

# Interdisciplinary perspectives on culture, conflict, and negotiation<sup>1</sup>

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There is no doubt that many of the greatest scientific breakthroughs have been made possible through interdisciplinary research. From the mapping of the genome to understanding the global map of terrorism, it is clear that science benefits from multiple perspectives that require expertise from different disciplines. As noted in the recent report by the Committee on Facilitating Interdisciplinary Research (2004) of the National Academy of Sciences: “Interdisciplinary research (IDR) can be one of the most productive and inspiring of human pursuits – one that provides a format for conversations and connections that lead to new knowledge”, (p. 16). Also aptly put by Karl Popper (1963), arguably one of the most influential philosophers of science in the twentieth century: “We are not students of some subject matter, but students of problems. And problems may cut right across the borders of any subject matter or discipline” (p. 88). Many of the problems that are studied in organizational behavior are of no exception, whether it is understanding the complex question of human motivation, group dynamics, or globalization. The value – if not the necessity – of interdisciplinary perspectives is indisputable. Organizational behavior, with its penchant for multiple perspectives, be it from sociology, psychology, economics, or related disciplines, is well positioned to continue to push its interdisciplinary envelope. Yet much is to be done to fully capitalize upon the differences that invariably bring the most creative research products. As noted in a recent editorial in *Science*: “In the years to come, innovators will need to jettison the security of familiar tools, ideas and specialties as they forge new partnerships” (Kafatos and Eisner, 2004, p. 1257).

It is with this interdisciplinary mandate that we ground our chapter on culture, conflict, and

negotiation. Observations of cultural differences in negotiation go as far back as early as 400 BC, when the Greek historian Herodotus observed the “strangeness” of how ancient Egyptians traded with the Greeks (Herodotus, Marincola, and de Selincourt, 2003). Within the context of organizational behavior/psychology, which includes research from both management and psychology departments, the study of culture, conflict, and negotiation has grown considerably over the last three decades, examining cultural influences on negotiator cognition, behavioral processes, and negotiated outcomes across a wide range of cultures and settings (see Gelfand, Erez, and Aycan, 2007). Few areas have expanded in terms of their depth and breadth as quickly as negotiation, and by extension as negotiation and culture (Kramer and Messick, 1995).

Yet, looking beyond our disciplinary borders, it is clear that there are many disciplines examining cultural influences on conflict and negotiations, broadly defined as situations in which individuals and groups are managing their interdependence and have a perceived conflict of interest (Walton and McKersie, 1965). In this chapter, we turn to a wide array of disciplines, both closely related as well as distant, including legal anthropology, comparative law, communication science, experimental economics, cognitive anthropology, language and disputing, international relations, and primatology, in order to push the interdisciplinary envelope on culture and negotiation in organizational behavior. In each discipline discussed, we identify the predominant paradigmatic approach to the study of culture, conflict, and negotiation including the *major research questions asked*, the *unit of analysis* used, the way in which *culture is conceptualized*, the dominant *methodology* used, as well as the *cross-cultural* (i.e., comparative) versus *intercultural* (i.e., involving different cultures) nature of research. We then review

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key representative work from each discipline. Our goal is not to provide an exhaustive review of the literature, but to provide several examples of prototypical work conducted in each discipline. Finally, we discuss the implications of each discipline for the study of culture, conflict, and negotiation in organizational behavior/psychology by comparing and contrasting the discipline with our field, and identifying interesting questions for future research in culture, conflict, and negotiation. Table 13.1 summarizes our discussion below. Above all, we hope that, by looking *outward* to representative works on culture, conflict, and negotiation from a variety of disciplines, we will begin to understand better our *own* implicit assumptions in organizational behavior/psychology and, most importantly, will invite new perspectives and interdisciplinary collaborations. We begin with a review of cross-cultural conflict and negotiation research in organizational behavior/psychology as a starting point from which to compare paradigms in other disciplines. We then discuss culture, conflict, and negotiation research in legal anthropology, comparative law, language and disputing, cognitive anthropology, experimental economics, primatology, communication science, and international relations.

### Organizational behavior/psychology

Cross-cultural research on conflict and negotiation within the field of organizational behavior/psychology generally takes a social-psychological approach to the study of culture, conflict, and negotiation, addressing the general question of *how do negotiators vary across nations in their perceptions, behaviors, and negotiation outcomes*, and a related question of *what are the challenges and opportunities faced in intercultural negotiations comprised of negotiators from different nations?* The *unit of analysis* tends to be the individual negotiator or the negotiation dyad. *Culture* is typically conceptualized using the framework of national differences in values (Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1994; Triandis, 1995). The most common methodology used is experiments and surveys and there is a priority on examining psychological states (e.g., cognitions) of negotiators as well as economic value achieved. Research in this field

historically has focused on *intracultural comparisons*, yet is increasingly examining *intercultural comparisons* as well.

Later, we also review in this section the closely related discipline of international business (IB), which unlike organizational behavior/psychology, tends to focus on actual business negotiations in the field. Research in IB examines questions pertaining to *intercultural negotiations such as what actual negotiators perceive to be critical for success and failure, and how third cultures develop during the negotiation process*, using methodologies such as surveys and interviews. Other studies in IB focus more at the *macro level of analysis*, examining negotiations that occur in international contexts such as *inter-firm negotiations, joint ventures, international alliances, and mergers and acquisitions*.

### Key findings from organizational behavior/psychology

Research in organizational behavior/psychology (OB/psychology) has examined how culture, typically conceptualized and/or operationalized through cultural value dimensions, affects negotiators' implicit theories about themselves, their counterparts, and the negotiation task. Implicit in this work is the notion that the meaning of the negotiation context is not "objectively" defined, rather, negotiators cognitively construct the reality of the social context in which they are negotiating (Bazerman and Carroll, 1987). Consistent with this, Gelfand *et al.* (2001) found that Japanese and US students have different cognitive interpretations of *identical* conflict episodes. For instance, US students perceived conflicts to be concerned with individual rights and autonomy, whereas Japanese students perceived conflicts to be concerned with violations of duties and obligations. US students also perceived conflicts to be more about competition, whereas Japanese students perceived conflicts to be more about cooperation. These findings empirically illustrated that the same conflicts may be perceived quite differently across cultures, yet make "cultural sense" from both cultural vantage points. From a practical point of view, Gelfand *et al.* (2001) concluded that, in intercultural situations, meta-level

**Table 13.1 Interdisciplinary perspectives on culture, conflict, and negotiation**

<b>Organizational Behavior/ Psychology</b>		<b>Legal Anthropology</b>				
<b>Major Questions and Processes Examined</b>	<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>How Culture is Conceptualized</b>	<b>Typical Methodology</b>	<b>Cross-cultural or Intercultural</b>	<b>Key Assumptions</b>	<b>Example Studies</b>
How do negotiations vary across nations?	Individual	Cultural value dimensions (e.g., Hofstede, 1980)	Experiments	Cross-cultural and intercultural	Cultural values are important explanatory variables in negotiation	Adair <i>et al.</i> , (2001); Adler <i>et al.</i> , (1987)
What are the challenges faced in intercultural negotiators?	Dyad		Surveys			Brett & Okumura (1998); Gelfand & Chirkov (1999); Gelfand <i>et al.</i> , (2001); Gelfand & Realo (1999); Graham (1984); Morris <i>et al.</i> , (2004); Tinsley (1998); Wade-Benzoni <i>et al.</i> , (2002)
Major processes investigated:					Negotiators construals and motives vary across cultures	
Negotiator cognitions, motivations, behavioral processes (verbal) and negotiated outcomes					Economic value is the most important outcome	
<b>Major Questions and Processes Examined</b>	<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>How Culture is Conceptualized</b>	<b>Typical Methodology</b>	<b>Cross-cultural or Intercultural</b>	<b>Key Assumptions</b>	<b>Example Studies</b>
How do various societies resolve disputes?	Community level; Pre-industrial societies	Social structure	Ethnographies	Cross-cultural	Culture is inextricably tied to the social context	Felstner (1974-1975); Gluckman (1955); Koshi <i>et al.</i> , (1976); Nader (1969); Nader & Todd (1970); Ross (1986, 1995)
What factors within these societies explain their preferred method(s) of dispute resolution?		Nature of social networks; Multiplex vs. simplex ties	Case studies			
Major processes investigated:		Nature of social organization; Technologically complex/rich vs. Technologically simple/poor				
Societal preference for dispute resolution method (e.g., competitive win-lose procedures, i.e. adjudication, and less distributive procedures such as mediation and negotiation)		Economic and political integration				

## Comparative Law

Major Questions and Processes Examined	Unit of Analysis	How Culture is Conceptualized	Typical Methodology	Cross-cultural or Intercultural	Key Assumptions	Example Studies	Implications for OB/ Psych
How does culture influence the design of legal systems?	Individual	Social structure	Legal materials	Cross-cultural	Culture influences disputing processes and disputing processes influence culture	Bierbrauer (1994); Chase (1997); Hamilton & Sanders (1992); Kawashima (1963); Lauchli (2000); Wagatsuma & Rosett (1986)	Test models that incorporate multiple levels of analysis, including societal culture, legal institutions, and individual attitudes
Do legal systems in turn influence culture?	Societal	Hierarchy vs. solidarity	Analyses of court cases				
How do individuals' attitudes of what are appropriate dispute resolution methods vary across cultures?		Shared psychological values, beliefs, norms (e.g., group harmony)	Surveys				Explore non-cultural explanations for country differences (e.g., institutional differences) in conflict behavior across cultures
Major processes investigated:							
Design of legal system (e.g., role of civil jury, lawyers, judge, role of experts)							
Individual perceptions of appropriate ways to resolve disputes (e.g., responsibility and punishment, purpose of apologies)							

## LANGUAGE AND DISPUTING

Major Questions and Processes Examined	Unit of Analysis	How Culture is Conceptualized	Typical Methodology	Cross-cultural or Intercultural	Key Assumptions	Example Studies	Implications for OB/ Psych
What does the language used during conflict reveal about the socio-cultural knowledge of speakers, as well as the rules of inference and interaction governing speakers' behaviors?	Groups in pre-industrial and industrial societies	Social Structure (e.g., Hierarchy)	Descriptive accounts of conflict discourse	Non-comparative ethnographies of particular groups	Culture is earned through language	Conley & O'Bar (1990); Conuro & Rizzo (1996); Grimshaw (1990); Watson-Gegeo & White (1990)	Incorporate linguistic analysis in studying negotiation process across cultures
Major processes investigated:			Transcripts				Explore the role of culture-specific emotions in negotiation
Frame (culture-specific) assumptions about how conflict should be resolved			Ethnographic records Audio and video records Dramatic scripts				Study the impact of public displays of conflict on reinforcing cultural values in the broader community

**Table 13.1 (cont.)**

<b>Cognitive Anthropology</b>						
<b>Major Questions and Processes Examined</b>	<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>How Culture is Conceptualized</b>	<b>Typical Methodology</b>	<b>Cross-cultural or Intercultural</b>	<b>Key Assumptions Example Studies</b>	<b>Implications for OB/ Psych</b>
How do meaning systems vary across cultures?	Group (aggregated from individuals)	Culture is represented by how knowledge is structured and organized	Cognitive sorting tasks	Cross-cultural (knowledge organization)	Medin <i>et al.</i> , (2006)	Focus on knowledge structures and their organization in influencing conflict behavior
What are the implications of cultural differences in meaning or intercultural perceptions during conflict?			Surveys	Intercultural (stereotyping)		
Major processes investigated:		Culture is distributional	Qualitative methods			Pay attention to the degree of consensus of values, attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge structures within a single culture instead of treating it as noise
Knowledge structures, Stereotyping						
<b>Experimental Economics</b>						
<b>Major Questions and Processes Examined</b>	<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>How Culture is Conceptualized</b>	<b>Typical Methodology</b>	<b>Cross-cultural or Intercultural</b>	<b>Key Assumptions Example Studies</b>	<b>Implications for OB/ Psych</b>
How do economic behaviors such as cooperation, fairness, and trust vary across cultures?	Individual	Culture is generally equated with country	Economic games with real incentives	Cross-cultural	Significant findings for others regarding behaviors across different countries provides universal evidence against pure self-interest	Examine the role of real incentives in cross-cultural studies of conflict and negotiation
Major processes investigated:	Societal	Macro structural variables (e.g., benefits to cooperation, market integration)	Ultimatum games		Bolmei <i>et al.</i> , (forthcoming, 2008); Buchan & Croson (2004); Buchan <i>et al.</i> , (2006); Henrich (2000); Henrich <i>et al.</i> , (2005); Oosterbeek <i>et al.</i> , (2003); Roth <i>et al.</i> , (1991)	Incorporate psychological constructs that are currently not studied (e.g., sanctions, fear of punishment) in addition to cultural values (e.g., collectivism) in explaining cultural differences in conflict behavior
Cooperation, competition, offer behavior, punishment, trust/ risk preferences			Trust games			
			Prisoner's dilemma games			

<b>Primateology</b>					
<b>Major Questions and Processes Examined</b>	<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>How Culture is Conceptualized</b>	<b>Typical Methodology</b>	<b>Cross-cultural or Intercultural</b>	<b>Key Assumptions</b>
How do various aspects of the social context influence various types of conflict behavior among primates?	Captive groups	Social/ Ecological Context	Direct observations of naturally-occurring behaviors in captive groups in treatment vs. control conditions	Across different ecological contexts	Conflict behaviors found in primates have significant relevance to humans
Major processes investigated:					Cords & Thurnheer (1993); de Waal (2000); Flack <i>et al.</i> (2005); Thierry (2000)
Aggression; reconciliation; third party alliance/ intervention					Examine differences in power distribution on effectiveness of certain conflict resolution procedures
Communication					Examine reconciliation and relationship repair processes across cultures
<b>Communication</b>					
<b>Major Questions and Processes Examined</b>	<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>How Culture is Conceptualized</b>	<b>Typical Methodology</b>	<b>Cross-cultural or Intercultural</b>	<b>Key Assumptions</b>
How does communication processes vary across cultures and in particular, in conflict situations?	Individual Dyad	Shared psychological values (e.g., Collectivism vs Individualism)	Experiments in Surveys	Cross-cultural and intercultural	Face and facework are critical to conflict and negotiation
What are the obstacles encountered when people from different cultures communicate?		Individual self constraints (e.g., Interdependent vs. Independent)			Variables relevant to intercultural interactions (e.g., anxiety) can differ from those relevant to intracultural interactions
How can communication be improved in intercultural contexts?					Integrate intercultural communication theories into conflict and negotiation research (e.g. the role of motivation, anxiety and intergroup dynamics in intercultural negotiations)
Major processes investigated:					Study non-tangible resources (e.g., identity) which can be negotiated in addition to more tangible resources such as economic profit
Face concerns and facework behaviors; conflict styles; verbal and non-verbal communication; anxiety and uncertainty					

Table 13.1 (cont.)

International Relations		Major Questions and Processes Examined		Unit of Analysis	How Culture is Conceptualized	Typical Methodology	Cross-cultural or Intercultural	Key Assumptions	Example Studies	Implications for OB/ Psych
How does culture influence negotiators' perceptions and behaviors?	Individual	Shared values, beliefs, norms	Case studies	Cross-cultural, although data is derived from intercultural settings	Cultural differences should be examined directly in intercultural contexts	Cohen (1991, 1997, 2000, 2001a, 2001b); Faure & Rubin (1993)	Study not only behaviors during the actual conflict, but also pre and post conflict stages			
When do cultural effects on negotiation become attenuated?	Group	Critical perspective of what cultures is not (see Zartman, 1993; Avruch, 1998)	Interviews		Real-world negotiations are critical to study (real incentives, rich context)		Examine a wider range of contextual variables in intercultural negotiation settings (e.g., perception of power, language of negotiation, cultural distance, historical memory)			
What kinds of metaphors are used to understand negotiation in various cultures?			Auto-biographies of Negotiators							
Major processes investigated: Negotiation perceptions and behaviors, pre-negotiation phases, behavioral styles/strategies, post negotiation procedures and relationships			Direct observations				Expand outcome variables to non-economic resources (e.g., quality of personal relationships, honor, face, status)			

conflicts – those which arise from very different definitions of the conflict itself – may make it especially difficult to come to agreements.

Research in OB/psychology has shown that negotiators across cultures also are differentially susceptible to different judgment biases. Negotiators in the US are particularly susceptible to competitive judgment biases such as *fixed pie* biases and fail to adequately assess the priorities of their counterparts (Gelfand and Christakopolou, 1999). Negotiators in the US also tend to have *self-serving biases* of their own fairness, which tends to decrease joint value at the negotiation table (Gelfand *et al.*, 2002; Wade-Benzoni *et al.*, 2002). Finally, negotiators in the US are also more likely to make internal attributions of other negotiators' behavior (e.g., their personality) rather than the situation, causing more competition in negotiation (Morris, Leung, and Iyengar, 2004; Valenzuela, Sristava, and Lee, 2005).

Moving beyond the individual level, research has examined whether there are cross-national differences in the use of negotiation tactics and outcomes in negotiations, typically in laboratory simulations. Early research had compared tactics and outcomes of Americans with Japanese (Graham, 1984), Canadians (Adler, Graham, and Gehrke, 1987), Chinese (Adler, Brahm, and Graham, 1992), French (Campbell *et al.*, 1988), and Russians (Graham, Evenko, and Rajan, 1993), examining whether *problem-solving* tactics are *reciprocated* to the same extent in negotiations in different cultures (Adler, Graham, and Gehrke, 1987; Adler, Brahm, and Graham, 1992), and has explored whether outcomes vary across cultures (Adler, Graham, and Gehrke, 1987) among other questions. In general, numerous cross-cultural differences were observed in tactics and outcomes, yet without a clear definitive pattern. In some cases results were consistent with predictions, in some cases there were no differences, and in some cases, results were reversed from what was predicted (see Gelfand and Dyer, 2000 for a review).

More recent research has drawn upon and *incorporated* theories and measures of cultural value dimensions (e.g., Hofstede, Schwartz) into culture and negotiation research, lending more theoretical

coherence to the field. Tinsley (1998), for example, examined how different dimensions of culture affect negotiators' preferences for different negotiation strategies. Cultural differences on hierarchical differentiation (acceptance of social inequality, such as in Japan), explicit contracting (using formal agreements, such as in Germany), and polychronicity (processing many tasks simultaneously, such as in the US) were related to preferences for using authorities, relying on external regulations, and integrating interests in conflicts, respectively. Others have found consistent patterns in cultural influences on preferences for information exchange strategies. A key finding is that US negotiators, who tend to be more individualistic and low context, are more likely to share information *directly* and they tend to achieve high joint gains through this strategy. By contrast, Japanese, Russian, and Hong Kong negotiators, who tend to be more collectivistic and high context, are more likely to share information *indirectly* through their patterns of offers and achieve high joint gains through this strategy (Adair and Brett, 2005; Adair *et al.*, 2004; Adair, Okumura, and Brett, 2001). Communication sequences are also affected by culture. Negotiators from collectivistic cultures use more flexible complementary sequences, and are better able to use direct and indirect forms of information exchange, as compared to negotiators from individualistic cultures (Adair and Brett, 2005; Adair, Okumura, and Brett, 2001).

Research in OB/psychology has increasingly examined situational factors that moderate cultural effects in negotiation. Several factors appear to *exacerbate* baseline cultural tendencies in negotiation, including accountability (Gelfand and Realo, 1999), high need for closure (Morris and Fu, 2001), and high ambiguity (Morris, Leung, and Iyengar, 2004). The nature of the relationship with one's counterpart also has a moderating impact in negotiations across cultures. For example, research has shown that negotiators from collectivistic cultures, far from always being cooperative, tend to be more competitive when they have strong egoistic motives and high aspirations (Chen, Mannix, and Okumura, 2003), are dealing with outgroup members or intergroup situations (Chen and Li, 2005; Probst,

Carnevale, and Triandis, 1999; Triandis *et al.*, 2001), and having little external monitoring (Gelfand and Realo, 1999).

Finally, research in OB/psychology has focused on the dynamics of *intercultural negotiations*. Micro OB/psychology research has tended to compare intracultural negotiations with intercultural negotiations using experimental role plays. For example, Brett and Okumura (1998) demonstrated that cultural differences in cognition have important consequences for intercultural negotiation outcomes. Specifically, they measured aspects of culture (individualism-collectivism and hierarchy-egalitarianism) and illustrated that they affected negotiators' schemas and scripts (i.e., related to self-interest, power, and information sharing). Their results strongly suggest that incompatible schemas and scripts made it more difficult to achieve integrative outcomes in intercultural, as compared to intracultural negotiations (see also Adair, 1999; Tinsley, 1998). Imai and Gelfand (2007) found that negotiators with high cultural intelligence (Earley and Ang, 2003) were better able to sustain integrative bargaining sequences and create higher joint gain.

By contrast, research coming from the international business tradition has focused on negotiators' *perceptions* of the factors that are critical for success and failure in *actual* business negotiations. For example, Tung (1982) found that Americans perceived that successful negotiations were attributable to the attitude of the US firm wanting to invest in a long-term relationship with China, product characteristics, and familiarity with Chinese culture in terms of business practices, social customs, politics, and language. Failed negotiations were perceived to be attributable to cultural differences in business practices, negotiating styles and communication breakdowns, product characteristics, and Chinese insincerity. In actuality, negotiation success was predicted by years of Americans' experience in trading with China, number of previous negotiations with the Chinese, reading books on Chinese practices, and hiring experts to train American negotiators (see also Lee and Lo, 1988; Tung, 1984; Stewart and Keown, 1989).

Some studies have examined how culture changes over time in intercultural negotiations. For

example, Brannen and Salk (2000) examined how national cultural traits of two companies combined to create a *third negotiated culture* through continuous interactions among members from both sides. Following the merger of a German company and a Japanese company, the authors found that in the startup period where there is high stress among top team members due to the novelty of working together, cultural differences in management were highly salient. By the time adjustment period was reached, however, these cultural differences were negotiated to form a third culture (see also Faure, 2000).

Finally, research on negotiations that occur across international borders also exists at a more "macro-strategic" level which can be differentiated from the "micro-behavioral" paradigm discussed above (Weiss 2004, 2006). Within the macro-strategic paradigm, research examines inter-firm negotiations (joint ventures, international alliances, and mergers and acquisitions) as well as the impact of foreign multinational enterprises (MNE) resources on the outcomes of market entry negotiations with host governments (i.e., percentage of subsidiary ownership obtained by MNEs). Although these negotiations occur in international contexts, culture does not play a prominent role in these studies (see Kobayashi, 1988; Nair and Stafford, 1998).

In sum, research on culture, conflict, and negotiation in OB/psychology has largely focused on cross-national differences in perceptions, behaviors, and outcomes in experiments, and to a lesser extent, in actual negotiations in the field. The primary focus is on *value differences* and related psychological constructs, and how they affect economic value achieved in negotiations in different countries. Increasingly, the field is advancing more dynamic approaches to culture and negotiation, illustrating that cultural differences can change depending on the proximal situation, as well as focusing on the development of third cultures. We next turn to the key questions, paradigms, and methodologies that characterize numerous other disciplines that are also examining culture, conflict, and negotiation, discussing how they can each complement and extend extant perspectives in OB/psychology in important ways.

## Legal anthropology

### *Legal anthropology and its paradigm*

Legal anthropology, a sub-discipline within social and cultural anthropology, refers to the study of legal systems in various societies around the world. We focus on a select number of representative works conducted prior to the 1980s within legal anthropology, as contemporary work in the field focuses primarily on law within the US. One of the *major questions* asked among the classic works in legal anthropology is: *how do various societies resolve disputes, and what factors within these societies explain their preferred method(s) of dispute resolution?* The paradigm used in this discipline to address this broader question appears to have a number of features different from cross-cultural organizational behavior/psychology. First, the *unit of analysis* is the social group, or community, of mostly pre-industrial societies. Second, *culture*, as conceptualized in OB/psychology and IB in terms of shared values is given a minimal role, and it is the *social structure* of the community that is of major emphasis in explaining dispute resolution. Third, the most common *methodologies* used are case studies and ethnography, which allow for rich, in-depth, contextual descriptions of how a particular group of people resolve real-life disputes. Finally, when generalizations are observed based on a collection of ethnographies, they are of *cross-cultural* rather than of intercultural nature (see Gluckman, 1955; Nader, 1969; Nader and Todd, 1978).

### *Key findings from legal anthropology*

In examining how various traditional societies resolve disputes, legal anthropologists have identified a wide variety of dispute resolution procedures that are used across cultures, including avoidance, tolerance, coercion, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and adjudication (Black, 1993; Koch, 1974, 1979; Nader and Todd, 1978). Given this spectrum of possible dispute resolution methods, one of the major foci in this discipline has been to understand how the *social structure* constrains or affords

certain predominant ways of managing disputes in a particular community. For example, pioneering figures in this field such as Gluckman (1955) and Nader and Todd (1978) argue that the *nature of social relationships* in a community determines the dominant mode of dispute resolution used. In communities with multiplex ties, where each individual relates to another by sharing several dimensions of activity such as work, kinship, and recreation, disputes tend to be resolved through more cooperative means (e.g., negotiation, mediation) resulting in compromise outcomes given that preservation of relationships is paramount. In contrast, in communities with simplex ties, where each individual relates to another through one dimension of activity such as only through work, disputes tend to be handled by more competitive procedures (e.g. arbitration, adjudication) win-lose outcomes resulting in given that the severing of relationships is not as consequential (Gluckman, 1955; Nader and Todd, 1978).

Even when adjudication is used, the more multiplex the social ties tend to be in a given society, the more emphasis there seems to be on compromise over win-lose outcomes. For example, Nader (1969) provides a rich description of court procedures among the Zapotec of Mexico. In this multiplex, Zapotec judges go to great lengths to "make balance" (*hacer el balance*) between the plaintiff and defendant to prevent direct confrontations that lead to win-lose outcomes that would disturb the broader community at large. Thus, unlike western court procedures, where the sole function is to settle the dispute assuming that the cause of the dispute is already known, the role of Zapotec court procedures is to find out what the trouble really is between the disputants from both perspectives. A Zapotec judge does not see the situation as if one party is clearly to blame, but sees both parties at fault to a certain extent. Thus, the judge's concern is not past-oriented in terms of establishing facts or guilt as it is in the West, but is future-oriented in terms of re-establishing disrupted personal relations. Nader (1969) observes that this style of dispute resolution can be found in ethnographic accounts of other societies including Korea (Hahm, 1969), India (Cohn, 1959), Norway (Aubert, 1967),

and the Ndendeuli of southern Tanzania (Gulliver, 1969).

Other research in legal anthropology has focused on how contextual variables interact with the nature of social ties in influencing dispute resolution procedures and outcomes (Nader and Todd, 1978). For example, when the source of the dispute is a *scarce resource*, relationships can be sacrificed in favor of win-lose outcomes (Starr and Yngvesson, 1975). Starr's (1978) description of Turkish society supports this view where even within multiplex communities, disputes over inheritance among siblings, or male control over the behavior of unmarried sisters can lead to the severance of relationships. Another contextual variable is the *power difference* between disputants. Nader and Todd (1978) observed that in many small-scale societies, existing power relations are legitimized through law, as the judge favors the more powerful disputant (Nader and Todd, 1978). A related finding by Todd (1978) is that social status determines whether one has access to certain dispute resolution forums in the first place. For example, Bavarians distinguish village members who have "*charakter*" (i.e., a personal characteristic describing how tightly one follows social norms) versus those who do not and only by having *charakter* can one gain social status and have access to preferred dispute resolution procedures.

Legal anthropologists also examine the relationship between the broader social organization and dispute resolution in different societies. Felstiner (1974–1975), for example, argued that non-government adjudication and mediation are more likely to be prevalent in technologically simple poor societies (TSPS), wherein social organization consists of extended family units, stable marriages that are often arranged and serve as liaisons between families, extra-nuclear family relationships that provide political and economic support, financial assistance in old age from family, low mobility of residence and vocation, and a lack of large-scale bureaucratic organizations. By contrast, avoidance is more likely to be prevalent in technologically complex rich societies (TCRS), wherein social organization is characterized by nuclear family units, relatively unstable marriages, extra-nuclear

family relationships that do not provide economic and political support, financial assistance in old age from the state, high mobility of residence and vocation, and the presence of large-scale bureaucratic organizations. Felstiner (1974–1975) reasoned that adjudication and mediation is more prevalent in TSPS than TCRS because it requires the presence of a social group that can apply normative rules to evaluate and sanction disputants, as well as the backing of coercive power that can enforce win-lose outcomes. Such factors are more characteristic of TSPS than TCRS, as face-to-face groups such as kin, factions, and villages can rule win-lose outcomes and disputants have no other choice than to adhere to such outcomes in order to maintain the overall functioning of the larger community. By contrast, avoidance is theorized to be more characteristic of TCRS than TSPS, as it is more likely to occur when the costs of severing the relationship between disputants are relatively low (see Danzig, 1973; Lowy, 1973; for criticisms, see also Newman, 1983) for economic perspective on the relationship between social complexity and legal institutions).

Koch, Sodergren, and Campbell (1976) also studied the extent to which the political integration of a society is related to dispute resolution practices. For example, in his own ethnographic work on the Jale of New Guinea, Koch (1974) describes how Jale communities are divided by several residential compounds consisting of a common men's house and family huts of its married members. Residents of the common men's house usually belong to several patrilineal lineages where each holds land as corporate estate. Since no political office exists for either the residential compounds or for the village as a whole, disputing parties resort to coercion which frequently escalates into warfare (for other examples, see Brogger, 1968; Fortes and Evans-Pritchard, 1940; Gluckman, 1959; Hoebel, 1954; Nader, 1965; Shapera, 1956). Indeed, among fifty pre-industrial societies, Koch *et al.* (1976) found that political integration (i.e., political authority above level of local community, strong centralized government, and relatively fixed mode of succession to political office) was associated with more use of triadic (i.e., adjudication, arbitration, mediation)

than dyadic procedures (i.e., coercion, avoidance, negotiation) of dispute resolution (for criticisms on Koch, Sodergren, and Campbell, 1976, see Ross, 1993).

More recently, Ross (1986, 1993) examined how social structure relates to varying levels of conflict across societies. Coding ninety ethnographies of pre-industrial societies on economic and political complexity, patterns of marriage, strength of social linkages across communities within a society, inter-community trade, and the existence of fraternal interest groups, Ross (1986, 1993) found that societies with greater degrees of cross-cutting ties (i.e., people from one social group such as ethnicity, religion, gender, etc. have connections with people in other types of that social group) had lower levels of internal conflict. He reasons that, in societies with many cross-cutting ties across different communities, it is harder for individuals to rally support from others for purely their own interests, given others are likely to have loyalties to numerous social groups. Interestingly, this same process that characterized societies with low internal conflict also seemed to be related to high external conflict. Furthermore, Ross (1986, 1993) found that the psycho-cultural environment, that is, the cultural level disposition of these low-conflict societies were characterized by greater affection and warmth, as well as less overt aggression and male gender-identity conflicts.

### *Legal anthropology: summary and implications for organizational behavior/psychology*

Research in legal anthropology places major emphasis on social structure in explaining preferred methods of dispute resolution as well as overall levels of conflict across societies. Unlike cross-cultural organizational behavior/psychology, conflict is studied at the societal level, and psychological values at the individual level are not examined. Synergies across legal anthropology and OB/psychology abound. One fruitful partnership would be to examine the interrelationship between social structural characteristics and culture-based psychological values such as collectivism. For example, does the shared value of collectivism develop as

social ties become more multiplex in a given society? How do cultural differences in cognitions and preferred conflict strategies vary depending on the nature of network ties? Are cultural differences in attitudes toward dispute resolution procedures such as mediation and negotiation in part explained in part by differences in social structural variables? More generally, the psychological tradition in OB would benefit from integrations with more macro social-structural and political context which has fruitfully been examined in legal anthropology.

## **Comparative law**

### *Comparative law and its paradigm*

At the broadest level, comparative law is concerned with the similarities and differences of *modern* legal systems across countries. Major questions that are asked in this discipline can vary from very macro questions such as, *how does culture influence the design of legal systems and do legal systems in turn influence culture?* to very micro questions such as, *how do individuals' perceptions vary across cultures in terms of the appropriate ways of resolving disputes?* Given such questions, the *unit of analysis* in comparative law can vary widely from country-level to individual-level. In terms of the treatment of *culture*, theory typically focuses on shared values as in organizational behavior/psychology, yet these values are rarely measured and cross-country comparisons are common. *Methodologically*, comparative law currently does not have a single predominant approach, and relies on a diverse set of methods such as analyses of legal materials (e.g. publications from institutes for law), court cases, as well as surveys. Finally, as the name of this discipline indicates, the relationship between culture and disputing is examined through focusing on *cross-cultural* comparisons.

### *Key findings from comparative law*

At a more macro, institutional level of analysis, Chase (1997, 2005) proposes that culture leads to differences in the design of legal systems among

modern states. For example, he contrasts the American common law (i.e., adversarial) system and the European civil law (i.e., inquisitorial) system and how cultural values underlie the different roles played by the civil jury, the lawyers, the judge, and experts in each legal system. In the American common law system, the *civil jury* plays an extremely important role in civil litigation compared to the European civil law system. Chase (2005) argues that the prominent role of the civil jury in America is consistent with *egalitarianism* because laypeople with no expertise, regardless of education or social status are given power superior to that of the judge (Damaska, 1997). It is also consistent with *individualism* because of the significant power given to each individual, where a single hold-out verdict can lead to the end of the trial. Furthermore, in the American common law system, parties are given control of *pre-trial discovery*; that is, the power to investigate facts prior to trial. For example, each party can require from their opponent to submit oral questions and answers under oath (i.e., depositions and interrogatories) and produce files for inspection by the adversary (i.e., document discovery). This process reflects American egalitarianism because it "levels the playing field" for the economically weaker party, and it also reflects individualism because it allows attorneys to pursue their own course of action. In continental Europe, where it is less egalitarian and less individualistic, pre-trial discovery is considered unnecessary and intrusive (Schlesinger *et al.*, 1998). The *role of the judge* also varies significantly across cultures due to egalitarianism. Whereas the judge in the American common law system plays a largely passive role except when making a ruling, the judge in the European civil law system plays a more active role, for example, in questioning witnesses for examination and cross-examination (Cappelletti and Garth, 1987) as well as gathering and presenting the facts (Langbein, 1985). Finally, in addition to proposing that culture leads to differences in the design of legal systems, Chase (2005) also argues that there is a *reflexive relationship* in that legal systems also reinforce the broader culture in the society. He argues, "a set of social practices predominant in one area of human life, such as disputing, can

importantly influence practices, beliefs, and norms in other areas of society" (p. 127), and that this process occurs because disputing is dramatic, public, and engages attention; disputing is endorsed by cultural leaders; and because the court procedures become ritualized through repetition.

Hamilton and Sanders (1992) similarly argue that there is a mutually causal relationship between culture and legal institutions in the US and Japan. For example, they discuss how the American social structure and values characterized by low hierarchy and low solidarity are consistent with legal procedures that tend to be less inquisitorial and more adjudicative, whereas the Japanese social structure and values characterized by high hierarchy and high solidarity are more in line with legal procedures that tend to be more inquisitorial and less adjudicative. Hamilton and Sanders (1992) also propose that such differences in legal institutions in turn influence individual-level attitudes regarding the law such as on responsibility and punishment. They showed, for example, that Americans form attributions of responsibility based on the behavior of the actor, whereas the Japanese form attributions of responsibility based on the obligations the actor has towards others. Similarly, when making suggestions for punishment for the actor, Americans tend to give sanctions that isolate the actor, whereas the Japanese tend to give sanctions that focus more on restoring the relationship between the actor and the victim, similar to the findings on multiplex ties discussed in legal anthropology previously.

Kawashima (1963) also compares cross-cultural differences in the *usage* of law in the US and Japan. He argues that the Japanese hesitation to go to court (evidenced in lower litigation rates, smaller number of lawyers, and smaller number of claims brought to court) can be explained by the Japanese cultural value of group harmony. He specifically argues that because judicial decisions threaten the harmony of social groups as they regulate conduct by universalistic standards instead of mutual understanding, using litigation in Japan has been condemned as morally wrong and rebellious. For this reason, the prevailing form of dispute resolution in Japan has been through extrajudicial means of reconciliation such as the government institutionalized system of mediation,

or *chotei*. Since Kawashima's (1963) work, similar arguments have been made for the role of culture in explaining Japan's low litigation rates (e.g., Kim and Lawson, 1979; Sato, 2001; Smith, 1987). However, other critics point out that there are alternative non-cultural explanations for low litigation rates in Japan. For example, Haley (1978) argued that institutional factors such as the low number of judges and lawyers available in Japan, shaped by the country's governing elites, explains lower litigation rates in Japan, not the cultural values of disputants per se. Ramseyer (1988) takes an economic perspective and argues that the lower litigation rates in Japan can be explained by rational decision-making processes concerning dispute resolution that would allow individuals to maximize their wealth and litigated outcomes. Yet, recently, Feldman (2007) argued that both institutional and economic/rational explanations are not contradictory with cultural explanations. Culture is what makes the governing elites shape the legal institution in the first place, and culture is what gives meaning to what is the most rational course of action.

The Japanese theme of valuing group solidarity and reconciliation is also reflected in Wagatsuma and Rosett's (1986) research on the functions of apologies in the US and Japan within legal contexts. They argue that, in Japan, the act of apologizing is not so much about acceptance of liability and responsibility as it is in the West, but is an act that signals the repairing of difficult relationships. Thus, sincerity of apologies in the US depends on genuine thoughts and whole-heartedness, whereas sincerity of apologies in Japan depend on performing the correct acts that restore relationships. Therefore, the Japanese can feel that they are not at fault, yet still think it is necessary to apologize to the other party. In the legal context, apologies are given higher priority in Japan than in the US. For example, in criminal law, letters of apology are used as an alternative to filing criminal charges, or in some cases may lead the judge to impose a milder sentence in a given trial. In contrast, apologies are generally avoided in the US for the fear of being accused of admitting responsibility.

Focusing at the more micro individual-level, Bierbrauer (1994) studied cultural differences

in attitudes towards the law, focusing on Kurds, Arabs, and Germans. Theorizing that collectivists (Kurds, Arabs) should place higher value on tradition and religion than individualists, Bierbrauer (1994) hypothesized and found that, compared to Germans, Kurds, and Arabs indicated less willingness to allow state law to intervene in family related matters (as it damages relationships), gave higher legitimacy for tradition and religion to handle disputes, preferred informal settlements, wanted apologies from the perpetrator to a greater degree, wanted family involved in third-party dispute resolution, valued harmony and compliance over formal rules in resolving disputes, and expected the judge to make greater allowance for gender and social status (see also Lauchli, 2000, who discusses similar notions regarding the influence of Confucian values on dispute resolution in China).

### *Comparative law: summary and implications for organizational behavior psychology*

In summary, the major focus of comparative law is to determine how culture influences legal systems in various modern states. Disputing processes within the field are theorized at multiple levels of analysis, from the legal institution to the individual. Many creative synergies exist across comparative law and cross-cultural conflict and negotiation research in OB, most notably developing multi-level models that incorporate societal culture, legal institutions, and individual-level disputing behaviors. For example, research combining these disciplines might examine if normative disputing procedures at the institution level mediate the influence of societal culture on schemas and scripts for negotiation. Do individuals socialized in cultures with adjudicative legal institutions have schemas for negotiation that emphasizes win-lose outcomes while individuals from cultures with inquisitorial legal institutions have schemas for negotiation that emphasizes compromise outcomes? Debates regarding the relative importance of cultural values as an explanation for country differences in legal systems as compared to economic and institutional factors are common in comparative law. Cross-cultural OB/psychology would benefit from

integrating such comparative explanations. Finally, it would also be interesting to examine the *reflexive* nature of culture and disputing in organizational behavior/psychology, for example, how changes in culture can evolve from changes in conflict and negotiation processes.

## Language and disputing

### *Paradigm of study in language and disputing*

The study of discourse or talk during conflict in various societies is not a single discipline but an approach taken by scholars that cuts across anthropology, linguistics, sociology, and psychology. The *major question* asked when using this approach is: *what does language used during conflict reveal about the socio-cultural knowledge presumed by speakers, as well as the rules of inference and interaction governing speakers' behaviors?* (Watson-Gegeo and White, 1990). In studying language during conflict, the *level of analysis* varies, depending on the particular context in which the conflict takes place. For example, conflict talk can occur within a dyad, or can occur within a group of individuals. *Culture* is treated as the particular social group to which the speakers' belong, including both pre-industrial and industrial societies. In terms of *methodology*, descriptive accounts of conflict discourse are examined employing sources such as transcripts, ethnographic records, audio and video records, as well as dramatic scripts. Finally, the vast majority of studies are non-comparative ethnographies of discourse during conflict, although several *cross-cultural comparisons* do exist (see Brenneis, 1988 for extensive review on language and disputing).

### *Key findings from language and disputing*

Through ethnographic analyses of transcripts of conflict discourse across a wide range of pacific pre-industrial societies, Watson-Gegeo and White (1990) illustrate that cultural concepts such as those of person and emotion, as well as the nature of the social structure, are systematically related

to the way in which conflict is conceptualized and resolved. For example, in most of the pacific societies studied, the concept of shame was the outcome of conflict and institutionalized practices such as reconciliation meetings existed for alleviating such shame. Furthermore, as discussed in Watson-Gegeo and White (1990), conflict discourse revealed that the social structure of the society influences various aspects of the conflict resolution process, including who controlled the process, the goals and outcomes of the process, and who participated in the process. For example, the political organization of the society was related to the extent to which the conflict resolution processes were controlled by officials and leaders. In the hierarchically organized Samoa, reconciliation meetings (*fono*) are called either when a social norm has been breached or when there is threat to the harmony of village life. These meetings are characterized by tight organization and control by chiefs, as well as orators who speak on behalf of the chiefs (Duranti, 1990). By contrast, in egalitarian Melanesia, discussion of conflict and decision-making meetings do not involve hierarchy (Watson-Gegeo and White, 1990). In hierarchical societies, the expected goals and outcomes of disputes were also explicit. For example, in the Hawaiian *ho'oponopono* ("to set things right"), or the family gathering for the discussion of interpersonal problems led by the household leader, the expected goal is always to clarify each individual's responsibility for actions and the expected outcome is always apology and forgiveness (Boggs and Chun, 1990). Social structure also influences the directness versus the indirectness of conflict discourse. For example, in hierarchical societies, the status of the powerful is signaled in direct speech. In contrast, in egalitarian societies, indirect discourse is used between disputants to avoid direct confrontations. For example, the Managalase of New Guinea manage contentious issues by presenting their own interpretations of affairs indirectly through the use of metaphors and allegories (McKellin, 1990). Finally, social structure also influences the *participation structure* or the constraints on who can say what to whom, how and when (Philips, 1972). In problem-solving contexts, multiple voices are allowed in an interactive

dialogue through the assistance of mediators (e.g., Hawaiian ho'oponopono, the Samoan fonu), whereas in contexts that create prescriptive, normative accounts of disputes to the public, lengthy interpretive accounts are given by pre-selected individual speakers. In such cases, because conflict resolution reflects socio-moral statements, who participates and how participation is managed is politically charged, and is reflected in the degree to which the event is planned in advance in terms of mutually agreed upon issues to be discussed. For example, in the Fiji pancayat, witnesses are already interviewed by committee members before the session is held, thus, committee members carefully control what witnesses say as well as what the general public observes. As Brenneis (1990) notes, in a society where the restoration of social ties is critical and individual emotions are de-emphasized, disputants are left satisfied despite such constraints on participation because the pancayat allows disputants and the public to share in the social experience of highly valued, non-individualized, collective moods.

Conflict discourse has also been studied among children in industrial societies. For example, Corsaro and Rizzo (1990) video-taped and studied cross-cultural similarities as well as differences in conflict talk among American and Italian nursery school children. In terms of similarities, children from both cultures mostly disputed about the nature of play, or how an act should be carried out in playing, as well as displaying oppositional exchanges. In both cultures, disputes over the nature of play involved children's attempts to come to shared understanding of play events. Despite these similarities, however, there were important cultural differences. Overall persuasiveness and verbal routines were much more important among Italian children than American children. That is, Italian children enjoyed engaging in disputes (*discussione*) as an end in itself using artful, creative dialogue. For example, Italian children emphasized style in their arguments, engaging in complex conflict talk by using interruption devices in turn-taking ("ma scusa" "but excuse me"), prefacing disagreements, using emphasis markers with "ma" (but), and format

tying, or repeating elements of an opponent's prior turn when talking.

Conflict discourse has also been studied in industrial societies in legal contexts. For example, although not focusing on cultural differences, Conley and O'Barr (1990) found that the style of accounts given by litigants varied depending on the social background of American litigants. For example, litigants of lower socioeconomic background tend to give relational accounts that emphasize status and relationships, filled with background details that are considered relevant to the litigant but irrelevant and inappropriate to the court. Such relational accounts were perceived by the court to be imprecise and tangential, whereas litigants of higher socioeconomic background tended to give rule-oriented accounts that emphasize rules and laws, leaving out information that pertains to motivation and feelings. The rule-oriented approach is correlated with the exposure to social power in the literature and rule-based cultures of business and law. When two sides of a dispute are given with different styles of accounts, Conley and O'Barr (1990) argue that the court is inherently biased in favor of the rule-oriented litigant.

Finally, in addition to the influence of culture/community on conflict discourse, Grimshaw (1990) discusses how sociological variables such as power, affect, and stakes act as constraints on the occurrence and intensity of conflict discourse. For example, in Corsaro and Rizzo's (1990) study previously discussed, the children disputed with each other but did not challenge teachers of higher authority. It seems that the greater the discrepancies in power between disputants, the less likely that the less powerful will challenge the more powerful. Furthermore, the greater the discrepancies in power, the more likely for the conflict talk to be indirect, overtly neutral, and of lower intensity. However, if the stakes are high, subordinates may challenge superiors with greater power.

### *Language and disputing: implications for organizational behavior/psychology*

In summary, the field of language and disputing relies on rich descriptive accounts of conflict discourse in various societies to examine culture-specific

characteristics of conflict resolution. Like legal anthropology and comparative law, the role of the social structure of societies is theorized to have an important role in the dynamics of conflict. The analysis of discourse or talk and how it constrains and affords the definition and resolution of disputes is an approach that can be integrated with research in OB/psychology. For example, as discussed in Watson-Gegeo and White's (1990) collection of ethnographies, shame plays a central role in the nature of conflict resolution processes in many societies, yet research on culture and negotiation in OB/psychology rarely examines emotions. Research on language and disputing also calls attention to collective outcomes of disputing. For example, the work by Brenneis (1990) highlights that bystanders are at least as important as disputants themselves in some societies, as they come to experience collective mood which helps further to strengthen socio-moral norms. Finally, with some exceptions (see Leung, 1987; Tinsley and Brett, 1997), there is little attention to culture and mediation in the organizational behavior literature, yet third-party involvement in conflict resolution is widespread in many societies worldwide.

## Cognitive anthropology

### *Paradigm of cognitive anthropology*

Broadly put, cognitive anthropology is the study of the relationship between culture and human thought (Robertson and Beasley, 2007). More specifically, this field examines how people in various cultures understand and organize the material objects, events, and experiences that make up their world according to their indigenous cognitive categories (Robertson and Beasley, 2007). One of the *major questions* asked is: *how do meaning systems vary across cultures and what are the implications of such cultural differences for intercultural conflict?* The most relevant work in this tradition is that of Medin, Ross, and Cox (2006) on culture, meanings, and resource conflict. In their research, the authors focus on cultural differences in meanings of nature, or more specifically, the knowledge organization of the concept of nature as a source for intercultural misperceptions and conflict over natural resources between Native American Indians

and European Americans. In this tradition, *culture* is typically not defined in terms of shared values but as "the causally distributed patterns of ideas, their public expressions, and the resultant practices and behaviors in given ecological contexts" (Medin, Ross, and Cox, 2006, p. 28). Thus, culture is viewed as distributional, and the variation in values and norms *within* cultures is also considered an important aspect of culture along with its consensus. Thus, in terms of *levels of analysis*, Medin and colleagues' work focuses at the group level. The *methodology* used includes both qualitative and quantitative approaches. For example, cognitive sorting tasks, open-ended explanations of sorting, as well as surveys on values and beliefs are all used, and associated methods have been developed to assess levels of agreement in the structure and distribution of knowledge in cultural groups (e.g., the Cultural Consensus Model (CCM); Romney, Weller, and Batchelder, 1986). Finally, the authors focus on *cross-cultural* differences in knowledge organization, as well as *intercultural* misperceptions and stereotyping that result from such cultural differences in knowledge organization.

### *Key findings from cognitive anthropology*

Medin, Ross, and Cox (2006) found that conflict over natural resources over (i.e., fish) between the Menominee Native American and European American fishermen are due to cultural differences in knowledge organization of nature (i.e., fishing), and that these differences are associated with negative intercultural stereotyping. The authors found that European Americans conceptualize nature in terms of sports, where the emphasis in fishing is placed on fair chase and competition to obtain "trophy game." In contrast, the Menominee conceptualize nature in terms of ecology, where the emphasis in fishing is placed on simply catching food. Cultural differences in the knowledge organization of nature were reflected in a number of cognitive tasks that examined expert fishermen's knowledge of fish among the two cultural groups. For example, when asked to freely sort species of fish into categories and provide a justification for why they did so, European Americans were more likely than the Menominees to use categories with

evaluative dimensions such as prestigious sport fish versus garbage fish and give taxonomic and morphological justifications. On the other hand, the Menominee, more than European Americans, were likely to categorize based on ecological relations. The authors found this differential salience of ecological information despite the same level of knowledge base across the two groups. In a separate study, participants were asked to look at pairs of fish and describe how they influenced each other in nature. While European Americans tended to report only relations of adult fish, consistent with an interest in only catching the biggest fish for sports, the Menominee took into account the whole cycle of each species, consistent with an interest in overall ecology. Again, both groups had similar levels of knowledge base about interactions among fish.

In addition to knowledge organization of fish, European Americans and the Menominee had different goals for the practice of fishing. For example, the European Americans highly prioritized fishing as a challenge to outsmart fish, whereas the Menominee highly prioritized fishing for food. However, broad commonalities were also observed across the two groups. For example, both groups rank-ordered the desirability of fish species similarly, and both groups condemned selling fish, keeping undersized fish, and fishing on spawning beds. Despite such similarities in values, however, there were many intercultural misperceptions. For example, the Menominee overestimated European Americans' focus on catching trophy-size fish, and underestimated the importance of fishing as an activity to pass down to future generations as well as being close to nature. European Americans, on the other hand, showed the largest discrepancy where they underestimated the Menominee's focus on fishing as a way to relax, and overestimated the approval of selling fish, keeping under-sized fish, and fishing on spawning beds, when in fact both groups condemned these practices. Finally, it was found that cultural differences in knowledge organization as discussed above were correlated with individual-level stereotyping. For example, the more European American individuals had stronger conceptualization of nature as sports, the more likely they were to have intercultural misperceptions.

### *Cognitive anthropology: summary and implications for organizational behavior/psychology*

In summary, cognitive anthropology focuses on cultural differences in knowledge structure and knowledge organization instead of cultural values. An interesting finding of Medin, Ross, and Cox's (2006) work is that knowledge organization can be a source of intercultural misperceptions, despite the two cultures sharing similar broader values which is a promising focus for organizational behavior/psychology. The notion in cognitive anthropology that the variability of beliefs, values, and norms (as opposed to its consensus) within one culture should not be treated as noise is also a meta-theoretical and empirical focus that should capture more attention in OB/psychology. For example, as they note, ignoring within-group differences can lead to the over-interpretation of cultural differences, as a consequence of researchers ignoring within-group differences (Medin, Ross, and Cox 2006).

### **Experimental economics**

#### *Experimental economics and its paradigm*

Traditionally, economics was regarded as a non-experimental science that solely relied on findings from real-world markets and economies. However, in the last two decades, controlled laboratory experimentation, with its advantage of allowing researchers to make causal conclusions, emerged as a vital methodology forming the branch of experimental economics. To date, this sub-discipline has allowed the testing of theoretical predictions on various aspects of economic behavior, as well as the major assumption of economics itself, that behavior is determined purely through self-interest and rational decision-making. Studies that specifically focus on culture in this field investigate *major questions* such as, *how do economic behaviors such as cooperation, fairness, and trust vary across cultures?* examined at the individual and societal levels of analysis. Furthermore, most studies treat *cultural differences* synonymously with country differences except for more recent field experiments that are being conducted across small-

scale pre-industrial societies by economic anthropologists. In either case however, cultural values or associated constructs are rarely measured. The methodologies used involve experiments that utilize various types of economic games where participants are always given real incentives (i.e., money). Finally, *cross-cultural comparisons* rather than intercultural comparisons are most common in experimental economics.

### *Key findings from experimental economics*

Numerous experiments provide evidence against the previously held major assumption of economics, the selfishness axiom, which states that individuals seek to maximize their own material gains. In fact, it has been observed that people often forgo material gains in order to act pro-socially. Such evidence comes from experiments conducted with university students in numerous countries, although culture was not the explicit focus (see Camerer, 2003 for extensive review). That people often behave pro-socially can also be found using various types of economic games discussed below.

#### **Ultimatum games**

For example, the ultimatum game (UG) involves two people, where the first player called the “proposer” is allotted a sum of money and can offer a proportion of the sum to the second player, the “responder.” The responder who knows the amount of the initial sum can either accept or reject the proposer’s offer. If the responder accepts, he or she receives the offer and the proposer gets the remainder of the money (initial sum minus the offer). If the responder rejects the offer, neither party gets anything. If individuals were acting selfishly to maximize their own gains, it would be predicted that responders should accept any positive offer, and proposers would not send any money in the first place. However across many studies, what is consistently observed is that proposers offer around 40–50 percent of the initial sum, with responders rejecting approximately 20 percent of the time (Henrich *et al.*, 2005). Thus, it seems that proposers are sensitive to fairness norms, where they would rather give up money than to treat others unfairly and risk being punished.

Early cross-cultural studies found little variability in offer and rejection rates in different countries (Henrich *et al.*, 2005). For example, Roth, Prasnikar, Okuno-Fujiwara, and Zamir (1991) found similar offer and rejection rates in the US, Japan, Yugoslavia, and Israel, and any differences found between these countries were small. Cameron (1999) also found similar rates in Indonesia. More recently, however, Henrich (2000) observed a more peculiar finding when comparing UG behavior through field experiments between the Machiguenga men of the Peruvian Amazon and UCLA students. He found that offer rates among the Machiguenga were much smaller (mean of 26 percent) than previous findings (mean of 40–50 percent). Thus, unlike what has been previously observed among university students in hundreds of experiments, the Machiguenga had no intention of sharing equally nor had any expectation of receiving equal shares from others.

In a more extensive cross-cultural project, Henrich *et al.* (2005) conducted field experiments in fifteen small-scale pre-industrial societies, exhibiting a wide range of economic and cultural conditions (i.e., horticulturalists, nomadic herders, small-scale agriculturalists). Comparing UG behavior across these societies, they found that the selfishness axiom was violated in some way in all societies. However, a significant degree of variability was observed across the groups, with offer rates ranging from 26–58 percent, which is far greater than the 40–50 percent typically seen among university students in industrialized societies. Interestingly, offer rates were positively associated with the degree of *market integration* in the society, or the degree to which people engage in market exchange, sociopolitical complexity, and settlement size. Offer rates were also positively associated with the degree of *payoffs to cooperation*, or the extent to which non-immediate kin are involved in economic life. Replicating previous findings, the Machiguenga who are almost entirely economically dependent on their own families exhibited one of the lowest offer rates among the societies studied. Henrich *et al.* (2005) discuss how experimental play in UG behavior in these societies mirror patterns of interactions in everyday life. For example, the Au and Gnaou of Papua Guinea offered

more than half of the initially allotted money but many of these offers were rejected. Such a pattern can be explained within a societal context in which people seek status through gift giving. Gift-giving creates a strong obligation for the receiver to reciprocate in the future and places the receiver in a subordinate status; thus, excessively large gifts are frequently refused. By contrast, the Hadza exhibited low offers and high rejection rates. In everyday life, the Hadza avoid sharing meat and look for opportunities not to share (Marlowe, 2004), and cooperation is only enforced by fear of punishment by means such as informal social sanctions, gossip, and ostracism (Blurton Jones, 1984).

In another study, arguing that it is problematic not to measure cultural traits when comparing UG behaviors across cultures, Oosterbeek, Sloof, and van Kuilen (2004) coded thirty-seven papers conducted between 1982 and 2003 on various cultural dimensions based on where each study was conducted, and examined whether there were any relationships between cultural traits and UG offers/rejection rates. They found that neither individualism nor power distance had any significant effects. However, they found that respect for authority had a negative association with offer rates.

Buchan, Croson, and Johnson (2004) also used the ultimatum game in their cross-cultural study, but focused on fairness beliefs in the US and Japan in various situational contexts. For example, the authors compared American and Japanese fairness beliefs when the proposer had greater power than the responder (i.e., had an alternative in case the deal did not go through with the responder) versus when the proposer had equal power with the responder (i.e., had no alternative). Buchan, Croson, and Johnson (2004) found that for Americans, what was considered fair offers (by the proposer) and demands (by the responder) were lower when the proposer had power than when the proposer did not have power. In contrast, for the Japanese, what was considered fair offers and demands were higher when the proposer had power than when the proposer did not have power. In other words, Americans believed that it is fair for the proposer with greater power to take the larger share of the money, whereas the Japanese believed that it is fair for the proposer with the

greater power to earn smaller portions of the money and share more of the surplus with the weaker partner. Buchan, Croson, and Johnson (2004) explains that this is consistent with American and Japanese differences on the meaning of power. In the US, power is coercive, while in Japan, there is an interdependent relationship between the powerful and the powerless, where the powerful takes care of its subordinate in exchange for loyalty.

### Trust games

Trust is another aspect of economic behavior that is studied cross-culturally in experimental economics. In studying trust, researchers often use the investment game (Berg, Dickhaut, and McCabe, 1995), which is played by a sender and a receiver. The sender is allotted an initial sum of money, and is told that he or she is free to keep the entire money or can split it with the receiver. Whatever amount of money sent to the receiver is tripled by the experimenter and given to the receiver. The receiver then decides whether to keep the entire tripled amount or to send some back to the sender. If both parties trusted each other, each would end up better off than if acting out of pure self-interest. For example, if the sender trusts the receiver and sends all of the ten dollars, the receiver gets thirty dollars, some of which he or she can send back. If the receiver reciprocates the sender's trust and sends back half of thirty dollars, each player ends up with fifteen dollars. By contrast, if the individuals purely acted out of self-interest, the sender would keep all of the ten dollars, and the receiver gets nothing.

Using this paradigm, recent work has examined whether culture influences levels of trust, and whether culture interacts with various social contexts in influencing levels of trust. For example, Buchan, Johnson, and Croson (2006) examined other-regarding preferences (ORP), which is a general term for constructs such as trust, reciprocity, and altruism, under ingroup versus outgroup contexts in the US, China, Japan, and Korea. Overall, the authors found few differences in ORPs across countries, although they did find that the Chinese sent slightly more money to receivers than the Americans. Furthermore, in terms of social context, the authors found that Americans send and return

more money when players are ingroup members, whereas the Chinese send and return more money when players are outgroup members. Buchan, Johnson, and Croson (2006) explain this pattern of results by speculating that ingroup biases among the Chinese may be more common in naturally occurring social groups. In another study, Buchan and Croson (2004) found similar results where Americans were less likely to expect proposers to act in trusting ways as the social distance between proposers and receivers increased, whereas this pattern was weaker for the Chinese. Finally, Buchan, Croson and Dawes (2002) found that culture and social identity interact to influence the propensity to trust and reciprocate. Individualists were found to trust and reciprocate more when interacting with ingroup members than strangers, whereas collectivists behaved the same way across these two conditions. The authors also found that the Americans and Chinese sent and returned higher amounts than Koreans and the Japanese, providing some evidence for varying norms of trust and reciprocity across countries.

More recently, Ashraf, Bohnet, and Piankov (2006) focused on the question of what motivates people to trust and be trustworthy across the US, Russia, and South America using dictator and investment games. More specifically, they examined whether people trust others purely through "calculative" expectations of the other's trustworthiness (i.e., a belief) or through unconditional kindness (i.e., the enjoyment of trusting others). The authors also examined whether people who have been shown trust become trustworthy because of reciprocity or unconditional kindness. They found that trust (i.e., amount of money sent) is predicted more by the expectation of trustworthiness than unconditional kindness, and that trustworthiness (i.e., proportion of money received that is returned) is predicted more by unconditional kindness than reciprocity. Similar trust behaviors were observed among the US, Russia, and South America.

While the previous studies focus more on individual-level trust, other research has theorized on why there are country-level differences in trust, which is believed to lead to differences in economic performance. Buchan *et al.* (2002, 2006) discuss multiple perspectives on why societies

differ in trust. For example, some emphasize culture (Ouchi, 1981; Fukuyama, 1995; Strong and Weber, 1998; Doney, Cannon, and Mullen, 1998), religion (La Porta *et al.*, 1997), ease of communication (Fishman and Khanna 1999), presence of sanctioning mechanisms for non-cooperation (Yamagishi, 1988a, 1988b, Yamagishi and Yamagishi, 1994; Yamagishi, Cook, and Watabe, 1998), differing social/economic systems (Henrich *et al.*, 2001, 2005), as well as degree and type of associative networks (Putnam, 1993). Zak and Knack (2001) also discuss sanctioning systems in terms of formal institutions (e.g., legal systems, the securities and exchange commission, investigative agencies) and informal systems (e.g., reputation and ostracism), as well as societal-level homogeneity, unequal distribution of income and discrimination. Furthermore, Zak and Fakhar (2006) provide evidence that societal-level trust across forty-one countries is correlated with consumption of plant-based estrogens and the presence of estrogen-like molecules in the environment. In their empirical study, Bohnet, Herrmann, and Zeckhauser (forthcoming) discuss some of these sources of country-level differences in trust in explaining why people in the Gulf (Emirates, Kuwaitis, Omanis) require a higher probability of trustworthiness from others in order to trust, compared to people in the West (Swiss, Americans). They theorize that in the Gulf, people are not inclined to trust strangers given the lack of formal institutions like contracts and the law. Instead, people in the Gulf trust familiar people where trust is promoted through social networks and informal social sanctions (See also Bohnet, Greig, Herrmann, and Zeckhauser, 2008 for other work on betrayal aversion in six countries).

### *Experimental economics: summary and implications for organizational behavior/psychology*

In summary, both experimental economics and organizational behavior/psychology examine how individual behavior such as cooperation, fairness, and trust vary across cultures, utilizing tightly controlled experiments in order to test theoretical predictions. Although both

disciplines rely on similar methodologies, one major difference is that experimental economics consistently provide real incentives (i.e., money) for participants in studying their behavior, whereas organizational behavior/psychology is less consistent, sometimes using real incentives and at other times relying on other methods such as course credit. Experimental economics examines additional societal-level factors such as market integration, payoffs to cooperation, and sanctioning systems as sources of cultural differences. As with other potential "mergers" across disciplines, the simultaneous examination of both the rich psychological and contextual approach to culture, conflict, and negotiation in OB/psychology can be fruitfully integrated with the incentives and societal-level factors found in economics. For example, it would be fruitful to examine the condition under which values explain differences in conflict and negotiation across cultures as compared to incentives and sanctions.

## Primateology

### *Paradigm of primatology*

Conflict resolution is one major area of research in the discipline of primatology, or the study of primate behavior. Given the focus on non-human primates, culture as is conceptualized in this field is not examined; however, the influence of the social/ecological context on primate conflict resolution behaviors is commonly examined. We focus specifically on these studies in identifying lessons that can be learned from primatology for the study of culture and conflict in organizational behavior/psychology. In the most general sense, the *major question* asked in these studies is: *how do various aspects of the social context/structure influence various types of conflict behavior among primates?* The *level of analysis* in these studies is the group, where primates are usually studied in captive groups. While *culture* is not studied explicitly, there is a focus on the the social/ecological context. The *methodologies* used in studying primates vary depending on the nature of the research question; however, at a general level, the frequency of naturally occurring behaviors of interest in a treatment condition

is compared to the frequency of the same behavior in a controlled condition. Finally, the cross-cultural-intercultural distinction is not relevant in this discipline; however, comparisons of conflict behavior can be made across different social/ecological contexts.

### *Key findings from primatology*

In examining the relationship between social/ecological context and conflict behaviors, one area of research in primatology has focused on how the various ways in which the *distribution of power* in primate societies affects the manifestation of aggression and post-conflict reconciliation behaviors among primates. For example, among different species of macaques, the extent of rigidity in the social hierarchy has been found to covary with conflict management patterns (Thierry, 2000). Rhesus and Japanese macaques that live with strong power asymmetries engage in highly uni-directional conflict, where the target of aggression flees or submits to the aggressor. Furthermore, post-conflict reconciliation behaviors between previous opponents are rare. By contrast, among Sulawesi Island macaques that live with weak power asymmetry, aggressive acts often elicit protests and counterattacks from the target (Thierry, 2000). Furthermore, post-conflict reconciliation behaviors between previous opponents are frequent. In explaining the origins of such power asymmetries, van Schaik (1989) argues that all animals live in groups for protection from predators, but such group living creates intra-group and inter-group competition for resources. In macaques, females create kin-bonded coalitions (i.e., the dominants) to face overt competition, both between individuals within a group and between groups. In cases where predation risks are high, the costs of leaving the group among subordinates are higher, thus, the subordinates remain in the group and dominants end up taking most of the resource share, creating despotic relationships among unrelated members within the group. By contrast, when predation risks are low, subordinates are not forced to remain within the group, and because dominants benefit from subordinates remaining within the group to cooperate against external threats, a

relatively equal division of resources results producing egalitarian relationships among non-kin.

The distribution of power in primate societies has also been examined in relation to *third-party policing*; that is, the physical intervention by a third party of a conflict between two primates. For example, among pigtailed macaques, Flack, de Waal, and Krakauer (2005) found that policing is only effective when exercised by a small number of powerful individuals within the society where the risk of physically intervening is of negligible cost to them. Furthermore, Flack, Krakauer, and de Waal (2005) found that, in pigtail macaques, knocking out the high power intervenors caused the social system to destabilize, leading to more conflict, less socio-positive interaction, and less reconciliation among other macaques. Flack, Girvan, de Waal, and Krakauer (2006) further found that policing has a direct function of preventing injuries and damaged relationships as well as indirect functions of altering the social resource network in a way in which group living is made more advantageous. For example, with policing, individual macaques had significantly more play and grooming partners, more beneficial affiliative contagion (i.e., A grooms B, B grooms C, etc.), more cooperation among individuals with unequal access to social resources, and more interaction-partner diversity (i.e., the prevention of formation of cliques of similar macaques).

In addition to the distribution of power within primate societies, the *value of relationships* is another type of social contextual variable conceptualized to influence reconciliation behaviors among primates. Reconciliation refers to the friendly reunion between former opponents soon after an aggressive confrontation (de Waal, 2000). Research generally supports that reconciliation is more likely to occur after conflict between parties that have a relationship of high social or reproductive value. For example, in a study by Cords and Thurnheer (1993), pairs of long-tailed macaques were trained so that popcorn was only obtainable by acting in a coordinated fashion with their partner by sitting side by side with each other. Macaques that were trained to cooperate were three times more likely to reconcile after an

induced conflict than those who were not trained to cooperate.

Another social contextual variable, *crowding*, also seems to affect conflict management patterns among primates. For example, van Wolkenten *et al.* (2006) found that crowding decreased aggression, play, and social grooming in capuchin monkeys (related to chimpanzees), suggesting that primates may avoid social encounters and adopt a conflict avoidance strategy. Indeed, many studies have supported the coping model, that animals respond to crowded conditions by modifying their behavior to reduce the severity of aggressive encounters (Aureli and de Waal, 1997; de Waal, 1989; de Waal, Aureli, and Judge, 2000; Judge, 2000; Judge and de Waal, 1997). Chimpanzees have also been found to increase friendly and appeasing interactions, although aggression increased slightly (de Waal, 1982). However, in a different study of chimpanzees, Aureli and de Waal (1997) found that all forms of social behavior were decreased, along with decreases in both intense and mild aggression. Furthermore, Rhesus macaques have been found to increase grooming while aggression remained constant. In shorter-term crowding studies, rhesus monkeys have been shown to engage in mild aggression and increase submissive signals, but also decrease grooming (Judge, 2000).

### *Primateology: summary and implications for organizational behavior/psychology*

In summary, primatology is another discipline in which conflict resolution is a major area of study. Although culture is not examined per se, it does study a number of social/ecological contextual variables, including distribution of power, policing, value of relationships, and crowding and their impact on various conflict management behaviors. One implication of this discipline for the study of culture, conflict, and negotiation in OB/psychology, is examining the role of differences in power distribution at a societal level on conflict resolution. For example, future research can examine questions such as, what role does power distance between negotiators have for conflict resolution across cultures? What are the effects of cultural differences

in power distance on effectiveness of third-party interventions? Furthermore, while conflict resolution has been studied, the act of reconciliation or relationship repair has received scant attention in organizational behavior/psychology, especially in cross-cultural contexts. Finally, borrowing from the primatology literature, we can expand our current individual-level understanding of culture such as cultural values (e.g., individualism-collectivism) and move towards a more ecological understanding of culture. In other words, focusing on higher level social/ecological differences may illuminate where cultural values come from. For example, it is possible that population density (e.g., crowding) may influence micro-level cultural values and behavior in conflict and negotiation situations.

## Communication

### *Communication and its paradigm*

Communication is a highly diverse discipline, and at the most general level examines how people exchange messages in order to create meaning across various contexts, cultures, channels, and media. Here, we focus on the cross-cultural and intercultural sub-disciplines within communication science which examine major questions such as: *How does communication vary across cultures, in conflict situations and more generally across situations? What are the obstacles encountered when people from different cultures communicate? How can communication be improved in intercultural contexts?* as well as, *how do cultural values influence negotiation behavior and outcomes?* The units of analysis in these areas, similar to cross-cultural organizational behavior are most typically at the individual level or the dyad level. Culture is often conceptualized as shared values and/or assessed through individuals' self-construals at the individual level. The research method used includes a variety of experimental paradigms such as questionnaire surveys and behavioral simulations. Finally, unlike organizational behavior that has predominantly focused on cross-cultural comparisons, the communication field has had a long history of distinguishing such *cross-cultural*

comparative research from *intercultural* research (Gudykunst and Mody, 2002).

### *Key findings from communication*

#### Comparative research on communication

One major contribution of the communication sciences to the study of culture and conflict is derived from Ting-Toomey's *Face-Negotiation Theory* (see Ting-Toomey, 2005, for a review). This theory examines cross-cultural differences in *face*, or "the claimed sense of favorable social self-worth that a person wants others to have of him or her" (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998, p. 187), which can be threatened, maintained, or enhanced, especially in emotionally vulnerable situations such as conflict. Face can be focused on the concern for one's own image (self-face), another's image (other-face), or both (mutual-face). Face-negotiation theory also examines cultural differences in *facework*, or the behavioral tendencies individuals have in maintaining or restoring face loss (Ting-Toomey, 2005). For example, while face and facework are universal communication phenomena, the meaning of face and how individuals enact facework differ across cultures. Individualists tend to have higher self-face concerns and use more self-oriented facework strategies whereas collectivists have higher other-face concerns and use more other-oriented facework strategies (Ting-Toomey *et al.*, 1991; Oetzel *et al.* (2001). In addition, individualists tend to use direct, face-threatening conflict styles such as dominating, whereas collectivists tend to use more indirect, mutual face-saving conflict styles such as avoiding and obliging (Elsayed-Ekhouly and Buda, 1996; Gabrielidis *et al.*, 1997; Ohbuchi, Fukushima, and Tedeschi, 1999; Oetzel and Ting-Toomey, 2003; Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998; Ting-Toomey *et al.*, 1991). Face and facework strategies also vary across high and low power distance societies. Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998) argue that in small power distance cultures, high status members tend to use verbally direct facework strategies such as disapproval and threatening strategies, while low status members tend to use defensive strategies to restore face loss. In contrast, in large power distance cultures, high status members tend to use verbally

indirect facework strategies such as indirect questioning and relational pressuring, while low status members use self-effacing and self-criticizing strategies to accept face loss. As well, individuals in small power distance cultures use horizontal facework which minimizes status differences, whereas individuals in large power distance cultures use vertical facework which maximizes status differences (Oetzel *et al.*, 2001).

Contextual factors also interact with culture in influencing face concerns. For example, Ting-Toomey (2005) argued that individualists are less likely to distinguish between ingroup and outgroup members during conflict, and consequently have self-face concerns when dealing with members from either group. By contrast, collectivists make a greater distinction between ingroups versus outgroups, and only have other-face concerns when dealing with ingroup members while having self-face concerns for outgroup members. In the experimental work on negotiation, Cai, Wilson, and Drake (2000) also illustrate the importance of another contextual factor – negotiators' roles (e.g., buyer or seller) – and how they differentially influence dyads high and low on collectivism (see also Drake, 2001).

Other work in the communication sciences have focused on cross-cultural variability in verbal and non-verbal communication styles that may have relevance for culture and conflict and negotiation research and problems experienced in intercultural contexts (see Gudykunst and Mody, 2002 for detailed review on cross-cultural verbal and non-verbal communication). For example, cultures vary in the *value placed on speech* (Lim, 2002). In the West, there is a rich tradition of placing great value on speech where words are assumed to carry universal meaning, whereas in the East, words are considered to be only part of the total communication context (see also Hall, 1976 on high and low context communication). *Language style* also varies considerably across cultures. For example, unlike English, Asian languages are characterized by various status-markers (e.g., honorific prefixes and suffixes, different sets of inflectional endings) and mechanisms to maintain group-orientedness (e.g., dropping of pronouns; see Kashima and

Kashima, 1998). Cultures vary in their *speech acts*, or the task that is perceived to be important in communicating. For example, while factual answers are valued in the West, courtesy is valued in the East (Hall and Whyte, 1960). Related work shows that individualism is associated with the importance of clarity in conversation, whereas collectivism is associated with the importance of social-relational constraints such as minimizing impositions (Kim, 1994, 2005; Miyahara and Kim, 1993; Miyahara *et al.*, 1998). Finally, culture also affects non-verbal aspects of communication that has relevance for conflict and negotiation (Andersen *et al.*, 2002). *Immediacy* refers to actions that communicate interpersonal closeness through behaviors such as smiling, touching, eye contact, open body positions, and vocal animation. High contact cultures include South America, southern and eastern Europe, and the Middle East, whereas low contact cultures include Asia and northern Europe (Hall, 1966). Furthermore, it is argued that situations in which it is appropriate to show positive versus negative *emotions* differ across cultures. In high power distance cultures, people only show positive emotions toward high status members, and negative emotions to those with lower status (Andersen and Bowman, 1999; Matsumoto, 1991; Porter and Samovar, 1998).

### **Intercultural communication**

Research in communication has long distinguished cross-cultural comparative research from intercultural research. One representative theory of effective intercultural communication is Gudykunst's (2005) anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM) theory, which was designed to explain interpersonal and intergroup communication effectiveness between ingroup members and strangers. The theory posits that interacting with strangers elicits *uncertainty*, a cognitive phenomenon of not being able to predict the stranger's attitudes, feelings, and behaviors, as well as *anxiety*, the affective equivalent of uncertainty. Gudykunst (2005) argues that communication effectiveness is a function of uncertainty and anxiety levels being above the minimum threshold and below the maximum threshold. Put simply, when uncertainty and

anxiety are below the minimum threshold, one does not make an effort to communicate effectively because of over-confidence in the predictability of the stranger's behavior, as well as the lack of adrenaline. Communication is also not effective when anxiety and uncertainty are above the maximum threshold because one then lacks the confidence to be able to predict others while feeling overwhelmed.

AUM theory identifies a number of factors that influence the likelihood that uncertainty and anxiety are effectively managed. Ways in which people react to strangers, such as having tolerance for ambiguity, reduces uncertainty and anxiety, and prevents people from relying on their first impressions in interpreting others. How people socially categorize strangers also matter; for example, having positive stereotypes of strangers help decrease uncertainty and anxiety. Situational factors also influence uncertainty management processes. For example, the greater the power the ingroup has over strangers, the less the anxiety (Goodwin, Operario, and Fiske, 1998). Also, the connectedness and inclusion one feels towards strangers reduces uncertainty (Berger and Calabrese, 1975; Gudykunst, Chua, and Gray, 1987) and anxiety (Stephan and Stephan, 1985). Gudykunst (2005) also argues that the extent to which uncertainty and anxiety management leads to effective communication largely depends on a person's level of mindfulness, which includes skills such as learning about strangers' perspectives by being open to novelty, being alert to distinctions, having an implicit awareness of multiple perspectives, and having an orientation in the present (Langer, 1997). Research thus far generally supports AUM theory (see Gudykunst and Nishida, 2001; Gudykunst, Nishida, and Chua, 1986; Gudykunst and Shapiro, 1996; Hubbert, Gudykunst, and Guerrero, 1999).

### ***Communication: summary and implications for organizational behavior/psychology***

In summary, research on culture and conflict/negotiation in communication shares a number of similarities with the foci in OB/psychology. Both

tend to focus on the individual/dyad level of analysis, and use similar methodologies such as questionnaire surveys and negotiation simulations. Numerous research traditions in communication could be fruitfully integrated with research in OB/psychology to enrich our understanding of culture, conflict, and negotiation. For example, it would be worthwhile to move beyond just examining cognitive sources of intercultural misunderstanding in negotiation (i.e., interpretation issues), and incorporate the role of motivation, uncertainty and anxiety, and intergroup dynamics, borrowing from AUM theory. Examining the dynamics of non-verbal aspects of communication such as immediacy behaviors and emotional displays in comparative and intercultural conflict and negotiation research will be an important complement to extant work on verbal communication styles in culture and conflict/negotiation research. Integrating this further with other disciplines that focus on social structure is also an exciting frontier. Finally, the communication literature is also rich in its focus on non-tangible resources that can be negotiated across cultures (e.g., identity, relationships, face) which can expand the economic focus in cross-cultural OB/psychology research.

## **International relations**

### ***Paradigm of international relations***

International relations, a branch of political science that is concerned with foreign affairs among nation states is another discipline that examines culture and conflict, specifically in the context of international diplomatic negotiations. This field investigates *major questions* such as: *how does culture influence negotiators' perceptions and behaviors? When do cultural effects on negotiation become attenuated? What kinds of metaphors are used to understand negotiation in various cultures?* Research in IR is generally conducted at the individual and group levels of analysis. Although these topics of inquiry are similar to those asked in organizational behavior/psychology, international relations differs significantly in that there is generally a lack of consensus among scholars

in international relations regarding the *relevance of culture* in negotiation. Consequently, there is a lot of discussion in the literature on *how culture should be treated* as a construct (see Zartman, 1993). Unlike organizational behavior/psychology, the *methodology* employed in international relations are more qualitative, including case studies, archives, interviews, autobiographies of negotiators, as well as direct observations conducted in the field. Finally, while *cross-cultural comparisons* are made in international relations, they are always derived comparing negotiators from different cultures as they directly engage in intercultural negotiations.

### *Key findings from international relations*

In his book on negotiations across cultures, Cohen (1991, 1997) relies on detailed historical examples of bilateral diplomatic negotiations (during the post-war period) between the US and other non-western states, as well as supplementary evidence from autobiographies and interviews of diplomats in order to study how culture influences negotiation behavior. Integrating across case studies, Cohen (1991, 1997) observes that such abstract cultural differences are indeed reflected in specific behaviors at various stages of negotiation. In the *pre-negotiation stage*, individuals from high context cultures (Cohen, 1991, 1997) prefer to establish personal relationships with their counterparts prior to negotiating, to a much larger extent than individuals from low context cultures. For example, in the 1984 negotiations over reforms in Japan's financial markets, the abrupt manner of Treasury Secretary Donald Reagan who was seen as if he was cutting a deal on Wall Street offended many Japanese who considered diplomatic negotiations to be a more interpersonally delicate issue (*Economist*, October 27, 1984). In addition to establishing personal relationships prior to negotiating, in high context cultures, negotiators go to great lengths in order to prevent uncertain processes and outcomes that can lead to loss of face and shame. For example, the Japanese have evolved a number of strategies to prevent surprises such as gathering as much information as possible about their counterparts prior

to negotiating and relying on informal contacts for pre-negotiation assurances, commitments, and guarantees.

Cohen (1991, 1997) identifies a number of cultural differences in behaviors *during the actual negotiation* as well. For example, during opening moves, negotiators from high versus low context cultures seem to differ in their expectations of when it is appropriate to reveal information. Americans, who assume an equal playing field, expect negotiators to start revealing information immediately, but with expectation of reciprocity from their counterparts, resembling the procedures of adversarial law. The Japanese, however, who feel that initial disagreement is overly aggressive and impolite, expect negotiators to reveal information later on in the negotiation. Consequently, it seems that in intercultural contexts, such differences in the timing of information-sharing leads Americans to be at a disadvantage compared to the Japanese (Cohen, 1991, 1997).

The way in which negotiators present their arguments to their counterparts is another type of behavior with significant cultural variability during negotiations. Edmund Glenn, a former state department interpreter argued from practical experience that negotiators from various cultures generally use one of three styles of persuasion (Cohen, 1991, 1997): (1) the *factual-inductive style*, where persuasion is based on concrete factual details (instead of grand philosophical debates) which serve as basis for conclusions; (used by the State Department, Congress, and in American legal training); (2) the *axiomatic-deductive style*, where persuasion focuses on broader principles first which serve as the basis for more practical applications; and (3) the *affective-intuitive style*, where persuasion is based on emotion rather than logic. Differences in the American factual-inductive style and the Egyptian axiomatic-deductive style have caused miscommunications in diplomatic negotiations during the Middle East conflict in the 1960s. For example, President Johnson was confused when the only message sent from Egyptian President Nasser was the desire to be understood. In using an axiomatic-deductive style, President Nasser was trying to establish the broader principles of their relationship

(i.e., whether their relationship was one of mutual respect, whether Egyptian concerns and Israeli concerns were to be given equal considerations etc.), rather than going straight to the practical, concrete details. In addition to the factual-inductive and axiomatic-deductive styles, cultures seem to differ on whether emotion or logic is predominantly used by negotiators in making arguments. For example, in hierarchical cultures such as Japan, negotiators often take on a supplicant posture and employ emotional appeals instead of logic when interacting with opponents of stronger power such as the US. For example, in the 1971 Japanese monetary crisis, the Japanese depended on the mercy of the US, arguing that Japan "is a small nation, poor in natural resources, and therefore dependent on foreign trade" (Angel, 1988).

Cohen argues that culture also influences the immediate context in which negotiation behaviors take place, for example, whether negotiators can exercise discretion as representatives of a group. For example, Mike Smith (interviewed by Cohen, March 11, 1996), a former deputy US trade representative notes that compared to Americans, the Japanese have smaller discretion during negotiation. Similar observations have been made of other hierarchical cultures, including Mexico (Bowers, interviewed by Frederick Williams, March 11, 1996), Egypt, China, and India (Cohen, 1997).

Finally, Cohen (1991, 1997) observes that not only does culture influence behaviors before and during negotiation, but *at the end of negotiation* as well. For example, negotiators from different cultures prefer varying degrees of formality or explicitness of agreements. Americans for instance, prefer explicit formal contracts that are to be implemented, whereas negotiators from high-context cultures prefer more informal agreements (e.g., unwritten arrangements) that have room to conceal embarrassing outcomes to save face, and are more flexible in terms of changes to be made in the future. In addition to the form of agreements, another cultural difference as it relates to the final stages of negotiation is the effect deadlines have on the subjective experience and behaviors of negotiators. For Americans, time is perceived to be a commodity that can be wasted, and negotiators are

particularly sensitive to the pressure to settle as deadlines approach, compared to negotiators from high context cultures. Especially given their shorter-term conception of negotiations coupled with impatience, Americans are often left at a disadvantage in diplomatic negotiations (Cohen, 1991, 1997).

While Cohen (1991, 1997) focused primarily on historical case studies, Faure (1999) conducted direct observations of intercultural negotiations in the field for six years, with a specific focus on China-US negotiations in order to study cross-cultural differences in negotiation. More specifically, he identifies how culture influences various aspects of negotiation, in terms of actors, structure, strategies, process, and outcome. First, in terms of *actors*, or general characteristics of negotiators, Faure (1999) observes that the Chinese are significantly influenced by historical memories of past international relations, often in the scale of hundreds to thousands of years, and use moral debt owed to China as a tactic in weakening the position of negotiators from different countries. Second, culture also seems to influence the *structure* of negotiations. He observes that it is typical for the number of individuals for a single negotiation party in China to consist of fifteen to thirty people, far greater than the American norm. Furthermore, it is more common in China than in the US for the real decision-maker to not be present in the negotiation in order to save face. Finally, in business contexts, the Chinese often view that they have more *power* than Americans, as they perceive themselves to be buyers and foreigners to be sellers. Third, culture influences negotiation *strategy*, where the Chinese adopt different metaphors when interacting with foreign versus domestic negotiators. For example, he argues that the metaphor used when interacting with foreigners is "mobile warfare," where counterparts are perceived to be barbarians, and strategies include competitive tactics such as frightening the other, making false concessions, inducing guilt, and wearing down their opponents physically and psychologically. In contrast, in domestic negotiations or in intercultural negotiations where the foreigner is perceived to understand some aspects of Chinese culture, the relevant metaphor becomes

a “joint quest,” where foreigners are perceived as civilized people and tactics involve more cooperative behaviors such as highly ritualized activity, indirect communication, and politeness. Finally, in terms of negotiation *process* and *outcomes*, Faure (1999) identifies similar patterns to Cohen (1991, 1997). For example, the Chinese spend more time on relationship-building prior to negotiation, use more emotional appeals, and prefer loose agreements and implementation over formal contracts, under the joint quest metaphor.

In other work in international relations, researchers have identified contextual factors that most likely *attenuate* or *bolster* the main effects of culture on negotiation. For example, Faure and Rubin (1993) studied a collection of case studies on intercultural river disputes and the negotiation of allocation of resources in geographically neighboring countries. Integrating across case studies, they identified several limiting or exacerbating conditions of cultural influences on negotiation. First, they argue that greater the cultural distance between the parties in an intercultural negotiation, the more complications arise. Second, they also argue that the more power asymmetry there is between the parties, the party with the least power is less likely to be influenced by culture, as behavior will be determined by compliance to high status parties. Finally, the greater the number of parties involved in the negotiation – that is – the more multilateral the negotiation is, the more likely that the main effects of culture are dampened.

While the discussion so far has focused on cultural comparisons of actual negotiation behaviors, in another stream of research, Cohen (2000, 2001a, 2001b) makes cultural comparisons of *language* used in the domain of negotiation as a window into how particular societies conceive of and frame negotiation. In other words, through language, culture-specific metaphors for negotiation are identified. In English-speaking cultures such as the US and the UK, the analysis of words reveal that a number of metaphors are used to construe negotiation as an activity. First, many negotiation-related terms are linked to the settlement of labor-management disputes which implies that negotiation as an activity is one in which rules

and procedures for conciliation are established. Thus, negotiations in the US and the UK involve non-violent tactics, disputes are resolved fairly and effectively, the party with lower power will not be ignored, and outcomes result from compromise and mutual concessions. Second, Americans conceptualize negotiation as similar to engineering, where they have a very “can do” attitude in believing that every conflict, akin to a scientific “problem” can be resolved through dispassionate, rational analysis. Third, Christian theology is another theme of negotiation, where words such as “good faith” implies that negotiators have a sincere commitment to resolve conflict with an honest intention of implementing agreements. Finally, words such as “equal playing field,” “play by the rules,” and “fair play” suggest that negotiation is conceptualized similarly to sports, where the contest of negotiation is ruled by fairness (Cohen, 2001a).

In Arabic cultures by contrast, negotiation is conceptualized very differently. For example, the theme of honor is pervasive as evident in the words relevant to negotiation such as “sharaf” (standing, honor), “ird” (dignity, honor), and “wajh” (face, reputation). In Arabic culture, clan rivalry is endemic and conflict arises over many issues, including women, land, property, and family name, each with the risk of igniting blood revenge or retribution, “tha’r.” The word for conflict, “niza”, does not distinguish between “dispute” and “conflict” as in the West, and is consistent with the tendency for disputes over trivial matters to quickly turn into issues of honor. Furthermore, the word for “compromise” (“hal wasat”) does not have the positive connotation as it does in the west, as compromise over principles such as honor is viewed negatively. In addition to the theme of honor, Islamic ethics is another predominant theme in negotiation in Arabic cultures. For example, in “tahkim,” or formal arbitration, the goal of the arbitrator is not just to make a judicial ruling, but to reconcile the antagonists as judicial rulings that reflect moral lessons for the society at large (Cohen, 2001a).

In Hebrew, negotiation involves religious themes, including the Bible, Judaism, and Jewish law which give negotiations a moralistic tone, as well as Zionism and war which give negotiations

a combative tone (Cohen, 2000). In Jewish culture, political negotiations are grounded in "shakla vetarya," or the studying and debate of the Talmud and Mishna. Thus, negotiation is conceptualized as an intellectual duel and problems are never definitively resolved, as the presence of a solution would imply closure (Cohen, 2000).

### *International relations: summary and implications for organizational behavior/psychology*

In summary, international relations and organizational behavior/psychology focus on the question of how culture influences negotiation perceptions and behavior. However, unlike organizational behavior/psychology, which relies on laboratory experiments, international relations relies on qualitative methods that allow for rich contextual descriptions of how culture impacts real-life political negotiations. Given the qualitative nature of the data, however, these observations may not be statistically representative. Furthermore, with no variables held constant, the observations are suggestive tendencies at best, or hypotheses for future research (Cohen, 1991, 1997). The review illustrates numerous interesting avenues for future synergies across disciplines. For example, research in OB/psychology tends to examine how culture impacts actual, one-shot negotiations, and the case studies reviewed in this section suggest that it is critical to examine how culture influences negotiators before and after the actual negotiation. For example, it would be interesting to examine whether culture influences the ways in which outcomes of previous negotiations influence the dynamics of current negotiations, and whether culture influences how and when negotiation agreements are implemented. It would also be worthwhile to examine cultural differences in negotiators' perception of time and deadlines. The international relations literature helps to identify a number of contextual variables, such as power asymmetries, that may interact with culture in influencing intercultural negotiation behavior. In addition, the work on metaphors shows that language is not a neutral entity, but one that carries

culture (see also Gelfand and McCusker, 2002). Thus, it is important to study not only intercultural negotiations that are conducted in English, but those that are conducted in other languages as well. Other contextual variables for future intercultural negotiation research include cultural distance between the two cultures, multilateral negotiations, and negative historical memory (e.g., Faure, 1999). As with the communication literature, IR research on culture, conflict, and negotiation suggests that non-economic outcomes, including the quality of personal relationships, status, face, and honor, are critical to examine in future research.

### *Conclusion*

We began this chapter with a call for interdisciplinary research on culture, conflict, and negotiation, arguing that the complexity of this topic invites and even demands knowledge from multiple disciplines. In order to start the interdisciplinary conversation, we reviewed prototypical work from a wide range of disciplines, including organizational behavior/psychology, legal anthropology, comparative law, language and disputing, cognitive anthropology, experimental economics, primatology, communication, and international relations, highlighting their commonalities and their differences. Not surprisingly, while all are concerned with how culture influences conflict and negotiation, different disciplines have a penchant for different research questions, different units of analysis, different ways in which culture is conceptualized, and different methodologies. By highlighting key insights and approaches from many disciplines to culture, conflict, and negotiation, we are beginning to map the scientific terrain that collectively address relevant factors in the broad topic of culture, conflict, and negotiation.

We have much optimism that the most important new insights in the area of culture, conflict, and negotiation will come from creative interdisciplinary mergers in theory and methods. Throughout the chapter, we gave examples of natural "cultural mergers" between OB/psychology and other disciplines studying culture, conflict, and negotiation. For example, the psychological perspective offered

in OB/psychology can be fruitfully integrated with notions of social structure (legal anthropology), ecology (primatology), linguistic analyses (language and disputing), incentives (experimental economics), power and history (international relations), institutional factors (comparative law), variance in cultural meanings (cognitive anthropology), among others. OB/psychology research on culture and negotiation will likewise benefit from methodological approaches that have proved useful in its sister disciplines.

At the same time, it is worth noting that interdisciplinary research on culture, conflict, and negotiation will likely itself be subject to the very same difficulties that have been identified in managing interdependence across cultures. Scientific disciplines have their own cultures, and interdisciplinary teams will invariably find that they are managing culture conflict as they study this very phenomenon. Differences in worldviews, scientific language, and priorities that are entrenched in different disciplinary paradigms will make the research process both more rewarding but more difficult (and time-consuming). As well, new structures and scientific outlets will need to be created to counter the discipline-focused tradition that characterizes academe. Yet like other topics covered in the *Handbook*, culture, conflict, and negotiation is complex, multi-level, and dynamic topic that requires deep and diverse cultural perspectives from many disciplines. We hope this chapter will help to start to build such necessary interdisciplinary bridges.

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