Introduction to Culture and Negotiation

The Context of Global and Multicultural Negotiations

L et's look in on Alex, who is struggling to cope in a cross-cultural negotiation setting. Here is Alex's message to people in his office. He might be a diplomat, a businessperson, or a development worker.

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To: The Gang at the Office
From: Alex
Subject: Progress on negotiations for the new initiative

I thought I should give you all an update on how the talks about the initiative are proceeding. In my last message, I told you that our team had to meet the local leader prior to proceeding. Well, that meeting happened, and it was quite an event! Initially we were surprised to be met by a detachment of soldiers who we assumed were the leader's personal bodyguards. They were all decked out in elaborate uniforms and rifles. They formed a corridor through which we walked to meet the leader, who was standing at the end of the column outside an elaborate audience hall and palace. He shook hands with all of us, introduced us to his wife, and invited us in to sit with them at a low table surrounded by chairs. (Naturally he and his wife sat in the largest and highest chairs!) He motioned to his servants, who rapidly brought tea and

some sweets, some of which were unrecognizable and very chewy. The leader initiated some small talk, asking about where we were from, what we had seen of the country, what we thought of the culture, and so on, and we reciprocated the small talk. Finally, one person on our team tried to talk directly about the proposed new initiative, but the leader dismissively waved his hand and said that we should discuss it later with some of his colleagues. We took the hint and returned to small talk.

Upon adjourning our meeting with the leader, our team was shown into another large audience hall adjacent to the palace and seated at the head table on a dais at the front of a large conference room with fixed tables in the shape of a U. About twenty or thirty men and three women filed in behind us and took their seats around the U. A number of people, who we assumed were their subordinates, also stood around the outside of the room and kept constantly coming in and going out while delivering messages to or taking notes from their bosses, who conferred and signed papers. (This went on throughout the meeting.) Occasionally a cell phone would ring, and the recipient of the call would take the call where he was sitting, often talking in a fairly loud voice, or would rush to the back or out of the room. It felt like controlled chaos!

Finally, we were asked to make our presentation. While most people seemed to be listening, there were also a number of side conversations going on. When we finished, the local participants began a long and elaborate discussion in their own language that didn't appear to have much focus either on us or on the program proposal. For long periods, they even seemed to be arguing among themselves. They occasionally asked us questions, but the discussion focused on several men who made fairly long, vociferous speeches, only portions of which were made in a language we understood or were interpreted for us. The group seemed to circle the question of whether to support our proposal, without ever explicitly supporting or rejecting it. I guess they wanted to get all of the views out on the table and assess the lay of the land without committing themselves. When it seemed appropriate, we added our comments and tried to answer their questions. Finally, one of the older men said he liked our ideas and suggested that talks continue at a later undefined time. I guess this will take longer than I figured! Please change my return air reservations to late next week. That's all for now.

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Alex's message illustrates some of the difficulties of intercultural negotiations. Traveling businesspeople, diplomats, and development specialists writing to their home offices find that formal ceremonial events, a confusing decision-making process, and unclear power dynamics leave them stymied

about how to proceed. Certainly local counterparts approach the negotiation process in ways that are strange—but are completely normal to them, of course.

This book is about the intersection between culture and negotiation. People who work across cultures, whether internationally or within nations, need general principles—a cultural map, if you will—to guide their negotiation strategies. Such a map will help them to:

- Identify the general topography of cultures—the beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, procedures, and social structures that shape human interactions

- Recognize potential hazards, obstacles, and pleasant surprises that intercultural travelers and negotiators might miss without a guide

- Select responses that will be more likely to achieve successful interactions and outcomes

Although many books have been written about the negotiation process and many more about culture, few analytical frameworks provide practical guidance about how individuals, groups, and organizations from different cultures solve problems, negotiate agreements, or resolve disputes. This book addresses this gap.

A DEFINITION OF CULTURE

Culture is the cumulative result of experience, beliefs, values, knowledge, social organizations, perceptions of time, spatial relations, material objects and possessions, and concepts of the universe acquired or created by groups of people over the course of generations. It is socially constructed through individual and group effort and interactions. Culture manifests itself in patterns of language, behavior, activities, procedures, roles, and social structures and provides models and norms for acceptable day-to-day communication, social interaction, and achievement of desired affective and objective goals in a wide range of activities and arenas. Culture enables people to live together in a society within a given geographical environment, at a given state of technical development, and at a particular moment in time (Samovar and Porter, 1988).

When we think of culture, we often think exclusively in terms of national cultures that are often reported in the media. However, we find cultural differences at many levels. For instance, women and men constitute the two largest cultural groups in the world (Gilligan, 1982). We also encounter subcultures in the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of ethnic groups, regional groups, social classes, tribes, clans, neighborhoods, and families (Kahane, 2003; Sunshine, 1990). Governments and their agencies, corporations and private firms, universities and schools, civil society and nongovernmental organizations have their own specific cultures and ways of doing things, often

called organizational culture (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Schein, 2004). Culture is also rooted in religious beliefs, ideological persuasions, professions, and professional training and in the levels and types of education (Smith, 1989; Sunshine, 1990). Finally, families have cultures that are a blend or combination of the cultures of their adult members or of their extended families (McGoldrick, Giordano, and Garcia-Preto, 1982, 2002).

Given all of these cultural variables and significant variations within cultures, how can we develop any conclusions about how a particular person or group from any one culture might behave in negotiations or conflicts? Despite the apparent insurmountable scope of the problem, specific cultures do contain clusters of people with fairly common attitudinal and behavioral patterns. These culture clusters occupy the middle portion of a bell-shaped curve (Trompenars, 1994), such as that illustrated in Figure 1.1.

However, every culture includes outliers—people who vary significantly from the norm and are outside the cultural cluster. Although they are still contained within the range for their culture, their views and behaviors differ significantly from those of their peers and may even look similar to those of people from other cultures. For instance, a businessperson or engineer from a developing country who was educated in the United Kingdom and has lived there for many years may have more in common with his or her peers in Europe than with people in his or her country of origin (Figure 1.2).

For this reason, we must be wary of making vague or sweeping generalizations about how people from a specific culture may think or act. Rigid notions about a group's cultural patterns can result in potentially inaccurate stereotypes, gross injustice to the group, and possibly disastrous assumptions or actions. Common elements and repetitive cultural patterns found in a group's central cultural cluster should be looked on as possible, or even probable, clues as to the ways that members of a cultural group may think or respond. However, the hypothesis should always be tested and modified after direct interaction with the individual or group in question. You never know when
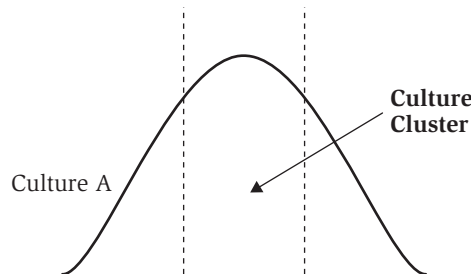

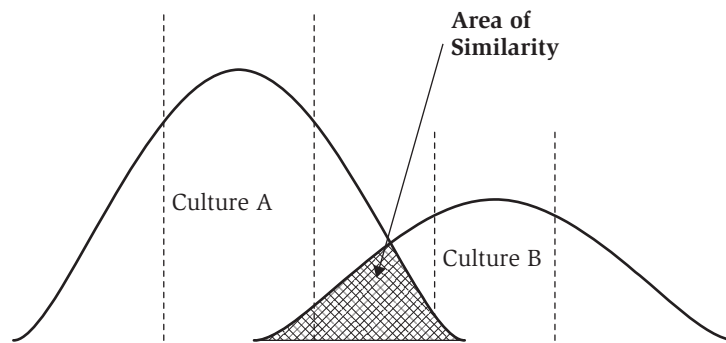**Figure 1.1.** Distribution of Cultural Patterns in a Specific Group

Figure 1.2. Overlaps and Differences Among Cultures
Source: Trompenars (1994).

you may encounter an outlier who acts out of cultural character, does not follow expectations according to stereotypes, and may think and behave more like you than you ever expected.

WHAT IS NEGOTIATION?

Before exploring the characteristics and cultural aspects of negotiation, we need a general definition of the term. Generally most Western negotiators and academics, when defining negotiation, emphasize the presence of incompatible positions or preferred solutions, a bargaining or problem-solving process based on an exchange of positions to address contested issues, or a process that results in specific tangible outcomes or substantive exchanges.

For example, Albin (2001, p. 1) states, ''Negotiation is a joint decision-making process in which parties, with initially opposing positions and con-flicting interests, arrive at a mutually beneficial and satisfactory agreement. It normally includes dialogue with problem-solving and discussion on merits, as well as bargaining and the exchange of concessions with the use of competitive tactics.'' Although this definition does identify some of the key characteristics or elements that may be present in negotiations, it fails to accommodate the full range of negotiation goals, approaches, procedures, and outcomes found across cultures. We explore some of these variables later in this chapter.

Within a broad definition of negotiation, we should also note that negotia-tions take place in a wide range of contexts, from simple market bargaining to complex processes to end wars within or between nations. Table 1.1 presents a schematic range of situations in which people from different cultures often engage in negotiation.

Table 1.1. Range of Negotiation Contexts

Less complex					More complex
Market bargaining	Contract negotiations	Negotiation of international norms	Negotiation of bilateral or multilateral assistance (development, humanitarian assistance, military aid)	Societal conflict:	International conflict:
Sales agreement (house, car, products, resources)	Trade agreements	Labor-management negotiations		Gang violence	Border dispute
		Environmental standards		Civil war	Dispute over a shared resource
				Secession	Invasion or takeover
				Rebellion	Survival
				Ethnic conflict	
Less conflict					More conflict

The examples in the table represent both simple and complex situations and ones that involve less or more conflict. Note, however, that situations of relatively little conflict can easily become contentious and move toward the right side of the table. For instance, trade negotiations are usually held in an atmosphere in which both sides are looking for mutual gain. However, if there has been recent perceived unfairness or disputes over certain kinds of goods, trade negotiations can become more contentious. And interactions that are generally straightforward in the context of a single culture can swiftly become conflictual due to intercultural misunderstanding. A European tourist might seek to purchase a carpet from a merchant in the market in Turkey. The interaction could begin amicably, with tea served and many carpets brought out for display. Although both buyer and seller expect a degree of over- and underbidding, either party might become angry based on perceived unfairness. A simple purchase can plunge into an irritated exchange.

Although the concepts in this book are applicable in all of the situations depicted in Table 1.1, they are most useful for more complex negotiations. The later chapters provide step-by-step practical guidance for all stages of negotiations. Such elaborate detail would be of little use for relatively simple transactions, but it becomes increasingly necessary as the stakes become higher and the level of actual or potential conflict rises.

CULTURAL VARIATIONS REGARDING THE ESSENTIAL PURPOSES OF NEGOTIATIONS

Members of different cultures see negotiations differently. For instance, some cultures place great emphasis on building positive relationships among negotiators—perhaps greater than their attention to any specific substantive

decision or outcome. Many cultures also emphasize preexisting commonalties or areas of agreement or connections and procedures that develop consensus, as opposed to the exchange of positions or the use of threats. As we will see in later chapters, this difference in the basic conceptualization of negotiations can be considered a cultural frame.

Because of the range of cultural conceptions about what negotiations signify, the divergent goals that are influenced by culture, and the vast range of procedures and practices involved, we need a broad definition of the negotiation process and its potential outcomes. Our working definition of intercultural negotiation, used in the remainder of this book, is detailed in Box 1.1.

Although these elements occur in almost all negotiations, different cultures emphasize or value different parts. We now examine the elements of this definition in more detail and explore how the components of negotiation interact with culture.

Negotiation Is a Relationship-Establishing and Building Process

Negotiation occurs in the context of relationships, preexisting or newly created affiliations between individuals or groups. Relationships either bind parties together through common positive feelings of trust, respect, caring, obligation, or love, or drive them apart because of mistrust, pain, or hate. Constructive relationships, which on occasion are a precondition for productive negotiations, are generally established through the development of common positive feelings, perceptions, interactions, and reciprocal obligations or exchanges. Because the quality of relationships is often a key to the potential success or failure of negotiations, examining how positive negotiator relationships are established, maintained, or damaged across cultures is critical.

Box 1.1. Intercultural Negotiation: A Definition

Intercultural negotiation is a process initiated by individuals, groups, or organizations from different cultures that enables them to:

1. Jointly define the form of their relationship.
2. Clarify individually and together the goals and outcomes to be achieved.
3. Communicate about issues of individual or common concern.
4. Educate each other about shared and differing issues, interests, or needs.
5. Develop options that address their interests, needs, issues, problems, or conflicts.
6. Influence and persuade each other.
7. Reach mutually acceptable decisions and agreements.
8. Implement agreements reached.

Note: We are indebted to William F. Lincoln for his thinking on the components of the definition of negotiation.

Culture influences participants' views regarding what a relationship is: its goals, what goes into making a good one, norms and expectations for exchanges and reciprocity, appropriate interactions, activities and rituals involved, and things that damage or destroy them. It also defines what relationships are appropriate for negotiations. For example, in a small town in France, it is perfectly acceptable for a single or married woman customer to have a positive and friendly relationship with a man from whom she regularly buys vegetables at a local farmers' market. The negotiation relationship usually begins with a greeting: ''*Bonjour Madame/Bonjour Monsieur!*'' During their subsequent exchanges, it is within culturally acceptable limits for them to exchange pleasantries about each other's families or goings on in the village, as well as to dicker a bit over the price of the produce. The familiar exchanges preserve their relationship—and might also influence the price of the vegetables. The seller wants to preserve the relationship and may throw in some extra fruit to indicate that he values the connection, while also encouraging the customer to return. The buyer's exchange may be no more than a smile, a good story, or a promise to return to the stall next week, Nevertheless, the exchange is valued.

Contrast this negotiation relationship to the possibilities of a similar market interaction between a single or married woman and a male merchant in Middle Eastern cultures. In some countries and cultures in the region, an exchange like the one described in France would be totally acceptable, but in other settings, any interchange between a woman and a man would be forbidden. In still other places, a woman could buy from a male merchant if she were accompanied by a male relative. What is talked about, by whom, and for how long would probably be more highly circumscribed, but haggling over price might be more exaggerated, even if only as a ritual, than in the French example.

Relationships, mutual obligations, and trust are often valued as the cement that will ensure compliance with an agreement. In such settings, relationships are more important for compliance than abstract rules, laws, or court systems. For example, Jewish merchants in Europe, since the time of the Middle Ages, often acted as the bankers, lenders, and facilitators of commerce throughout the continent. Their network of coreligionists, who shared a common culture and similar values and were often connected through intermarriage, created bonds that allowed the lending and transfer of funds to be conducted in a fairly predictable and secure manner. It was the relationships and shared values and culture that facilitated these trusting exchanges, not the rule of law, although the latter often developed and was formalized from the model of these preexisting relationships (Putnam, 1993). Similar cultural relationship patterns have been found in networks of Chinese, Lebanese, and Indian merchants across the world (Sowell, 1996).

Negotiation Is a Goal- and Outcome-Oriented Process

Much of the literature on negotiation and statements from prominent negotiators in the West identify substantive agreements as the primary goal or outcome of negotiations. Substantive agreements involve coming to terms over money, property, performance, behaviors, and so forth. The focus is often on concrete and tangible outcomes, whether negotiations involve a reduction of the number of missiles possessed by nations, the adoption of a specific foreign policy, the intervention conditions for a peacekeeping force, development of a balance of trade, the definition of contractual relations in a commercial transaction between a multinational and a host country partner, terms for implementation of a development project, or even the price of a hotel room or taxi.

However, culture often defines what kinds of substantive outcomes are important or desirable. For example, in some more traditional societies, a person's wealth or status is measured in the number of cows and size of herd he possesses, not in the more abstract forms of wealth, such as money in coin or paper currency. An exchange of money, although of value, may not be the proper goal or outcome for negotiations.

Although substantive goals and outcomes are clearly important, they may not always be the primary outcome desired by all parties, especially those from different cultures. In some cultures, a relationship or psychological outcome may be just as important as any specific substantive agreement. In addition to substantive and relationship goals, some parties are concerned about the procedures used to achieve outcomes. The interactions among substantive, relationship, and procedural interests—and differing concepts regarding negotiation—is a constant theme in this book.

Negotiation Is a Communications Process

Communication is the lifeblood of negotiations, for to reach agreements, parties must communicate and exchange information with each other and be able to accurately interpret and understand data that have been presented. They need to be able to exchange information on their feelings, perceptions, concerns, interests, needs, goals, objectives, visions, and procedural preferences. Communication can be face-to-face, through intermediaries, written, over the telephone or Internet, or through symbolic gestures (such as gift giving), but it is a required element of effective negotiations.

Communication is deeply affected by culture. What, when, where, to whom, and how parties communicate is directly influenced by a negotiator's culture and background. Whether parties use respectful or pejorative language, speak directly or in a roundabout manner, quietly converse about a topic or debate

it in a loud voice, or present specific or general proposals early or late in negotiations is governed by the cultural background of the participants. The cultural patterns of communication are explored in detail in later chapters.

Negotiation Is a Joint Education Process

At some time, the negotiators begin a mutual education process. This may be an explicit education process or indirect mutual learning through the presentation and exploration of positions. In most cases, in order to reach agreements, the parties must create informal or formal opportunities to educate each other about the connections they desire, the topics or issues for discussion, and their individual and collective needs and interests.

Cultures use contrasting approaches to educating one another. For example, a comparative study of business executives from the United States, France, and Germany concluded that many members of each of these cultures have very different styles and expectations for educational procedures in the context of negotiations. Hall and Hall (1990) noted that French executives often expect elaborate presentations that may include emotional content and literary or historical illusions: ''The French like to provide masses of figures organized in complex patterns along with detailed background information. This is a result of their education, which stresses abstract thinking and the use of statistics and figures'' (p. 103). In contrast, Germans in general provide more information on a subject than most other cultures either expect or require. Germans generally expect direct, clear, and highly precise presentations that provide a logical outline of facts, lots of data (including minutiae), and a summary at the end that repeats all major points. In still another contrast, American business executives generally expect direct and, on occasion, informal presentations (though not as direct as Germans) that are punchy, to the point, and often accompanied by some humor. Points are often made in headline or bulleted form, and a brief digest of key ideas may be submitted in written form. American executives appear to find general or background information less important than specifics that are needed to make immediate decisions. More will be said about cultural approaches to education in negotiations in later chapters.

Negotiation Is a Problem-Solving and Option-Generation or Proposal Process

Although negotiation serves many purposes and may achieve a wide range of goals, it is primarily a problem-solving process. Negotiators strive to identify a common issue, problem, or conflict and generate possible options to address their individual and collective concerns, interests, and needs.

In general, there are three broad procedural approaches to problem solving and negotiations, and related option generation: positional bargaining,

interest-based or integrative negotiations, and relationship or conciliatory pro-
cedures (Walton and McKersie, 1991). These approaches are practiced in
all cultures to some degree, although members of specific cultures typically
emphasize one approach over another. The approaches may also be conducted
separately or in combination. (See Chapter Four for a full exploration of these
three approaches.)

Negotiators from a given culture select the specific procedures they will
use depending on the specific situation; the particular issues or conflicts in
question; the parties involved and their rank, status, authority, or gender; the
perceived risks or stakes; their potential or actual means of influence; their
expectations or goals regarding current and future relationships; personal style;
and cultural norms regarding preferred negotiation approaches and a variety
of other factors, including the approach that the other party or parties adopt.
In general, outcomes of negotiation can be integrative or distributive in nature.

Integrative outcomes address to the greatest extent possible the individual
and joint aspirations, interests, and needs of the parties. Striving for integrative
solutions to issues, problems, and conflicts involves parties in identifying
individual and mutual interests and needs and then developing options, or
possibly an overall formula or package, that achieve the greatest benefit for all
involved. Distributive outcomes are negotiation consequences that result from
the division, sharing, or allocation of perceived or actual limited resources.
Money, property, time, performance, or activity can often be divided and
allocated among concerned parties.

The desirability of achieving integrative or distributive outcomes of negoti-
ation is influenced by the mind-sets and cultural norms of the parties (Fisher,
1988). Decisions about the approach taken are determined by the issues,
who the parties are, perceived or actual scarcity, and preferred negotiation
procedures, among other things.

Relationship or conciliatory procedures are used to establish and build
positive personal, intragroup, and intergroup relations or repair or solve
problems in the context of relationships. In some cases, there are relatively
few substantive issues of concern, as negotiators focus on changes in attitudes,
expectations, or relationship-oriented behaviors.

Negotiation Is an Influence and Persuasion Process

In negotiations across cultures, the cultural acceptability of a persuasion tactic
may make the difference between a positive working relationship and deadlock.
Each party initiates activities to influence and promote change within the other
party. Generally these activities expand or narrow the range of potential options
for agreement.

Negotiators have many ways to influence each other, including cooperative tactics that provide positive benefits from collaboration, as well as more coercive means that may risks, and hurt or damage the other side if they do not comply. Some means of influence are exercising formal authority; providing testimony of experts or information; using connections or the influence of respected associates of another party; making suggestions on how to proceed with discussions; making threats or exercising coercion; being a nuisance; appealing to the status quo or traditional ways of addressing problems; exercising moral authority or appeals; or exerting personal persuasion (Mayer, 2000). Strategies and persuasion tactics have significant cultural elements that promote or discourage their utility or acceptability to members of other cultures.

Negotiation Is an Agreement, Decision-Making, and Exchange Process

Negotiations involve procedures by which parties reach agreements and exchange either tangible items (money, land, goods, or behavior) or intangible items (trust, respect, apologies, retraction of a statement or curse) to meet individual or jointly defined substantive, procedural, or psychological interests or needs. Members of diverse cultures often differ sharply regarding what constitutes an agreement, how an agreement is reached, the degree of detail and closure involved, and expected procedures for implementation and compliance. The culture of the parties may also significantly influence what is exchanged, how exchanged items are valued, and what constitutes equity or fairness. More will be said about these aspects of intercultural negotiation in later chapters.

Negotiation Is an Action-Oriented Process That Requires Implementation

Negotiations are different from conversations or discussions in that they are outcome oriented. They generally result in changes of attitude, behavior, performance, or an exchange of something of value to one or more parties. This means that agreements have to be implemented. In general, negotiated agreements are either self-executing, in that parties make necessary exchanges in the negotiations themselves, or non-self-executing, which requires performance or exchanges over time. Each of these approaches may have culturally sanctioned or common norms regarding how they are confirmed. In some cultures, it may be a handshake, in others a meal, and yet in others the signing of a contract. Regardless of the type of agreement, usually some procedure is used to implement and a ritual performed to confirm the agreement.

PREPARATIONS FOR INTERCULTURAL NEGOTIATIONS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

An important first step in becoming an effective intercultural negotiator is to understand that culture can make a difference and pay attention to it. People just starting to work across cultures, and even those with extensive experience, often make several significant mistakes. First, they may start from a significantly ethnocentric viewpoint, assuming that all people are basically the same and denying differences because of ignorance or belief that their culture is the basic template from which all others are derived (Bennett, 1983). Such individuals or groups often believe that underneath our multipigmented skin, diverse languages, unusual clothing, and different behaviors, we all have identical wants and desires and similar approaches to negotiation and conflict resolution. Those who assert the basic similarity of cultures assume that if we can just communicate well with each other, all problems can be addressed or will evaporate.

Although this view is less common than it used to be, it is still frequently found in those with little experience with people from or working in diverse cultures. It is also prevalent among those of a second group who, when abroad, spend most of their time with colleagues and friends from their own culture or in international diplomatic, business, development worker enclaves, or tourist havens where either Western or international middle- or upper-class culture prevails or local culture is presented as a caricature of only the most acceptable, or in some cases romanticized cultural elements—a slice of the real thing.

Thus, when international travelers—whether tourists, businesspeople, or diplomats—visit countries such as Mexico, they are introduced to Mexican culture by mariachis (singing musical groups with guitars), sombreros, and margaritas. In Indonesia, they are likely to stay in an international hotel where accommodations are similar to those they might find in their home countries, they can choose Western or Japanese (or local) food if they care to, taxis or limousines whisk them (or get stalled in traffic) to meetings and meeting rooms that are similar to those found in developed countries, and so forth. If they take a break over the weekend, they are often likely to visit a Club Med type of resort in which only a slice of Indonesian culture is presented. In some cases, it may be limited to the gamelan orchestra—a percussion ensemble with xylophones, gongs, and other instruments—in the hotel lobby, masks and woodcarvings in the hotel shops, or the attire of the concierge, hotel staff, or servers in the restaurant. In these settings, it is perfectly possible to be abroad and never leave the comforts and culture of one's home culture and rest assured that ''people in X foreign country live just like us.''

A third group who are likely to think that all people within their cultures are basically the same—or should have the same values, cultural patterns, and behaviors that they do—are members of groups, organizations, or countries that are, or have been in the past, politically, economically, or socially more powerful and dominant than members of other cultures, or expatriates who have never had to accommodate or adapt to the cultures of others. For example, men in many cultures often miss or do not understand the culture of women and ask, ''Why can't a woman be more like a man?''

In the United States, the majority of Anglos, or whites with historical origins in Northern Europe, frequently do not understand, dismiss, or are threatened by the culture and needs of long-term citizens in the Southwest of Hispanic origin (who have been there since the 1600s) or more recent Latino or Hispanic immigrants from other Latin American countries. They demand that non-Anglo groups integrate and become just like the rest of Americans, or ''stay on the other side of the river'' (Badillo, 2006).

Americans may not understand the culture or attitudes of Somalis and assume that they are striving for the same things that people from the United States want (Kaplan, 2003). Germans may not understand the cultures and sensitivities of members of central European or Turkish cultures and the joint history that they share with Germans (Kaplan, 2005). Russians may fail to accommodate to the cultural patterns and aspirations of Georgians, residents of the Crimea, Chechnyans, or former Soviet Republics (Nasmyth, Ku, and Pun, 2007; Sakwa, 2005). Chinese from the People's Republic of China may not understand the cultures or sensitivities of Tibetans, Taiwanese, Uyghurs, Inner Mongolians, Vietnamese, and so forth (Terrill, 2003).

In each of these examples of intercultural relations, power between cultures helps define and strongly influences relationships, interactions, procedures, and types of outcomes. ''Culture needs to be taken seriously in debates over justice, in the sense that criteria for fairness are always rooted in particular cultural traditions, rather than in some transcultural definition of human reason, interests or rights. And particular cultures exist in relation to one another, in contexts always shaped by power—the sovereign power to coerce, enslave, or exterminate tying in with the ability to dictate the terms of political debate, while denying the cultural roots of these terms'' (Kahane, 2003, p. 7).

As people become more familiar with other cultures, they begin to recognize differences but may still be defensive about the merits of their own in contrast to others. They take the view that while others exist, their culture is superior and the best. As they adjust further to differences, they may not judge other cultures as harshly, but they may still minimize differences, thinking that we are all basically the same despite some small differences (Wanis-St. John, 2005).

Another common mistake, currently in vogue, is to go to the other extreme: romanticizing culture and diversity and treating other cultures and their

members as exotic, sacred, and deserving of protection from ''cultural imperi-alism.'' Followers of this approach overemphasize differences among cultures, on occasion try to ''go native,'' make extreme efforts to be culturally correct, and try hard to avoid unpardonable cultural errors.

Both views of culture hold some truth—there are many similarities among cultures, and cultures are unique. People get married in most cultures, but the kinds of relationships and relationship expectations that the couple have, the terms of the marriage contract, and rituals for uniting them may be extremely different. Children are educated in all societies, but what they are taught, how, by whom, and for how long are different across cultures. The education of students, in terms of subject matter, way of thinking, and the teaching-learning process in a Pakistani *madrasa* and one of the French *grandes écoles* are all quite different. People drive cars in many countries and cultures. However, the side of the road they drive on (left, right, in the middle or weaving between the two), where they drive (roads, sidewalks, or through fields), the way they drive (in an orderly and predictable or random fashion), and their observance of laws or informal driving practices (law abiding or adherence to situational ethics) may differ drastically. Leaders and managers in the private or public sector of various cultures and societies help define and oversee the work of subordinates. However, they do it very differently.

To move beyond the two extremes described and shift from a stance of ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism, a view in which there is greater acceptance of cultural differences and tolerance for them, individuals and groups move through three stages of development: acceptance, adaptation, and integration (Bennett, 1993).

Acceptance involves setting aside denial of differences and limiting or suspending judgments about merit, value, or appropriateness of different cultures, accepting that differences do exist and that it is all right for people to think and act in diverse ways. Adaptation means that ''we become more skilled at seeing shared realities through different lenses and consequently can make adjustments to our understanding of an action, phenomenon, or idea different from our own'' (Wanis-St. John, 2005, p. 124). Integration involves significant acceptance and understanding of cultural differences in thought and behavior, and comfort interacting within a cultural milieu that is different from one's own. Integration allows an individual or group to culturally adapt to a different culture and respond appropriately depending on the people, setting, issues, or tasks.

Just as individuals and groups may view their own cultures and those that are different from perspectives along a continuum of ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism, they may do the same when considering negotiation or the resolution of disputes. Some people believe that everyone practices these relationship-handling and problem-solving procedures in a universal manner

and that culture makes relatively little difference in behaviors, strategies, interactions, or outcomes. At the other extreme are people who think that negotiation and conflict resolution practices are so particular and unique that they always have significant impacts on parties' interactions and outcomes and must at all times be taken seriously into consideration, with adaptations made when planning strategies, procedures, and behaviors.

The extreme views about culture and negotiation noted represent unhelpful outlooks. The truth lies somewhere in between. Cultural differences may be important factors in the success or failure of intercultural interactions and negotiations. Diversity can create barriers to agreement but also enable parties to find mutually acceptable solutions precisely because parties are different and have different interests, priorities, and goals. Seeing cultural differences in this way ''has the potential to offer us 'foreign' strategies for reaching optimal, integrative agreements, or at least teaching us the relative merits of those approaches. It can also help us to understand that cultures need not incline us to conflict with each other'' (Wanis-St. John, 2005).

In this respect, we need to move from acceptance of differences and toward adaptation and integration as successful strategies for intercultural problem solving, negotiations, and conflict resolution. While we must accept that culture plays an important part in interactions and negotiations between individuals and groups, we must not ascribe all problems encountered in problem solving or negotiations to cultural differences. Problems can also be caused by personal or group differences and styles of behavior, different approaches to negotiations, competing interests, or social structures.

The critical task is to determine what functions, roles, and impacts culture has on intercultural relations and negotiations and to develop appropriate strategies to accommodate these influences. To do this, we need a tool to help distinguish what may or may not be cultural factors and one that helps participants in intercultural problem solving or negotiations develop effective responses and strategies.

CONCLUSION

In an increasingly globalized world, we interact with people from other cultures in many contexts. Almost all countries are now host to large immigrant populations—political or economic refugees, people seeking new opportunities or fleeing oppression. Most modern societies are conglomerations of many cultures, requiring us to learn how to work across cultural divides in the business world, school, health care establishments, government, and other

social institutions. As we work together, we depend on negotiation as an essential skill, and mastering negotiation across cultures has become essential.

Thousands of people enter other cultures on a daily basis—as business executives, diplomats, development and relief workers, or peacemakers. Like those struggling to operate in an increasingly multicultural domestic context, these international travelers must become conversant with the ways in which culture and negotiation intersect. Global and cross-cultural negotiation is no longer an optional competency. The next chapter presents a tool for identifying and understanding cultural differences that influence negotiations: the Wheel of Culture.