

OF

Cross-Cultural Psychology

Masculinity and Femininity

*The Taboo Dimension
of National Cultures*

Geert Hofstede
and Associates

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of National Cultures*

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CCP

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Masculinity and Femininity

Cross-Cultural Psychology Series



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Many of the basic assumptions contained in standard psychology curricula in Western universities have been uncritically accepted for many years. The volumes in the **Cross-Cultural Psychology** series present cultural perspectives that challenge Western ways of thinking in the hope of stimulating informed discussions about human behavior in all domains of psychology.

Cross-Cultural Psychology offers brief monographs describing and critically examining Western-based psychology and its underlying assumptions. The primary readership for this series consists of professors who teach, and students who take, the wide spectrum of courses offered in upper-division and graduate-level psychology programs in North America and elsewhere.

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SERIES EDITORS' INTRODUCTION



The comparative study of thought and behavior across cultures has been one of the most interesting and productive developments in psychology during the past quarter century. We believe, as do many others, that psychology can mature into a valid and global discipline only to the extent that it incorporates paradigms, perspectives, and data from an ever-widening circle of both cultures and ethnic groups. That was the general guiding philosophy behind the **Cross-Cultural Research and Methodology** series that was started in 1975, in which 20 volumes were published. Like the CCRM series, this new series offers books describing and critically examining Western-based psychology and its underlying assumptions. Most of the basic assumptions contained in standard psychology curricula in the many universities of the highly industrialized Western world have been unchallenged. The volumes in this new series present cultural elements that challenge Western

ways of thinking in the hope of stimulating informed discussions about human behavior in all domains of psychology. Books in this series are written for use as core texts or as supplements, depending on the instructor's requirements. We believe that the cumulative totality of books in this series will contribute to the development of a much more inclusive psychology and will lead to the formation of the interesting, testable hypotheses about the complex relationships between culture and behavior.

As series editors, we are fortunate to have an international panel of experts in cross-cultural psychology to help guide us in the selection and evaluation of manuscripts. The 14 members of the editorial board represent 11 different countries and many of the domains within psychology.

Many books relevant to cross-cultural psychology have appeared during the past 25 years. One of the defining publications was Geert Hofstede's *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values*. Published in 1980 by Sage, as a volume in the Cross-Cultural Research and Methodology series, that book has influenced many people and has been a factor in a large number of research projects. In *Culture's Consequences*, Hofstede explained how he developed ways to measure the now-familiar four values of Individualism, Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance, and Masculinity. He provided considerable data to support the validity and usefulness of these sociocultural dimensions. Hofstede's tour de force has had an almost unparalleled influence on cross-cultural research. Transcending the workplace, or managerial attitudes and values, these four dimensions have been used by many researchers to explain such things as macroscopic (cultural) and microscopic (individual) characteristics and variables, clinical syndromes, and the nature of interpersonal interaction among people from different cultures.

One of these dimensions, that of Individualism, was the focus of a later book in the CCRM series (Kim, Triandis, Kagitçibasi, Choi, and Yoon, 1994).¹ This new book addresses in more detail the Masculinity dimension. The idea of treating Masculinity (and reciprocally, Femininity) as an important and researchable dimension of human values is at once both quite acceptable and logical as well as perhaps the most controversial (or delicate, or misunderstood) of the four dimensions—hence the appropriate subtitle, "The Taboo Dimension." Hofstede did his characteristically excellent job of designing the book. Bringing to-

gether different pieces of the puzzle in the form of various chapters by individuals who have done research on this dimension, this edited book is a valuable addition to the cross-cultural literature. Like *Culture's Consequences*, it will guide many researchers in dozens of societies as they attempt to understand how culture and the phenomena of psychological masculinity and femininity interact. Now, nearly 20 years since the publication of his seminal book, we are pleased to be part of this continuity of scholarship that looks into important ways to understand sociocultural processes.

—Walter J. Lonner

—John W. Berry

NOTE

1. Kim, U., Triandis, H. C., Kagitçibasi, C., Choi, S.-C., and Yoon, G. (Eds.). (1994). *Individualism and collectivism: Theory, method, and applications*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

PREFACE



This book fits Sage's Cross-Cultural Psychology series like a bead in a string. It builds on my 1980 book *Culture's Consequences* (Volume 5 in the Sage Cross-Cultural Research and Methodology series), and it is a partner volume to the reader *Individualism and Collectivism* edited by Kim, Triandis, Kagitçibasi, Choi, and Yoon (Volume 18 in the Sage Cross-Cultural Research and Methodology series, 1994).

Unlike its partner volume, however, the present book is as much a monograph as a reader. Four large chapters by me carry the main line of the argument; eight shorter chapters by invited contributors support and illustrate it. This is a consequence of the different developments in the study of individualism/collectivism and of masculinity/femininity. Individualism/Collectivism and Masculinity/Femininity were twin dimensions in *Culture's Consequences*, derived as independent (orthogonal) factors from the same country-level factor analysis of work goals.

Those two dimensions, along with two others (Power Distance and Uncertainty Avoidance), derived in different ways, were proposed as anthropological distinctions between societies, affecting sociological and psychological processes within those societies. The Individualism/Collectivism distinction was eagerly picked up by cross-cultural psychologists. It correlates with national wealth, opposing wealthy to poor countries. It also opposes Western to Asian countries. It continues to do so after these Asian countries have developed economically, although to a diminishing extent. The dimension provided a useful framework for the growing community of Asian psychologists in their dialogue with a psychological discipline developed entirely in the West. Since Harry Triandis took the initiative in 1986, there have been symposia on Individualism/Collectivism in the biannual congresses of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology. In 1990, there was even a special conference on the topic alone, organized by Uichol Kim in Seoul, Korea, and preceding the IACCP Congress in Nara, Japan. Papers presented at this conference were the source of the Sage reader *Individualism and Collectivism*.

Masculinity/Femininity was just as important an anthropological distinction in my 1980 book as Individualism/Collectivism, but it did not correlate with national wealth and did not oppose the West to Asia. There were masculine and feminine national cultures in Asia, Europe, and the Americas. Psychologists from feminine cultures like Sweden, Portugal, Thailand, and Costa Rica were unlikely to rally to symposia or conferences with colleagues from masculine cultures like Japan, the United States, Mexico, or Germany. Also, in some countries that I had identified as masculine, the dimension was judged politically incorrect.

In the 1992 IACCP Congress at Liège, Belgium, I convened a symposium about research connected to the Masculinity/Femininity dimension. This was followed by similar symposia in Pamplona, Spain, in 1994, and in Montréal, Québec, Canada, in 1996. Six of the eight short chapters in the present book are based on contributions made at one of these symposia. Three of the six had in the meantime been published elsewhere, and they have been reprinted with permission and with minor editing. The five other short chapters have been rewritten or newly written for this book. My own four chapters were outlined in a

long working paper titled *Masculinity, Religion, Gender and Sex* presented in Montréal, but they have been considerably elaborated.

Profound thanks are due to the nine contributors of the eight chapters, who were supportive and fast, and who put up kindly with my editorial interferences. Among the ten of us are three women and seven men, representing a variety of disciplines (clinical psychology, cross-cultural psychology, developmental and sports psychology, social psychology, education, marketing, and sociology). What will strike any reader is the predominance of authors from the Netherlands—six of us were born in that country. This was not a deliberate selection by a Dutch editor; all but one of the other Dutch contributors already had done their research before I even discovered their existence. Among the countries with a pronouncedly feminine national culture, the Netherlands probably has the largest concentration of social scientists accustomed to expressing themselves in the English language. In the same way that Asian researchers recognize the importance of the Individualism/Collectivism dimension, the Dutch are turned on by Masculinity/Femininity differences.

As an editor, I have been more strict than most reader editors. The chapters by others were selected for their synergy and cross-fertilization. Their common element is that they all refer to, and make use of, the Masculinity/Femininity dimension in *Culture's Consequences*. Part I is devoted to a definition of the dimension, its validation in different studies, and methodological questions. Part II relates the dimension to gender issues and gender role gaps in different national cultures. Part III reviews contributions on the relationships between Masculinity/Femininity, religion, and sexuality, domains where the dimension is highly relevant but to which it has rarely been applied. A name index and a subject index provide easy access for users.

Although this is only half my book, I want to dedicate it informally. The dedication is to my teachers, especially those at the two secondary schools I attended during the difficult years 1939-1945. Having more time to reflect since I became an emeritus, I increasingly recognize to what extent my intellectual capital was formed during those years, and how our teachers fed our interests in culture, cultures, history, languages, and ideas. The teaching profession in the Netherlands and

elsewhere is sometimes considered to be in a crisis, but to all teachers who read this, I want to testify the gratitude of a student who benefited from his teachers' lessons over a lifetime—and there are many like me.

There is another teacher, Maaïke Van den Hoek, my partner and complement for 43 years in interests, skills, gender role play, sex, religion, and cross-cultural experiences. Without you, *douce amie*, I am only half a person, but it takes a whole person to write meaningfully about femininity and masculinity.

Geert Hofstede
Velp, the Netherlands

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