

Culture and the Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion, and Motivation

Hazel Rose Markus
University of Michigan

Shinobu Kitayama
University of Oregon

People in different cultures have strikingly different construals of the self, of others, and of the interdependence of the 2. These construals can influence, and in many cases determine, the very nature of individual experience, including cognition, emotion, and motivation. Many Asian cultures have distinct conceptions of individuality that insist on the fundamental relatedness of individuals to each other. The emphasis is on attending to others, fitting in, and harmonious interdependence with them. American culture neither assumes nor values such an overt connectedness among individuals. In contrast, individuals seek to maintain their independence from others by attending to the self and by discovering and expressing their unique inner attributes. As proposed herein, these construals are even more powerful than previously imagined. Theories of the self from both psychology and anthropology are integrated to define in detail the difference between a construal of the self as independent and a construal of the self as interdependent. Each of these divergent construals should have a set of specific consequences for cognition, emotion, and motivation; these consequences are proposed and relevant empirical literature is reviewed. Focusing on differences in self-construals enables apparently inconsistent empirical findings to be reconciled, and raises questions about what have been thought to be culture-free aspects of cognition, emotion, and motivation.

In America, "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." In Japan, "the nail that stands out gets pounded down." American parents who are trying to induce their children to eat their suppers are fond of saying "think of the starving kids in Ethiopia, and appreciate how lucky you are to be different from them." Japanese parents are likely to say "Think about the farmer who worked so hard to produce this rice for you; if you don't eat it, he will feel bad, for his efforts will have been in vain" (H. Yamada, February 16, 1989). A small Texas corporation seeking to elevate productivity told its employees to look in the mirror and say "I am beautiful" 100 times before coming to work each day. Employees of a Japanese supermarket that was recently opened in New Jersey were instructed to begin the day by holding hands and telling each other that "he" or "she is beautiful" ("A Japanese Supermarket," 1989).

Such anecdotes suggest that people in Japan and America may hold strikingly divergent construals of the self, others, and the interdependence of the two. The American examples stress attending to the self, the appreciation of one's difference from others, and the importance of asserting the self. The Japanese examples emphasize attending to and fitting in with others and

the importance of harmonious interdependence with them. These construals of the self and others are tied to the implicit, normative tasks that various cultures hold for what people should be doing in their lives (cf. Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1987; Erikson, 1950; Veroff, 1983). Anthropologists and psychologists assume that such construals can influence, and in many cases determine, the very nature of individual experience (Chodorow, 1978; Dumont, 1970; Geertz, 1975; Gergen, 1968; Gilligan, 1982; Holland & Quinn, 1987; Lykes, 1985; Marsella, De Vos, & Hsu, 1985; Sampson, 1985, 1988, 1989; Shweder & Levine, 1984; Smith, 1985; Triandis, 1989; Weisz, Rothbaum, & Blackburn, 1984; White & Kirkpatrick, 1985).

Despite the growing body of psychological and anthropological evidence that people hold divergent views about the self, most of what psychologists currently know about human nature is based on one particular view—the so-called Western view of the individual as an independent, self-contained, autonomous entity who (a) comprises a unique configuration of internal attributes (e.g., traits, abilities, motives, and values) and (b) behaves primarily as a consequence of these internal attributes (Geertz, 1975; Sampson, 1988, 1989; Shweder & Levine, 1984). As a result of this monocultural approach to the self (see Kennedy, Scheier, & Rogers, 1984), psychologists' understanding of those phenomena that are linked in one way or another to the self may be unnecessarily restricted (for some important exceptions, see Bond, 1986, 1988; Cousins, 1989; Fiske, in press; Maehr & Nicholls, 1980; Stevenson, Azuma, & Hakuta, 1986; Triandis, 1989; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988). In this article, we suggest that construals of the self, of others, and of the relationship between the self and others may be even more powerful than previously suggested and that their influence is clearly reflected in differences among cultures. In particular, we compare an *independent* view of the self with one other, very different view, an *interdependent* view. The indepen-

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Hazel Rose Markus, Research Center for Group Dynamics—ISR, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-1248, or to Shinobu Kitayama, Department of Psychology, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403-1227.

dent view is most clearly exemplified in some sizable segment of American culture, as well as in many Western European cultures. The interdependent view is exemplified in Japanese culture as well as in other Asian cultures. But it is also characteristic of African cultures, Latin-American cultures, and many southern European cultures. We delineate how these divergent views of the self—the independent and the interdependent—can have a systematic influence on various aspects of cognition, emotion, and motivation.

We suggest that for many cultures of the world, the Western notion of the self as an entity containing significant dispositional attributes, and as detached from context, is simply not an adequate description of selfhood. Rather, in many construals, the self is viewed as *interdependent* with the surrounding context, and it is the “other” or the “self-in-relation-to-other” that is focal in individual experience. One general consequence of this divergence in self-construal is that when psychological processes (e.g., cognition, emotion, and motivation) explicitly, or even quite implicitly, implicate the self as a target or as a referent, the nature of these processes will vary according to the exact form or organization of self inherent in a given construal. With respect to cognition, for example, for those with interdependent selves, in contrast to those with independent selves, some aspects of knowledge representation and some of the processes involved in social and nonsocial thinking alike are influenced by a pervasive attentiveness to the relevant *others* in the social context. Thus, one’s actions are more likely to be seen as situationally bound, and characterizations of the individual will include this context. Furthermore, for those with interdependent construals of the self, both the expression and the experience of emotions and motives may be significantly shaped and governed by a consideration of the reactions of others. Specifically, for example, some emotions, like anger, that derive from and promote an independent view of the self may be less prevalent among those with interdependent selves, and self-serving motives may be replaced by what appear as other-serving motives. An examination of cultural variation in some aspects of cognition, emotion, and motivation will allow psychologists to ask exactly what is universal in these processes, and it has the potential to provide some new insights for theories of these psychological processes.

In this analysis, we draw on recent research efforts devoted to characterizing the general differences between American or Western views of personhood and Eastern or Asian perspectives (e.g., Heelas & Lock, 1981; Hofstede, 1980; Marsella et al., 1985; Roland, 1988; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990; Shweder, 1990; Shweder & LeVine, 1984; Stigler, Shweder, & Herdt, 1990; Triandis, 1989; Triandis & Brislin, 1980; Weisz et al., 1984). We extract from these descriptions many important differences that may exist in the specific content, structure, and functioning of the self-systems of people of different cultural backgrounds. The distinctions that we make between independent and interdependent construals must be regarded as general tendencies that may emerge when the members of the culture are considered as a whole. The prototypical American view of the self, for example, may prove to be most characteristic of White, middle-class men with a Western European ethnic background. It may be somewhat less descriptive of women in general, or of men and women from other ethnic groups or social

classes.¹ Moreover, we realize that there may well be important distinctions among those views we discuss as similar and that there may be views of the self and others that cannot easily be classified as either independent or interdependent.

Our intention is not to catalog all types of self-construals, but rather to highlight a view of the self that is often assumed to be universal but that may be quite specific to some segments of Western culture. We argue that self-construals play a major role in regulating various psychological processes. Understanding the nature of divergent self-construals has two important consequences. On the one hand, it allows us to organize several apparently inconsistent empirical findings and to pose questions about the universality assumed for many aspects of cognition, emotion, and motivation (see Shweder, 1990). On the other hand, it permits us to better specify the precise role of the self in mediating and regulating behavior.

The Self: A Delicate Category

Universal Aspects of the Self

In exploring the possibility of different types of self-construals, we begin with Hallowsell’s (1955) notion that people everywhere are likely to develop an understanding of themselves as physically distinct and separable from others. Head (1920), for example, claimed the existence of a universal schema of the body that provided one with an anchor in time and space. Similarly, Allport (1937) suggested that there must exist an aspect of personality that allows one, when awakening each morning, to be sure that he or she is the same person who went to sleep the night before. Most recently, Neisser (1988) referred to this aspect of self as the *ecological self*, which he defined as “the self as perceived with respect to the physical environment: ‘I am the person here in this place, engaged in this particular activity’” (p. 3). Beyond a physical or ecological sense of self, each person probably has some awareness of internal activity, such as dreams, and of the continuous flow of thoughts and feelings, which are private to the extent that they cannot be directly known by others. The awareness of this unshared experience will lead the person to some sense of an inner, private self.

Divergent Aspects of the Self

Some understanding and some representation of the private, inner aspects of the self may well be universal, but many other aspects of the self may be quite specific to particular cultures. People are capable of believing an astonishing variety of things about themselves (cf. Heelas & Lock, 1981; Marsella et al., 1985; Shweder & LeVine, 1984; Triandis, 1989). The self can be construed, framed, or conceptually represented in multiple ways. A cross-cultural survey of the self lends support to Durkheim’s (1912/1968) early notion that the category of the self is primar-

¹ The prototypical American view may also be further restricted to a particular point in history. It may be primarily a product of late, industrial capitalism (see Baumeister, 1987). For an analysis of the origins of the independent view, see Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton (1985) and Weber (1958).

ily the product of social factors, and to Mauss's (1938/1985) claim that as a social category, the self is a "delicate" one, subject to quite substantial, if not infinite, variation.

The exact content and structure of the inner self may differ considerably by culture. Furthermore, the nature of the outer or public self that derives from one's relations with other people and social institutions may also vary markedly by culture. And, as suggested by Triandis (1989), the significance assigned to the private, inner aspects versus the public, relational aspects in regulating behavior will vary accordingly. In fact, it may not be unreasonable to suppose, as did numerous earlier anthropologists (see Allen, 1985), that in some cultures, on certain occasions, the *individual*, in the sense of a set of significant inner attributes of the person, may cease to be the primary unit of consciousness. Instead, the sense of belongingness to a social relation may become so strong that it makes better sense to think of the *relationship* as the functional unit of conscious reflection.

The current analysis focuses on just one variation in what people in different cultures can come to believe about themselves. This one variation concerns what they believe about the relationship between the self and *others* and, especially, the degree to which they see themselves as *separate* from others or as *connected* with others. We suggest that the significance and the exact functional role that the person assigns to the other when defining the self depend on the culturally shared assumptions about the separation or connectedness between the self and others.

Two Construals of the Self: Independent and Interdependent

The Independent Construal

In many Western cultures, there is a faith in the inherent separateness of distinct persons. The normative imperative of this culture is to become independent from others and to discover and express one's unique attributes (Johnson, 1985; Marsella et al., 1985; J. G. Miller, 1988; Shweder & Bourne, 1984). Achieving the cultural goal of independence requires construing oneself as an individual whose behavior is organized and made meaningful primarily by reference to one's own internal repertoire of thoughts, feelings, and action, rather than by reference to the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others. According to this construal of self, to borrow Geertz's (1975) often quoted phrase, the person is viewed as "a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgment, and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against a social and natural background" (p. 48).

This view of the self derives from a belief in the wholeness and uniqueness of each person's configuration of internal attributes (Johnson, 1985; Sampson, 1985, 1988, 1989; Waterman, 1981). It gives rise to processes like "self-actualization," "realizing oneself," "expressing one's unique configuration of needs, rights, and capacities," or "developing one's distinct potential." The essential aspect of this view involves a conception of the self as an autonomous, independent person; we thus refer to it as the

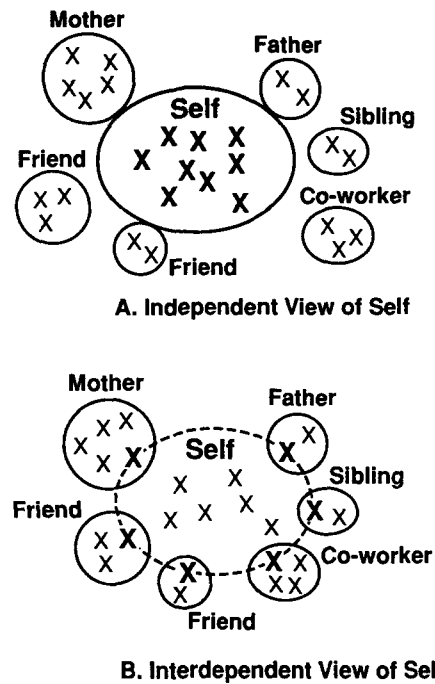


Figure 1. Conceptual representations of the self. (A: Independent construal. B: Interdependent construal.)

independent construal of the self. Other similar labels include *individualist*, *egocentric*, *separate*, *autonomous*, *idiocentric*, and *self-contained*. We assume that, on average, relatively more individuals in Western cultures will hold this view than will individuals in non-Western cultures. Within a given culture, however, individuals will vary in the extent to which they are good cultural representatives and construe the self in the mandated way.

The independent self must, of course, be responsive to the social environment (Fiske, in press). This responsiveness, however, is fostered not so much for the sake of the responsiveness itself. Rather, social responsiveness often, if not always, derives from the need to strategically determine the best way to express or assert the internal attributes of the self. Others, or the social situation in general, are important, but primarily as standards of reflected appraisal, or as sources that can verify and affirm the inner core of the self.

The Western, independent view of the self is illustrated in Figure 1A. The large circle represents the self, and the smaller circles represent specific others. The Xs are representations of the various aspects of the self or the others. In some cases, the larger circle and the small circle intersect, and there is an X in the intersection. This refers to a representation of the self-in-relation-to-others or to a particular social relation (e.g., "I am very polite in front of my professor"). An X within the self circle but outside of the intersection represents an aspect of the self perceived to be relatively independent of specific others and, thus, invariant over time and context. These self-representations usually have as their referent some individual desire, preference, attribute, or ability (e.g., "I am creative"). For those with independent construals of the self, it is these inner attributes that are

most significant in regulating behavior and that are assumed, both by the actor and by the observer alike, to be diagnostic of the actor. Such representations of the inner self are thus the most elaborated in memory and the most accessible when thinking of the self (as indicated by Xs in Figure 1A). They can be called *core conceptions*, *salient identities*, or *self-schemata* (e.g., Gergen, 1968; Markus, 1977; Stryker, 1986).

The Interdependent Construal

In contrast, many non-Western cultures insist, in Kondo's (1982) terms, on the fundamental *connectedness* of human beings to each other. A normative imperative of these cultures is to maintain this interdependence among individuals (De Vos, 1985; Hsu, 1985; Miller, 1988; Shweder & Bourne, 1984). Experiencing interdependence entails seeing oneself as part of an encompassing social relationship and recognizing that one's behavior is determined, contingent on, and, to a large extent organized by what the actor perceives to be the thoughts, feelings, and actions of *others* in the relationship. The Japanese experience of the self, therefore, includes a sense of interdependence and of one's status as a participant in a larger social unit (Sampson, 1988). Within such a construal, the self becomes most meaningful and complete when it is cast in the appropriate social relationship. According to Lebra (1976) the Japanese are most fully human in the context of others.

This view of the self and the relationship between the self and others features the person not as separate from the social context but as more connected and less differentiated from others. People are motivated to find a way to fit in with relevant others, to fulfill and create obligation, and in general to become part of various interpersonal relationships. Unlike the independent self, the significant features of the self according to this construal are to be found in the interdependent and thus, in the more public components of the self. We therefore call this view the *interdependent construal of the self*. The same notion has been variously referred to, with somewhat different connotations, as *sociocentric*, *holistic*, *collective*, *allocentric*, *ensembled*, *constitutive*, *contextualist*, *connected*, and *relational*. As with the independent self, others are critical for social comparison and self-validation, yet in an interdependent formulation of the self, these others become an integral part of the setting, situation, or context to which the self is connected, fitted, and assimilated. The exact manner in which one achieves the task of connection, therefore, depends crucially on the nature of the context, particularly the others present in the context. Others thus participate actively and continuously in the definition of the interdependent self.

The interdependent self also possesses and expresses a set of internal attributes, such as abilities, opinions, judgments, and personality characteristics. However, these internal attributes are understood as situation specific, and thus as sometimes elusive and unreliable. And, as such, they are unlikely to assume a powerful role in regulating overt behavior, especially if this behavior implicates significant others. In many domains of social life, one's opinions, abilities, and characteristics are assigned only secondary roles—they must instead be constantly controlled and regulated to come to terms with the primary task of interdependence. Such voluntary control of the inner attributes

constitutes the core of the cultural ideal of becoming mature. The understanding of one's autonomy as secondary to, and constrained by, the primary task of interdependence distinguishes interdependent selves from independent selves, for whom autonomy and its expression is often afforded primary significance. An independent behavior (e.g., asserting an opinion) exhibited by a person in an interdependent culture is likely to be based on the premise of underlying interdependence and thus may have a somewhat different significance than it has for a person from an independent culture.

The interdependent self is illustrated in Figure 1B. For those with interdependent selves, the significant self-representations (the Xs) are those in relationship to specific others. Interdependent selves certainly include representations of invariant personal attributes and abilities, and these representations can become phenomenologically quite salient, but in many circumstances they are less important in regulating observable behavior and are not assumed to be particularly diagnostic of the self.² Instead, the self-knowledge that guides behavior is of the self-in-relation to specific others in particular contexts. The fundamental units of the self-system, the core conceptions, or self-schemata are thus predicated on significant interpersonal relationships.

An interdependent self cannot be properly characterized as a bounded whole, for it changes structure with the nature of the particular social context. Within each particular social situation, the self can be differently instantiated. The uniqueness of such a self derives from the specific configuration of relationships that each person has developed. What is focal and objectified in an interdependent self, then, is not the inner self, but the *relationships* of the person to other actors (Hamaguchi, 1985).

The notion of an interdependent self is linked with a monistic philosophical tradition in which the person is thought to be of the same substance as the rest of nature (see Bond, 1986; Phillips, 1976; Roland, 1988; Sass, 1988). As a consequence, the relationship between the self and other, or between subject and object, is assumed to be much closer. Thus, many non-Western cultures insist on the inseparability of basic elements (Galtung, 1981), including self and other, and person and situation. In Chinese culture, for instance, there is an emphasis on synthesizing the constituent parts of any problem or situation into an integrated or harmonious whole (Moore, 1967; Northrop, 1946). Thus, persons are only parts that when separated from the larger social whole cannot be fully understood (Phillips, 1976; Shweder, 1984). Such a holistic view is in opposition to the Cartesian, dualistic tradition that characterizes Western thinking and in which the self is separated from the object and from the natural world.

Examples of the interdependent self. An interdependent view of the self is common to many of the otherwise highly diverse cultures of the world. Studies of the mainland Chinese, for example, summarized in a recent book by Bond (1986), show that even among the most rapidly modernizing segments of the Chinese population, there is a tendency for people to act

² For a discussion of how interdependent selves strive to maintain a balance between internal (private) and extensive (public) representations, see T. Doi (1986).

primarily in accordance with the anticipated expectations of others and social norms rather than with internal wishes or personal attributes (Yang, 1981b). A premium is placed on emphasizing collective welfare and on showing a sympathetic concern for others. Throughout the studies of the Chinese reported by Bond, one can see the clear imprint of the Confucian emphasis on interrelatedness and kindness. According to Hsu (1985), the supreme Chinese virtue, *jen*, implies the person's capability to interact with fellow human beings in a sincere, polite, and decent fashion (see also Elvin, 1985).

Numerous other examples of cultures in which people are likely to have some version of an interdependent self can also be identified. For example, Triandis, Marin, Lisansky, and Betancourt (1984) have described the importance of *simpatico* among Hispanics. This quality refers to the ability to both respect and share others' feelings. In characterizing the psychology of Filipinos, Church (1987) described the importance that people attribute to smooth interpersonal relations and to being "agreeable even under difficult circumstances, sensitive to what others are feeling and willing to adjust one's behavior accordingly." Similarly, Weisz (in press) reported that Thais place a premium on self-effacement, humility, deference, and on trying to avoid disturbing others. Among the Japanese, it is similarly crucial not to disturb the *wa*, or the harmonious ebb and flow of interpersonal relations (see also Geertz, 1974, for characterizations of similar imperatives among the Balinese and Moroccans).

Beattie (1980) claimed that Africans are also extremely sensitive to the interdependencies among people and view the world and others in it as extensions of one another. The self is viewed not as a hedged closure but as an open field. Similarly, Marriott (1976) argued that Hindu conceptions assume that the self is an open entity that is given shape by the social context. In his insightful book, Kakar (1978) described the Hindu's ideal of interpersonal fusion and how it is accompanied by a personal, cultural sense of hell, which is separation from others. In fact, Miller, Bersoff, and Harwood (1990), in a recent, carefully controlled study on moral reasoning, found that Indians regard responsiveness to the needs of others as an objective moral obligation to a far greater extent than do Americans. Although the self-systems of people from these cultures are markedly different in many other important respects, they appear to be alike in the greater value (when compared with Americans) that is attached to proper relations with others, and in the requirement to flexibly change one's own behavior in accordance with the nature of the relationship.

Even in American culture, there is a strong theme of interdependence that is reflected in the values and activities of many of its subcultures. Religious groups, such as the Quakers, explicitly value and promote interdependence, as do many small towns and rural communities (e.g., Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985). Some notion of a more connected, ensembled, interdependent self, as opposed to a self-contained, independent self, is also being developed by several of what Sampson (1989) calls "postmodern" theorists. These theorists are questioning the sovereignty of the American view of the mature person as autonomous, self-determined, and unencumbered. They argue that psychology is currently dominated by a view of the person that does not adequately reflect the extent to which

people everywhere are created by, constrained by, and responsive to their various interpersonal contexts (see Gergen & Gergen, 1988; Gilligan, 1982; Miller, 1986; Tajfel, 1984).

Further definition of the interdependent self. Theorists of Japanese culture are beginning to characterize the interdependent self much more specifically than was previously attempted. These descriptions offer some more refined ideas of how an interdependent view of self can depart markedly from an independent view of self (see Nakane, 1970; Plath, 1980; R. J. Smith, 1983). For example, building on a study of L. T. Doi (1973), Bachnik (1986) wrote

(in Japanese society) rather than there being a single social reality, a number of possible perspectives of both self and social life are acknowledged. Interaction in Japanese society then focuses on the definition of the appropriate choice, out of all the various possibilities. This means that what one says and does will be different in different situations, depending on how one defines one's particular perspective versus the social other. (p. 69)

In Japan, the word for self, *jibun*, refers to "one's share of the shared life space" (Hamaguchi, 1985). The self, Kimura (cited in Hamaguchi, 1985) claimed, is "neither a substance nor an attribute having a constant oneness" (p. 302). According to Hamaguchi (1985), for the Japanese, "a sense of identification with others (sometimes including conflict) pre-exists and selfness is confirmed only through interpersonal relationships. . . . Selfness is not a constant like the ego but denotes a fluid concept which changes through time and situations according to interpersonal relationships" (p. 302).

The Japanese anthropologist Lebra (1976) defined the essence of Japanese culture as an "ethos of social relativism." This translates into a constant concern for belongingness, reliance, dependency, empathy, occupying one's proper place, and reciprocity. She claimed the Japanese nightmare is exclusion, meaning that one is failing at the normative goal of connecting to others. This is in sharp contrast to the American nightmare, which is to fail at separating from others, as can occur when one is unduly influenced by others, or does not stand up for what one believes, or when one goes unnoticed or undistinguished.

An interdependent view of self does not result in a merging of self and other, nor does it imply that one must always be in the company of others to function effectively, or that people do not have a sense of themselves as agents who are the origins of their own actions. On the contrary, it takes a high degree of self-control and agency to effectively adjust oneself to various interpersonal contingencies. Agentic exercise of control, however, is directed primarily to the inside and to those inner attributes, such as desires, personal goals, and private emotions, that can disturb the harmonious equilibrium of interpersonal transaction. This can be contrasted with the Western notion of control, which primarily implies an assertion of the inner attributes and a consequent attempt to change the outer aspects, such as one's public behaviors and the social situation (see also Weisz et al., 1984).

Given the Japanese notion of control that is inwardly directed, the ability to effectively adjust in the interpersonal domain may form an important basis of self-esteem, and individualized styles of such adjustment to social contingencies may contribute to the sense of self-uniqueness. Thus, Hamaguchi

(1985), for example, reported that for the Japanese, “the straightforward claim of the naked ego” (p. 303) is experienced as childish. Self-assertion is not viewed as being authentic, but instead as being immature. This point is echoed in M. White and LeVine’s (1986) description of the meaning of *sunao*, a term used by Japanese parents to characterize what they value in their children:

A child that is *sunao* has not yielded his or her personal autonomy for the sake of cooperation; cooperation does not suggest giving up the self, as it may in the West; it implies that working with others is the appropriate way of expressing and enhancing the self. Engagement and harmony with others is, then, a positively valued goal and the bridge—to open-hearted cooperation, as in *sunao*—is through sensitivity, reiterated by the mother’s example and encouragement. (p. 58)

Kumagai (1981) said *sunao* “assumes cooperation to be an act of affirmation of the self” (p. 261). Giving in is not a sign of weakness; rather, it reflects tolerance, self-control, flexibility, and maturity.

The role of the other in the interdependent self. In an interdependent view, in contrast to an independent view, others will be assigned much more importance, will carry more weight, and will be relatively focal in one’s own behavior. There are several direct consequences of an interdependent construal of the self. First, relationships, rather than being means for realizing various individual goals, will often be ends in and of themselves. Although people everywhere must maintain some relatedness with others, an appreciation and a need for people will be more important for those with an interdependent self than for those with an independent self. Second, maintaining a connection to others will mean being constantly aware of others and focusing on their needs, desires, and goals. In some cases, the goals of others may become so focal in consciousness that the goals of others may be experienced as personal goals. In other cases, fulfilling one’s own goals may be quite distinct from those of others, but meeting another’s goals, needs, and desires will be a necessary requirement for satisfying one’s own goals, needs, and desires. The assumption is that while promoting the goals of others, one’s own goals will be attended to by the person with whom one is interdependent. Hence, people may actively work to fulfill the others’ goals while passively monitoring the reciprocal contributions from these others for one’s own goal-fulfillment. Yamagishi (1988), in fact, suggested that the Japanese feel extremely uncomfortable, much more so than Americans, when the opportunity for such passive monitoring of others’ actions is denied.

From the standpoint of an independent, “self-ish” self, one might be led to romanticize the interdependent self, who is ever attuned to the concerns of others. Yet in many cases, responsive and cooperative actions are exercised only when there is a reasonable assurance of the “good-intentions” of others, namely their commitment to continue to engage in reciprocal interaction and mutual support. Clearly, interdependent selves do not attend to the needs, desires, and goals of *all* others. Attention to others is not indiscriminate; it is highly selective and will be most characteristic of relationships with “in-group” members. These are others with whom one shares a common fate, such as family members or members of the same lasting social group, such as the work group. Out-group members are typically

treated quite differently and are unlikely to experience either the advantages or disadvantages of interdependence. Independent selves are also selective in their association with others but not to the extent of interdependent selves because much less of their behavior is directly contingent on the actions of others. Given the importance of others in constructing reality and regulating behavior, the in-group–out-group distinction is a vital one for interdependent selves, and the subjective boundary of one’s “in-group” may tend to be narrower for the interdependent selves than for the independent selves (Triandis, 1989).

To illustrate the reciprocal nature of interaction among those with interdependent views, imagine that one has a friend over for lunch and has decided to make a sandwich for him. The conversation might be: “Hey, Tom, what do you want in your sandwich? I have turkey, salami, and cheese.” Tom responds, “Oh, I like turkey.” Note that the friend is given a choice because the host assumes that friend has a right, if not a duty, to make a choice reflecting his inner attributes, such as preferences or desires. And the friend makes his choice exactly because of the belief in the same assumption. This script is “natural,” however, only within the independent view of self. What would happen if the friend were a visitor from Japan? A likely response to the question “Hey, Tomio, what do you want?” would be a little moment of bewilderment and then a noncommittal utterance like “I don’t know.” This happens because under the assumptions of an interdependent self, it is the responsibility of the host to be able to “read” the mind of the friend and offer what the host perceives to be the best for the friend. And the duty of the guest, on the other hand, is to receive the favor with grace and to be prepared to return the favor in the near future, if not right at the next moment. A likely, interdependent script for the same situation would be: “Hey, Tomio, I made you a turkey sandwich because I remember that last week you said you like turkey more than beef.” And Tomio will respond, “Oh, thank you, I really like turkey.”

The reciprocal interdependence with others that is the sign of the interdependent self seems to require constant engagement of what Mead (1934) meant by taking the role of the other. It involves the willingness and ability to feel and think what others are feeling and thinking, to absorb this information without being told, and then to help others satisfy their wishes and realize their goals. Maintaining connection requires inhibiting the “I” perspective and processing instead from the “thou” perspective (Hsu, 1981). The requirement is to “read” the other’s mind and thus to know what the other is thinking or feeling. In contrast, with an independent self, it is the individual’s responsibility to “say what’s on one’s mind” if one expects to be attended to or understood.

Consequences of an Independent or an Interdependent View of the Self

Table 1 presents a brief, highly simplified summary of some of the hypothesized differences between independent and interdependent construals of the self. These construals of self and other are conceptualized as part of a repertoire of self-relevant schemata used to evaluate, organize, and regulate one’s experience and action. As schemata, they are patterns of one’s past behaviors as well as patterns for one’s current and future behav-

Table 1
Summary of Key Differences Between an Independent and an Interdependent Construal of Self

Feature compared	Independent	Interdependent
Definition	Separate from social context	Connected with social context
Structure	Bounded, unitary, stable	Flexible, variable
Important features	Internal, private (abilities, thoughts, feelings)	External, public (statuses, roles, relationships)
Tasks	Be unique Express self Realize internal attributes Promote own goals	Belong, fit-in Occupy one's proper place Engage in appropriate action Promote others' goals
Role of others	Be direct; "say what's on your mind" <i>Self-evaluation</i> : others important for social comparison, reflected appraisal	Be indirect; "read other's mind" <i>Self-definition</i> : relationships with others in specific contexts define the self
Basis of self-esteem ^a	Ability to express self, validate internal attributes	Ability to adjust, restrain self, maintain harmony with social context

^a Esteeming the self may be primarily a Western phenomenon, and the concept of self-esteem should perhaps be replaced by self-satisfaction, or by a term that reflects the realization that one is fulfilling the culturally mandated task.

iors (Neisser, 1976). Markus and Wurf (1987) called this assortment of self-regulatory schemata the *self-system*. Whenever a task, an event, or a situation is self-relevant, the ensuing processes and consequences are likely to be influenced by the nature of the self-system. The self-system has been shown to be instrumental in the regulation of intrapersonal processes such as self-relevant information processing, affect regulation, and motivation and in the regulation of interpersonal processes such as person perception, social comparison, and the seeking and shaping of social interaction (see Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1987; Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1984; Markus & Wurf, 1987, for reviews). The goal of this article is to further specify the role of the self-system in behavior by examining how these divergent cultural self-schemata influence individual experience.

In the current analysis, we hypothesize that the independent versus interdependent construals of self are among the most general and overarching schemata of the individual's self-system. These construals recruit and organize the more specific self-regulatory schemata.³ We are suggesting here, therefore, that the exact organization of many self-relevant processes and their outcomes depends crucially on whether these processes are rooted in an independent construal of the self or whether they are based primarily on an interdependent construal of the self. For example, in the process of lending meaning and coherence to the social world, we know that people will show a heightened sensitivity to self-relevant stimuli. For those with an independent view of self, this includes information relevant to one's self-defining attributes. For one with an interdependent view of self, such stimuli would include information about significant others with whom the person has a relationship or information about the self in relation to another person.

Affect regulation involves seeking positive states and avoiding negative ones. Positive states are those that enhance or promote one's view of the self, and negative states are those that challenge this view. For a person with an independent view of self, this involves seeking information that confirms or en-

hances one's internal, private attributes. The most desirable situations are those that allow one to verify and express those important internal attributes and that convey the sense that one is appropriately autonomous. In contrast, for a person with an interdependent view of self, one might expect the most desirable states to be those that allow one to be responsive to one's immediate context or that convey the sense that one is succeeding in his or her interdependent relationships or statuses.

A third important function of the self-concept suggested by Markus and Wurf (1987) is that of motivating persons, of moving them to action. The person with an independent view of self should be motivated to those actions that allow expression of one's important self-defining, inner attributes (e.g., hardworking, caring, independent, and powerful), whereas the person with an interdependent view of self should be motivated to

³ What these very general cultural self-schemata of independence or interdependence mean for a given individual's articulated view of self cannot be specified, however. The self-concept derives not only from the cultural self-schema that is the focus herein but from the complete configuration of self-schemata, including those that are a product of gender, race, religion, social class, and one's particular social and developmental history. Not all people who are part of an independent culture will thus characterize themselves as independent, nor will all those who live as part of an interdependent culture claim to be interdependent. Within independent and interdependent cultures, there is great diversity in individual self-definition, and there can also be strong similarities across cultures. For example, many artists, whether Japanese or American, may describe themselves as nonconformist, innovative, and breaking with tradition. And many aspects of their behavior are indeed very similar. Yet, nonconformity Japanese-style and nonconformity American-style, although similar in some respects, will not, because of the differences in their supporting cultural contexts, be identical. For Japanese, nonconformity is a privilege afforded only to selected, talented individuals whose deviance from the norm of interdependence is implicitly sanctioned by the rest of society. For Americans, nonconformity is regarded as every individual's birthright.

those actions that enhance or foster one's relatedness or connection to others. On the surface, such actions could look remarkably similar (e.g., working incredibly hard to gain admission to a desirable college), but the exact source, or etiology, of the energizing motivation may be powerfully different (De Vos, 1973; Maehr & Nicholls, 1980).

In the following sections, we discuss these ideas in further detail and review the empirical literature, which suggests that there are significant cognitive, emotional, and motivational consequences of holding an independent or an interdependent view of the self.

Consequences for Cognition

If a cognitive activity implicates the self, the outcome of this activity will depend on the nature of the self-system. Specifically, there are three important consequences of these divergent self-systems for cognition. First, we may expect those with interdependent selves to be more attentive and sensitive to others than those with independent selves. The attentiveness and sensitivity to others, characterizing the interdependent selves, will result in a relatively greater cognitive elaboration of the other or of the self-in-relation-to-other. Second, among those with interdependent selves, the unit of representation of both the self and the other will include a relatively specific social context in which the self and the other are embedded. This means that knowledge about persons, either the self or others, will not be abstract and generalized across contexts, but instead will remain specific to the focal context. Third, a consideration of the social context and the reactions of others may also shape some basic, nonsocial cognitive activities such as categorizing and counterfactual thinking.

In exploring the impact of divergent cultural construals on thinking, we assume that how people think (the process) in a social situation cannot be easily separated from what they think about (the content; Shweder, 1990; Shweder & Bourne, 1984). Extensive research on social cognition in the past decade has suggested the power of content in social inference (e.g., see Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Markus & Zajonc, 1985, for reviews). It is the nature of the representation (e.g., self, another person, a weed, or clam chowder) that guides attention, and that determines what other relevant information will be retrieved to fill in the gap of available sense data. For example, investigations by D'Andrade (1981) and Johnson-Laird (1983) indicate that the greater the familiarity with the stimulus materials, the more elaborate the schemata for framing the problem, and the better the problem solving. In general, then, how a given object is culturally construed and represented in memory should importantly influence and even determine how one thinks about the object. Accordingly, the divergent representations of the self we describe should be expected to have various consequences for all cognition relevant to self, others, or social relationships.

More interpersonal knowledge. If the most significant elements of the interdependent self are the self-in-relation-to-others elements, there will be a need, as well as a strong normative demand, for knowing and understanding the social surrounding, particularly others in direct interaction with the self. That is, if people conceive of themselves as interdependent parts of larger social wholes, it is important for them to be

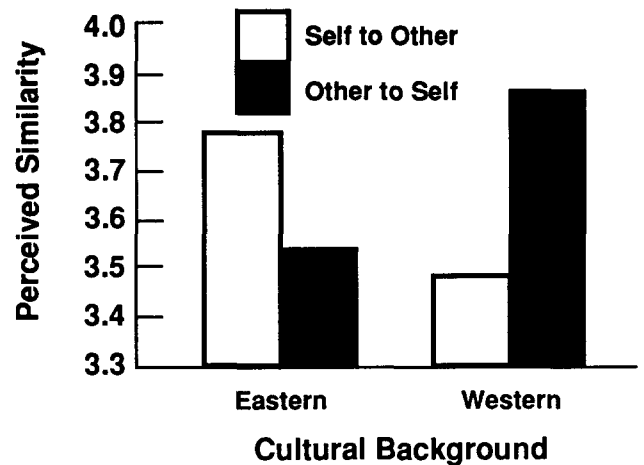


Figure 2. Mean perceived similarity of self to other and other to self by subjects with Eastern and Western cultural backgrounds.

sensitive to and knowledgeable about the others who are the coparticipants in various relationships, and about the social situations that enable these relationships. Maintaining one's relationships and ensuring a harmonious social interaction requires a full understanding of these others, that is, knowing how they are feeling, thinking, and likely to act in the context of one's relationships to them. It follows that those with interdependent selves may develop a dense and richly elaborated store of information about others or of the self in relation.

Kitayama, Markus, Tummala, Kurokawa, and Kato (1990) examined this idea in a study requiring similarity judgments between self and other. A typical American finding is that the self is judged to be more dissimilar to other than other is to the self (Holyoak & Gordon, 1983; Srull & Gaelick, 1983). This finding has been interpreted to indicate that for the typical American subject, the representation of the self is more elaborated and distinctive in memory than the representation of another person. As a result, the similarity between self and other is judged to be less when the question is posed about a more distinctive object (Is *self* similar to other?) than when the question is posed about a less distinctive object (Is *other* similar to self?). If, however, those with interdependent selves have at least as much knowledge about some others as they have about themselves, this American pattern of findings may not be found.

To test these predictions, Kitayama et al. (1990) compared students from Eastern cultural backgrounds (students from India) with those from Western cultural backgrounds (American students). As shown in Figure 2, for the Western subjects, Kitayama et al. replicated the prior findings in which the self is perceived as significantly more dissimilar to the other than is the other to the self. Such a finding is consistent with a broad range of studies showing that for individuals with a Western background, supposedly those with independent selves, self-knowledge is more distinctive and densely elaborated than knowledge about other people (e.g., Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1984). This pattern, however, was nonsignificantly reversed for the Indian subjects, who judged the self to be somewhat more similar to the other than is the other to the self. It appears, then,

that for the latter, more interdependent subjects, knowledge about others is relatively more elaborated and distinctive than knowledge about the self. Asymmetry in similarity judgments is an indirect way to evaluate knowledge accessibility, but a more direct measure of cross-cultural differences in knowledge of the other should reveal that those with interdependent selves have more readily accessible knowledge of the other.

Context-specific knowledge of self and other. A second consequence of having an interdependent self as opposed to an independent self concerns the ways in which knowledge about self and other is processed, organized, and retrieved from memory. For example, given an interdependent self, knowledge about the self may not be organized into a hierarchical structure with the person's characteristic attributes (e.g., intelligent, competent, and athletic) as the superordinate nodes, as is often assumed in characterizations of the independent self. In other words, those with interdependent selves are less likely to organize knowledge about the "self in general" or about the "other in general." Specific social situations are more likely to serve as the unit of representation than are attributes of separate persons. One learns about the self with respect to a specific other in a particular context and, conversely, about the other with respect to the self in a particular context.

In exploring variations in the nature of person knowledge, Shweder and Bourne (1984) asked respondents in India and America to describe several close acquaintances. The descriptions provided by the Indians were more situationally specific and more relational than those of Americans. Indian descriptions focused on behavior; they described what was done, where it was done, and to whom or with whom it was done. The Indian respondents said, "He has no land to cultivate but likes to cultivate the land of others," or "When a quarrel arises, he cannot resist the temptation of saying a word," or "He behaves properly with guests but feels sorry if money is spent on them." It is the behavior itself that is focal and significant rather than the inner attribute that supposedly underlies it. Notably this tendency to provide the specific situational or interpersonal context when providing a description was reported to characterize the free descriptions of Indians regardless of social class, education, or literacy level. It appears, then, that the concreteness in person description is not due to a lack of skill in abstracting concrete instances to form a general proposition, but rather a consequence of the fact that global inferences about persons are typically regarded as not meaningful or informative.

Americans also describe other people in terms of the specifics of their behavior, but typically this occurs only at the beginning of relationships when the other is relatively unknown, or if the behavior is somehow distinctive and does not readily lend itself to a trait characterization. Rather than saying "He does not disclose secrets," Americans are more likely to say "He is discreet or principled." Rather than "He is hesitant to give his money away," Americans say "He is tight or selfish." Shweder and Bourne (1984) found that 46% of American descriptions were of the context-free variety, whereas this was true of only 20% from the Indian sample.

A study by J. G. Miller (1984) on patterns of explanation among Indian Hindus and Americans revealed the same tendency for contextual and relational descriptions of behavior

among Indian respondents. In the first phase of her study, respondents generated two prosocial behaviors and two deviant behaviors and then explained why each behavior was undertaken. For example, in the prosocial case, respondents were asked to "describe something a person you know well did recently that you considered good for someone else." Miller coded the explanations for reference to dispositional explanations; for reference to social, spatial, temporal location; and for reference to specific acts or occurrences. Like Shweder and Bourne (1984), she found that on average, 40% of the reasons given by American respondents referred to the general dispositions of the actor. For the Hindu respondents, dispositional explanations constituted less than 20% of their responses.

In a second phase of the study, Miller (1984) asked both American and Indian respondents to explain several accounts of the deviant behaviors generated by the Indian respondents. For example, a Hindu subject narrated the following incident:

This concerns a motorcycle accident. The back wheel burst on the motorcycle. The passenger sitting in the rear jumped. The moment the passenger fell, he struck his head on the pavement. The driver of the motorcycle—who is an attorney—as he was on his way to court for some work, just took the passenger to a local hospital and went on and attended to his court work. I personally feel the motorcycle driver did a wrong thing. The driver left the passenger there without consulting the doctor concerning the seriousness of the injury—the gravity of the situation—whether the passenger should be shifted immediately—and he went on to the court. So ultimately the passenger died. (p. 972)

Respondents were asked why the driver left the passenger at the hospital without staying to consult about the seriousness of the passenger's injury. On average, Americans made 36% of their attributions to dispositions of the actors (e.g., irresponsible, pursuing success) and 17% of their attributions to contextual factors (driver's duty to be in court). In comparison, only 15% of the attributions of the Indians referred to dispositions, whereas 32% referred to contextual reasons. Both the American and the Indian subjects focused on the state of the driver at the time of the accident, but in the Indian accounts, the social role of the driver appears to be very important to understanding the events. He is obligated to his role, he has a job to perform. Actions are viewed as arising from relations or interactions with others; they are a product of obligations, responsibilities, or commitments to others and are thus best understood with respect to these interpersonal relations. This preference for contextual explanations has also been documented by Dalal, Sharma, and Bisht (1983).

These results call into question the exact nature of the fundamental attribution error (Ross, 1977). In this error, people, in their efforts to understand the causes of behavior, suffer from an inescapable tendency to perceive behavior as a consequence of the internal, personal attributes of the person. Miller's (1984) Indian respondents also explained events in terms of properties or features of the person, yet these properties were their role relationships—their socially determined relations to specific others or groups. Because role relationships necessarily implicate the social situation that embeds the actor, it is unclear whether the explanations of the Indian respondents can be viewed as instances of the fundamental attribution error. It may be that the fundamental attribution error is only characteristic of those with an independent view of the self.

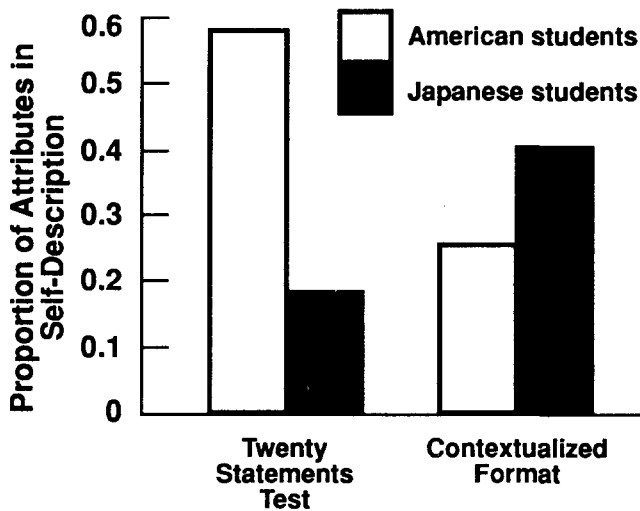


Figure 3. Mean proportion of psychological attributes endorsed by American and Japanese students in two self-description tasks.

The tendency to describe a person in terms of his or her specific behavior and to specify the context for a given behavior is also evidenced when those with interdependent selves provide self-descriptions. Cousins (1989) compared the self-descriptions of American high school and college students with the self-descriptions of Japanese high school and college students. He used two types of free-response formats, the original Twenty Statements Test (TST; Kuhn & McPartland, 1954), which simply asks "Who Am I?" 20 consecutive times, and a modified TST, which asks subjects to describe themselves in several specific situations (me at home, me with friends, and me at school). When responding to the original TST, the Japanese self-descriptions were like those of the Indians in the Shweder and Bourne (1984) study. They were more concrete and role specific ("I play tennis on the weekend"). In contrast, the American descriptions included more psychological trait or attribute characterizations ("I am optimistic," and "I am friendly"). However, in the modified TST, where a specific interpersonal context was provided so that respondents could envision the situation (e.g., me at home) and presumably who was there and what was being done to whom or by whom, this pattern of results was reversed. As shown in Figure 3, the Japanese showed a stronger tendency to characterize themselves in psychological trait or attribute terms than did Americans. In contrast, Americans tended to qualify their self-descriptions, claiming, for example, "I am sometimes lazy at home."

Cousins (1989) argued that the original TST essentially isolates or disembeds the "I" from the relational or situational context, and thus self-description becomes artificial for the Japanese respondents, who are more accustomed to thinking about themselves within specific social situations. For these respondents, the contextualized format "Describe yourself as you are with your family" was more "natural" because it locates the self in a habitual unit of representation, namely in a particular interpersonal situation. Once a defining context was specified, the Japanese respondents were decidedly more willing to make

generalizations about their behavior and to describe themselves abstractly using trait or attribute characterizations.

American students, in contrast to their Japanese counterparts, were more at home with the original TST because this test elicits the type of abstract, situation-free self-descriptions that form the core of the American, independent self-concept. Such abstract or global characterizations, according to Cousins (1989), reflect a claim of being a separate individual whose nature is not bound by a specific situation. When responding to the contextualized self-description questions, the American students qualified their descriptions as if to say "This is how I am at home, but don't assume this is the way I am everywhere." For American respondents, selfness, pure and simple, seems to transcend any particular interpersonal relationships.

Basic cognition in an interpersonal context. One's view of self can have an impact even on some evidently nonsocial cognitive activities. I. Liu (1986) described the emphasis that the Chinese place on being loyal and pious to their superiors and obedience to them, whether they are parents, employers, or government officials. He claimed that most Chinese adhere to a specific rule that states "If your superiors are present, or indirectly involved, in any situation, then you are to respect and obey them" (I. Liu, 1986, p. 78). The power and the influence of this rule appear to go considerably beyond that provided by the American admonition to "respect one's elders." I. Liu (1986) argued that the standard of self-regulation that involves the attention and consideration of others is so pervasive that it may actually constrain verbal and ideational fluency. He reasoned that taking account of others in every situation is often at odds with individual assertion or with attempts at innovation or unique expression. This means, for example, that in an unstructured creativity task in which the goal is to generate as many ideas as possible, Chinese subjects may be at a relative disadvantage. In a similar vein, T. Y. Liu and Hsu (1974) suggested that consideration of the rule "respect and obey others" uses up cognitive capacity that might otherwise be devoted to a task, and this may be the reason that Chinese norms for some creativity tasks fall below American norms.

Charting the differences between an independent self and interdependent self may also illuminate the controversy surrounding the debate between Bloom (1981, 1984) and Au (1983, 1984) over whether the Chinese can reason counterfactually (for a thorough review of this debate, see Moser, 1989). Bloom's studies (1981) on the counterfactual began when he asked Chinese-speaking subjects questions like "If the Hong Kong government were to pass a law requiring that all citizens born outside of Hong Kong make weekly reports of their activities to the police, how would you react?" Bloom noted that his respondents consistently answered "But the government hasn't," "It can't," or "It won't." Pressed to think about it anyway, the respondents became frustrated, claiming that it was unnatural or un-Chinese to think in this way. American and French respondents answered similar questions readily and without complaint. From this and subsequent studies, Bloom (1981, 1984) concluded that Chinese speakers "might be expected typically to encounter difficulty in maintaining a counterfactual perspective as an active point of orientation for guiding their cognitive activities" (1984, p. 21).

Au (1983) challenged Bloom's conclusions. Using different

stimulus materials and also different translations of the same stimulus materials, she reported that Chinese subjects performed no differently from their Western counterparts. The controversy continues, however, and many investigators remain unconvinced that the differences Bloom and others have observed in a large number of studies on counterfactual reasoning are solely a function of awkward or improper translations of stimulus materials.

Moser (1989), for example, discussed several of Bloom's (1981, 1984) findings that are not easily explained away. He described the following question that Bloom (1981, pp. 53–54) gave to Taiwanese, Hong Kong, and American subjects in their native language.

Everyone has his or her own method for teaching children to respect morality. Some people punish the child for immoral behavior, thereby leading him to fear the consequences of such behavior. Others reward the child for moral behavior, thereby leading him to want to behave morally. Even though both of these methods lead the child to respect morality, the first method can lead to some negative psychological consequences—it may lower the child's self-esteem.

According to the above paragraph, what do the two methods have in common? Please select only one answer.

- A. Both methods are useless.
- B. They have nothing in common, because the first leads to negative psychological consequences.
- C. Both can reach the goal of leading the child to respect morality.
- D. It is better to use the second.
- E. None of the above answers makes sense. (If you choose this answer, please explain.)

Bloom (1984) reported that 97% of American subjects responded C, but that only 55% of the Taiwanese and 65% of the Hong Kong respondents answered C. In explaining his results, he wrote:

Most of the remaining Chinese-speaking subjects chose D or E and then went on to explain, based on their own experience and often at great length and evidently after much reflection, why, for instance, the second method might be better, or why neither method works, or why both methods have to be used in conjunction with each other, or perhaps, why some other specified means is preferable. For the majority of these subjects, as was evident from later interviewing, it was not that they did not see the paragraph as stating that both methods lead the child to respect morality, but they felt that choosing that alternative and leaving it at that would be misleading since in their experience that response was untrue. As they saw it, what was expected, desired, must be at a minimum an answer reflecting their personal considered opinion, if not a more elaborated explanation of their own experiences relevant to the matter at hand. Why else would anyone ask the question? American subjects, by contrast, readily accepted the question as a purely "theoretical" exercise to be responded to according to the assumptions of the world it creates rather than in terms of their own experiences with the actual world. (Bloom, 1981, p. 54)

It is our view that the differences in response between the Americans and the Chinese may be related to whether the respondent has an independent or interdependent construal of the self. If one's actions are contingent on, determined by, or made meaningful by one's relationships and social situations, it is reasonable to expect that respondents with interdependent selves might focus on the motivation of the person administer-

ing the question and on the nature of their current relationship with this person. Consequently, in the process of responding, they might ask themselves, "What is being asked of me here? What does this question expect of me or require from me? What are potential ramifications of answering in one way or another in respect to my relationship with this person?" In Lebra's (1976) terms, what is "my proper place?" in this social interaction [i.e., me and the interviewer], and what are the "obligations attached to [it?]" (p. 67). To immediately respond to the question as a purely abstract or theoretical exercise would require ignoring the currently constituted social situation and the nature of one's relationship with the other. This, of course, can be done, but it does not mean that it will be easily, effortlessly, or automatically done. And this is especially true when the pragmatics of a given context appears to require just the opposite. It requires ignoring the other's perspective and a lack of attention to what the other must be thinking or feeling to ask such a question. One's actions are made meaningful by reference to a particular set of contextual factors. If these are ignored or changed, then the self that is determined by them changes also. Those with relatively unencumbered, self-contained, independent selves can readily, and without hesitation, entertain any of a thousand fanciful possible worlds because there are fewer personal consequences—the bounded, autonomous self remains essentially inviolate.

One important implication of this analysis is that people with interdependent selves should have no disadvantage in counterfactual reasoning if the intent of the questioner and the demand of the situation is simply to test the theoretical reasoning capacities of the person. One such situation would involve an aptitude test such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Indeed, on the quantitative portion of the SAT that requires substantial hypothetical and counterfactual reasoning (e.g., "If Tom walked 2 miles per hour, then how far will he have walked in 4 hours?"), both Taiwanese and Japanese children perform considerably better than their American peers (Stevenson et al., 1986).

It would appear important, therefore, to distinguish between competence and performance or between the presence of particular inference skills and the application of these skills in a particular pragmatic context (see also Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition, 1982). The discussion thus far implies that regardless of the nature of the self-system, most people with an adequate level of education possess the skills of hypothetical reasoning and the ability to think in a counterfactual fashion. Yet, the application of these skills in a particular situation varies considerably with the nature of the self-system. Some people may invoke these skills much more selectively. For those with interdependent selves, in contrast to those with independent selves, a relatively greater proportion of all inferences will be contingent on the pragmatic implications of a given situation, such as the perceived demands of the interviewer, the convention of the situation, and the rules of conversation.

Do styles of thinking and inference vary above and beyond those that derive from the pragmatic considerations of particular social situations? This question has yet to be more carefully addressed. However, given the tendency to see people, events, and objects as embedded within particular situations and relationships, the possibility seems genuine. Chiu (1972), for example, claimed that the reasoning of American children is charac-

terized by an inferential–categorical style, whereas the reasoning of Taiwanese Chinese subjects displays a relational–contextual style. When American children described why two objects of a set of three objects went together, they were likely to say “because they both live on a farm.” In contrast, Chinese children were more likely to display a relational–contextual style, putting two human figures together and claiming the two go together “because the mother takes care of the baby.” In the latter case, the emphasis is on synthesizing features into an organized whole. Bruner (1986) referred to such differences as arising from a paradigmatic versus a narrative mode of thought. In the former, the goal is abstraction and analyzing common features, in the latter, establishing a connection or an interdependence among the elements.

Consequences for Emotion

In psychology, emotion is often viewed as a universal set of largely prewired internal processes of self-maintenance and self-regulation (Buck, 1988; Darwin, 1896; Ekman, 1972; LeDoux, 1987). This does not mean, though, that emotional experience is also universal. On the contrary, as suggested by anthropologists Rosaldo (1984), Lutz (1988), and Solomon (1984), culture can play a central role in shaping emotional experience. As with cognition, if an emotional activity or reaction implicates the self, the outcome of this activity will depend on the nature of the self-system. And apart from the fear induced by bright lights and loud sounds, or the pleasure produced by a sweet taste, there are likely to be few emotions that do not directly implicate one’s view of the self. Thus, Rosaldo (1984) contended “feelings are not substances to be discovered in our blood but social practices organized by stories that we both enact and tell. They are structured by our forms of understanding” (p. 143), and we would add, specifically, by one’s construal of the self. In an extension of these ideas, Lutz (1988) argued that although most emotions are viewed as universally experienced “natural” human phenomena, emotions are anything but natural. Emotion, she contended, “can be viewed as cultural and interpersonal products of naming, justifying, and persuading by people in relationship to each other. Emotional meaning is then a social rather than an individual achievement—an emergent product of social life” (Lutz, 1988, p. 5).

Among psychologists, several cognitively oriented theorists of emotion have suggested that emotion is importantly implicated and embedded in an actual social situation as construed by the person (e.g., De Riviera, 1984; Roseman, 1984; Scherer, 1984). Accordingly, not only does the experience of an emotion depend on the current construal of the social situation (e.g., Frijda, Kuipers, & ter Schure, 1989; Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, & O’Connor, 1987; C. Smith & Ellsworth, 1987), but the experienced emotion in turn plays a pivotal role in changing and transforming the very nature of the social situation by allowing a new construal of the situation to emerge and, furthermore, by instigating the person to engage in certain actions. From the current perspective, construals of the social situation are constrained by, and largely derived from, construals of the self, others, and the relationship between the two. Thus, emotional experience should vary systematically with the construal of the self.

The present analysis suggests several ways in which emotional processes may differ with the nature of the self-system. First, the predominant eliciting conditions of many emotions may differ markedly according to one’s construal of the self. Second, and more important, which emotions will be expressed or experienced, and with what intensity and frequency, may also vary dramatically.

Ego-focused versus other-focused emotions. The emotions systematically vary according to the extent to which they follow from, and also foster and reinforce, an independent or an interdependent construal of the self. This is a dimension that has largely been ignored in the literature. Some emotions, such as anger, frustration, and pride, have the individual’s internal attributes (his or her own needs, goals, desires, or abilities) as the primary referent. Such emotions may be called *ego focused*. They result most typically from the blocking (e.g., “I was treated unfairly”), the satisfaction, or the confirmation (e.g., “I performed better than others”) of one’s internal attributes. Experiencing and expressing these emotions further highlights these self-defining, internal attributes and leads to additional attempts to assert them in public and confirm them in private. As a consequence, for those with independent selves to operate effectively, they have to be “experts” in the expression and experience of these emotions. They will manage the expression, and even the experience, of these emotions so that they maintain, affirm, and bolster the construal of the self as an autonomous entity. The public display of one’s own internal attributes can be at odds with the maintenance of interdependent, cooperative social interaction, and when unchecked can result in interpersonal confrontation, conflict, and possibly even overt aggression. These negative consequences, however, are not as severe as they might be for interdependent selves because the expression of one’s internal attributes is the culturally sanctioned task of the independent self. In short, the current analysis suggests that, in contrast to those with more interdependent selves, the ego-focused emotions will be more frequently expressed, and perhaps experienced, by those with independent selves.

In contrast to the ego-focused emotions, some other emotions, such as sympathy, feelings of interpersonal communion, and shame, have another person, rather than one’s internal attributes, as the primary referent. Such emotions may be called *other focused*. They typically result from being sensitive to the other, taking the perspective of the other, and attempting to promote interdependence. Experiencing these emotions highlights one’s interdependence, facilitates the reciprocal exchanges of well-intended actions, leads to further cooperative social behavior, and thus provides a significant form of self-validation for interdependent selves. As a consequence, for those with interdependent selves to operate effectively, they will have to be “experts” in the expression and experience of these emotions. They will manage the expression, and even the experience, of these emotions so that they maintain, affirm, and reinforce the construal of the self as an interdependent entity. The other-focused emotions often discourage the autonomous expression of one’s internal attributes and may lead to inhibition and ambivalence. Although among independent selves these consequences are experienced negatively (e.g., as timidity) and can, in fact, have a negative impact, they are tolerated, among interdependent selves, as the “business of living” (Kakar, 1978,

p. 34). Creating and maintaining a connection to others is the primary task of the interdependent self. In short, this analysis suggests that, in contrast to those with more independent selves, these other-focused emotions will be more frequently expressed and perhaps even experienced among those with interdependent selves.

Ego-focused emotions—emotions that foster and create independence. In a comparison of American and Japanese undergraduates, Matsumoto, Kudoh, Scherer, and Wallbott (1988) found that American subjects reported experiencing their emotions *longer* than did Japanese subjects, even though the two groups agreed in their ordering of which emotions were experienced longest (i.e., joy = sad > anger = guilt > fear = shame = disgust). Americans also reported feeling these emotions more intensely than the Japanese and reported more bodily symptoms (e.g., lump in throat, change in breathing, more expressive reactions, and more verbal reactions) than did the Japanese. Finally, when asked what they would do to cope with the consequences of various emotional events, significantly more of the Japanese students reported that no action was necessary.

One interpretation of this pattern of findings may assume that most of the emotions examined, with the exception of shame and possibly guilt, are what we have called ego-focused emotions. Thus, people with independent selves will attend more to these feelings and act on the basis of them, because these feelings are regarded as diagnostic of the independent self. Not to attend to one's inner feelings is often viewed as being inauthentic or even as denying the "real" self. In contrast, among those with more interdependent selves, one's inner feelings may be less important in determining one's consequent actions. Ego-focused feelings may be regarded as by-products of interpersonal relationships, but they may not be accorded privileged status as regulators of behavior. For those with interdependent selves, it is the interpersonal context that assumes priority over the inner attributes, such as private feelings. The latter may need to be controlled or de-emphasized so as to effectively fit into the interpersonal context.

Given these differences in emotional processes, people with divergent selves may develop very different assumptions about the etiology of emotional expressions for ego-focused emotions. For those with independent selves, emotional expressions may literally "express" or reveal the inner feelings such as anger, sadness, and fear. For those with interdependent selves, however, an emotional expression may be more often regarded as a public instrumental action that may or may not be related directly to the inner feelings. Consistent with this analysis, Matsumoto (1989), using data from 15 cultures, reported that individuals from hierarchical cultures (that we would classify as being generally interdependent; see Hofstede, 1980), when asked to rate the intensity of an angry, sad, or fearful emotion displayed by an individual in a photograph, gave lower intensity ratings than those from less hierarchical cultures. Notably, although the degree of hierarchy inherent in one's cultures was strongly related to the intensity ratings given to those emotions, it was not related to the correct identification of these emotions. The one exception to this finding was that people from more hierarchical cultures (those with more interdependent selves) were less likely to correctly identify emotional expressions of happiness. Among those with interdependent selves (often those from hier-

archical cultures), positive emotional expressions are most frequently used as public actions in the service of maintaining interpersonal harmony and, thus, are not regarded as particularly diagnostic of the actor's inner feelings or happiness.

For those with interdependent selves (composed primarily of relationships with others instead of inner attributes), it may be very important not to have intense experiences of ego-focused emotions, and this may be particularly true for negative emotions like anger. Anger may seriously threaten an interdependent self and thus may be highly dysfunctional. In fact, some anthropologists explicitly challenge the universalist view that all people experience the same negative emotions. Thus, in Tahiti, anger is highly feared, and various anthropological accounts claim that there is no expression of anger in this culture (see Levy, 1973; Solomon, 1984). It is not that these people have learned to inhibit or suppress their "real" anger but that they have learned the importance of attending to others, considering others, and being gentle in all situations, and as a consequence very little anger is elicited. In other words, the social reality is construed and actually constructed in such a way that it does not lend itself to the strong experience, let alone the outburst, of negative ego-focused emotions such as anger. The same is claimed for Ukta Eskimos (Briggs, 1970). They are said not to feel anger, not to express anger, and not even to talk about anger. The claim is that they do not show anger even in those circumstances that would certainly produce complete outrage in Americans. These Eskimos use a word that means "childish" to label angry behavior when it is observed in foreigners.

Among the Japanese, there is a similar concern with averting anger and avoiding a disruption of the harmony of the social situation. As a consequence, experiencing anger or receiving anger signals may be relatively rare events. A study by Miyake, Campos, Kagan, and Bradshaw (1986), which compared Japanese and American infants of 11 months of age, provides suggestive evidence for this claim. These investigators showed each infant an interesting toy and paired it with a mother's vocal expression of joy, anger, or fear. Then they measured the child's latency to resume locomotion toward the toy after the mother's utterance. The two groups of infants did not differ in their reactions to expressions of joy or fear. But, after an angry vocal expression of the mother, there was a striking difference between the two groups. The Japanese children resumed locomotion toward the toy after 48 s, American children after only 18 s. It may be that the Japanese children are relatively more traumatized by their mother's anger expressions because these are such rare events.

Notably, in the West, a controversy exists about the need, the desirability, and the importance of expressing one's anger. Assuming a hydraulic model of anger, some argue that it is necessary to express anger so as to avoid boiling over or blowing up at a later point (Pennebaker, 1982). Others argue for the importance of controlling one's anger so as not to risk losing control. No such controversy appears to exist among those in predominantly interdependent cultures, where a seemingly unchallenged norm directs individuals to restrain their inner feelings and particularly the overt expression of these feelings. Indeed, many interdependent cultures have well-developed strategies that render them expert at avoiding the expression of negative emotions. For example, Bond (1986) reported that in China

discussions have a clear structure that is explicitly designed to prevent conflict from erupting. To begin with, discussants present their common problems and identify all the constraints that all the participants must meet. Only then do they state their own views. To Westerners, such a pattern appears as vague, beating around the bush, and not getting to the heart of the matter, but it is part of a carefully executed strategy of avoiding conflict, and thus perhaps the experience of negative emotions. Bond, in fact, noted that among school children in Hong Kong and Taiwan, there is a tendency to cooperate with opponents even in a competitive reward structure and to rate future opponents more positively than others who will not be opponents (Li, Cheung, & Kau, 1979, 1982).

In a recent cross-cultural comparison of the eliciting conditions of several emotions, Matsumoto et al. (1988) also found that Japanese respondents appear to be avoiding anger in close relations. Specifically, for the Japanese, closely related others were rarely implicated in the experience of anger. The Japanese reported feeling anger primarily in the presence of strangers. It thus appears that not only the expression but also the experience of such an ego-focused emotion as anger is effectively averted within an interdependent structure of relation. When anger arises, it happens outside of the existing interdependence, as in confrontation with out-groups (e.g., Samurai warfare in feudal Japan). In contrast, Americans and Western Europeans report experiencing anger primarily in the presence of closely related others. This is not surprising, given that expressing and experiencing ego-focused, even negative emotions, is one viable way to assert and affirm the status of the self as an independent entity. Consistent with this analysis, Stipek, Weiner, and Li (1989) found that when describing situations that produce anger, Chinese subjects were much more likely than American subjects to describe a situation that happened to someone else ("a guy on a bus did not give up a seat to an old woman"). For Americans, the major stimulus to anger was the situation where the individual was the victim ("a friend broke a promise to me").

Other emotions, such as pride or guilt, may also differ according to the nature of the mediating self-system. As with anger, these expressions may be avoided, or they will assume a somewhat different form. For example, if defined as being proud of one's own individual attributes, *pride* may mean hubris, and its expression may need to be avoided for those with interdependent selves.⁴ Consistent with the idea that pride in one's own performance may be inhibited among those with interdependent selves, Stipek et al. (1989) found that the Chinese were decidedly less likely to claim their own successful efforts as a source of pride than were Americans. These investigators also reported that the emotion of guilt takes on somewhat different connotations as well. Among those with independent selves, who are more likely to hold stable, cross-situational beliefs and to consider them self-definitional, "violating a law or a moral principle" was the most frequently mentioned cause of guilt. Among Chinese, however, the most commonly reported source of guilt was "hurting others psychologically."

Other-focused emotions—emotions that create and foster interdependence. Those with interdependent selves may inhibit the experience, or at least the expression, of some ego-focused emotions, but they may have a heightened capacity for the experience

and expression of those emotions that derive primarily from focusing on the other. In Japan and China, for example, there is a much greater incidence of cosleeping, cobathing, and physical contact between mother and child than is typically true in most Western countries. The traditional Japanese mother carries the child on her back for a large part of the first 2 years. Lebra (1976) claimed that Japanese mothers teach their children to fear the pain of loneliness, whereas Westerners teach children how to be alone. Japanese and Chinese socialization practices may help the child develop an interdependent self in the first place, and at the same time, the capacity for the experience of a relatively greater variety of other-focused emotions.

The greater interdependence that results between mothers and their children in Japan is reflected in the finding that the classification of infants according to the nature of their attachments to their mothers (i.e., secure, ambivalent, and avoidant) departs markedly from the pattern typically observed in Western data. Specifically, many more Japanese infants are classified as "ambivalently attached" because they seem to experience decidedly more stress following a brief separation from the mother than do American infants (Ainsworth, Bell, & Stayton, 1974; Miyake, Chen, & Campos, in press). This finding also indicates that a paradigm like the typical stranger situation is inherently linked to an independent view of self and, thus, may not be appropriate for gauging attachment in non-Western cultures.

In Japan, socialization practices that foster an intense closeness between mother and child give rise to the feeling of *amae*. *Amae* is typically defined as the sense of, or the accompanying hope for, being lovingly cared for and involves depending on and presuming another's indulgence. Although, as detailed by Kumagai and Kumagai (1985), the exact meaning of *amae* is open to some debate, it is clear that "the other" is essential. When a person experiences *amae*, she or he "feels the freedom to do whatever he or she wills" while being accepted and cared for by others with few strings attached. Some say *amae* is a type of complete acceptance, a phenomenal replication of the ideal mother-infant bond (L. T. Doi, 1973). From our point of view, experiencing *amae* with respect to another person may be inherent in the formation and maintenance of a mutually reciprocal,

⁴ In interdependent cultures, if pride is overtly expressed, it may often be directed to a collective, of which the self is a part. For example, the Chinese anthropologist Hsu (1975) described an event in which a Japanese company official showed a "gesture of devotion to his office superior which I had never experienced in the Western world" (p. 215). After talking to Hsu in his own small, plain office, the employee said, "Let me show you the office of my section chief." He then took Hsu to a large, elaborately furnished office, pointed to a large desk, and said proudly, "This is the desk of my section chief." Hsu's account makes clear that this was not veiled cynicism from the employee, just complete, unabashed pride in the accomplishments of his boss. Americans with independent self-systems can perhaps understand this type of pride in another's accomplishment if the other involved is one's relative, but it is typically unfathomable in the case of one's immediate supervisor. Without an understanding of the close alignment and interdependence that occurs between employees and supervisors, the emotion experienced by the employee that prompted him to show off his supervisor's office would be incomprehensible.

interdependent relationship with another person. If the other person accepts one's *amae*, the reciprocal relationship is symbolically completed, leading to a significant form of self-validation. If, however, the other person rejects one's *amae*, the relationship will be in jeopardy.

For the purpose of comparing indigenous feelings, such as *amae*, with the more universal ones, such as anger and happiness, Kitayama and Markus (1990) used a multidimensional scaling technique, which allows the identification of the dimensions that individuals habitually or spontaneously use when they make judgments about similarities among various emotions. Recent studies have demonstrated that people are capable of distinguishing among various emotions on as many as seven or eight cognitive dimensions (Mauro, Sato, & Tucker, 1989; C. Smith & Ellsworth, 1987). In these studies, however, the dimensions have been specified a priori by the experimenter and given explicitly to the respondents to use in describing the emotions. When the dimensions are not provided but allowed to emerge in multidimensional scaling studies, only two dimensions are typically identified: activation (or excitement) and pleasantness (e.g., Russell, 1980). And it appears that most Western emotions can be readily located on a circumplex plane defined by these two dimensions. Thus, although people are capable of discriminating among emotions on a substantial number of dimensions, they habitually categorize the emotions only on the dimensions of activation and pleasantness.

More recently, Russell (1983; Russell, Lewicka, & Niit, 1989) applied the same technique to several non-Western cultural groups and replicated the American findings. He thus argued that the lay understanding of emotional experience may indeed be universal. Russell used, however, only those terms that have clear counterparts in the non-Western groups he studied. He did not include any emotion terms indigenous to the non-Western groups such as *amae*. It is possible that once terms for such indigenous feeling states are included in the analysis, a new dimension, or dimensions, may emerge. To explore this possibility, Kitayama and Markus (1990) sampled 20 emotions from the Japanese language. Half of these terms were also found in English and were sampled so that they evenly covered the circumplex space identified by Russell. The remaining terms were those indigenous to Japanese culture and those that presuppose the presence of others. Some (e.g., *fureai* [feeling a close connection with someone else]) refer primarily to a positive association with others (rather than events that happen within the individual, such as success), whereas others refer to interpersonal isolation and conflict (e.g., *oime* [the feeling of indebtedness]). Japanese college students rated the similarity between 2 emotions for each of the 190 pairs that could be made from the 20 emotions. The mean perceived similarity ratings for these pairs were then submitted to a multidimensional scaling.

Replicating past research, Kitayama and Markus (1990) identified two dimensions that closely correspond to the activation and the pleasantness dimensions. In addition, however, a new dimension emerged. This third dimension represented the extent to which the person is engaged in or disengaged from an interpersonal relationship. At the interpersonal engagement end were what we have called other-focused emotions, such as shame, *fureai* [feeling a close connection with somebody else], and *shitashimi* [feeling familiar], whereas at the disengagement

end were found some ego-centered emotions, such as pride and *tukeagari* [feeling puffed up with the sense of self-importance], along with sleepiness and boredom. This interpersonal engagement-disengagement dimension also differentiated between otherwise very similar emotions. Thus, pride and elation were equally positive and high in activation, yet pride was perceived as considerably less interpersonally engaged than elation. Furthermore, anger and shame were very similar in terms of activation and pleasantness, but shame was much higher than anger in the extent of interpersonal engagement.

More important, this study located the indigenous emotions within the three-dimensional structure, permitting us to understand the nature of these emotions in reference to more universal emotions. For instance, *amae* was low in activation, and neither positive nor negative, fairly akin to sleepiness, except that the former was much more interpersonally engaged than the latter. This may indicate the passive nature of *amae*, involving the hopeful expectation of another person's favor and indulgence without any active, agentic solicitation of them. Completion of *amae* depends entirely on the other person, and, therefore, *amae* is uniquely ambivalent in its connotation on the pleasantness dimension. Another indigenous emotion, *oime*, involves the feeling of being psychologically indebted to somebody else. *Oime* was located at the very negative end of the pleasantness dimension, perceived even more negatively than such universal negative emotions as anger and sadness. The extreme unpleasantness of *oime* suggests the aversive nature of unmet obligations and the press of the need to fulfill one's obligations to others and to return favors. It also underscores the significance of balanced and harmonious relationships in the emotional life of those with interdependent selves.

The finding that the Japanese respondents clearly and reliably discriminated between ego-focused emotions and other-focused emotions on the dimension of interpersonal engagement versus disengagement strongly suggests the validity of this distinction as an essential component of emotional experience at least among Japanese and, perhaps, among people from other cultures as well. In a more recent study, Kitayama and Markus (1990) further tested whether this theoretical dimension of emotion also underlies and even determines how frequently people may experience various emotions and whether the frequency of emotional experience varies with their dominant construal of self as independent or interdependent.

Kitayama and Markus (1990) first sampled three emotions common in Japanese culture that were expected to fall under one of the five types theoretically derived from the current analysis. These types are listed in Table 2. Ego-focused positive emotions (*yuetukan* [feeling superior], pride, and *tukeagari* [feeling puffed up]) are those that are most typically associated with the confirmation or fulfillment of one's internal attributes, such as abilities, desires, and needs. Ego-focused, negative emotions (anger, *futekusare* [sulky feeling], and *yokyufuman* [frustration]) occur primarily when such internal attributes are blocked or threatened. Also included were those correspondingly positive or negative emotions associated with the maintenance or enhancement of interdependence. Thus, three emotions are commonly associated with the affirmation or the completion of interdependent relationships (*fureai* [feeling of connection with someone], *shitashimi* [feeling of familiarity to

someone], *sonkei* [feeling of respect for someone]) and thus were designated as positive and other focused. In contrast, some negative emotions are typically derived from one's failure to offer or reciprocate favors to relevant others and thus to fully participate in the relationship. They are thus closely linked to disturbance to interdependence and a consequent desire to repair the disturbance. They include *oime* [feeling of indebtedness], shame, and guilt. Finally, as noted before, interdependent selves are likely to tolerate ambivalence regarding one's interdependent status with some relevant others. Interestingly, some emotions are uniquely linked to this interpersonal ambivalence. Three such emotions (*amae* [hopeful expectation of others' indulgence or favor], *tanomi* [feeling like relying on someone], and *sugari* [feeling like leaning on someone]) were examined.

Japanese respondents reported how frequently they experienced each of the 15 emotions listed in Table 2. The five-factor structure implied by the theoretical designation of the 15 emotions to one of the five types was verified in a confirmatory factor analysis (Jöreskog, 1969). A correlation matrix for the five types is given in Table 3. There was a strong correlation between positive and negative ego-focused emotions, as may be expected if both of them are derived from and also foster and reinforce an independent construal of self. Furthermore, these ego-focused emotions are clearly distinct from the other-focused emotions. Thus, neither positive nor negative ego-focused emotions had any significant relationship with other-focused, positive emotions. Interestingly, however, these ego-focused emotions were significantly associated with the ambivalent and, to a larger extent, with the negative other-focused emotions, suggesting that the experience of ego-focused emotions, either positive or negative, is readily accompanied, at least in Japanese culture, by the felt disturbance of a relationship and, thus, by a strong need to restore harmony. Alternatively, being embedded

Table 2
The 15 Emotions and Their Meaning

Emotion type (factor)	Emotion	Meaning	
Ego focused	Positive	<i>Yuetukan</i>	Feeling superior
		<i>Tukeagari</i> Pride	Feeling puffed up with the sense of self-importance
	Negative	<i>Futekusare</i> <i>Yokyufuman</i>	Sulky feeling Frustration
		Anger	
Other focused	Positive	<i>Fureai</i>	Feeling of connection with someone
		<i>Shitashimi</i>	Feeling of familiarity to someone
		<i>Sonkei</i>	Feeling of respect for someone
	Ambivalent	<i>Amae</i>	Hopeful expectation of someone's indulgence and favor
		<i>Tanomi</i>	Feeling like relying on someone
<i>Sugari</i>		Feeling like leaning on someone	
Negative	<i>Oime</i> Shame Guilt	Feeling of indebtedness	

Table 3
Correlations Among the Five Types of Emotions

Emotion	1	2	3	4	5
Ego focused					
1. Positive	—				
2. Negative	.70	—			
Other focused					
3. Positive	-.05	-.18	—		
4. Ambivalent	.35	.63	.40	—	
5. Negative	.49	.69	.18	.43	—

in a highly reciprocal relation and feeling obliged to contribute to the relationship may sometimes be perceived as a burden or pressure, hence rendering salient some of the ego-focused emotions.⁵ Finally, the three types of other-focused emotions (positive, ambivalent, and negative) are all positively correlated (see Table 3).

Can the frequency of experiencing the five types of emotions be predicted by one's predominant construal of self as independent or interdependent? To address this issue, Kitayama and Markus (1990) also asked the same respondents eight questions designed to measure the extent to which they endorse an independent construal of self (e.g., "Are you a kind of person who holds on to one's own view?"; "How important is it to hold on to one's own view?") and eight corresponding questions designed to measure the extent to which they endorse an interdependent construal of self (e.g., "Are you the kind of person who never forgets a favor provided by others?"; "How important is it to never forget a favor provided by others?"). Consistent with the current analysis, the frequency of experiencing both positive and negative ego-focused emotions significantly increased with the independent construal of self. They were, however, either negatively related (for positive emotions) or unrelated (for negative emotions) to the interdependent construal of self. In marked contrast to this pattern for the ego-focused emotions, all three types of other-focused emotions were significantly more frequently experienced by those with more interdependent construals of self. These emotions, however, were either unrelated (for positive and negative other-focused emotions) or negatively related (for the ambivalent emotions) to the independent construal of self.

Consequences for Motivation

The study of motivation centers on the question of why people initiate, terminate, and persist in specific actions in particular circumstances (e.g., Atkinson, 1958; Mook, 1986). The answer given to this question in the West usually involves some type of internal, individually rooted need or motive—the motive to enhance one's self-esteem, the motive to achieve, the motive to affiliate, the motive to avoid cognitive conflict, or the motive to self-actualize. These motives are assumed to be part

⁵ On these occasions, perhaps interdependent selves are most clearly aware of their internal attributes. Such awareness (the *honne* in Japanese) may be typically accompanied by a situational demand (the *tatemae* in Japanese).

of the unique, internal core of a person's self-system. But what is the nature of motivation for those with interdependent self-systems? What form does it take? How does the ever-present need to attend to others and to gain their acceptance influence the form of these internal, individual motives? Are the motives identified in Western psychology the universal instigators of behavior?

As with cognition and emotion, those motivational processes that implicate the self depend on the nature of the self-system. If we assume that *others* will be relatively more focal in the motivation of those with interdependent selves, various implications follow. First, those with interdependent selves should express, and perhaps experience, more of those motives that are social or that have the other as referent. Second, as we have noted previously, for those with independent selves, agency will be experienced as an effort to express one's internal needs, rights, and capacities and to withstand undue social pressure, whereas among those with interdependent selves, agency will be experienced as an effort to be receptive to others, to adjust to their needs and demands, and to restrain one's own inner needs or desires. Motives related to the need to express one's agency or competency (e.g., the achievement motive) are typically assumed to be common to all individuals. Yet among those with interdependent selves, striving to excel or accomplish challenging tasks may not be in the service of achieving separateness and autonomy, as is usually assumed for those with independent selves, but instead in the service of more fully realizing one's connectedness or interdependence. Third, motives that are linked to the self, such as self-enhancement, self-consistency, self-verification, self-affirmation, and self-actualization, may assume a very different form depending on the nature of the self that is being enhanced, verified, or actualized.

More interdependent motives? Murray (1938) assembled what he believed to be a comprehensive list of human motivations (see also Hilgard, 1953, 1987). Many of these motives seem most relevant for those with independent selves, but the list also includes some motives that should have particular salience for those with interdependent selves. These include *deference*, the need to admire and willingly follow a superior, to serve gladly; *similance*, the need to imitate or emulate others, to agree and believe; *affiliation*, the need to form friendships and associations; *nurturance*, the need to nourish, aid, or protect another; *succorance*, the need to seek aid, projection, or sympathy and to be dependent; *avoidance of blame*, the need to avoid blame, ostracism, or punishment by inhibiting unconventional impulses and to be well behaved and obey the law; and *abasement*, the need to comply and accept punishment or self-deprecation. Many of the social motives suggested by Murray seem to capture the types of strivings that should characterize those with interdependent selves. When the cultural imperative is to seek connectedness, social integration, and interpersonal harmony, most of these motives should be typically experienced by the individual as positive and desirable. In contrast, when the cultural task centers on maintaining independence and separateness, holding any of these motives too strongly (e.g., *similance* and *succorance*) often indicates a weak or troubled personality. Thus, Murray, for example, gave the need to comply the pejorative label of *need for abasement*.

The limited evidence for the idea that those with interdepen-

dent selves will experience more of the social or interdependent motives comes from Bond (1986), who summarized several studies exploring the motive patterns of the Chinese (see also McClelland, 1961). He found that the level of various motives are a fairly direct reflection of the collectivist or group-oriented tradition of the Chinese. Thus, Chinese respondents show relatively high levels of need for abasement, socially oriented achievement, change, endurance, intraception, nurturance, and order; moderate levels of autonomy, deference, and dominance, and succorance; and low levels of individually oriented achievement, affiliation, aggression, exhibition, heterosexuality, and power. The socially oriented achievement motive has, as its ultimate goal, a desire to meet expectations of significant others, whereas the individually oriented achievement motive implies a striving for achievement for its own sake (discussed later). Hwang (1976) found, however, that with continuing rapid social change in China, there is an increase in levels of exhibition, autonomy, intraception, and heterosexuality and a decrease in levels of deference, order, nurturance, and endurance. Interestingly, it appears that those with interdependent selves do not show a greater need for affiliation, as might at first be thought, but instead they exhibit higher levels of those motives that reflect a concern with adjusting oneself so as to occupy a proper place with respect to others.

The motive for cognitive consistency. Another powerful motive assumed to fuel the behavior of Westerners is the need to avoid or reduce cognitive conflict or dissonance. Classic dissonance occurs when one says one thing publicly and feels another, quite contrasting thing privately (Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959). And such a configuration produces particular difficulty when the private attitude is a self-defining one (Greenwald, 1980). One might argue, however, that the state of cognitive dissonance arising from counterattitudinal behavior is not likely to be experienced by those with interdependent selves. First it is the individuals' roles, statuses, or positions, and the commitments, obligations, and responsibilities they confer, that are the constituents of the self, and in that sense they are self-defining. As outlined in Figure 1, one's internal attributes (e.g., private attitudes or opinions) are not regarded as the significant attributes of the self. Furthermore, one's private feelings are to be regulated in accordance with the requirements of the situation. Restraint over the inner self is assigned a much higher value than is expression of the inner self. Thus, Kiefer (1976) wrote:

Although Japanese are often acutely aware of discrepancies between inner feelings and outward role demands, they think of the latter . . . as the really important center of the self. Regarding feelings as highly idiosyncratic and hard to control, and therefore less reliable as sources of self-respect than statuses and roles, the Japanese tends to include within the boundaries of the concept of self much of the quality of the intimate social group of which he is a member. (R. J. Smith, 1985, p. 28)

More recently, T. Doi (1986) has argued that Americans are decidedly more concerned with consistency between feelings and actions than are the Japanese. In Japan there is a virtue in controlling the expression of one's innermost feelings; no virtue accrues from expressing them. Triandis (1989), for example, reported a study by Iwao (1988), who gave respondents a series of scenarios and asked them to judge which responses would be

appropriate for the person described in the scenario. In one scenario, the daughter brings home a person from another race. One of the possible responses given was "thought that he would never allow them to marry but told them he was in favor of their marriage." This answer was rated as best by only 2% of Americans. In sharp contrast, however, it was rated as best by 44% of the Japanese. Among the Americans, 48% thought it was the worst response, whereas only 7% of the Japanese rated it as the worst.

Common motives in an interdependent context. Of those motives assumed by Murray (1938) and Hilgard (1987) to be universally significant, the achievement motive is the most well-documented example. Various defined as the desire to overcome obstacles, to exert power, to do something as well as possible, or to master, manipulate, or organize physical objects, human beings, or ideas (Hall & Lindzey, 1957; Hilgard, 1987), the achievement motive is thought to be a fundamental human characteristic. However, the drive for achievement in an interdependent context may have some very different aspects from the motive for achievement in an independent cultural context. In a recent analysis of the content and structure of values in seven cultures (i.e., Australia, United States, Spain, Finland, Germany, Israel, and Hong Kong), S. H. Schwartz and Bilsky (1990) found a conflict between values that emphasize independent thought and action and those that emphasize restraining of one's own impulses in all samples except Hong Kong. In the Hong Kong sample, self-restraint appeared to be quite compatible with independent thought and action.

Although all individuals may have some desire for agency or control over their own actions, this agency can be accomplished in various ways (Maehr, 1974). Pushing oneself ahead of others and actively seeking success does not appear to be universally valued. An illuminating analysis of control motivation by Weisz et al. (1984) suggests that acting on the world and altering the world may not be the control strategy of choice for all people. Instead, people in many Asian cultures appear to use what is termed *secondary control*. This involves accommodating to existing realities "sometimes via acts that limit individualism and personal autonomy but that enhance perceived alignment or goodness of fit with people, objects, or circumstances" (Weisz et al., 1984, p. 956).

The American notion of achievement involves breaking away, pushing ahead, and gaining control over surroundings. How do selves concerned with fitting in and accommodating to existing realities achieve? The question of achievement motive in an interdependent context is all the more compelling because many of the most collective societies of the world currently appear extremely preoccupied with achievement. In an analysis of Chinese children's stories, for example, Blumenthal (1977) found that the most common behavior was achievement-oriented in nature, the second most frequent was altruism, and the third was social and personal responsibility. Among junior high school students in Japan, the motto "pass with four, fail with five" is now common. This refers to the fact that if one is sleeping 5 hr a night, he or she is probably not studying hard enough to pass exams. It appears, however, that this strong emphasis on achievement motivation is, in part, other motivated. It is motivated by a desire to fit into the group and to meet the expectations of the group. In the child's case,

the group is the family, and the child's mission is to enhance the social standing of the family by gaining admission to one of the top universities. The motive to achieve need not necessarily reflect a motive to achieve for "me" personally (Maehr & Nicholls, 1980). It can have social or collective origins. Children are striving to achieve the goals of others, such as family and teachers, with whom they are reciprocally interdependent. Consistent with this notion, Yu (1974) reported that the strength of achievement motivation was correlated positively with familism and filial piety. Striving for excellence necessarily involves some distancing or separating from some others, but the separation allows the child to properly accomplish the task of the student and thus to fulfill his or her role within the family.

Several studies by Yang (Yang, 1982/1985; Yang & Liang, 1973) have sought to distinguish between two types of achievement motivation: individually oriented and socially oriented. Individually oriented achievement motivation is viewed as a functionally autonomous desire in which the individual strives to achieve some internalized standards of excellence. In contrast, socially oriented achievement motivation is not functionally autonomous; rather, individuals persevere to fulfill the expectations of significant others, typically the family (Bond, 1986). With socially oriented achievement, when the specific achievement goal is met, the intense achievement motivation formerly evident may appear to vanish. This analysis indeed fits many anecdotal reports indicating that once admitted into the college of their choice, or hired by their preferred company, Japanese high school and college students are no longer particularly interested in achievement.

Once a new goal is established, of course, the socially oriented achievement motive may be easily reengaged by any figure who can serve as a symbolic substitute for family members. A longitudinal survey conducted in Japan over the last 30 years (Hayashi, 1988) has repeatedly shown that approximately 80% of the Japanese, regardless of sex, age, education, and social class, prefer a manager with a fatherlike character (who demands a lot more than officially required in the work, yet extends his care for the person's personal matters even outside of work) over a more Western-type, task-oriented manager (who separates personal matters from work and demands as much as, yet no more than, officially required). In a large number of surveys and experiments, Misumi and his colleagues (summarized in Misumi, 1985) have demonstrated that in Japan a leader who is both demanding and personally caring is most effective regardless of the task or the population examined (e.g., college students, white-collar workers, and blue-collar workers). This is in marked contrast to the major conclusion reached in the leadership literature in the United States, which suggests that leadership effectiveness depends on a complex interaction between characteristics of leaders, characteristics of followers, and, most important, on the nature of the task (Fiedler, 1978; Hollander, 1985). According to our analysis, in Japan as well as in other interdependent cultures, it is the personal attachment to the leader and the ensuing obligation to him or her that most strongly motivate people to do their work. Motivation mediated by a strong personal relationship, then, is unlikely to be contingent on factors associated with the specific task or environment.

The self-related motives. The motive to maintain a positive view of the self is one motive that psychologists since James (1890) through Greenwald (1980), Harter (1983), Steele (1988), and Tesser (1986) have assumed to be universally true. What constitutes a positive view of self depends, however, on one's construal of the self.⁶ For those with independent selves, feeling good about oneself typically requires fulfilling the tasks associated with being an independent self; that is, being unique, expressing one's inner attributes, and asserting oneself (see Table 1). Although not uncontested, a reasonable empirical generalization from the research on self-related motives is that Westerners, particularly those with high self-esteem, try to enhance themselves whenever possible, and this tendency results in a pervasive self-serving bias. Studies with American subjects demonstrate that they take credit for their successes, explain away their failures, and in various ways try to aggrandize themselves (e.g., Gilovich, 1983; Lau, 1984; J. B. Miller, 1986; Whitley & Frieze, 1985; Zuckerman, 1979). Maintaining self-esteem requires separating oneself from others and seeing oneself as different from and better than others. At 4 years old, children already show a clear self-favorability bias (Harter, 1989). When asked to compare themselves with others with respect to intelligence, friendliness, or any skill, most children think they are better than most others. Wylie (1979) reported that American adults also consider themselves to be more intelligent and more attractive than average, and Myers (1987), in a national survey of American students, found that 70% of students believe they are above average in leadership ability, and with respect to the "ability to get along with others," 0% thought they were below average, 60% thought they were in the top 10%, and 25% thought they were in the top 1%. Moreover, as documented by Taylor and Brown (1988), among Americans, most people feel that they are more in control and have more positive expectations for themselves and their future than they have for other people. This tendency toward false uniqueness presumably derives from efforts of those with independent selves to maintain a positive view of themselves.

The motive to maintain a positive view of the self may assume a somewhat different form, however, for those with interdependent selves. Feeling good about one's interdependent self may not be achieved through enhancement of the value attached to one's internal attributes and the attendant self-serving bias. Instead, positive feelings about the self should derive from fulfilling the tasks associated with being interdependent with relevant others: belonging, fitting in, occupying one's proper place, engaging in appropriate action, promoting others' goals, and maintaining harmony (see Table 1). This follows for at least two reasons. First, people with interdependent selves are likely to be motivated by other-focused emotions, such as empathy and *oime* (i.e., the feeling of psychological indebtedness) and to act in accordance with the perceived needs and desires of their partners in social relations, and this may produce a social dynamic where individuals strive to enhance each other's self-esteem. In such reciprocal relationships, *other* enhancement could be more instrumental to self-enhancement than direct attempts at self-enhancement because the latter are likely to isolate the individual from the network of reciprocal relationships. Second, self-esteem among those with interdependent selves may be based in some large measure on their capacity to

exert control over their own desires and needs so that they can indeed belong and fit in. As noted earlier (see also Weisz et al., 1984), such self-control and self-restraint are instrumental to the ability to flexibly adjust to social contingencies and thus are highly valued in interdependent cultures. Indeed, self-restraint together with flexible adjustment is often regarded as an important sign of the moral maturity of the person.

A developmental study by Yoshida, Kojo, and Kaku (1982, Study 1) has documented that self-enhancement or self-promotion are perceived quite negatively in Japanese culture. Second (7–8 years old), third (8–9 years old), and fifth graders (10–11 years old) at a Japanese elementary school were asked how their classmates (including themselves) would evaluate a hypothetical peer who commented on his own superb athletic performance either in a modest, self-restrained way or in a self-enhancing way. The evaluation was solicited on the dimension of personality ("Is he a good person?") and on the dimension of ability ("Is he good at [the relevant athletic domain]?"). As shown in Figure 4A, the personality of the modest peer was perceived much more positively than was that of the self-enhancing peer. Furthermore, this difference became more pronounced as the age (grade) of the respondents increased. A similar finding also has been reported for Chinese college students in Hong Kong by Bond, Leung, and Wan (1982), who found that individuals giving humble or self-effacing attributions following success were liked better than those giving self-enhancing attribution. The most intriguing aspect of the Yoshida et al. (1982) study, however, is their finding for the ability evaluation, which showed a complete crossover interaction (see Figure 4B). Whereas the second graders took the comment of the peer at face value, perceiving the self-enhancing peer to be more competent than the modest peer, this trend disappeared for the third graders, and then completely reversed for the fifth graders. Thus, the fifth graders perceived that the modest peer was more competent than the self-enhancing peer. These findings indicate that as children are socialized in an interdependent cultural context, they begin to appreciate the cultural value of self-restraint and, furthermore, to believe in a positive association between self-restraint and other favorable attributes of the person not only in the social, emotional domains but also in the domains of ability and competence. Although it is certainly possible for those with independent selves to overdo their self-enhancement (see Schlenker & Leary, 1982), for the most part, the American prescription is to confidently display and express one's strengths, and those who do so are evaluated positively (e.g., Greenwald, 1980; Mullen & Riordan, 1988).

Self- or other-serving bias. Given the appreciation that those with interdependent selves have for self-restraint and self-control, the various self-enhancing biases that are common in Western culture may not be prevalent in many Asian cultures. In an initial examination of potential cultural variation in the tendency to see oneself as different from others, Markus and Kitayama (in press) administered questionnaires containing a series of false-uniqueness items to large classes of Japanese college students in Japan and to large classes of American college

⁶ For a compelling analysis of how self-esteem is related to culture, see Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski (in press).

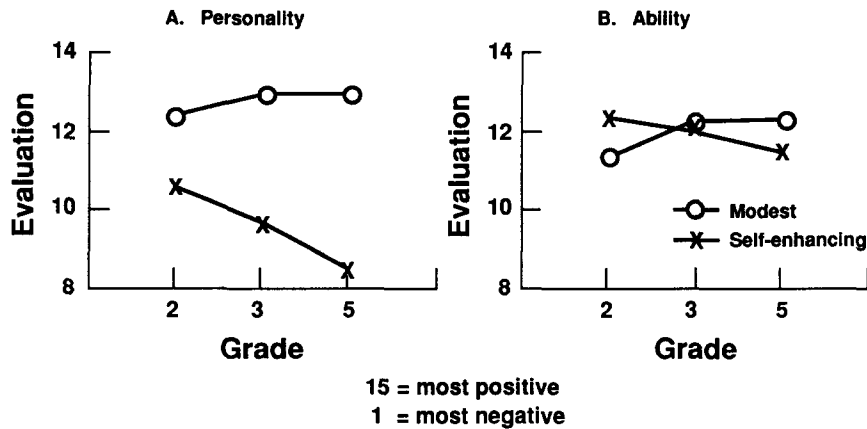


Figure 4. Mean evaluations by second, third, and fifth graders. (A: Personality of target person. B: Ability of target person. Drawn from results reported by Yoshida, Kojo, and Kaku, 1982)

students in the United States. In both cases, the classes were chosen to be representative of university students as a whole. They asked a series of questions of the form "What proportion of students in this university have higher intellectual abilities than yourself?" There were marked differences between the Japanese and the American students in their estimations of their own uniqueness; the Americans displayed significantly more false uniqueness than the Japanese. American students assumed that only 30% of people on average would be better than themselves on various traits and abilities (e.g., memory, athletic ability, independence, and sympathy), whereas the Japanese students showed almost no evidence of this false uniqueness. In most cases, the Japanese estimated that about 50% of students would be better than they were or have more of a given trait or ability. This is, of course, the expected finding if a representative sample of college students were evaluating themselves in a relatively nonbiased manner.

In a recent series of studies conducted in Japan with Japanese college students, Takata (1987) showed that there is no self-enhancing bias in social comparison. In fact, he found just the opposite—a strong bias in the self-effacing direction. Participants performed several anagram problems that were alleged to measure memory ability. After completion of the task, the participants were presented with their actual performance on some of the trials and also the performance of another person picked at random from the pool of subjects who had allegedly completed the study. The direction of the self–other difference was manipulated to be either favorable or unfavorable to the subject. The dependent measures were collected in a private situation to minimize self-presentational concerns. Furthermore, because it was considered possible that the subjects might still believe they had a chance of seeing the other person afterward, in a followup study the "other person" was replaced with a computer program that allegedly simulated the task performance of the average college student.

Several studies (e.g., Goethals, 1989; Marks, 1984; Wylie, 1979) reveal that with respect to abilities, Americans typically give themselves higher ratings than they give to others. Thus, when a comparison with another is unfavorable to the self, the self-enhancement hypothesis predicts that Americans should

show little confidence in this estimate of their ability and seek further information. This, in fact, was the case in an American study by J. M. Schwartz and Smith (1976), which used a procedure very similar to Takata's (1987). When subjects performed poorly relative to another person, they had very little confidence in their own score. These American data contrast sharply with the Japanese data. Takata's study shows a tendency exactly the opposite of self-enhancement. Furthermore, the pattern did not depend on whether the comparison was made with another person or with the computer program. The Japanese subjects felt greater confidence in their self-evaluation and were less interested in seeking further information when they had unfavorable self-evaluations than when they had favorable ones. Similarly, Wada (1988) also reported that Japanese college students were convinced of their level of ability on a novel, information-integration task after failure feedback, but not after success feedback. These data suggest what might be called a modesty bias or an other-enhancement bias in social comparison.

A similar modesty bias among those with interdependent selves has also been suggested by Shikanai (1978), who studied the causal attribution for one's own success or failure in an ability task. Typically, American subjects believe that their internal attributes such as ability or competence are extremely important to their performance, and this is particularly the case when they have succeeded (e.g., Davis & Stephan, 1980; Gilmor & Reid, 1979; Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 1982; Weiner, 1986). In the Shikanai study, Japanese college students performed an anagram task. Half of them were subsequently led to believe that they scored better than the average and thus "succeeded," whereas the other half were led to believe that they scored worse than the average and thus "failed." Subjects were then asked to choose the most important factor in explaining the success or the failure for each of 10 pairs made from the 5 possible causes for performance (i.e., ability, effort, task difficulty [or ease], luck, and mental-physical "shape" of the day). Shikanai analyzed the average number of times each cause was picked as most important (possible minimum of 0 and maximum of 4). As shown in Figure 5, a modesty bias was again obtained, especially after success. Whereas failure was attributed mainly to the lack of effort, success was attributed primar-

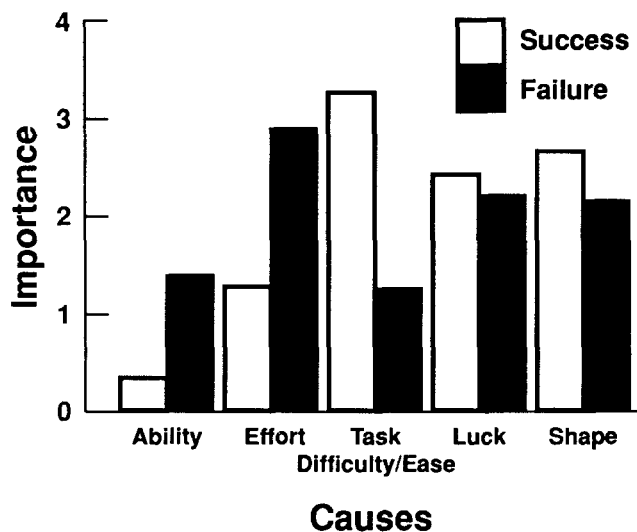


Figure 5. Mean importance rating given to each of five causes following success and failure. (Drawn from results reported by Shikanai, 1978.)

ily to the ease of the task. Furthermore, the potential role of ability in explaining success was very much downplayed. Indeed, ability was perceived to be more important after a failure than after a success, whereas task difficulty (or its ease) was regarded to be more important after a success than after a failure. Subsequent studies by Shikanai that examined attribution of success and failure of others did not find this pattern (Shikanai, 1983, 1984). Thus, the pattern of "modest" appraisal seems to be specific to the perception and the presentation of the self and does not derive from a more general causal schema applicable to both self and others. For others, ability is important in explaining success. Yoshida et al. (1982, Studies 2 and 3), who studied explanations of performance in a Japanese elementary school, found the tendency to de-emphasize the role of ability in explaining success as early as the second grade.

Observations of a tendency to self-efface, and not to reveal the typical American pattern of blaming others or the situation when explaining failure, have been made outside of the experimental laboratory as well. In a study by Hess et al. (1986), Japanese mothers explained poor performance among their fifth graders by claiming a lack of effort. In marked contrast, American mothers implicated effort in their explanations but viewed ability and the quality of the training in the school as equally important. This study also required the children to explain their own poor performance by assigning 10 points to each of five alternatives (ability, effort, training at school, bad luck, and difficulty of math). Japanese children gave 5.6 points to lack of effort, but American children gave 1.98 points. H. Stevenson (personal communication, September 19, 1989) noted that in observations of elementary school classrooms, Japanese teachers, in contrast to American teachers, rarely refer to differences in ability among their students as an explanation for performance differences, even though the range of ability as assessed by standardized tests is approximately the same. Those with interdependent selves thus seem more likely to view intellectual achievement not as a fixed attribute that one has a cer-

tain amount of, but instead as a product that can be produced by individual effort in a given social context.⁷

The nature of modesty. The exact nature of these modesty, self-effacing, or other-enhancing biases has yet to be specified. Perhaps those from interdependent cultures have simply learned that humility is the desired response, or the culturally appropriate response, and that it is wise not to gloat over their performance or to express confidence in their ability. This interpretation implies that the modesty biases observed in the studies described herein are primarily the result of impression management and that the subjects involved actually could have held different, perhaps opposite, beliefs about themselves and their ability. However, it is also possible that these other-enhancement biases reflect, or are accompanied by, psychologically authentic self-perceptions. There are two related possibilities consistent with this suggestion.

First, given the press not to stand out and to fit in, people in interdependent cultures may acquire through socialization a habitual modest-response tendency. In large part, it may be a function of the need to pay more attention to the other than to the self, just as the self-serving bias is believed to result from a predominant focus on the self (see Ross & Fletcher, 1985). Consequently, for those with interdependent selves, whenever certain aspects of self need to be appraised in public, a modest, self-effacing pattern of responses may occur spontaneously. Furthermore, this modesty can be motivated by many other-focused emotions that are central to the construal of self as an interdependent entity. From an independent viewpoint, such modesty seems false and the result of suppressing a "natural" pride in one's attributes. Yet, such pride is only natural within a view of the self as an independent entity. From an interdependent view, modest responses may be experienced quite positively and engender the pleasant, other-focused feelings that are associated with connecting and maintaining interdependence.

Such positive, other-focused feelings also may be responsible for the finding that Japanese students are more convinced of and more confident in their ability after failure than success. The satisfaction of doing well that can accompany good performance on a novel, decontextualized task may be mitigated by the threat of potential uniqueness and uncertainty over how to respond to it. Moreover, if a predominant basis of self-esteem is how well one fits in and preserves relationships and interpersonal harmony, then failing to distinguish oneself with a highly successful performance may not be particularly devastating.⁸

⁷ Of course, because those in Asian cultures believe high ability to be a result of effort does not mean that they do not differentiate between ability and effort. In all likelihood, they believe that effort and ability are related in a multiplicative fashion to determine performance. Thus, for instance, in a recent study by Stipek, Weiner, and Li (1989), Chinese respondents reasoned, just as their American counterparts did, that if a person shows the same level of performance with much less effort expended on the task, the person must have a high level of the relevant ability. Our point is simply that those in Asian cultures believe that abilities are relatively more changeable over a long span of time through the effort the person expends.

⁸ As noted, achievement may sometimes be construed as a means to complete one's interdependence, as may well be the case for a Japanese high school student who studies hard to gain admission to a prestigious college. In this case, failure may well be extremely troubling for those with interdependent selves.

Certainly it will not be as devastating as it is to the person whose self-esteem rests primarily on doing well individually and on separating oneself from others.

Second, among those with interdependent selves, there may not be an awareness of one's own ability in general or in the abstract. Instead, one's own ability in a given task under a given condition may be inferred from whatever cues are available in the specific situation in which the task is performed. And whatever is inferred in this way may be experienced as authentic and genuine. For example, upon receipt of feedback about their ability, interdependent selves may first attend and think not so much about their ability as about the approval or disapproval of the person who gives the feedback. If approval or disapproval can be strongly and unambiguously inferred, then the perception of approval or disapproval may provide a strong heuristic clue about ability; if one receives approval, one must have high ability in this situation, whereas if one receives disapproval, then one must have low ability in this situation. In the absence of a strong, enduring belief about one's ability in the abstract, such a heuristic may provide a subjectively genuine self-appraisal. This analysis also suggests why those with interdependent selves may be convinced of their low ability after a failure feedback to a much greater extent than they are convinced of their high ability after a success feedback. Because of the prevalent social norms for polite behavior in interdependent cultures, disapproval can be more unequivocally inferred from negative feedback than approval can be inferred from positive feedback.

These suggestions about the source of a modest self-appraisal have yet to be empirically tested, but they are worthy of careful inquiry because these forms of self-appraisal may be quite unique to interdependent cultures. On the basis of empirical evidence, however, this much seems clear: Those with interdependent selves will typically not claim that they are better than others, will not express pleasure in the state of feeling superior to others, and indeed may not enjoy it. A strong, pervasive motive for self-enhancement through taking personal credit for success, denying personal responsibility for failure, and believing oneself to be better than average may be primarily a Western phenomenon. It is akin to being the nail that stands out.

So far, the empirical evidence on cultural variation in self-related motives is limited largely to differences in self-enhancement versus other enhancement. However, other self-related motives, such as self-affirmation (Steele, 1988), self-verification (Swann & Read, 1981), and self-actualization (Maslow, 1954), may also differ across cultures in similar ways. A series of studies by Steele has shown that the negative psychological impact of one's own misdeed, blunder, or public embarrassment can be reduced once another, significant aspect of the self is activated and affirmed. Thus, one's threatened self-worth can be restored by a reminder of another, unthreatened aspect of the self (e.g., "I may not be athletic, but at least I'm creative"). To the extent that very different aspects of self are highly valued among those with interdependent selves, this process of self-affirmation may also differ. For those with independent selves it will be the internal attributes of self that may most effectively offset each other and reestablish threatened self-esteem, whereas for those with interdependent selves it may be the more public aspects of the self, like one's significant social roles, statuses, and important interpersonal relations, that must be focal in self-esteem mainte-

nance. Thus, self-affirmation for an interdependent self will require an opportunity to ensure that one is fitting in and engaging in proper action in a given situation.

In a similar vein, exactly what is verified in self-verification and what is actualized in self-actualization may also differ considerably across cultures. Currently, it is common to assume that individuals are motivated to verify and actualize an internally coherent set of attributes that they regard as significant. Our present analysis would imply, however, that people with interdependent selves may strive to verify and actualize the more public qualities of the self—the ones that allow them to conceive of themselves as respectable and decent participants in significant interpersonal relationships.

Furthermore, among those with interdependent selves, self-verification and self-actualization may even be achieved through the realization of some more general, abstract forms of relation, that is, one's relationship to or one's role in society or even in the natural or cosmic system. The self-description studies reviewed earlier suggest this possibility. In general, the self-descriptions of those with interdependent selves have been found to be quite concrete and situation specific (see Cousins, 1989). There is, however, one interesting, reliable exception to this. Subjects from Asian cultural backgrounds (presumably those with predominantly interdependent selves) often provide extremely global self-descriptions, such as "I am a unique creation," "I am a human being," "I am an organic form," and "I am a product of my environment." It could appear that these statements are too abstract to be informative in any pragmatic sense (Rosch, 1978). The lack of information contained in these descriptions, however, may be more apparent than real. Note that these global statements presuppose a view of the world as an encompassing whole in which these subjects perceive themselves to be a part or a participant. And for these subjects, it may be these relationships that must be verified and actualized.

We have suggested the different forms that some self-related motives might assume if they are based in an interdependent rather than an independent construal of self. Further empirical work is required to determine whether the types of self-related motives described herein are indeed as prevalent in Eastern interdependent cultures as they have been found to be in Western, particularly American, cultures. It could be that these self-relevant motives are not part of the set of universal individual strivings,⁹ but instead an outgrowth of an independent self-system rooted in the press for separation and individuation.

Conclusions

We have described two divergent construals of the self—an *independent* view and an *interdependent* view. The most significant differences between these two construals is in the role that is assigned to the other in self-definition. Others and the surrounding social context are important in both construals, but for the interdependent self, others are included *within* the boundaries of the self because relations with others in specific

⁹ It is intriguing that Murray's (1938) original study of motives, as well as Hilgard's (1953, 1987) update of it, did not include any of the self-focused motives that are so central to current research on the self.

contexts are the defining features of the self. In the words of Lebra (1976), the individual is in some respects "a fraction" and becomes whole when fitting into or occupying one's proper place in a social unit. The sense of individuality that accompanies an interdependent self includes an attentiveness and responsiveness to others that one either explicitly or implicitly assumes will be reciprocated by these others, as well as the willful management of one's other-focused feelings and desires so as to maintain and further the reciprocal interpersonal relationship. One is conscious of where one belongs with respect to others and assumes a receptive stance toward these others, continually adjusting and accommodating to these others in many aspects of behavior (Azuma, 1984; Weisz et al., 1984). Such acts of fitting in and accommodating are often intrinsically rewarding, because they give rise to pleasant, other-focused emotions (e.g., feeling of connection) while diminishing unpleasant ones (e.g., shame) and, furthermore, because the self-restraint required in doing so forms an important basis of self-esteem. Typically, then, it is others rather than the self that serve as the referent for organizing one's experiences.

With an independent construal of the self, others are less centrally implicated in one's current self-definition or identity. Certainly, others are important for social comparison, for reflected appraisal, and in their role as the targets of one's actions, yet at any given moment, the self is assumed to be a complete, whole, autonomous entity, without the others. The defining features of an independent self are attributes, abilities, traits, desires, and motives that may have been social products but that have become the "property" of the self-contained individual (see Sampson, 1989) and that are assumed to be the source of the individual's behavior. The sense of individuality that accompanies this construal of the self includes a sense of oneself as an agent, as a producer of one's actions. One is conscious of being in control over the surrounding situation, and of the need to express one's own thoughts, feelings, and actions to others, and is relatively less conscious of the need to receive the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others. Such acts of standing out are often intrinsically rewarding because they elicit pleasant, ego-focused emotions (e.g., pride) and also reduce unpleasant ones (e.g., frustration). Furthermore, the acts of standing out, themselves, form an important basis of self-esteem.

The Role of the Self

The relative importance that is accorded to others in these two construals has a wide range of psychological implications. In this article, we have outlined some of the cognitive, emotional, and motivational consequences of holding a view of the self that includes others and that requires others to define the self. Although a rapidly expanding volume of studies suggest that some aspects of cognitive functioning are relatively hardwired, many features of the way people perceive, categorize, or assign causality are probably not basic processes that derive in any straightforward way from the functioning of the human machinery or "hardware." Rather, these processes are to a large extent personal, reflecting the nature of the self that anchors them. Thus, they reflect all of those factors, including cultural aspects, that jointly determine the self. If one perceives oneself as embedded within a larger context of which one is an interde-

pendent part, it is likely that other objects or events will be perceived in a similar way. For example, a given event involving a particular actor will be perceived as arising from the situational context of which this actor is an interdependent part, rather than as stemming solely from the attributes of the actor. Or, in answering any question, one's first tendency may be to consider the particular social situation that is defined by the current interaction (e.g., teacher-student, worker-co-worker, and younger-elder) and then to gauge the range of responses that are most appropriate to this situation. These construals of self are probably abstracted through early patterns of direct interactions with parents and peers. The way people initially, and thus thereafter, most naturally or effortlessly perceive and understand the world is rooted in their self-perceptions and self-understandings, understandings that are themselves constrained by the patterns of social interactions characteristic of the given culture.

Consequences for Self-Processes

Our discussion of the cognitive, emotional, or motivational consequences has by no means exhausted the range of potential consequences of holding an independent or interdependent construal of the self. Consider first the set of processes connected by a hyphen to the self. It is reasonable to assume that all of these phenomena (e.g., self-affirmation [Steele, 1988], self-verification [Swann, 1983], self-consciousness [Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975], self-control [Carver & Scheier, 1981], self-actualization [Maslow, 1954], or self-handicapping [Jones & Berglas, 1978]) could assume a somewhat different form depending on how interdependent the self is with others.

Self-esteem for those with an independent construal of the self depends on one's abilities, attributes, and achievements. The most widely used measure of self-esteem, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, requires the endorsement of items like "I am a person of worth" or "I am proud of my abilities." Self-esteem associated with an interdependent self could include endorsement of similar items, although what it means to be, for example, a person of worth could well have a different meaning. Or high self-esteem may be more strongly associated with an endorsement of items that gauge one's ability to read the situation and to respond as required. If this is the case, a threat or a challenge to the self may not come in the form of feedback that one is unlike a cherished conception of the inner or dispositional self (dumb instead of smart; submissive rather than dominant) but instead in terms of a threat of a disruption of, or a disconnection from, the relation or set of relations with which one forms an interdependent whole.

The focus on the distinction between independent versus interdependent selves has the potential to provide a means of integrating research on a large number of separate personality constructs. One of the significant distinctions that appears repeatedly throughout Western psychology reflects a variation among individuals in how tuned in, sensitive to, oriented toward, focused on, or concerned they are with others. The introversion-extraversion dimension reflects this difference, as does the inner-directed-outer-directed distinction (Reisman, Denny, & Glazer, 1950). Other related distinctions include high versus low self-monitoring (Snyder, 1979), personal identity

versus social identity (Cheek, 1989; Hogan, 1975), public versus private self-consciousness (Fenigstein, 1984), social orientation versus individual orientation (Greenwald, 1980), collectivism-individualism (Hui, 1988; Triandis, 1989), and field independence-field dependence (Witkin & Goodenough, 1977). In fact, Witkin and his colleagues described a field-dependent person as one who includes others within the boundaries of the self and who does not make a sharp distinction between the self and others. Many of the empirical findings (described in Witkin & Goodenough, 1977; Witkin, Goodenough, & Oltman, 1979) about the interpersonal expertise and sensitivities of field-dependent people are similar to those described herein for people with interdependent selves.

Consequences for Social Psychological Phenomena

Other social behaviors may also depend on one's mediating model of the self (see Triandis, 1989, for a recent analysis of some of these effects). Thus, for one with an interdependent self, conformity may not reflect an inability to resist social pressure and to stick by one's own perceptions, attitudes, or beliefs (the defining features of the self). Instead, conformity to particular others with whom the other is interdependent can be a highly valued end state. It can signify a willingness to be responsive to others and to adjust one's own demands and desires so as to maintain the ever-important relation. The conformity observed for these subjects with interdependent selves when surrounded with others who form part of an important social unit, could well be much higher than typically observed. However, conformity to the desires and demands of those outside the important social unit or the self-defining in-group may not be required at all. Thus, for those with interdependent selves, a typical Asch-type conformity paradigm involving subjects and strangers as confederates may result in less conformity than typically observed in American studies.

Studies of other phenomena such as social facilitation or social loafing could also produce differential effects, depending on the self-systems of the subjects. Should those with interdependent construals of the self show pronounced social facilitation compared with those with individual selves? Or should those with interdependent selves be less susceptible to social loafing (decrements in performance when one's individual contribution to the group product cannot be identified; see Harkins, Latané, & Williams, 1980)? Our analysis is also relevant to two of the central problems in Western psychology—the inconsistency between attitudes and behavior and the inconsistency between personality and behavior. As we have noted, interdependent selves do not prescribe or require such a consistency between one's internal attributes and one's actions. Consequently, the press for consistency should be much less important and much less bemoaned when not observed. In fact, consistency from an interdependent perspective may reflect a lack of flexibility, insensitivity to the context, rigidity, or immaturity.

Further analysis of the consequences of different construals of the self may also prove fruitful in understanding some basic social psychological questions. Social psychologists report that people are enormously influenced by others, often to an extent that the investigators and certainly individuals themselves, find

unbelievable. People conform, obey, diffuse responsibility in a group, allow themselves to be easily persuaded about all manner of things, and become hopelessly committed to others on the basis of minimal action (e.g., see Myers, 1989). Even within highly individualist Western culture, most people are still much less self-reliant, self-contained, or self-sufficient than the prevailing cultural ideology suggests that they should be. Perhaps Western models of the self are quite at odds with actual individual social behavior and should be reformulated to reflect the substantial interdependence that characterizes even Western individualists. Sampson (1989) has recently argued that the reality of globalization and a shrinking world will force just such a rethinking of the nature of the individual.

Construals of the Self and Gender

Many important gender differences may also be linked to divergent construals of the self. Recent feminist theory on empathy suggests that relations have a power and a significance in women's lives that have gone largely unrecognized (e.g., Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Jordan & Surrey, 1986; J. B. Miller, 1986; Stewart & Lykes, 1985). An awareness of and sensitivity to others is described as one of most significant features of the psychology of women. If this is the case, then self-esteem and self-validation should depend not only on being able to do a job well, but on fostering and sustaining relationships. As Gilligan (1986) claimed, a willingness and an ability to care are standards of self-evaluation for many women. This theoretical work is forging a new vision of dependence, one that is similar in many ways to some Eastern views. Being dependent does not invariably mean being helpless, powerless, or without control. It often means being interdependent. It thus signifies a conviction that one is able to have an effect on others and is willing to be responsive to others and to become engaged with them. In other words, there is an alternative to selfishness (which implies the exclusion of others) besides selflessness (which is to imply the exclusion of the self or self-sacrifice): There is a self defined in relationship to others (see Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Markus & Oyserman, 1988).

Difficult Questions

Carrying out the research necessary to systematically investigate the range of basic consequences of having one or another construal of the self raises several complex questions. Some of these we have only touched on. For example, a persistent issue is how deep or pervasive are these cultural differences? Are the observed differences primarily a reflection of differences in styles of behavioral expression, or do they also reflect differences in the phenomenology accompanying the behavior? If there are norms against the display or expression of anger, what happens to the nature of the felt anger? In other words, is it the case, as we suggest here, that these norms can sometimes be internalized to the extent that they determine the nature of one's experience? For example, a recent study by Bontempo, Lobel, and Triandis (1989) compared the public and private responses of individuals from a collectivist culture with those of individuals from an individualist culture. The researchers asked respondents to indicate how enjoyable it would be to

engage in a time-consuming, individually costly behavior such as visiting a friend in the hospital. Only in the public condition did individualists claim that the behavior would be enjoyable. The collectivists, in contrast, claimed that the behavior would be enjoyable even when their responses were private.

The view that altruistic behaviors are only seemingly altruistic and that they are public actions without any subjective, private foundation can perhaps be traced to the insistence of Western psychologists on the internal attributes (feeling, thought, and traits) as the universal referents for behavior. They have thus understandably failed to attend to the possibility of the other as a referent for behavior, and thus to the possibility of other-focused emotions. There is, however, the possibility that such emotions can motivate genuine, other-oriented, altruistic behaviors, without any conscious, or even unconscious, calculation of individual payoff, and as such serve as the important glue of interdependent relationships.

Another thorny issue centers on the assessment of cultural differences. The use of introspective reports, for example, which are typically quite useful in the study of cognition, emotion, and motivation, may be problematic in cross-cultural research because within a given cultural context, people have little access to the absolute extent of their attention or responsiveness to others. This may explain, for example, why Triandis et al. (1988) found that those with collective selves do not report a greater than average awareness of or concern for the demands of others. Another persistent issue is that of translation and equating stimuli and questionnaires. Can psychologists readily assume that when an American and a Japanese use the word *embarrass* it indicates a similar emotional experience? Can they hypothesize, for example, that those with interdependent selves should show more high self-monitoring (i.e., attention to the behavior of others) than those with independent selves, and then assume that a translation of Snyder's (1979) scale into Japanese or Chinese will be sufficient to reflect these differences? One may even ask to what extent a construct such as self-monitoring can be unequivocally defined across different cultures with remarkably different construals of self.

In sum, we have argued that the view one holds of the self is critical in understanding individual behavior and also in understanding the full nature of those phenomena that implicate the self. A failure to replicate certain findings in different cultural contexts should not lead to immediate despair over the lack of generality of various psychological principles or to the conclusion of some anthropologists that culturally divergent individuals inhabit incomparably different worlds. Instead, it is necessary to identify the theoretical elements or processes that explain these differences. We suggest that how the self is construed may be one such powerful theoretical element.

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