forms the roots of action.”

Because the habits of our culture are beneath awareness, and because we naturally

tend to feel most comfortable acting in the patterns of our own culture, we tend to follow a consistent pattern of culturally determined responses even when immersed in a different cultural setting. That is why cross-cultural interaction sometimes results in cross-cultural misunderstanding.

Culture is formed from values, attitudes, and behavior. In the cross-cultural setting we naturally respond according to the values, attitudes and behavioral norms of our own culture. Our counterparts² naturally respond according to the values, attitudes and behavioral norms of their own culture.

If something goes wrong, if the cross-cultural transaction is not successful, it may happen that neither side considers a cultural explanation for the misunderstanding. It may be that each side simply concludes that those people are difficult to deal with. Or perhaps each concludes that the other is unprofessional and lacks common courtesy³.

When interpersonal interactions go wrong within the cross-cultural setting, does the source of the trouble lie in personality or in culture? While it is often difficult to answer this question, a knowledge of cultural differences and how to manage them is an important tool in the professional kit, right next to techniques for coping with personality differences.

Language Notes:

- 1 filter: 过滤
- 2 counterpart: 对应的人或物
- 3 courtesy: 礼貌

Passage 4

Categories of Cultures

Material Culture, Institutional Culture and Mental Culture

Generally speaking, culture can be divided into three categories: 1) material culture, referring to all the products of manufacturing; 2) institutional culture¹, referring to various systems and the theories that support them, such as social systems, religious systems, ritual systems, educational systems, kinship systems and language; and 3) mental culture, referring to people's mentality and behaviors, their thought patterns, beliefs, concepts of value, and aesthetic tastes.

Surface Culture and Deep Culture

As the pictures in Activity 7 show, culture can be aptly² compared to an iceberg. Just as an iceberg has a visible section above the water line and a larger, invisible section below the water line, so culture has some aspects that are observable and others that can



only be suspected, imagined, or intuited³. Also like an iceberg, the part of culture that is visible (observable behavior) is only a small part of a much bigger whole. With regard to change and influence, two levels of culture may be distinguished: 1) the surface culture, which changes at a relatively rapid rate, including popular music and entertainment, clothing and hair styles, and 2) the deep culture, which is relatively slow to change, including attitudes toward life, religious and philosophical beliefs, and values in human relationships. Surface culture changes daily, weekly, yearly, and by decades.

Deep culture is relatively stable over a long period of time — throughout hundreds or thousands of years. Thus clearer boundaries between cultures may be seen at the deep culture level. It is at the deep level of culture that we find the Great Traditions of the world such as Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam — the enduring philosophies and religions of the world upon which civilizations are built.

Little c culture and Big C Culture

In specialized fields of study, common words take on specialized meanings. Writers in cross-cultural studies often distinguish between two uses of the word culture as: 1) the total way of life of a group of people, and 2) a refinement or sophistication⁴ within a society. The first use has been called “little c culture”, and the second, “big C culture”.

Little c culture includes the routine aspects of life, such as how common people greet one another, what they wear, what they eat, and their myriad⁵ daily habits. This is what I mean by “culture”. Little c culture encompasses everything as a total way of life, so big C culture is necessarily part of little c culture. Big C culture is very often the refinement of little c activities. For instance, little c food becomes big C cuisine; little c meals become big C formal banquets and all of the etiquette and ritual that goes with them. Little c clothing becomes big C fashion. A cultured (big C) person knows the finer points of manners and customs, and can distinguish between the common and the refined.

Dominant Culture and Sub-culture

Whereas traditional societies can be characterized by a high consistency of cultural traits and customs, modern societies are often a conglomeration⁶ of different, often competing cultures and subcultures. In such a situation of diversity, a dominant culture is one whose values, language, and ways of behaving are imposed on a subordinate culture or cultures through economic or political power. The dominant culture is usually but not always in the majority and achieves its dominance through legal or political suppression of other sets of values and patterns of behavior, or by monopolizing the media of communication.

A subculture is a culture within a broader mainstream culture, with its own separate



values, practices, and beliefs. In sociology, the concept of subculture explains the behavior of some social groups; sociologists study subcultures as one way of studying culture. An example of a long standing subculture in the United States is the old-order Amish of Pennsylvania, Indiana and Ohio. Originating in Switzerland and coming to the States as early as 1727, the Amish people today number approximately sixty thousand. They have gone to considerable lengths to maintain the integrity of their traditional culture — no small feat in the United States, a country that emphasizes progress and change. The Amish value their religious beliefs, hard work, agrarian way of life, pacifism, simplicity and neighborly cooperation. They are a clearly visible sub-cultural group in that they wear simple clothing, transport themselves by horse and buggy, and rarely send their children to public schools. Research on subcultures has often focused on deviance⁷ (for example, on criminal subcultures).

Language Notes:

- 1 institutional culture: 制度文化
- 2 aptly: 适当地, 巧妙地
- 3 intuit: 由直觉知道
- 4 sophistication: 教养
- 5 myriad: 无数的, 大量的
- 6 conglomeration: 聚集物; 混合体
- 7 deviance: 异常行为

Passage 5

Characteristics of Culture

Although researchers don't agree with each other on the definition of culture, they reach an agreement on what the major characteristics of culture are.

Culture Is Learned

Culture is not transferred genetically. Rather, it is acquired through the process of learning or interacting with one's environment. We acquire our culture, including ideas, values and behavior patterns, by growing up in it.

Human infants come into the world with basic drives such as hunger and thirst, but they do not possess instinctive patterns of behavior to satisfy them. Likewise, they are without any cultural knowledge. However, they are genetically predisposed¹ to rapidly learn language and other cultural traits. New born humans are amazing learning machines. Any normal baby can be placed into any family on earth and grow up to learn their culture and accept it as his or her own. Since culture is non-instinctive, we are not genetically programmed to learn a particular one.

Every human generation potentially can discover new things and invent better



technologies. The new cultural skills and knowledge are added onto what was learned in previous generations. As a result, culture is cumulative². Due to this cumulative effect, most high school students today are now familiar with mathematical insights and solutions that ancient Greeks such as Archimedes³ and Pythagoras⁴ struggled their lives to discover.

Culture Is a Shared Meaning System

Culture is very much about groups, and a basic need of groups is to be able to communicate, both at a superficial level (for which ordinary language largely suffices) and also at a deeper level of meaning. Thus, we should say that culture is a shared phenomenon. For a thing, idea, or behavior pattern to qualify as being cultural, it must have a meaning shared by most people in a society. It is this shared nature of culture that makes our lives less complicated. Because people share a common culture, they are able to predict, within limits, how others will think and behave. For example, when meeting someone for the first time in Beijing or Shanghai, it is customary to shake the person's hand. If both people grew up in Beijing or Shanghai, neither party will have to wonder what is meant by an outstretched hand. They will know, with nearly absolute certainty, that the extended hand is a nonverbal gesture signifying friendship rather than a sexual advance, a hostile attack, or an attempt to steal one's wallet. It is when we step outside our familiar cultural settings — where meanings are not shared with other people — that misunderstanding occurs. In fact, the uncertainty one experiences when trying to operate in an unfamiliar culture often leads to culture shock, a form of psychological distress that can result in depression, overeating, or irritability.

The degree to which people within any given society share their culture varies from culture to culture. Even in small-scale, homogeneous⁵ societies, one can expect to find a certain amount of differentiation based on gender, class, age, religion, or ethnicity. The daughter of a wealthy physician in Athens, for example, is likely to have a somewhat different set of values and behavioral expectations than the daughter of a rural Greek farmer. Moreover, societal rules are never adhered to strictly. Although culture exerts a powerful influence, people continue to exercise free will either by reinterpreting rules, downplaying their consequences, or disregarding them altogether (such as the catholic who practices birth control or the conscientious objector⁶ who flees the country rather than serve in a war).

Culture Involves Beliefs, Values, and Norms

Another major component of a society's culture consists of the systems of values and beliefs which are characteristic of that society. These systems overlap significantly with the other components of culture; see, for example, how religious belief systems can affect the cultural significance of rain, how systems of morality can affect the cultural significance of a recreational pursuit like bowling (in the learned behavior component), and how religious belief systems can intertwine with systems of social organizations like political governments.



Belief/value systems overlap so much with these other components of cultural systems largely because beliefs and values play such a pervasive role in culture. In our baseline definition of culture we suggest that culture consists essentially of learned behaviors and the template-effect by which a growing, changing culture is passed on from generation to generation. Beliefs and values affect virtually every learned behavior; the metaphorical template consists to a significant degree of belief/value systems. Thus, these systems are a central component of the larger cultural systems in which they exist.

Belief systems involve stories, or myths, whose interpretation can give people insight into how they should feel, think, and/or behave. The elaborate polytheistic⁷ mythologies of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations are a good example of how belief systems can affect the daily life of a society's members and the role they can play in giving significance to people's actions. The most prominent systems of beliefs tend to be those associated with formal religions; however, any system of belief in which the interpretation of stories affects people's behavior — a system of superstitions, for example — can be a living, contributing component of a given society's culture.

In Mexican culture, a death of an aunt is an event that business associates are expected to view as significant to the family members; a boss is expected to have an understanding attitude towards an employee who is not able to get a report done by a deadline because of the funeral and family needs. In Britain, the attitude toward a business associate's loss of an aunt is that this is a private affair, regrettable and perhaps very sad, but something that should not affect work to a great extent. In fact, for a businessperson, handling the situation well means keeping it from having an impact on work. Reports should come in on time if possible.

A value system differentiates right feelings, thoughts and behavior from wrong feelings, thoughts and behavior. It involves what a culture regarded as good or bad, right or wrong, fair or unfair, just or unjust, beautiful or ugly, clean or dirty, valuable or worthless, appropriate or inappropriate, and kind or cruel. Value systems can and very often do grow out of belief systems. For example, one could argue that the value system behind Good Samaritan Law* (a law which protects off-duty medical personnel from being

* Good Samaritan Law: 好撒玛利亚人法，这一法律是指，对于那些根据法律规则既没有法定义务也没有约定义务，或者说与自己先前的行为没有任何关联，而只是出于自愿去救助他人的人，若出现不良的结果，法院可以在考量其良好愿望的前提下免除其法律责任。典故见《圣经·路加福音10》。

有一个律法师（an expert in law）试探耶稣怎样才可以获得永生。耶稣问他律法上是怎么写的？他回答说：“你要尽心、尽性、尽力爱你的神”，而且“要爱你的邻居如同爱自己”。那人又问耶稣：“谁是我的邻居呢？”耶稣回答：有一个人从耶路撒冷去耶利哥，落到了一群强盗手中。他们剥去了他的衣裳，把他打个半死后丢下他走了。有一个祭司从这条路下来，看见他，但从他身边过去了。又有一个利未人（Levite）来到这个地方，看见他，也照样从他身边过去了。惟有一个撒玛利亚人行路来到那里，看见他就动了慈心，上前用油和酒倒在他的伤处，包裹好了，扶他骑上自己的牲口。耶稣问律法师：“你想，这三个人中哪一个是那位落难之人的邻居呢？”律法师说：“是怜悯他的。”耶稣说：“你去照样做吧。”



sued for malpractice when they assist someone in an emergency) is a direct descendant⁸ of the Christian belief system — a belief system whose story of the Good Samaritan gives the law its name. However, other value systems — those governing incest, for example — appear to exist independently of formal belief systems.

Norms refer to rules for appropriate behavior, which provide the expectations people have of one another and of others. Norms are the outward manifestations of beliefs and values. When a person's behaviors violate the culture's norms, social sanctions⁹ are usually imposed. Norms exist for a wide variety of behaviors and include typical social routines. Norms are the superficial characteristics that emerge from a culture's beliefs and values. Norms are linked to beliefs and values to form the patterns of a culture. Norms are culturally ingrained principles of correct and incorrect behaviors which, if broken, carry a form of overt or covert penalty. Individuals are rewarded or punished as they conform to or deviate from the norms. Indeed, the extent to which a person is a member of a culture or subgroup is often gauged by his or her adherence to norms.

Culture Affects Behaviors

Human behavior is affected both by genetic inheritance¹⁰ and by experience. The ways in which people develop are shaped by social experience and circumstances within the context of their inherited genetic potential. The scientific question is just how experience and hereditary potential interact in producing human behavior.

Each person is born into a social and cultural setting — family, community, social class, language, religion — and eventually develops many social connections. The characteristics of a child's social setting affect how he or she learns to think and behave, by means of instruction, rewards and punishment, and example. This setting includes home, school, neighborhood, and also, perhaps, local religious and law enforcement agencies. Then there are also the child's mostly informal interactions with friends, other peers, relatives, and the entertainment and news media. How individuals will respond to all these influences, or even which influence will be the most potent, tends not to be predictable. There is, however, some substantial similarity in how individuals respond to the same pattern of influences — that is, to being raised in the same culture. Furthermore, culturally induced behavior patterns, such as speech patterns, body language, and forms of humor, become so deeply imbedded in the human mind that they often operate without the individuals themselves being fully aware of them.

Every culture includes a somewhat different web of patterns and meanings: ways of earning a living, systems of trade and government, social roles, religions, traditions in



clothing and foods and arts, expectations for behavior, attitudes toward other cultures, and beliefs and values about all of these activities. Within a large society, there may be many groups, with distinctly different subcultures associated with region, ethnic origin, or social class. If a single culture is dominant in a large region, its values may be considered correct and may be promoted — not only by families and religious groups but also by schools and governments. Some subcultures may arise among special social categories (such as business executives and criminals), some of which may cross national boundaries (such as musicians and scientists).

Fair or unfair, desirable or undesirable, social distinctions are a salient¹¹ part of almost every culture. The form of the distinctions varies with place and time, sometimes including rigid castes, sometimes tribal or clan hierarchies, sometimes a more flexible social class. Class distinctions are made chiefly on the basis of wealth, education, and occupation, but they are also likely to be associated with other sub-cultural differences, such as dress, dialect, and attitudes toward school and work. These economic, political, and cultural distinctions are recognized by almost all members of a society — and resented by some of them.

Language Notes:

- 1 predisposed: 先天具有……倾向的
- 2 cumulative: 累积的, 渐增的
- 3 Archimedes: 阿基米德, 古希腊哲学家、数学家、物理学家
- 4 Pythagoras: 毕达哥拉斯, 古希腊数学家、哲学家
- 5 homogeneous: 同质的, 同类的
- 6 conscientious objector: 拒绝服兵役的人
- 7 polytheistic: 多神崇拜的
- 8 descendant: 派生物
- 9 sanction: 制裁
- 10 inheritance: 遗传特征
- 11 salient: 显著的, 突出的

Passage 6

Cultural Norms in China

By Himanshu Sethia

One of the first things you learn about “living in China”, is that the way you, a foreigner, views things in general, is generally considered pretty strange and mysterious. What we foreigners take for granted can be completely unknown to the average Chinese person (and totally untrusted), whilst everything we mistrust or fail to understand, is commonplace, rating no particular consideration for the Chinese person. In short, we live and think and approach life from completely different perspectives; perspectives that we have ‘learned’ within our social environments.



The first priority in this article is to bring to your attention ways of thinking, acting and living that you might not find appropriate.

In the western countries, young people are encouraged to think for themselves and make their own decisions. But in China, boys and girls will study only what their parents want them to study and if there are two children in the family without enough money for both to go to school or university, it will be the boy who studies, not his sister. They are also not permitted (by law) to marry until they are 22 and 20 years old respectively.

So what am I on about here? Just this! It is one thing to talk about multiculturalism and how we should 'respect' everyone's culture, and it is another thing, to have to 'put up with' that culture in our daily lives, or expose aspects of those cultures to our children whom we have raised to hold contrary values.

Beyond this, there is another more important matter, which is, that many of our cultural values, are truly only relevant to our own culture and society. Idealists like to talk about making our culture multicultural, but we tend to forget or fail to know that some of those customs are things we find offensive in our personal lives. Circumcision¹ (male and female), tattoos, alcohol, smoking, modesty or lack thereof, women's rights, gay rights, general manners and courtesy, religion or lack thereof are just some examples of things in other cultures that we might find offensive.

In China, no one ever tells people exactly what they think. On this score they are very western (politically correct). Much of your 'common/ordinary' western conversation will be considered improper if spoken in front of women, children or old people. Say thank you except on formal occasions, and people will look at you strangely.

Family members do not lend money to each other, it is just given. If someone gives you a gift you must return the honor with a gift of your own. There is no need to say thank you to your parents for anything, for everything they do for you is their duty. Washing, cooking and cleaning is women's work. When people pay unannounced visits to your house at meal times, it's quite natural for you to invite them to join you.

If you refuse to drink alcohol, even if you are a non-drinker, you dishonor the people who force you to drink, and force you they will. They are after all, 'honoring you' and displaying their love and appreciation for you. Heaven forbid that you not be a smoker, or worse, that you are, because they will make you chain smoke more than at any other time in your life. Smoking at the dinner table during a dinner is usual, and if in a restaurant, the moment the last person takes his last mouthful of food, everyone jumps up and leaves. There is no hanging around for coffee and a chat.

I've heard it said that the Chinese are racists. In some ways I think this might be true,



but generally they do not hate people based on race. They do not look down on people because of the color of their skin, or their religion. They merely insist that their Chinese culture is superior to foreign cultures, that Chinese culture ought to be maintained, and that foreigners should not force their foreign ways on the Chinese.

Cultural change can only ever be successful when that culture changes from within by the will of the people. Not by legislation. We cannot force countries to change their social culture, just because we find it unacceptable, and we should not force our own people to accept foreign culture, simply because we undervalue our own national culture.

Final Note:

Should you decide to pay a visit to China, you should not encounter too much of a culture shock. If on the other hand you decide to live here, you had better be prepared to suffer quite a lot. It is amazing at times how (ultimately) easy it is for me to go with the flow; to cook a meal for 6 people without prior notice; to give friends money because they ask; to take in people because they expect it; to not notice a million things that would have upset me two years ago. It is also amazing how assertive² I have become in refusing to succumb to manipulation.

In the final analysis, personally I am extremely comfortable in China, and I look forward to exploring more new things in the near future during my stay in china.

Language Notes:

1 circumcision: 割礼

2 assertive: 坚定而自信的, 坚决主张的

Passage 7

Cultivate Cultural Identity

Whenever the United States is mentioned, Hollywood movies and Coca Cola come to mind; with Japan, it's sumo¹ and sushi² that are synonymous with the island nation's culture; France is always associated with wine and perfume; while for Brazil, samba and free-flowing football are common associations.

What is the cultural identity of our nation? Kungfu? Peking Opera? Or dumplings?

Asked such a question, we can easily end up scratching our heads, as we find it quite difficult to come up with a clear answer.

Perhaps the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, which is the highest grossing non-English film in the U.S., or Yao Ming, the Chinese star of the U.S National Basketball Association's Houston Rockets, who is a household name in the U.S.

A blue book entitled the Annual Report on China's Cultural Soft Power Research,



published by Social Sciences Academic Press of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences last week, found that China's cultural industry contributed less than 4 percent to the world's output, dwarfed³ by the size of its economy and population.

Also, the share of this industry in the nation's GDP was much lower than the proportion in Western countries, which was more than 10 percent.

While we have spent many years creating booming primary and secondary industries, we have spent little time focusing on becoming a cultural world entity.

And economic powerhouse aside, cultural productions are valuable tools for building a strong nation.

As Joseph Nye of Harvard University, who invented the term "soft power" some 20 years ago, emphasized: "In today's information age, success depends not only on whose army wins, but also on whose story wins."

The nation has always had a strong traditional culture and we have created more than 300 Confucius Institutes and another 300 Confucius Classrooms in 96 countries to teach our language and culture. More than 40 million people are learning Chinese around the world.

However, ask these people what the modern Chinese identity is and they are likely to reply in economic terms.

The country has been running at full throttle⁴ pursuing economic growth for three decades. Now it is time to feed the soul and build our sense of identity.

It is important that the government put the nation's cultural well-being at the top of its agenda.

Language Notes:

1 sumo: 相扑运动

2 sushi: 寿司

3 dwarf: 使……相形见绌

4 at full throttle: 以最高速度

Passage 8

Formation of Cultural Identity

*By Manuel Parés i Maicas**

In my opinion, the outstanding characteristics of cultural identity are the following:

A dominant ethnic group

A dominant ethnic group plays a vital role in the formation of cultural identity.

* Manuel Parés i Maicas is Professor in the Department of Science of Communication, University of Barcelona.



However, most cultural identities are in fact the result of the historical mixing up of different ethnic groups. This phenomenon has increased in recent times, and we may assert that most communities are actually multi-ethnic and multicultural. Internal and external migrations, for different causes — economic, labor, political, exile, etc. — have given way to the reality of what we might call hybridism or crossbreeding.

Sociology

There are a certain number of elements that affect the basis of any cultural identity, namely, class structure, the concept of power, the dialectics between elites and the rest of the population, the role of leaders, and so on. Moreover, age, sex, education, economic or social status may offer a range of different attitudes, which must be taken into consideration. For instance, I believe that youth behavior should be analyzed and studied to see if it changes when people become adults. Another aspect to consider is the fact that people are members of diverse peer or primary groups and of secondary groups as well. This circumstance may have a certain influence on our opinions and behavior. All these elements thus may generate different views of cultural identity, resulting in a taxonomy¹ of perceptions from a subjective point of view.

History

The role of traditions, of the collective memory, of the rooted customs, etc. often explain the evolution of any community. An important issue is how the history of a society is written, and hence the risk of a biased approach, either in a positive or in a negative sense. Historical science should be as balanced as possible.

Culture

Either in its anthropological or sociological sense, culture is important, that is, culture as a creative process of the different fine arts, literature, music, and aesthetics. Moreover, the role of autochthonous² culture and its contacts with other cultures of the same state — in the case of stateless nations — or with foreign cultures is significant here.

No culture is today isolated, and its evolution is a consequence of a permanent cross-cultural process. External cultural contributions or influences are necessary and unavoidable. However, the basic element of any cultural identity must keep its main elements, but adapt itself to the changing conditions. A cosmopolitan³ approach to culture should be felt as a necessity by members of any cultural identity. Popular culture is also an element to consider very seriously: humor, handicraft, antiques, dances, tools, cooking, clothes, songs, pictures, photographs and so on, are often some of the best ways to express an identity. Seen from abroad these elements constitute some of the most representative images. Special consideration should be given to the place occupied by diverse types of museums. They are effectively one of the best representations of the



process of formation of any cultural identity.

As far as science and technology are concerned, I believe that their identity role has been less ascertained, possibly because scientific research and technological development are rather concentrated in a very limited number of countries.

Language

In many analyses, the mother tongue is considered the main element. In this concern I must say that in many societies — whether states, nations or even regions — we are witnessing phenomenon of linguistic confrontation because the simultaneous use of the mother tongue language and other languages — external or not — bring about bilingual or diglossic⁴ situations.

Sociolinguistics is a discipline becoming more and more relevant, because there are more and more frequent cases of languages in contact which become conflictive. For instance, the cases of the Flemings* or Quebecers** are paradigmatic here.

Intellectuals

This aspect relates to culture and language. The cultural elite is outstanding in the process of development and crisis of any cultural identity, because to a large extent the culture is constructed as a consequence of their contributions, actions or behaviors. I think that often intellectuals are among the main builders of any cultural identity and their role as opinion leaders and communicators has to be specially heeded. For this reason their action through the mass media is very significant. Again they are the main providers of ideology, either of nationalism or of other type of ideological approaches. Certain journalists, of course, should be included in this category.

Religion

Religion is a relevant element which cannot be neglected, even in industrial societies. Religious conflicts connected with the development of certain cultural identities are a noticeable fact.

Political system

The political system allows, according to its nature, a cultural identity to develop in one form or another, especially in the case of the coexistence in a state of one or more stateless nations, as happens, for instance, in Spain, which is a plural-cultural and a plural-linguistic country.

The key problem here is the role of power, how it is conceived, how it is exercised and how it is distributed. We can then distinguish between a democratic or an authoritarian regime, a monarchy or a republic, a Unitarian⁵ or a federal state. The possibilities of development of a cultural identity, principally of stateless nations, depend

* Flemings: 讲弗莱芒语的比利时人。

** Quebecers: 加拿大讲法语的魁北克人。



to a large extent on the structure of such a regime. Undoubtedly, if it is democratic and federal, they will be larger. Citizens should be aware of this feeling of cultural identity, and their political participation should reflect it. Furthermore, it is necessary that political parties, pressure groups and social movements keep it alive. In other words, it is indispensable that the corresponding civil society feels the need to maintain this idea and sentiment of cultural identity.

Symbols

Any cultural identity possesses a certain number of signs or elements of identification, such as flags, anthems songs, and sacred days, whose symbolic content and projection should be underscored because of their relevance.

Belonging

Finally, in this long enumeration⁶, we have to refer to what I call the psychological dimension, namely the will to belong and to identify oneself with a definite society and with its elements defining its cultural identity, the feeling of belonging to a community, its values, its history, etc., in other words, the strongly-based sentiment of being members of a community with a specific cultural identity. This dimension has always had a rational and a sentimental background.

Language Notes:

- 1 taxonomy: 分类学, 分类系统
- 2 autochthonous: 当地的, 土著的
- 3 cosmopolitan: 世界性的
- 4 diglossic: 讲两种语言的
- 5 Unitarian: 中央集权的
- 6 enumeration: 细目, 列举

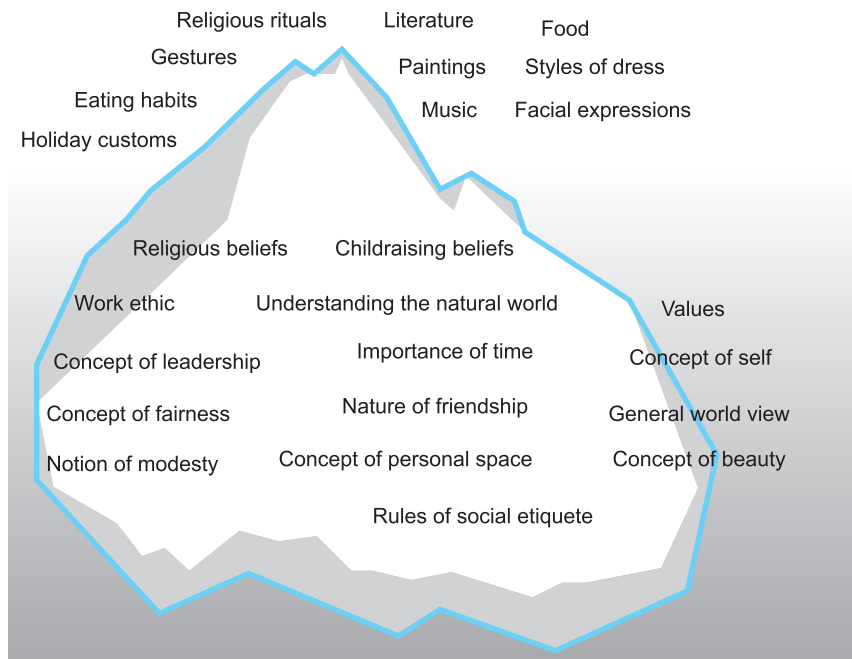
Content questions:

1. What is culture? Please illustrate with examples how culture is associated with everyday life.
Tips: Please refer to Passage 1 & 2.
2. How do you define the relationship between the mainstream American culture and the Indian culture, and that between the Han ethnic group culture and the minority ethnic groups' cultures?
Tips: Please refer to Passage 4.
3. Please make a list of simplest words/phrases to describe culture.
Tips: For the basic features of culture, please refer to Passage 5.
4. What are the key factors that most contribute to the formation of cultural identity?
Tips: Please refer to Passage 8.



Part IV Suggested Answers to the Activities

Activity 7



Activity 9

Possible interpretation of Alligator River is (1) people do not always have similar interpretations of the world around them. They perceive and interpret behavior in different ways; (2) as a result of different values, people's beliefs, behaviors and reactions are not always similar; (3) no two people, even from the same culture, have exactly the same perceptions and interpretations of what they see around them; (4) many interpretations, however, are learned within a person's culture. Therefore, those who share a common culture will probably perceive the world more similarly than those who do not share a common culture.

Activity 11

Directness (5); Centrality of family (3); External control (10); Saving face (7);
Respect for age (6); Informality (2); Deference to authority (9); Indirectness (1);
Self-reliance (4); Egalitarianism (8)