March 1972

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Problem in Lieu of Thesis written by Anthony C. Griffin entitled "The Influences of Assumptions and Values on Intercultural Interactions." I recommend that it be accepted for three quarter hours of credit in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Agricultural Extension.

_____
Major Professor

We have read this problem
and recommend its acceptance:

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Vice President for
Graduate Studies and Research

1004096

PROBLEM C: THE INFLUENCES OF ASSUMPTIONS AND VALUES ON INTERCULTURAL INTERACTIONS

A Problem in Lieu of Thesis

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

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by

Anthony C. Griffin

March 1972

ABSTRACT

This study has attempted to draw together and more clearly define some of the cultural assumptions and values that may influence our behavior as human beings. More specifically, it has attempted to clarify how these assumptions and values may influence the behavior of individuals in cross-cultural situations.

Assumptions were defined as the predispositions people employ to explain and pattern the world in a rational manner. Assumptions are relatively vague and very difficult to define or measure. Values are the explicit reflections of cultural assumptions, and are relatively concrete, specific, and more easily explained or measured than assumptions.

Considerable emphasis was given to a discussion of cultural patterns which are the individual's guides to the number and kind of alternatives he may choose from for solving problems. These patterns were broken down into four basic components, which were discussed in the body of this text: (1) the modalities of human activity; (2) man's relationships with nature; (3) the temporal focus of human life; and (4) man's relationship with other men.

It was suggested that the effectiveness of many internationally related programs might be enhanced through the adoption of an attitude of culturally relativity, where the individual, group, or institution is able to scrutinize itself in the light of often different cultural attitudes and modes of behavior.

Edward Stewart's alternative for encouraging the adoption of this attitude was examined.

In conclusion, implications for further research into the character of cross-cultural communications and behavior were discussed.

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CHAPTER I

SITUATION AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

Introduction

In recent years an increasingly larger number of U.S. colleges and universities have sought to provide a more complete integration of their international students with campus and community life. This has been an explicitly stated objective of several major universities.[1] Smaller colleges with international student enrollment have also directed themselves toward this end, albeit on more modest scales. These efforts at integration and providing viable milieu toward facilitating cross-cultural interaction have in many places met with only limited success or outright failure. Such efforts have included Host Family programs, International Wives groups, international clubs, programmed social and academic contacts, participation in sports activities, area studies and research programs, foreign technical assistance programs, multicultural living arrangements, and international festivals, to name a few. Several research studies have been conducted in an effort to determine the extent and character of international student participation in university and community life,

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[1]The University of Michigan, Cornell University, University of California at Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of Wisconsin and the University of Texas are six major schools which have addressed themselves toward this general objective.

and hypotheses regarding why the foreign student does or does not participate are numerous.[2]

Purpose of the Study

This study was undertaken in an attempt to define and clarify some of the assumptions and values of individuals as these may affect their behavior in a cross-cultural situation. More specifically, the study proposes to examine some of these values and assumptions as they may relate to the behavior of those Americans who are in relatively close contact with international students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. These persons would include foreign student advisors, academic faculty with international students in their classrooms, Knoxville residents who host or otherwise associate with international students, American students on the University of Tennessee campus who have contact with these students, and other University personnel whose work brings them in contact with internationals.

Under this rubric may also be included those Americans who are not directly concerned with international students at the University of Tennessee, but Americans overseas (i.e., missionaries, technical advisors, U.S. Government personnel abroad).

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[2]See C. V. Coehlo, Changing Images of America: A Study of Indian Students' Perceptions (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1958); R. D. Lambert and M. Bressler, Indian Students on an American Campus (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956); Florence Kluckhohn and Fred L. Strodtbeck, Variations in Value Orientations (New York: Row, Peterson, 1961); and Edward Stewart, American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective (Pittsburgh: Regional Council for International Education, 1971).

Methods

This paper is based on some of the ideas and constructs of principally three authors: Florence Kluckhohn, Fred L. Strodtbeck and Edward C. Stewart. Their concepts concerning dominant American values and assumptions as they influence individual behavior will first be analyzed in a general context, and then be applied specifically to the purposes of this study. Where appropriate, examples and illustrations from other authors and texts will be incorporated.

Examination of Related Literature

Little systematic attention has been given to the character of cross-cultural communication and how it is effected. This is partially evinced by the relative lack of literature in this field. Studies dealing with intercultural communication among foreign and domestic students in America are numerous, but, it is contended here, only superficial in content.

Much of this literature is mechanistically oriented. Stress is most often put on examining differences in cultural mores, values and folkways that are easily defined and easily measured. However, few attempts have been made to systematically explore the character of cross-cultural behavior vis-á-vis differing cultural assumptions and values. This study will attempt to do so.

For the purposes of this study, values are defined as being largely explicit in nature, and are easily articulated by individuals. They are relatively concrete and specific: the value of hard work in America, dignity of the individual, time is money, etc.

Cultural assumptions, on the other hand, are most often implicit to the individual, very difficult for him to articulate, and ill-defined. They represent how the individual sees and explains the world in which he lives.

Much of the literature examined in this study purports to examine the characteristics of interaction between foreign and American students, how it is effected, or why it fails. However, most of these writers reflect dominant American assumptions and values, by addressing themselves to examining how intercultural interaction might be enhanced on American campuses, rather than questioning the reasons for encouraging such interaction in the first place. There is relatively little introspection as to purposes, but considerable emphasis on methodology.

One author notes that the international student's adjustment to, and participation in, campus and community life is contingent upon several basic factors, some of which include:

> 1. Faculty, administrative and student commitment . . . to develop open-minded attitudes and conciliatory patterns of behavior toward each other. If they do not, unhappiness and waste of time, money and energy result.
> 2. Provision of certain facilities should be made to ease the . . . social adjustments between foreign students, fellow students, faculty, administrators and citizens. . . . Those foreign students who are not outgoing, independent personalities may need special help in making contacts with available resources.
> 3. Adaptation and adjustment to American life are the goals of American education for international students.
> 4. If the foreign student is to derive the greatest benefits from his sojourn here, he must learn to establish priorities in his use of time and energies.[3]

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[3]Helen C. Clarke and Martha Ozawa, The Foreign Student in the United States (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1970), 184-188.

A more scholarly work addresses itself to defining and clarifying the role(s) of culture vis-á-vis situational factors. The authors note that the behavior and adaptation of the foreign student cannot be predicted or adequately evaluated without considering the frame of reference provided by his culture, and that evaluation of the extent of adaptation of the international student requires the use of multiple criteria, including ". . . the personal and social adaptation that the student must make in order to meet educational needs, career goals and situational demands."[4]

Based on their long-range study of graduate students, Selby and Woods suggest that the emotional and academic pressures placed on the international student to achieve, to compete with other students, may effectively preclude leisurely social activities and broad social contact with Americans. The authors found that ". . . student morale varied with the academic seasons, whether quarter or semester, . . . and, in fact, the academic pressures preempt his attention and energy."[5]

In a paper by Clarence Hendershot the basic question posed is, ". . . how can universities enhance their effectiveness in preparing both the American and our foreign visitors on our campuses to live together harmoniously on 'Spaceship Earth?'" Toward accomplishing this end, Hendershot proposed that such activities as noted above (e.g., Host Family programs, International clubs), which are designed

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[4]Marjorie Klein, et al., "The Foreign Student Adaptation Program," International Educational and Cultural Exchange (Winter, 1971).

[5]Henry A. Selby and Clyde M. Woods, "Foreign Students at a High-Pressure University," Sociology of Education, XXXIX (1966), 153.

to facilitate foreign student participation in American life, ". . . be coordinated . . . and that measures should be taken to maximize these cultural benefits."[6]

Some efforts have been made to statistically measure the character and extent of the foreign student's adaptation to campus life, and to assess his needs, goals, and the exact character of some of the situational factors he confronts, or may confront, while pursuing his studies in this country.

Tamar Becker, in her dissertation on attitudinal changes among a selected population of foreign students at UCLA, tested the U-Curve hypothesis of attitudinal changes among international students there.[7] This hypothesis states that foreign students typically undergo a definite cycle in their feelings toward the United States. They begin with highly enthusiastic reactions on their arrival here, experience a "trough" of depression later in their stay, and arrive at some accommodation with conflicting feelings of distrust and dislike for the host culture, and those of enthusiasm for the host country.

However, Becker hypothesized that the attitudes of students from developed nations (e.g., Europe) would be

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[6]Clarence Hendershot, International Centers (paper prepared for CODFISH [Council of Directors of Foreign and International Student Headquarters] meeting, Office of International Education, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, May 9-10, 1971), p. 3. See also, Dixon C. Johnson, Involving Americans in International Programs (paper prepared for Annual Conference of NAFSA [National Association for Foreign Student Affairs], University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, May 11-14, 1971).

[7]Tamar Becker, "Patterns of Attitudinal Changes Among Foreign Students," dissertation abstract published in The American Journal of Sociology, LXXIII (January, 1968), 431-432.

> . . . less defensive, less nationalistic throughout the sojourn--that they would associate more extensively with non-compatriots and expose themselves to a wider range of communications.[8]

Conversely, it was predicted that a reverse pattern would occur for those students from semi-developed countries with these students experiencing considerably more of a "trough" and less assommodation of value systems toward the end of their stays. Based on her observations, Becker concluded that attitudinal changes were significantly related to whether the student comes from an "underdeveloped," "semi-developed," or "highly developed" country.

Edward Stewart concluded that these programs which seek to broaden relations among foreign and American students are usually short-sighted and often result in failure. According to Stewart:

> They make the typical American assumption that bringing people together in some form of social activity will spontaneously produce meaningful cross-cultural interaction. Experience negates the assumption, and reveals the need for the [foreign student] advisor to possess awareness of his own culture and social predispositions.[9]

Stewart goes on to say that the American student represents, in an aggregate sense, the American value system, and

> Unless American students, or particular groups within the American student body, can be helped to recognize others . . . the foreign student may be compelled to either retreat into an enclave of foreign or compatriot students, or to discard his own culture and become "Americanized."[10]

This author generally supports Stewart's views in this regard. Indeed, Stewart and a very few others posit that in order for internationally-oriented programs to succeed on University campuses,

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[8] Ibid., 434. [9] Stewart, 9. [10] Ibid., 9.

it is imperative that all participants--whether American or foreign--recognize their own cultural identity, and be able to judge their behavior and that of others from a viewpoint of cultural relativity.

CHAPTER II

CONTRASTS OF CULTURAL ASSUMPTIONS AND VALUES

It is assumed here that certain cultural characteristics of Americans and foreigners influence their behavior with each other, and that these behaviors are largely products and manifestations of the cultural assumptions and values held by both Americans and foreigners.

Most Americans certainly realize that foreigners are culturally different from them. This awareness of differences more often than not takes the form of perceived stereotypes, where people of differing cultures are categorized in terms of the host country culture. It is also likely that these stereotypes reflect the assumptions and values held by the host culture, and help to "explain" the new and the different to those in the host culture who have contact with foreigners.

Many Americans may still see Asians as shy and deferential, mysterious and generally inscrutable, Arabs are explosive, sly and tricky. Indians are gentle and tolerant. Germans are organized and ruthless. The British are staid, haughty and wry. Africans are ebullient, politically and socially backward, and closely tied to nature.

Americans are generally able to perceive cross-cultural differences in customs and mores with little difficulty. Differences in posture, gesture, family relationships, religions, political and economic systems can be objectified and understood by American analysts,

however

> The fact that these differences may be easily perceived often obscures the deeply embedded but more profound disparities in concepts about the world and experience and in patterns of thought and modes of action, all of which affect . . . person-to-person interaction.[1]

While in virtually any culture values and assumptions may vary according to individuals, groups, and even institutions, certain values are shared by a dominant portion of society and constitute norms for that culture. However, these variations in values are both limited and systematic.[2] As the term is used here, cultural patterns signify the individual's guides to the kind and number of alternatives or solutions he may choose from for solving problems. This is based on Kluckhohn's premise that: (1) there is a limited number of common human problems for which all men must, at some time, attempt to find solutions; (2) problem solving is definitely variable within a range of possible solutions; and (3) while various solutions or alternatives to problem solving are theoretically present, some solutions will most often be preferred over others.[3] This is to say that problems that all men face are common to them because of their common humanity. Also, depending on dominant societal, group, and/or individual norms and values, certain and specific solutions to these problems will be chosen consistently more often than other solutions or alternatives. Thus, while a wide range of alternatives is theoretically present and available to the individual confronted with a problem to solve, his values, whether reflecting dominant societal values or whether merely

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[1]Stewart, 4. [2]Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 10. [3]Ibid.

his as an individual, will ipso facto preclude him from perceiving all the possible solutions and therefore preclude him from choosing from a wide range of problem solving options.

Thus, within both dominant and variant patterns of thought, alternatives are, in effect, rank-ordered.

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, along with Stewart, have singled out these problem areas as common to all societies.

(1) What are the modalities of human activity?
(2) What are Man's relationships to nature?
(3) What is the temporal focus of human life?[4]

These areas of interest will be examined below and are graphically illustrated in Figure 1.

Modalities of Human Activity

Kluckhohn suggests that self-expression is a problem common to all individuals of all cultures,[5] and which she classifies as the "activity modality" centering on the problem of man's mode of self-expression in activity.

In the United States, the dominant mode of activity is "doing"--referring to the assumption that an individual's actions should center on the realization of concrete accomplishments. Its most distinctive characteristic in American society is

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[4] Ibid., 11. See also Stewart, 26, and Stewart, et al., Simulating Intercultural Communication Through Role Playing (Washington, D.C.: Human Resources Research Office, Technical Report 69-7, May, 1969), 14.

[5] Stewart, et al., 14.

Orientation	Range of Possible Variations					
Human Nature	Evil		Neutral	Mixture of Good-Evil	Good	
	Mutable	Immutable	Mutable	Immutable	Mutable	Immutable
Man-Nature	Subjugation to Nature		Harmony with Nature		Mastery Over Nature	
Time	Past		Present		Future	
Activity	Being		Being-In-Becoming		Doing	
Relational	Lineality		Collaterality		Individualism	

Figure 1. Values and assumptive orientations and a range of possible variations.[a]

[a]Florence Kluckhohn and Fred Strodtbeck, Variations in Value Orientations (New York: Row, Peterson, 1961), 12. See also E. C. Stewart, et al., Simulating Intercultural Communication Through Role Playing (Washington, D.C.: Human Resources Research Office, Technical Report 69-7, May, 1969), 20-21, for a more detailed description and summary of cultural assumptions and values.

> . . . a demand for the kind of activity which results in accomplishments that are measurable by standards conceived to be external to the acting individual. In other words, what does the person do? What can be accomplish?[6]

According to this view, for every action there must be a cause, and in terms of this mode, the American's view of the world is rational in that events and circumstances are ultimately understandable, measurable, and subject to manipulation. Succinctly stated:

> . . . the American's tendency is to be means oriented toward the world. . . . He conceives [the world] in terms of problems which a rational problemsolver can solve.[7]

A second cultural orientation to action, often dominant in other societies, is that of "being" which is in contrast to the American "doing" orientation. This mode of activity refers to the spontaneous expression of what often is regarded in these other societies as the innate nature of human personality. As noted by Stewart, it involves the phenomenological experience of man rather than his tangible accomplishments, and is associated with the notion of having a natural and given position in society.[8]

For instance, in some non-Western countries it is the contemplative man or the mystic who is valued and idealized by society as a whole, rather than the American "doer." This orientation or mode of activity could possibly be construed as a spontaneous expression of desires and impulses. But, this conclusion would not be complete or accurate, as such behavior would generally be mitigated by the demands of other

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[6]Kluckhohn, 17. [7]Stewart, American Cultural Patterns, 30.

[8]Ibid., 14.

assumptions and values. Essentially, this mode stresses what man is rather than what he can become.

The "being" mode and the assumptions that underpin it centers on the roles of the individual in society, rather than on his achievements or ability. It is then largely ascriptive in nature, and defines "experience" as being largely apart from man's manipulation or control; experience, while not wholly external to man, is both a part of him and the world.

Where the American will ordinarily try to understand and manage behavior and environment, the ascriptive aspect of this "being" mode supposes that individual behavior or actions play a significantly smaller role in problem-solving and determining the outcome of any given situation or set of situations. Instead, for example, the motivations and interests of the individual's work or peer groups may well take precedence over individual goals, ideas and responsibilities.

A third orientation to action is that of "being-in-becoming."[9] This view of man's nature is similar to the "being" orientation in that it reflects what the human being is rather than what he can do. The major difference between this and the other modes is that it stresses that man can and does develop ". . . all aspects of the self as an integrated whole."[10]

Man's Relation to Nature

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck premise their discussion of this topic on the three relatively well accepted theses of man's relationship

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[9]Kluckhohn, 16. [10]Stewart, American Cultural Patterns, 33.

to nature, and how these are perceived by some writers in sociology, anthropology, philosophy, ethnology and psychology. These three views are:

(1) Man's subjugation to nature.

(2) Man's harmony with nature.

(3) Man's superiority over nature.

The first view is often perceived through expressions of fatalism, or, "If it is God's will. . . ." While he may be an integral part of nature, he is subject to it. He cannot affect but is affected.

The second mode of perceiving man's relationship to nature is that of harmony with it. According to Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck:

> One is simply an extension of the other, and a conception of wholeness derives from their unity.[11]

The mastery over nature position is the one mode perhaps most exemplified by Americans. In this view, man is separate from the physical world, and is able to change, manage and ultimately dominate it. According to this view, man is basically future oriented. He generally does not question the value or efficacy of pursuing certain goals or of solving problems as much as the best means toward realizing these goals. This contrasts with the view of nature held by many non-Western peoples in that natural, or material wealth is limited; it cannot be increased significantly so as to benefit the maximum number of people, but it can easily be decreased. Therefore, the individual's ability to effect significant changes in his environment

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[11]Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 13.

is also limited. Perhaps more important, however, is that he who attempts to manage resources, whether for self or community benefit, is looked upon askance by other members of the community if the proposed or attempted change would significantly challenge the existing use of resources and material. Thus, considerably more emphasis is placed on conformity to societal norms, and significant deviation from these is subject to punishment in a variety of ways. By extension, competition between members of a society for goods or non-material benefits (e.g., status) is more severely limited than in the United States, which places much greater emphasis on the value of competition.

Temporal Orientation

Where the American middle-class man may subscribe to the assumptions outlined above, peoples in many non-Western countries would tend to place significantly greater emphasis on living the here-and-now, the past, or a combination of the two. This does not mean that the future orientation as outlined above does not exist at all in other nations, as it relates to the individual's behavior; all three temporal orientations do exist. However, they may be ordered--or rank-ordered--differently than we would do so as Americans.

Numerous illustrations of this are available from the author's own observations. In many Andean countries, for example, there is considerable stress on the combination of the two orientations of past and present. In the Mexican-American Southwest United States, the present time orientation is often ranked as the first order

alternative. Also, it might be generalized that the Chinese, at least until recently, have placed great emphasis on the past orientation.

Man's Relation With Other Men

It is assumed here that personal relations among Americans are marked by a number of characteristics. Some of these will be examined below vis-á-vis how interpersonal relationships may be perceived by many non-Western countries.

Because of man's basic humanity, his "oneness" with his fellows, the American ideally holds that all men are essentially equal. Man's basic "humanity," then, is the standard by which all men are factored.

In many non-Western countries the basic equality of all men may be more a function of roles or status than the common demoninator it is in America. And, in the contrast of Americans working abroad,

> Americans . . . find it very confusing to shift from high to low status as the situation demands. . . . Their uneasiness often leads to an assertive attempt to either establish a superficially egalitarian ethos . . . or else to an attempt to establish hierarchies which are rigidly resistant to other considerations such as lineage and education.[12]

The value of equality in many non-Western countries does not pervade society and provide a basis for all interpersonal relationships.

Instead equality may be more often expressed as a function of roles and therefore status. It is then considerably more of a variable instead of a constant, as may be the general case in America.

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[12]Stewart, American Cultural Patterns, 46.

These differing approaches to interpersonal relations may be manifested through the confrontation orientation of Americans in their attempts to establish rather intimate, informal relationships with others. According to the context of the relationship, this approach is often anathema to other peoples and personally threatening. The Japanese and Chinese concepts of "face" are directly related to this, although each differs from the other.[13]

Kluckhohn distinguishes between relational orientations by categorizing interpersonal relations according to whether the "collateral" or "lineal" principle dominates across societies.[14]

If the so-called collateral principle is a dominant societal norm, the individual's adherence to and expression of laterally extended group (e.g., family, religious affiliation) norms and values take primacy over "individuality" or individual goals.

If the lineal principle is dominant,

> group goals again have primacy, but there is the additional factor that one of the most important of these group goals is continuity through time. Continuity of the group through time and ordered positional succession within the group are both crucial issues when liniality dominates the relational succession [author's emphasis]. . . .[15]

Thus, the individual is not a human being in and by himself, but only as part of a social order. This is a difficult concept with which most Americans can successfully identify.

It is suggested here that some internationally oriented programs

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[13]For a description of the Japanese concepts of "face" vs. those of the Chinese, see ibid., 49.

[14]Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 19.

[15]Ibid., 19.

conducted by private and governmental agencies in the United States are predicated on the assumption that:

proximity → contact → interaction of participants → understanding and appreciation → cooperation → peace.

It is this author's view that this assumption reflects a considerable naivete on the part of its adherents. This assumption is not based on empirical, specific grounds, but is only "known" at the gross common sense level. It might alternatively be argued that:

proximity → contact → selective interaction of participants → reinforcement of prejudices and/or misunderstanding → distrust → emnity.

This suggests that those who are engaged in internationally related programs might best realize some of their goals by adopting an attitude of cultural relativity where the individual or group can scrutinize itself in the light of other, often radically different cultural attitudes and modes of behavior. In a nutshell, to know others one must know himself as well as the extent to which his own attitudes and behavior are influenced by his society and its values, and the values of the individual involved.

Adopting this proposed attitude of cultural relativity is certainly a difficult process. To date, little concrete work has been done in this area, as is evinced by the dearth of research in this area.

Some few private and governmental agencies have addressed their training programs to inducing precisely this type of attitudinal change in terms of the relativity of values and standards of behavior.

It is proposed here, however, that many of these programs are only partially successful in meeting this goal in that they tend to be more objectively oriented (i.e., changing others) than subjectively oriented (i.e., changing oneself). While the most effective approach toward inducing attitudes of cultural relativity is still largely a matter of conjecture, an interesting alternative has been proposed.[16]

According to Stewart, the American should have a thorough understanding and appreciation for his own culture, the foreign culture with which he is trying to identify, and the "culture" which emerges from continued and profound contact of the American and his foreign counterpart. This "third culture" has been defined as:

> The complex of patterns learned and shared by communities of men stemming from both a Western and non-Western society.[17]

In this third culture, it is assumed that relationships between interacting persons should ideally be coordinate and compatible. Where they are not, conflict arises between American and foreigner.

Stewart also argues that conflict between the American and foreigner may provide both with the opportunities for "unfreezing," "moving," and "refreezing" of attitudes and behavior.[18]

Through profound and risk-oriented interaction between Americans and foreigners, whether artificially induced through role playing or defined through actual cross-cultural experience, the individual is "unfrozen" from habitual modes of perception:

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[16] Stewart, American Cultural Patterns, 86.

[17] Stewart, et al., Simulating Intercultural Communication, 11.

[18] Ibid., 8.

> by the experience of being exposed to the consequences of acting upon his own cultural-cognitive frame of reference.[19]

This part of the process brings one's own values and cultural assumptions into question, and highlights the roles his own culture plays in determining who and what he is.

The "moving" aspect of the process induces an attitude of cultural relativity and, hopefully, empathy with values and behaviors often radically different from what he would ordinarily accept or reject as "correct" or "incorrect."

The final part of this process is that of "refreezing," where the individual is ready, willing and able to relearn other values and behaviors as being "correct" or "incorrect," and to feel comfortable with these behaviors and the reasons for them.

This by no means implies that the individual then "goes native." Rather, by "unfreezing," "moving," and "refreezing" he should become more aware of his own values as an American, and as an individual.

Through this process, the individual's cognitive abilities, his flexibility and maturity in understanding, appreciating and applying new approaches to problem solving may be significantly strengthened.

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[19] Ibid., 8.

CHAPTER III

IMPLICATIONS

Below, we shall attempt to analyze some of the salient characteristics of some University of Tennessee international programs insofar as these characteristics reflect dominant American values and assumptions. Also, implications for further research will be discussed as these are pertinent to understanding the roles culture may play in influencing behavior of individuals in cross-cultural situations.

University of Tennessee International Club and International House

International and American student participation in International Club programs has been less than satisfactory.[1] The lack of strong, continuous leadership by Club officers, coupled with sporadic funding, unimaginative programming, and a failure to actively recruit new members, certainly contributes to this unattractive picture of the International Club. However, there is perhaps another reason for inadequate Club performance.

International clubs are generally not a natural part of the University and community environment. Like International Houses across the country and at the University of Tennessee, these clubs are designed to provide a "home away from home" for the foreign

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[1] Gaither and Griffin, 6.

student. Instead of fostering interaction between foreign and domestic students, they often find themselves reaching primarily the foreign student who has not reached a comfortable accommodation with his university and community surroundings. Whether this is true remains to be definitely proven. However, International clubs and International houses are a permanent part of many University campuses.

Given the above, this author would suggest that the University of Tennessee International Club and International House provide the major function of acquainting the new foreign students with a wider spectrum of campus activities, University of Tennessee facilities, and the Knoxville community. In effect, what is proposed here is that these two organizations serve only a liaison function between the newly arrived foreign student and the wider community. They should not attempt to perpetuate themselves on a permanent, indefinite basis so far as any one student is concerned, but should seek to introduce the new foreign student to the widest possible range of American life as found in Knoxville. Neither organization is performing this function satisfactorily at present.

In-Service Training for Professionals and Para-Professionals

There are two national organizations in the United States which conduct in-service training programs for University personnel and community residents interested in intercultural communications and cross-cultural interaction programs. The National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) and the Regional Council for International Education (RCIE) encourage foreign student advisors,

international students, community people working with foreign students, and academic personnel to attend inter-cultural communication workshops and seminars dealing with cross-cultural communications and behavior. Participants are encouraged to initiate similar workshops on their respective campuses, given appropriate local circumstances.

This aspect of the overall programming of NAFSA and RCIE forms a relatively small part of their operations. Of the two, however, RCIE has most probably done more concrete work in this field. Given the purposes of this analysis, we would conclude that both organizations, especially NAFSA, the larger and perhaps more influential of the two, devote considerably more time and resources toward investigating further the character of cross-cultural communications and the influences of culture on behavior.

Intercultural Communications Workshops

These workshops are a relatively new innovation in the United States. To date, three such workshops (ICW's) have been conducted on the University of Tennessee's Knoxville campus.

The ICW is designed to enable participants of different cultural backgrounds to increase their understanding of their own and other cultures, and attempts to relate personal behavior to the processes of cross-cultural communications. The ICW is experientially oriented and informal, with much of the participant interaction taking place in small groups. For the most part, University of Tennessee ICW participants have responded enthusiastically to this program, which will continue throughout the academic year.

Use of Video Tape in Examining Cultural Influences on Behavior

Since summer, 1971, the Office of International Student Affairs, in cooperation with the Psychology Department of the University of Tennessee, has been videotaping non-structured informal conversations between students from different cultural backgrounds. This method is being used to discover cultural similarities and differences which may affect interaction between the participants. Through use of both this medium and the Intercultural Communications Workshop, it is also hoped that a better definition of the extent of cultural vs. individual, personal influences on intercultural communication and behavior will result.

To our knowledge, this experiment is unique in the United States, and its efficacy has yet to be demonstrated. However, the services of a videotape cameraman with a background in psychology have been engaged to continue this research during winter, 1972.

Both the ICW and the use of the video tape are essentially research projects conducted by this office. While ICW and videotape participants may gain from participation in these projects, their primary purpose is to provide the staff of this office with a more thorough understanding of its principle clientele--the international student. To date, they have provided us with considerable reason for re-thinking and re-evaluating the purposes and programs of this office.

Data from this research will, hopefully, provide more insights as to the exact functions of the International Club and the

International House, as well as the roles of the various National Associations (e.g., Chinese Association, Arab Association) on campus play in the social, cultural, and academic life of their respective clienteles.

The practical upshots for this research might help provide concrete and reliable answers for some questions, including: how are the International Club, International House, the Host Family Program, and the National Associations perceived by their clientele? Is there a correlation between national background and participation in campus and community events? To what extent do students feel they should "adjust" to life here? How do foreign students here perceive Americans as a whole and why are Americans seen the way they are? How do American students and professors see the foreign student, as a whole? How do these perceptions affect their behavior? What are the expectations of the foreign student from his sojourn here? What does he expect to do when he returns home? How different (or how similar) are the needs of foreign students vs. those of American students?

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

This essay has attempted to draw together and more clearly define some of the assumptions and values that may help determine our behavior as human beings. More specifically, this study attempted to clarify how these values and assumptions may influence behavior of individuals in cross-cultural situations.

It has been recognized that, while deviant or variant patterns of behavior do exist for Americans as a whole, certain values have been accepted as dominant within this society. Our concern in this paper has been with these values and assumptions.

Assumptions have been defined as the predispositions employed by the individual to explain and pattern the world in a rational manner. Values are explicit reflections of assumptions. They are relatively concrete, specific, and easily definable. Assumptions are relatively implicit, vague, and more difficult to define or measure.

It has been suggested that, as certain values are dominant within a society, variations in value orientations are rather limited. Corollary to this is Kluckhohn's premise that: (1) there are a limited number of common problems which all men must, at some time, attempt to resolve; (2) there are, practically speaking, only a limited number of alternatives an individual may choose from for solving

problems; and (3) while various alternatives to solving problems are theoretically present, some solutions or alternatives will most often be chosen over others.

Cultural patterns have been defined as the individual's guides to the kind and number of alternatives he may choose from for problem solving. Cultural patterns have been broken down and analyzed in four components: (1) the modalities (or modes) of human activity; (2) man's relationship with nature; (3) the temporal focus of human life; and (4) man's relationship with other men.

The activity modality centers on the various modes of man's self-expression in activity. Modalities may vary across cultures, and also within cultures. In the United States, it was suggested that the dominant mode of activity was "doing," in contrast to the "being" mode of activity dominant in other cultures. This mode, in turn, is distinct from the "being is becoming" mode of activity.

Various relationships of man to nature were also discussed. These relationships, as argued in this paper, may take three different forms: (1) man's subjugation to nature; (2) man's harmony with nature; and/or (3) man's mastery over nature.

Man's perception and use of time has been discussed as a cultural variable. Culture may help determine men to be basically past oriented, present oriented, or future oriented.

Cultural influences on varying forms of interpersonal relationships were also discussed. A distinction was made between these relational orientations on the basis of whether they were essentially "collateral," "lineal," or "individually" oriented.

It was suggested that those who are engaged in internationally related programs adopt an attitude of cultural relativity, where cultural and individual assumptions, values, and behaviors are questioned and modified vis-á-vis assumptions, values and behaviors found in cultures other than his own.

Stewart suggests that this attitude might be realized through the individual's adoption of a "third culture," which may emerge from a thorough understanding of the foreign culture, and his own culture. The third culture emphasizes a compatability between different cultural values, assumptions, and behaviors, and emerges from profound and give-and-take contact of different cultural backgrounds.

An attitude of cultural relativity may be induced through the "unfreezing," "moving," "refreezing" process outlined by Stewart. Through this process, serious conflicts of values and behaviors are minimized, and the individual's ability to appreciate and apply new approaches to problem solving are, hopefully, enhanced.

Implications for research and application of the theories presented in the body of this paper were discussed in the final chapter.

It was suggested that the University of Tennessee International Club and the International House serve as liaison agencies between the newly arrived foreign student and the University and Knoxville communities.

Recommendation was also made for the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) and the Regional Council for

International Education (RCIE) to quantitatively and qualitatively expand their investigations into the character of cross-cultural communications.

Mention was made of the use of intercultural communications workshops and the videotaping of intercultural dyads as other useful means to further clarify and define the character and processes of cross-cultural communications.

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