

VALUE DIMENSIONS AND THEIR CONTEXTUAL DYNAMICS ACROSS CULTURES

价值观维度： 跨文化的动态体现

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

价值观维度:跨文化的动态体现/顾力行、翁立平、普罗斯(美)主编.
(跨文化研究.第五辑)

—上海:上海外语教育出版社,2014

ISBN 978-7-5446-3677-3

I. ①价… II. ①顾…②翁…③普… III. ①文化交流—文集
IV. ①G115-53

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2014)第 047964 号

出版发行: **上海外语教育出版社**

(上海外国语大学内) 邮编: 200083

电 话: 021-65425300 (总机)

电子邮箱: bookinfo@sflep.com.cn

网 址: <http://www.sflep.com.cn> <http://www.sflep.com>

责任编辑: 李健儿

印 刷: 上海信老印刷厂

开 本: 850×1168 1/32 印张 17.5 字数 599千字

版 次: 2014 年 8 月第 1 版 2014 年 8 月第 1 次印刷

印 数: 1 000 册

书 号: ISBN 978-7-5446-3677-3 / G · 1122

定 价: 48.00 元

本版图书如有印装质量问题,可向本社调换

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Acknowledgements

The development and publication of these two volumes on values studies (*Intercultural Research Vol. 4* and *Vol. 5*) could not have been made possible without the generous institutional support of the leaders, officials, and faculty of Shanghai International Studies University. We are also indebted to the many scholars who have laid the foundations for this research focus in the International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP), International Academy of Intercultural Research (IAIR) and International Association of Intercultural Communication Studies (IAICS). It is our great pleasure to present their seminal work here for the Chinese reading and research public.

Professor Steve Kulich, Dr. Weng Liping, and Professor Michael Prosser are grateful for the effective cooperation since 2005 on this and related projects, and for the excellent supportive work by the editorial team in the SISU Intercultural Institute (SII).

We specifically express our gratitude for the award and extension of a SISU “211 Project” Key Research Project (Grant #KX161010) entitled “Intercultural Communication Series Research” (2007–2011) and the follow up 2011 Annual SISU Normal-Level Research Project (Grant #2011114032) entitled “Interdisciplinary Research on Chinese People’s Values” (2012–2013) of which the development of these two volumes was an integral part.

Earlier grants provided by Resource Exchange International, Inc. (REI) were also instrumental to framing, launching, and carrying out this project. Specifically important was REI funding of projects under “the Shanghai Chinese Values Project (SCVP)”

and its extensions from 1996–2006 (REI Project # CHN-Kul-2-96, Initial Grant, Phase 2, Phase 3).

This project and the SISU Scientific Research Office that supports it are part of a commitment to contribute to the internationalization and interdisciplinary cooperation of the SII, the university, and the field by linking cooperating intercultural researchers on interdisciplinary research and writing projects, selecting and editing the best new work, and publishing continuing topical volumes in this monograph series of *Intercultural Research*.

While past volumes in this series have more extensively showcased the research achievements of our national CAFIC scholars or those doing studies on the Chinese in the IAICS or ACCS, these two volumes seek to highlight the benchmarks of international scholarship in an effort to move the enterprise of values studies forward both domestically and internationally.

This series was not designed to be a set of “conference volumes,” but from the outset has aimed to provide a set of monographs where each volume is focused on one important topic or theme in the field. Each chapter is meant to be a specially invited “state-of-the art” summary of a key topic in intercultural communication studies. This volume in particular attempts to fulfill the high goals we have for this series, having both international and domestic scholars providing their best work as a reference or benchmark on which to further the research agenda. We are grateful to all who have contributed, and all who will build on the chapters put forward here.

The Editors, Shanghai

Intercultural Research **Series Preface**

Michael H. PROSSER

Chair, SII International Advisory Board

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Ancient Athens served as an intercultural and intellectual crossroads for Asia and Europe. The Greek philosopher, Socrates' famous statement "I am neither a citizen of Athens, nor of Greece, but of the world" speaks eloquently of the impact of intercultural communication (IC), comparative analysis, and the importance of identity clarification both in his and contemporary society. Greek philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle all looked outward from their own culture, identifying or debating major world value orientations such as goodness, justice, truth, and happiness. For East Asia, multiple schools of thought developed during the Spring and Autumn Period, shaping China's cross-state communication. Confucius' *Analects* articulated the role of *rén* (benevolence and kindness), *lǐ* (propriety and right living through ritual), *dé* (moral power), *dào* (internalized moral direction), and *miànzǐ* or *lián* (externalized social image and harmony). These Confucian orientations were integrated into what became the fabric of not only the Chinese state, but the educational and philosophical orientation of much of East and South Eastern Asia.

All of these early cultural conceptualizations of identities and values strongly support the potentially positive intercultural, multicultural, and global world orientations that have enhanced a

dialogue of civilizations and cultures, and stress factors that are unifying rather than divisive. The challenge continues to be substantial since intercultural, multicultural, and global communication might just as easily be highly negative with increasing war, poverty, crime, and pandemics. The goal of all those interested in promoting a better local and global society vastly prefers the former.

The location from which this series originates shows some of these dynamics and contradictions. Just as each nation and people must deal with highs and lows, China is grappling both with some of the positive dialogues of modernization and internationalization, and also the challenges of divergent cultural or global discourses. From the depths of the Wenchuan earthquake in Sichuan that rallied not only the nation's, but the world's sympathy, engagement and commitment to rebuild, to the heights of the spectacularly well-orchestrated and successful 2008 Beijing Olympics; from the ongoing challenges of natural disasters like floods or human tragedies and accidents or the global financial crisis, to the futuristic development of Shanghai and its visionary and record-breaking participation and cooperation at the 2010 Shanghai Expo, we see these human and intercultural dynamics at work.

I would suggest that intercultural communication as a field has emerged to embody and embrace both these challenges of human clashes and the dialogues across cultures and civilizations. The anthropologists Edward T. Hall and Ruth Benedict serve as the symbolic grandparents of intercultural communication in North America, though neither set out to begin a new field. Others in North America in the 1960s and 1970s and coming from various viewpoints (see Vol. 2 for the complete list of influential scholars) and I sought early to develop an intercultural communication discipline or sub-discipline, which has now spread broadly through much of the academic world.

When the field of intercultural communication began to develop rapidly in China during the 1980s and 1990s, Chinese scholars (in alphabetical order) such as Du Ruiqing, Gao Yihong, Gong Wenxiang, Gu Jiazuo, Guan Shijie, He Daokuan, Hu

Wenzhong, Jia Yuxin, Lin Dajin, Wang Hongyin, Wang Qi, and their contemporaries each brought and sinocized many of these western intercultural theories and practical implications for China. Michael Harris Bond (originally from Canada), Kuo-Shu Yang, Kwang-Kuo Hwang, Chung-fang Yang, Kwok Leung, Lianxiang Sha, Kai-ping Peng (originally from Beijing, now at UC Berkeley) and others have also sought to indigenize social and cultural psychology to strengthen Chinese scholarship on intercultural communication. Currently many Chinese scholars, either in China itself, in North America, or other regions around the world, have developed robust theories and models or have postulated newer ones, as has been well articulated and documented by Hui-ching Chang, Guo-Ming Chen, Ling Chen, and Wenshan Jia and Mingzhi He in the premier volume of this series, *Intercultural Perspectives on Chinese Communication* (2007).

The SISU Intercultural Institute (SII) of Shanghai International Studies University (SISU), under the executive leadership of Steve J. Kulich (顾力行), has accepted a mandate to undertake an *Intercultural Research* series of volumes which seeks to publish “cutting edge and seminal articles on the state of the intercultural field” in a variety of areas. As formulated in the establishment of the series, Kulich emphasized that “Each volume will focus on one primary domain and will include diverse theoretical and applied research from cultural, intercultural or cross-cultural approaches for that area, seeking to present and frame a ‘state of the art’ or an extended development summary on the topic” (2007, Vol. 1, p. 377).

The SII is committed to building close cooperation with both Chinese and international scholars. That was reflected in the first volume entitled *Intercultural Perspectives on Chinese Communication*, where domestic scholars of the CAFIC were joined by international scholars from communication studies, social linguistics, as well as indigenous and cross-cultural psychology to contribute seminal reviews of IC in their areas of expertise. SII is also committed to highlight and bring some integration to the diverse disciplines that influence, contribute to

or are informed by intercultural scholarship. This is illustrated particularly by efforts in that first and subsequent volumes to invite contributions from communication studies at both the interpersonal (*jiāojiè*) as well as mass communication (*chuánbō*) levels and also to include the perspectives of cultural psychology, cultural anthropology and other related fields. The interdisciplinary nature of IC motivates the SII team to identify and integrate those aspects that contribute to shared foundations for the field, especially as these reflect intercultural, multicultural human development, in keeping with our motto to “develop a discipline to develop people.”

This focus on cooperation has continued with the biennial thematic IC conferences held by Shanghai Normal University, part of the dynamic cooperation among CAFIC Shanghai Branch institutions (which also includes regular cross-city scholar forums and the occasional outstanding IC MA thesis conference). Past volumes have highlighted interdisciplinary and multi-perspective scholarship on *Identity and Intercultural Communication*; focusing on *I: Theoretical and Contextual Construction* (Vol. 2), and *II: Conceptual and Contextual Applications* (Vol. 3).

These two volumes take up the important topic of IC values — *Value Frameworks at the Theoretical Crossroads of Culture* (Vol. 4) and *Value Dimensions and their Contextual Dynamics across Cultures* (Vol. 5). Later volumes will focus on subsequent SHNU conference themes, like IC and adaptation (Vol. 6 and Vol. 7), IC competence, and other important topics for intercultural disciplinary development.

Naturally, since Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press is publishing the series, Chinese academic contributions are especially encouraged, as well as those from the wider international academic community. Based on Professor Kulich’s many years of scholarship on values, it is very meaningful that the SISU Intercultural Institute’s fourth and fifth volumes are centered on the continuing examination of value studies and their applications. Indeed, the first year postgraduate course that he has taught since 2002 for intercultural communication MA students focuses specifically on the theoretical and applied research on

value studies, identities, and core-culture domains. It may be one of the few such courses internationally to stand alone on these topics within the broader academic study of intercultural communication. Related to other strands of research, the course that he developed in 2005 on “Intercultural Research Foundations: History and Status” has become a springboard for one of the first doctoral programs in intercultural communication (*kuàiwénhuà jiāojiè*) in China, which started in 2010 and has already graduated its first groups of PhDs. Coursework, conference papers, research projects, and contributions to the “Interdisciplinary Survey of Intercultural Communication Research” (one of the PhD program’s course titles) will surely provide ongoing stimulus and ready application for future volumes.

In his foreword for the first volume, *Intercultural Perspectives on Chinese Communication* (2007), Shijie Guan noted that three features characterize the series: (1) It serves as an interdisciplinary platform for China’s IC research; (2) It emphasizes the importance of scientific methodology in IC research; (3) It focuses on the localization of IC research. He concludes his remarks by saying that “The publication of this series is an occasion to celebrate for the entire Chinese community: My hope is that it develops into a series that is interdisciplinary, methodology-promoting, indigenized into the Chinese settings and blend well theories with practice (p. xvi).” As he also notes in that foreword, “In today’s world, communication between various cultures have become an important task for human beings. Just as Lourdes Arizpe, chair of the Scientific Committee of the *World Culture Report, 2000*, says, ‘Cultural exchanges are in fact the axis of the new phenomena’ as global cultures develop and change (p. ix).”

Since the initial books by Edward T. Hall, *The Silent Language*, *The Hidden Dimension*, *Beyond Culture*, and *The Dance of Life* began to shape the early study of intercultural communication theoretically and practically, so too, it is reasonable to assume that these volumes might provide new impetus for the academic study of various cultural contexts. The historical development, frameworks and research approaches

presented both by well-established and emerging scholars in these volumes will surely move the academic understanding of key intercultural topic areas ahead. Each volume's contribution toward highlighting theoretical constructs, clarifying the "state of the art" and presenting cutting edge research and practical applications will hopefully contribute to a new apex in the field of intercultural communication. It is to the ongoing development of the intercultural communication discipline both in China and abroad that this series is dedicated.

November 15, 2013, Charlottesville, Virginia

Foreword to the Two Values Volumes

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The world is becoming a global village, which requires that people of different cultures become skillful in interacting with members of other cultures (Earley & Ang, 2006). Interaction across cultures requires special skills for communication, cooperation, negotiation, and joint problem solving. These interactions implicate the values that people bring to the social relationship.

Humans are unable to process the rich information in their environment. For example, our eyes are capable of discriminating 7,500,000 colors, but we manage with less than three score color names. That is, we deal with the information overload by categorizing the stimuli — i.e., we deal with many stimuli as if they are equivalent. However, the categorizations in each culture are not the same. For instance, when people deal with “us” (our in-group) in some cultures they focus on similarities in place of birth, language, religion, race, or social class; in other cultures they focus on similarities in ideology or world view.

Furthermore, categories have associations with other categories. In one culture, for instance, “socialism” is linked to “democracy” and in another it is linked to “poverty.” The evaluation of categories often varies across cultures. In English “sphere” is “good” but in Greek it is “bad” (because it also means bullet).

Some categories are used as guiding principles in the life of

humans, and these are values. In some cultures a particular value is very important as a guiding principle and in other cultures it is not (Schwartz, 1992).

In sum, there are many kinds of difficulties in bridging cultures. The difficulties in achieving successful interactions can be illustrated by an example of translation from English to Russian. The English sentence “The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak” was translated into Russian, and back translated into English, as “The vodka is strong but the meat is rotten” (Mladinow, 2011). We can see that there is some justification for these mistakes. “Spirit” has 25 meanings, according to *The Random House College Dictionary*, including that it is “the active principle of a substance extracted through distillation.” If one believes that vodka is involved then “strong” is an appropriate qualifier. “Flesh” has 19 meanings, such as “a substance that includes muscle and fat.” Once one has identified “meat” as the object, rotten is an appropriate qualifier.

In short, concepts, beliefs, attitudes, norms and values differ across cultures. Researchers during the past 50 years have identified the major patterns that summarize similarities and differences across cultures in these entities. For example, a cultural syndrome (Triandis, 1995) is a pattern of concepts, beliefs, attitudes, norms and values that is organized around a theme, such as the centrality of the group (collectivism) or the centrality of the individual (individualism).

The job of identifying the most important cultural syndromes was complex and extensive. But much has been learned, and now it is brought together in a series of volumes edited by Steve J. Kulich. The chapters were written by the stars of this research enterprise.

The two volumes you have in your hands are a treasure-trove for comparative and cross-cultural values research. Whenever two people of different cultural/national backgrounds communicate in intercultural contexts, their differing value orientations, and meanings assigned to the same values words, in relation to those or another's values can be a factor in the outcomes of the communication or play a defining role in how they behave,